**COUNCIL ON FORESTRY MEETING**

**Date:** 5/20/21

**Location:** Virtually via Zoom

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| **Council Members:** | | | **Guests:** | | | | |
| Tom Hittle, *Chair* | Kenneth Price | | Faye Bokelman, *DNR* | | Ron Eckstein, Wildlife Soc. | Phil Blake, Forest Data Network | |
| Matt Dallman, *Vice Chair* | Paul Strong | | Rebecca Diebel, *DNR* | | Stacey Johnson, WI Paper | Duane Norwood, FR Data Net | |
| Heather Berklund,  *Chief State Forester* | Jordan Skiff | | Sara Minkoff, DNR | | Richard Wedepohl, former CoF | Joe Fitzgerald, Milwaukee Water Commons | |
| Senator Janet Bewley | Jason Sjostrom | | Pam Porter, DNR | | Cory Bruce, Mursau’s Office | Nancy Bozek, WWOA | |
| Representative Beth Meyers | William Van Lopik | | Mike Warnke, DNR | | Nels Hulse, MTE Wood | Randy Cooper, WWOA | |
| Representative Jeff Mursau | Michael Bolton | | Kirsten Held, DNR | | Tony Johnson, UW | Allan Braun, NRCS | |
| Henry Scheinebeck | Adena Rissman | | Sean Kennedy, DNR | | Richard Lindroth, UW | Beckie Gaskill, Lakeland Times | |
| James Hoppe | Buddy Huffaker | | Andy Stoltman, DNR | | Nicole Filizetti, LEAF | Dave Behrend | |
| James Kerkman | Rebekah Luedtke | |  | | Gena Abramson, Bad River |  | |
| **Next Meeting:** July 21-22, 2021 | | | | | | | |
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| **Agenda Item** | **Decisions** | **Assignments/Follow Up** |
| Council Business Updates |  |  |
| On April 15, the Council (CoF) letter with comments on the budget went to the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) and Tom spoke at the public hearing on April 21. The Council received a letter from the Urban Forestry Council expressing support for the Council letter to JFC. | | |
| **Agenda Item** | **Decisions** | **Assignments/Follow Up** |
| Silviculture Guidance Team (SGT): Work Plan  **Presenter:** Adena Rissman & Sustainable Forestry Committee |  | **SGT** - bring climate change recommendations to the Council at the July meeting |
| The Silviculture Guidance Team (SGT) reviewed the Silviculture Handbook and their recommendations will turn the handbook into a Forester’s Guide to Silviculture in Wisconsin. Additional information will be added to all sections - cover types prioritized for revision include fir spruce, white cedar, hemlock hardwood, and black walnut. Some revisions may go out for public comment, but not those that are just organizational changes (*e.g. moving of chapters to different areas of the website*). The only major revision is asking to add an EAB reference to the swamp hardwood section.  The Sustainable Forestry Committee (SFC) is considering if there is enough climate change information to add it as a handbook section or if this information is better served in a different document. SFC will bring their recommendations to the Council at the next meeting in July. | | |
| **Agenda Item** | **Decisions** | **Assignments/Follow Up** |
| DNR Report on State Lands Harvest Volumes (Act 166)  **Presenter:** Doug Brown, *DNR* |  | **Rebekah** - work with Doug Brown to craft a request letter and send it to Tom and Matt for initial review.    **Tom & Matt** - send the draft letter to CoF members for review and approval  **COF members** – review letter and send any edits to Tom & Matt |
| State statute requires that the DNR prepare an [annual report on state lands timber harvests](https://councilonforestry.wi.gov/Meetings/Timber%20Harvest%20%20Inventory%20Report%20-%20DNR%20State%20Lands%20CY19-20_Final.pdf) for the Council and state legislature. If the harvest exceeds or falls under the goals by 10%, the DNR must prepare a report containing the reasons for noncompliance and recommendations on how to ensure it will not occur again the next year.  Doug Brown, DNR County Forest Specialist, explained to CoF where the data for the state lands timber harvest report comes from, how the percentages are calculated, DNR efforts to ensure that it meets the goals, and the results of this year’s report.  CoF identified that the $3,000 cap on timber sales is old (since 1999) and no longer useful as the amount can hamstring sales. Upping the dollar amount could add flexibility and assist in selling smaller sales. The DNR has pushed for this change for several Legislative cycles but it has never been approved. Support for this idea from Forestry partners may help get it passed.   * Rebekah Luedtke will work with Doug Brown to craft a request letter and send it to Tom and Matt for initial review. * Tom and Matt will send the draft letter to CoF members for review and approval. * Once approved, Representative Meyers volunteered to send the letter to the Legislature and share it with colleagues. | | |
