

**Guideline Implementation Monitoring Technical Committee
Meeting Minutes
July 12, 1999**

In attendance: Mike Phillips, Charlie Blinn, Dick Rossman, Rick Dahlman, Alan Jones, Pat Emerson, Dave Parent, Harry Fisher, Terry Weber, Mike Houser (for Kent Jacobson)

Absent: Barb Leuelling, Clarence Turner, Bob Morrow, Tim Quincer, Jim Jones, Tom Martinson, and Kent Jacobson.

Mike Phillips convened the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

Documents distributed

Mike Phillips distributed the following documents:

1. July 12, 1999 GIMTC agenda.
2. Final GIMTC membership.
3. Draft June 7-8, 1999 GIMTC meeting minutes.
4. Draft June 28, 1999 GIMTC meeting minutes.
5. Pre-site visit review worksheet - draft 7/8/99.
6. On-site review worksheet - draft 7/8/99.
7. Guideline implementation monitoring questions - from May GIMTC meetings.

Introductory discussions

The minutes from the June 7-8, 1999 and the June 28, 1999 guideline implementation monitoring committee meetings were approved with a couple of minor changes.

The GIMTC congratulated Dave Parent on his appointment to the MFRC. There was some discussion about whether the GIMTC would now have to show Dave some respect in recognition of his solemn appointment to this august body. But then we decided, why start now?

Mike Phillips reviewed the agenda and the order in which the items would be taken up. All discussion on the guideline measures was to be deferred until the other agenda items had been thoroughly discussed.

Who will do monitoring

The following list of options was generated during brain storming:

- C Contractor
 - outside of Council
 - DNR Resource Assessment

- University of Minnesota
- C Consulting firm
- C Forest health monitoring crews
- C BMP style audit team
- C Third party Q.C.
- C MN Conservation Corps crews
- C Self (forester post sale evaluation) with QAQC crew
- C DNR

There was considerable discussion on this issue, much of which focused on the use of MCC crews. Harry Fisher expressed a concern that the MCC crews were not qualified to do the field reviews. He feels that they do not have the forest management or logging background needed to do the field reviews. A number of committee members expressed the view that the individuals or teams that will be doing the field reviews will just be collecting data. Because of the nature of the monitoring questions, field experience would not necessarily be required and field crews can be provided adequate training to answer the questions and collect the data needed to complete the field reviews.

Issues:

- C paid versus unpaid (direct or direct plus in-kind)
- C all approaches have costs, it is a question of who pays and where the cost is shifted

The GIMTC identified 3 categories of options (i.e., BMP style field audit, self monitor with QAQC, contract with QAQC) and listed the positives and negatives of each option.

Review positives and negatives of different approaches

BMP style audit team

Positives

- C high credibility/education
- C breadth of experience
- C cheaper compared to direct cost of contracting
- C participation opportunity for all

Negatives

- C time and training needed (with high sample size)
- C hard to get rounded@teams
- C turn over in team membership
- C bias in team membership
- C logistics for large number of people
- C inconsistent measurement between teams

Self monitor with QAQC

Positives

- C less expensive versus contract
- C cost/data collected - less direct cost
- C lots-a-data
- C puts fox in henhouse

Negatives

- C lack of trust
- C NIPF? Who would sample (50% of sites)
- C need to train everybody
- C variable delays for sale closing
- C burden for sale administer
- C high indirect cost - shifted to others

Contract (e.g., DNR Resource Assessment, consulting firm, University of Minnesota, MCC crew, FHM crews) with QAQC provided by MFRC

Positives

- C low indirect cost
- C consistency
- C high level of credibility
- C reduced training needs
- C ability to specify expertise
- C efficient
- C shift field logistics to contractor

Negatives

- C high direct cost
- C need for contract administration and QAQC
- C may not get same contractor each year

Mike Phillips asked for a vote on which of the approaches the committee members would prefer to recommend as their first choice to the MFRC.

BMP style audit team: 1st choice: 0

Self monitor with QAQC: 1st choice: 0

Contract with QAQC: 1st choice: 8

Options for reducing the time it takes to complete field reviews

- C fewer people doing evaluations

- C computerized forms - only use required forms
- C choose a sub-set of all guidelines to monitor each year (e.g., one year RMZ, next year cultural) (*team split on this recommendation*)
- C eliminate water quality and visual quality from monitoring - proven performance - *team split on this item*
- C identify a set of critical (*which ones are critical*) guidelines to measure at all sites, then a full set to monitor on every 5th site or so; or, critical + one subject area. *Team split on this, time is taken up by travel and logistics, not time to fill out form*
- C separate effectiveness from implementation
- \$ more estimating versus actual measurements

Some committee members suggested that it was not the function of the committee to recommend options for reducing the time it takes to do a field review; that we should be presenting the best possible program recommendations to the MFRC.

