

# MINNESOTA FOREST RESOURCES COUNCIL

## Policy Committee

10:00 am – 12:00 pm, Thursday, June 23, 2022

### NOTES

**Members present:** Craig Engwall, Katie Fernholz, Pete Aube, Rick Horton, Jim Manolis, Mike Kilgore, Bob Owens, Brendan Jordan, Amber Ellering

**Members absent:** Keith Karnes

**Staff present:** Eric Schenck, Anna Stockstad

**Guests:** Molly Jansen (TNC)

The meeting began with a review of the meeting objective. Some discussion occurred related to logistics for the July and September Council meeting.

An update of the Governor's Climate Action Framework draft was reported by Eric. The involvement of MFRC has been focused on "big picture" concepts. One of the major topics in the draft has been the baseline for accounting for carbon in the forest sector. It was emphasized that the MFRC should continue to send clear communications related to carbon accounting and comparisons of forest scenarios and outcomes. During the development of the Climate Action Framework, there has been a large push to separate the forestry sector from the larger agricultural sector.

Eric summarized the Council rankings of the information needs (9) proposed in the "Carbon in Minnesota's Forests" report (Matt Russell, UMN). The three highest ranked information needs were related to life cycle assessments of timber harvesting with the focus on carbon, understanding forest carbon baselines, and long-term effects of lands enrolled in carbon programs/impacts to available wood. The Committee agreed that the rankings mirror the needs identified in the Climate Action Framework. Establishing a carbon baseline and standardizing how carbon is measured in MN was recommended as the first step moving forward. More involvement from the Council should be included in the development of life cycle assessments.

The potential need for a "Carbon Ad Hoc" subcommittee was proposed by Eric. Experts outside of the Council could also be included in this subcommittee. Members of the group suggested that the ad hoc committee not be a subcommittee within the policy committee, but instead be an ad hoc committee within the Council since carbon is not exclusively a policy topic. The scope of work, responsibilities, and support in the form of MFRC staff lead of the ad hoc committee would need to be defined and presented at the July Council meeting.

Related to the Resolution 2022-1 Action and Communications Strategy, Eric proposed that MFRC staff create an outlet on the MFRC website to store materials related to biomass that has been presented to the Council. It was suggested that staff should also create a short summary of biomass harvesting in MN.

A discussion took place about next steps related to Resolution 2022-2 and the TNC “Million Acre” proposal. It was suggested that there could be a public-private partnership to establish a new nursery in the state, but the demand for seedlings and where these seedlings could be planted would need to be determined.

The need for the Committee to acknowledge other forest policy issues, with high level identification of issues in contrast to focusing on only the detailed technical issues, was addressed since these issues could affect other MFRC work.

Eric then summarized the MFRC support letter of the Climate Smart Seed Procurement proposal. The point was raised that The Nature Conservancy also brought forward another proposal in addition to the Climate Smart Seed Procurement proposal, so further discussion is required about how the Council chooses to support specific proposals for funding.

Eric updated the group about his recent field tour focused on the DNR Lidar Enhanced Forest Inventory. General perception about an DNR-led “all lands” lidar inventory has been varied.

Meeting adjourned.