

# Family Forest Landowner Committee

Time: April 26, 2023, 8:30 a.m.

Location: Zoom Meeting

## Attendance

Members present: Janet Erdman (chair), Kathleen Preece, Mike Kilgore  
Members absent: Rick Horton  
Alternates present: None  
Staff present: Jaime Thibodeaux, Eric Schenck  
Guests: John Bathke, Eli Sagor, Brian Huberty, Scott Johnson, Anna Stockstad

## Membership

Kathleen and Janet shared a recent discussion they had with State Forester Patty Theilen pertaining to DNR representation and communication with regard to the FFL Committee. Per the discussion, Patty is comfortable with meeting minutes and a courtesy heads-up when relevant issues/topics arise at the FFL Committee level. It was discussed that close ties to the DNR PFM team would help everyone stay abreast of issues/topics. Meetings are open and DNR is welcome at any time. She expressed appreciation and offered to be contacted if responses are needed. Eric would like to see DNR representation on the FFL Committee, possibly Amber as Patty's alternate or Gary Michael. Janet and Kathleen will review possible Councilmember interest and reach out to DNR.

It was suggested that regional committees and Soil and Water Conservation Districts be represented on the committee. It's been agreed earlier that Council members and alternates will serve as committee members in accordance with MN Statute 89A.03. Eric Schenck noted that Scott Johnson, representing the Ruffed Grouse Society, had applied for Council membership and was a possible candidate for FFL Committee membership. It was noted there are very few voting issues and again emphasized that meetings are open, suggestions and input are welcomed, and agenda items of interest can be submitted.

## Facilitation of Meetings

Everyone is welcome to attend meetings, including regional chairs and others who have requested to attend. The meetings will be facilitated like the Landscape Advisory Committee and other meetings. Items of interest can be sent to be put on the agenda.

## Communication with Regional Committees

It's been requested by the regional chairs that this committee keep lines of communication open with them and request and consider input on issues. Along with meeting attendance, meeting minutes will be sent to all regional chairs, and any topics of interest to the regional chairs can be communicated through Jaime at the regional chair quarterly meetings. Again, any items of concern can be requested to be put on the agenda.

## Committee Development

This discussion included determining this committee's role in private forest management and how it can be best informed of family forest landowner issues and topics to best represent this interest on the Council.

- Janet suggested that time be spent learning about the FFL groups or organizations to gain understanding of their status and needs. The following have indicated interest in working with the FFL Committee.
  - Jennifer Corcoran, DNR, private landowner enhanced forest inventory for Pine County
  - Julie Marinucci, St. Louis County, Wildfire Reduction Grant
  - Anna Stockstad, UMN Extension

These and other interested parties such as MFA, could be invited to committee meetings to describe their roles, status, goals, and issues. It was suggested that Jennifer Corcoran be asked to our next meeting.

- Brian asked what outcomes would be achieved through this committee and expressed concern about the farm bill. The committee charter was reviewed, and Eric indicated that this committee is still forming. His intent is to have the soon-to-be hired policy person look at the farm bill. In addition, this issue can also be brought to this committee as an agenda item.
- Other intentions/objectives:
  - Mike would like to see the Council commission private forest landowner studies. Also, the Council is not hampered by politics that might limit other agencies' attempts to introduce something more controversial. This committee can bring forward those proposals.
  - Eric stated this committee's guidance in private lands will assist all committees, including the rebuilding of the regional committees. This can be a niche for advancing private forest management.
  - Eric discussed one of the initial undertakings of this group, for example, determining the status of *A system framework for Minnesota's family-owned forests*, and discussed the pilot project's opportunity to reach out to landowners.

## Pilot Project Update

Eli gave an overview and updated the committee on the status of Coordinated Family Forest Landowner Education/Upper Mississippi River Headwaters Watershed project. They are currently working to determine research assistance and design as well as steering team makeup.

## Next meeting

Date and Time: June 28, 2023, 8:30 a.m.  
Zoom meeting

ATTACHMENTS None