Monitoring protocols

- C 1 report/form filled per site
- C effectiveness measures
 - none or limit to water quality and visual quality
 - long term issue and broaden scope

Recommendation -effectiveness measures

Examples of effectiveness measures that would be possible but time consuming are:

- C visual quality
- C water quality with respect to sediment
- C bulk density/soil resistance
- C regeneration of trees
- C blowdown of leave trees (RMZ also)
- C long term viability of regeneration

Team recommends that effectiveness measurement should be separate from implementation monitoring. Much of effectiveness monitoring is long term and is research driven. The GIMTC does not feel that with the time constraints on the field review teams that they will have the time to collect the samples or to take measurements that will address the appropriate questions on effectiveness of the guidelines.

Timing of monitoring

- C are there guidelines that require specific timing? For example, cultural resources would best be monitored ASAP after harvest
- C give enough time in spring to clean-up sites

- C no snow
- C leaf-off
- C site must be closed
- C activity must have occurred within 18-24 months of the aerial photography. Limit is 2 growing seasons
- C monitoring must be completed before another growing season passes

Other time issues

- C logistics (pre-site)
- C travel to site
- C walking in/out of site
- C looking over site (measurements)
- C filling out form

Follow-up visits

These would likely only be used for effectiveness monitoring. Mike Houser suggested that follow-up visits may not be the best approach for effectiveness monitoring of the wildlife guidelines. Mike Phillips stated that it could be an effective approach, for example, in evaluating long-term decreases in soil bulk density on skid trails and landings, which is a forest soil productivity issue.

Review of questions originally proposed by Mike Phillips and Dick Rossman

The committee reviewed and provided answers to a series of questions posed to the technical committee in May. The question that prompted the most discussion concerned what to do about problem sites. All agreed that the objective is to collect data and not to enforce laws and regulations. Mike Phillips and Rick Dahlman stated that if the landowner is along with the team, that provides an opportunity for the team to discuss with the landowner some of the options for correcting any problems encountered during the review. Some committee members expressed some reservations about this approach. It was suggested that a landowner not receive a written review of his/her land but a generic thank you letter with perhaps a mechanism for the landowner to indicate if he/she would like a copy of the final report.

Other

Near the end of the meeting the question was asked as to whether the priority for the fall field reviews should be to collect baseline data or to field test the forms. The majority opinion (probably unanimous) on the committee is that the forms should be thoroughly field tested by the committee which would also leave time to collect some of the needed baseline data in the fall. The rest of the sites could be field reviewed in the spring. Mike Phillips said that the monitoring program had purchased two field use computers that will be used in preference to printed work

sheets. When the computers arrive and the software programs have been modified and installed, the technical committee will have another opportunity to field review and modify the program.

Another general question was raised about site selection. How would limiting site selection to what was harvested in the previous growing season affect the logistics of site selection by aerial photography. Mike Phillips agreed to check on this with Alan Ek et al. It would likely complicate the process by at least expanding the number of flight lines needed to obtain an adequate number of potential sample sites.

The issue was raised as to whether we would specify the expertise on the field review teams. We have the option of specifying the expertise needed whether we use interdisciplinary BMP style audit teams or contract the field reviews. If we use the BMP style audit teams, we would likely use a broad range of constituency groups as in the past. For the contractor, we could also specify a minimum level of expertise (e.g., soil scientist, hydrologist, wildlife manager, roads engineer). Another option would be not to specify in the request for proposal (RFP) the expertise required, but have the contractor identify what expertise they will utilize in conducting the field reviews. The resources proposed by the potential contractors would become part of the RFP selection process of review. In general, however, the committee felt that at a minimum, there needs to be expertise in basic forest management, timber harvesting and wildlife management on the field review teams.

Alan Jones suggested that we take the guidelines and measures and organize the materials that Mike Phillips produced look less like an official form. Mike asked Alan if he could take one of the guideline measure pages and provide an example of what he is proposing.

Mike asked that all comments on the site profile form need to be to Dick Rossman by July 17 and that all changes to the guideline measures need to be to Mike by July 30.

Mike indicated that he will now be working with Dick Rossman in preparing the report for the MFRC that identifies the options and recommendations for the implementation monitoring program. Mike indicated that he will send the report out for review to the technical committee prior to submitting it to the MFRC.

Next Meeting

The July 12, 1999 meeting was the last official meeting of the guideline implementation monitoring technical committee. Mike Phillips suggested that the committee might be brought together again to field test the final review form in the fall. The committee agreed that it would be productive to field test the forms and measures when they are in final form. But it was also suggested that the field reviews should wait until we get the field computers with the appropriate software programs.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

