

# MINNESOTA FOREST RESOURCES COUNCIL

## Landscape Advisory Committee

1:00 – 3:00 pm, Wednesday, February 9, 2022

### NOTES

Members present: Jim Manolis, Janet Erdman, Kim Berns-Melhus, Connie Cummins, Rick Horton, Keith Karnes, Craig Engstrom

Members absent: Deb Theisen, Forrest Boe

Staff present: Eric Schenck

Guests: Joel Mielke (alternate), Dennis Kepler (DNR)

Jim Manolis opened the meeting with introductions. Eric provided a brief review of Sustainable Forest Resources Act provisions related to forest resource monitoring (89A.07) that direct the DNR commissioner to monitor forest resources at stateside, landscape and site-levels, with MFRC providing oversight and direction. Monitoring under this section also is intended to provide information in formats needed for MFRC landscape planning functions (89A.06).

Dennis Kepler (DNR Supervisor of Resource Monitoring) provided an overview of lidar enhanced forest inventory technology and methodology, including the collection of plot based information (PBI) needed by computer models to interpret lidar and other inventory data. Dennis shared statewide maps showing the schedule and geographic scope of lidar imagery and PBI sample points. Dennis explained that state funding is available to collect PBI on state lands and some other public land management agencies also are partnering to collect or fund PBI data collection. However, collection of PBI on private lands is not funded and in landscapes with large amounts of private forest land the accuracy of the lidar enhanced forest inventory is compromised. Also, Dennis explained that private land management is likely different than public land management and there are limits to which public land PBI data can be extrapolated to private land forest inventories.

On public lands with stand maps (i.e. GIS polygons) the lidar enhanced forest inventory can produce raster data at 20 meter (66ft) resolution at the stand level for each polygon. The lidar enhanced forest inventory also can produce its own stand level polygons by identifying areas with similar forest conditions. The stand level raster data includes: 1) stand basal area; 2) above ground biomass; 3) quadratic mean diameter; 4) trees per acre; 5) site index; 6) standing volume; and 7) cover type. Stand level summaries will not be produced without polygon maps.

Questions and discussion occurred about treatment of private land forest inventory information. Private land ownership polygons could be used to generate stand level information. However, without private land PBI accuracy would be compromised and privacy is a concern. Collecting PBI data on private lands takes longer

and costs more. FIA collects data on private land with <5% denial rate. Lands enrolled in forest stewardship program might be sites for PBI data collection.

DNR would like to have web-based tool to display lidar enhanced forest inventory. There was a FY23 budget proposal for more PBI data collection. DNR believes lidar enhanced forest inventory will provide a 55% cost reduction and result in faster updates of on the ground stand inventories. Jim Manolis asked why no surveys were shown for NW Minnesota. Dennis replied that for the Red River Valley watershed association purchased the lidar data for the region and is not interested in developing a forest inventory. Jim indicated that polygon data would be more useful, not just raster data.

Connie Cummins asked if Federal, State and Private Forestry funding could be used to collect PBI data on private lands. Discussion also occurred about LCCMR grants. Pilot projects are planned for Cass and Lake Counties. Some discussion also occurred about the Arrowhead pilot project. Eric indicated that the Committee could develop a report on the Lidar Enhanced Forest Inventory for the March Council meeting and/or schedule it as a presentation.

Chair Manolis, having to leave early, indicated that the agenda topic of discussing additional metrics to be added to the MFRC's website "Dashboard" would be postponed and covered on the April LAC agenda.

Eric initiated discussion on Council Resolution 2022-2 "Increase Nursery Capacity". Specifically he brought up four topics from the agenda: 1) Status and Stakeholder Outreach & Communication; 2) Tree Planting Report—Finalizing & Relevance to Resolution; 3) "Fact Sheet" Development; 4) PRT Informational Sheet. Rick Horton pointed out that the resolution itself provided facts as "Whereas" statements making additional fact sheets not necessary. Additional discussion occurred about how Council representatives can and have shared the resolution with their stakeholders or with the legislature.

With regard to agenda topics for the next LAC meeting, Eric mentioned that the Kathleen and Janet had proposed a private lands "forum" in conjunction with the May Council meeting. Also, Eric is looking for input from the Committee about field workshops for a September 2-day Council at the Cloquet Forestry Center. Keith Karnes asked about local sites to visit specific to climate change. Janet Erdman mentioned that the Minnesota Forestry Association wants to create a database of private landowners but does not want it housed in nonprofit. Discussion occurred on topic and whether MFRC might serve that purpose.

Eric updated the Committee on the Director of Forest Planning and Coordinator position description which has gone to Human Resources and should be posted soon, as well as a few other MFRC updates.

Meeting was adjourned.