

Family Forest Landowner Committee

Time: August 23, 2023, 8:30 a.m.

Location: Zoom Meeting

Attendance

Members present:	Janet Erdman (chair)
Members absent:	Rick Horton, Kathleen Preece, Mike Kilgore, Pete Aube
Alternates present:	Gary Michael (for Patty Thielen)
Staff present:	Jaime Thibodeaux, Eric Schenck
Guests:	John Bathke, Brian Huberty, Anna Stockstad, Linda Kingery, James Aasen, Dave Roerick

Strategic Planning

Kathleen and Janet created a draft of this committee's strategic plan for the next biennium. Comments on the overall impression of this draft were made.

- Include simplification of the process for landowners such as one contact for all needs. Wildfire and forest carbon are big issues. Revise this so it is a task list for this committee.
- Include supporting forest markets.
- The vision of this plan could include making recommendations for private land services and partnerships and making policy recommendations to the Council.
- The overall goal is to encourage more active stewardship by family forest landowners.

There was further discussion on simplifying the process for landowners, a portion of which is included in #11 of the strategic planning draft: "MFRC will advocate at the state and federal level simplification of cost-share program." There is an opportunity to simplify cost-share dollars in the upcoming Farm Bill. *(See next item.)*

Farm Bill Resolution

The discussion evolved into whether urgent action should be taken on the upcoming Farm Bill to redirect the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) funds to USFS State and Private Forestry that can then be granted to the state forestry agencies. Family forest landowners are accustomed to working successfully with their local partners and state agencies, and state forestry agencies can more efficiently implement federal funding through their existing programs.

It was determined that if a resolution could be created in time for the September 6 Policy Committee meeting and approved, it could potentially be approved at the September MFRC meeting, which would provide a small amount of time to distribute to legislators prior to the anticipated fall release of the initial draft of the 2023 Farm Bill. The resolution would be distributed to the governor, legislators, and others for possible impact. Janet, Eric, Jaime, Kathleen, and Janet will meet at 8:30 a.m. on August 30 to craft the resolution.

Other items

- The Southeast Landscape Committee will be performing a functional analysis on private forest landowner service providers in southeast Minnesota.
- The FFL Committee will continue strategic planning at the October 25 meeting.

Next meeting

Date and Time: October 25, 2023, 8:30 a.m.

Zoom meeting

ATTACHMENTS *2022-2024 Family Forest Landowner Strategic Planning*