

MEETING SUMMARY

NE REGIONAL LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE

June 28, 2001

Members Present: Dave Anderson, Dick Olson, Mark Reed, Clyde Hanson, Lawson Gerdes, Tom Martinson, Jim Hall, Bob Stine, Milo Rasmussen, Terry Brown, Kara Dunning, Meredith Cornett, Jim Larson, Tim O'Hara, Duane Kick and Jan Green

Staff Present: Amie Brown, Julie Heinz and David Miller

Guests: JoAnn Hanowski (NRRI), George Host (NRRI), Mark White (NRRI) and Rick Lichty (UMD)

Economic Data

Rich Lichty presented the report on current economic conditions to the Committee for the second time. The report was modified based on the feedback received from the first presentation:

- the county areas were changed to disregard the Red River Valley area and the metro area.
- some further checking on tourism was completed and unfortunately there are just no accurate studies available that would support figures he could use in his presentation. The figures would be hotel receipts but that does not give a breakdown of local vs visitors. He said he would encourage some organization to do a complete study as it would be very beneficial. However, it would be very expensive as you would have to do surveys in order to get data that would be accurate. Also, for a survey to be useful it would have to be repeated over a period of time.

Some additional points:

- The Medical Field and State Employment (education and non-education) rates very high in the NE region.
- Employment figures count all employees so long as they work one day during the month of the survey.
- IMPLAN is a top down model that uses national data and desegregates to the State and County level. Information estimates of economic activity are based on the model.
- Should look at the linkages between the paper mills and the rest of the economy ie the ripple effect.

The report provides the baseline economic information that the Committee can use to measure impacts on the economy of changes in forest management. The committee will need to decide how to do the impact analysis using this report and the IMPLAN model. Actual figures could be used once the landscape goals, objectives and strategies are

completed or scenario's can be developed to show the potential impacts given a certain set of conditions.

The report will be finalized in the next few weeks and sent to all Committee members. Information presented to date and the final report can be found on the following web site: <http://sbe.d.umn.edu/ced/BBER/projects/projects.htm> under the title "Northern Minnesota Forestry Analysis Final Report"

Small Group Reports

Each ecosystem group leader reported the goals their group developed since the last landscape committee meeting. The papers they presented are attached so the details will not be repeated. Discussion points for each group are as follows:

Jack Pine-Black Spruce Type – Duane Kick

- Concern by industry that proposed goals and objectives do not harvest enough outside the BWCA to compensate for older successional stages inside the BWCA. Proposed goals would increase harvest 14% from 6 % now.
- Disappearance of jack pine is significant. Jack pine has been cut and naturally converted to aspen, balsam, fir; steps need to be taken to replace it by establishing a long range goal to replacement jack pine
- Need to compare map of where it grows...and where the inventory of jack pine is now (spatial arrangement-soil productivity).

Dry-mesic white pine-red pine – Jim Larson

- Jim reviewed the process to make sure it was correct (it is).
- Meredith Cornett developed goals and numbers but Jim and Meredith did not have a chance to meet and discuss.
- Need more time to complete.

Mesic white pine-red pine – Tom Martinson

Mesic birch-aspen-spruce-fir – Kara Dunning

- Need to consider the budworm problem in this type.
- Lawson Gerdes presented a paper on this type since she could not attend the group meeting (copy attached).
- Kara indicated she would not be able to spend as much time on this in the next few months so would indicate an alternative lead person.

General Discussion Points on Small Group Work

- Bob Stine: not ready to agree on any of the goals, objectives and strategies-need to have all the same format so committee can compare and analyze the whole package for all ecotypes.
- We are not accounting for what is going back to –0- in the DNR.
- Need current age class info in 10 yr increment....using CSA data source.

- Jan Green: need to have the current condition mapped with ownership. We have the potential by acreage, but need to know species by acre, rather than stand type.
- Tim O'Hara has concerns about the huge reduction of aspen type, how will we address.
- Alternative scenarios should also be brought to the table.
- Dave Anderson need to look at the total impact of goals for each type before we agree to final product.
- Tim O'Hara trying to achieve those older ecological types could create a very unhealthy forest. .
- Current industry is adaptable over long term – once utilized jack pine and not aspen now aspen is primary species.

Next Steps

Economic/Social

1. The economic report does not break out tourism as an industry do to the lack of survey data. This is a major concern for the NE Committee. Rick Lichty will check several more sources before finalizing his report, but he is already over budget and can't do much more. Currently the following organizations are involved in gathering survey information on recreation and tourism in northern MN:
 - Itasca County is in the beginning process of a survey on tourism for Itasca County
 - US Forest Service is collecting information on recreational use for both the Chippewa and Superior NF; should be ready this fall.
 - Cook County will be collecting survey data on cross county ski and snowmobile use and conflict this winter.
 - Voyagers National Park may have some survey data on visits to the Park in their Master Plan.
 - SEAGRANT (Glen Kreg) is starting to survey use.
2. The use of scenarios to measure economic impact from the IMPLAN model requires the committee to determine the value change from the current data. This could be the value change of wood supply, tourism etc. The time frame (short 10 yrs vs long 50 + yrs) can be determined by the Committee but the further out you go the less accurate the model projections. Can run scenarios based on various levels of wood supply (+/-10 % or +/- 20 percent) to see what impacts are or can wait until landscape goals are completed and determine impact then.
3. Key questions:
 - How much of the tourist based economy is "forest based" vs event based or water based etc?
 - What are the linkages between industries?
 - How do we account for new value added industries coming in or existing industries adapting to resource mix/supply?
 - How do we account for social values?
4. Staff Actions (complete by September meeting):

- Obtain, if possible, “expert opinion” on the % of tourism that is forest based.
- Contact organizations doing surveys for tourism and develop a proposal for an ongoing survey to determine tourist use (would need to do cooperatively or find additional money to accomplish).
- Explore with Rick Lichty the cost and process for doing a Cost/Benefit study to account for economic and social values.

Ecological

The Committee was not ready to dialogue and agree to any of the landscape goals presented by the four ecological type groups. More time was needed along with more information. The following information and process was agreed to:

- Staff will provide current age class information in 10 year increments using CSA data and displaying in growth stage format (Terry Brown, 7/5).
- Staff will map of current conditions by ownership (Mark White, 7/15)..
- Each group will use Duane Kick’s format in their analysis and send to Dave by August 17:
 - Prepare one alternative that reaches minimum RNV.
 - Prepare alternatives that differ from the minimum and why.
- It is the responsibility of each NE committee member to contact the group leader(s) to express concerns, different alternatives etc.
- Dave will put the package together and send to committee by August 24.

Dave encourage everyone to participate over the summer and to share their analysis and proposed landscape goals with others. The goal at the September meeting will be to agree on the goals so we can move on to looking at economic impacts.

NEXT NE LANDSCAPE MEETING-SEPTEMBER 20TH (NRRI)