



MFRC Landscape Advisory Committee

Time: Aug 10, 2022 10:00 AM

Members Present: Jim Manolis, Janet Erdman, Keith Karnes, Rick Horton, Kim Berns-Melhus, Kathleen Preece,

Members Absent: Craig Engwall, Deb Theisen,

Staff Present: Eric Schenck, Jaimé Thibodeaux, Sadie Mathison

Guests Present: Patty Thielen, David Ruff, Tom Schulz, James Aasen

Introductions & Remarks

Jaimé began by expressing her enthusiasm for the new opportunity with MFRC, introduced herself, and initiated a round of introductions.

MFRC Update –Eric Schenck

Eric announced that the application period for the Applied Forest Science Coordinator position has closed and we have four applicants that will advance to interviews. The Policy position will be posted in the coming months.

Eric stated that the Council recently voted to form a Climate Change and Carbon Ad Hoc Committee. Katie Fernholz will be chairing the committee. The committee will consist of Council members and non-Council members and will work on next steps for the recommendations which came out of the recently completed “Carbon In Minnesota’s Forests” report commissioned by MFRC.

Regional Landscape Chair Reports

James Aasen from the Northern Committee referred to the flooding this year in his region and as a result, his regional committee has not met since last fall. His SWCD is working on invasive species control, forest planning, and BWSR One Watershed One Plan plans in conjunction with landscape stewardship plans for those watersheds.

David Ruff reported that due to the pandemic and the absence of a Regional Landscape Program Coordinator, activity with the Southeast Regional Committee has been less than usual. They did meet in the spring to talk about a timber harvest that happened locally and had been flagged for FMG use. They have been working with Lindberg and BWSR at establishing One Watershed One Plan technical teams to work in conjunction with the Zumbro watershed plan and a special focus on the West Indian Creek area which has a 319 grant for forest protection and management. The Mississippi River/Winona/La Crescent is the last watershed in the Southeast

landscape to complete a One Watershed One Plan and they are close to wrapping it up. Establishing technical teams for this area would be very beneficial.

Former chair of the West Central landscape committee, Tom Schulz reported that the West Central landscape plan is out of date and needs revision. They are looking at the Minnesota Million because some of the land in their landscape is adaptable for increased planting. There is concern over the aging out of citizen participants of committee.

Jaimé promised a future call with each regional committee.

Regional Webpage Updates

Eric provided an update on the MFRC website. There was an in-depth conversation around the Forest Metrics and Carbon Dashboards which are found on each regional landscape webpage as well as a discussion of how to manage these going forward regarding maintenance vs. usefulness and other metrics that might be added.

Sadie provided an overview of the functionality available for the regional committee webpages housed on the MFRC website and invited further discussion with each committee.

Landscape Coordinator Priorities

As an introduction to this topic Eric mentioned reengagement and a review of priorities, especially private land forest stewardship.

Thoughts regarding further priorities included face to face meetings with the committees, content for the upcoming biennial report describing an update on each committee, more work on private land engagement, information sharing with the Communication Committee, a rebuild of the conduit between MFRC and the folks in the Northern communication to go both ways, and communication in both directions between the committees and the Council/the LAC.

Jaimé presented the idea of a Regional Landscape Committee Member packet that describes the program and the expectations of members to help with recruitment and to guide current members. She also suggested a different document for the committee chairs.

LAC members expressed a concern over intimidating language and a desire to include private landowners regardless of their forestry knowledge or experience. Jaimé invited further ideas, comments, and assistance with wording. She will send out a revised version to this committee.

September 19th Private Lands Forest Forum (Cloquet)

Eric introduced the topic of a Private Lands Forest Stewardship Forum that will be held in Cloquet the day before the September meeting of the Council. He drew attention to the Private Land Framework which had been developed with multiple stakeholders in 2015. This forum will help to develop a shared vision for framework implementation and outcomes utilizing the work already done in the Framework.

A small group has been meeting to discuss strategies for moving forward with the concepts provided in the report. She shared some of the ideas that the group has talked about as possibilities. She hopes to gather input regarding MFRC's role. Janet would like to have a variety of representatives at the forum, not just Council members. There is a need to gather input regarding MFRC's role and for someone to lead this initiative. Jaime will reach out to see if there is an option to get the group together next week.

Private Forest Landowner Outreach Proposal

Eric shared a proposal that came from Eli Sagor, UMN Extension Forestry/Sustainable Forest Education Cooperative which included bringing on someone to lead an outreach initiative. The desire to have action-oriented outcomes brought it to the Landscape Advisory Committee. The discussion brought suggestions for specific topics, such as carbon, as areas of focus, outreach methods such as a landowner database, a look at My MN Woods as a tool, and for more specificity in the proposal with a champion to lead.

Committee members were asked to submit ideas for next meeting topics.

Meeting adjourned.