| **Agenda Item** | **Decisions** | **Assignments/Follow Up** |
| Regional Economic Diversification Summit (REDS): Listening Sessions Update |  | **Tom & Matt** – create a document giving more detail on the summit planning timeline and commitment needs for CoF volunteers.  **CoF members** - email Tom or Matt if you wish to volunteer for the summit planning team |
| The Regional Economic Diversification Summit (REDS) listening sessions had a lot of government and forestry partner support. Between both sessions, 275 people (*including speakers, CoF members, etc.*) from a variety of industry fields attended. There are links to session recordings on both the WEDC and CoF websites.  REDS is a process, not just an event. There are no hard start or stop dates, so work could continue for years. The strategic team is still in place and Tom meeting with WEDC weekly. Going forward:   * UW-Extension will perform a thematic analysis of listening session feedback, identify strengths/weaknesses, and list actionable item recommendations in a report that can be shared with CoF and other partners. * Action teams will look at possible leadership and federal funding (*action items must meet funding criteria*). Non-profit or universities will be asked to distribute the funds. * Timeline:   + UW-Extension will come to the July CoF meeting to discuss the initial data they collected from the REDS listening sessions.     - They hope to have a draft of the full report available for review in September.   + Would like to have a winter REDS summit – CoF will be responsible for planning the summit and financing a portion of it.     - Tom and Matt will create a document giving more detail on the summit planning timeline and commitment needs for CoF volunteers.     - CoF members should email Tom or Matt if they wish to volunteer for the summit planning team. | | |
| **Agenda Item** | **Decisions** | **Assignments/Follow Up** |
| Council Biennial Report  **Presenter:** Tom Hittle, Matt Dallman, & Rebecca Diebel | CoF unanimously approved the biennial report with the addition of FAP language as decided by Tom, Matt, and Rebecca (*the report will not come back to CoF for review after edits*). | **Tom, Matt, and Rebecca** – add Forest Action Plan (FAP) language to the biennial report |
| The [Council on Forestry Biennial Report](https://councilonforestry.wi.gov/Meetings/CoF_BiennialReport_2019-2020_v5.pdf) was created by Tom Hittle, Matt Dallman, and Rebecca Diebel (*with help from DNR staff)*. Requested edits from the last CoF meeting were made and the team is asking CoF to approve this draft as final. Once approved, Rebecca will send it to the appropriate Legislative bodies.  CoF identified that there was no mention of the Forest Action Plan (FAP) in the report and requested that the team add it to the report in the Council accomplishments section.  Jordan Skiff motioned to approve the biennial report with the addition of FAP language as decided by Tom, Matt, and Rebecca (*the report will not come back to CoF for review after edits*). The motion was seconded by Buddy Huffaker and passed with unanimous approval. | | |
| **Agenda Item** | **Decisions** | **Assignments/Follow Up** |
| Profile Committee Update on Communications  **Presenter:** Profile Committee |  | **Profile Committee** – create a full list of tactics and bring it to the July CoF meeting for prioritization  **CoF Members** – email ideas about other tactics that could be used to Jim Kerkman |
| The Profile Committee presented the guiding document they created that outlines their goals and some tactics they could use to achieve those goals. The committee will create a full list of tactics and bring it to the July CoF meeting for prioritization. If CoF members have ideas about other tactics that could be used, they should email them to Jim Kerkman who will share them will the Profile Committee. | | |
| **Agenda Item** | **Decisions** | **Assignments/Follow Up** |
| State Budget Process Update  **Presenter:** Heather Berklund |  |  |
| Heather Berklund updated CoF on the state budget process timeline:   * September 2020 - DNR reauthorization of stewardship * Governor Evers’ budget was released in February 2021 * The Joint Finance Committee (JFC) invited the DNR to provide testimony on April 6 & 7, 2021 * Public hearings on the budget occurred mid-to-late April 2021 * JFC took their first votes on May 7, 2021 * Legislative fiscal papers are happening now and the DNR is not currently scheduled for additional JFC deliberations * Hopefully, a final budget will be approved in the next few months | | |
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| 1 Trillion Trees Pledge  **Presenter:** Carmen Hardin, *DNR* |  |  |
| Carmen Hardin gave a presentation to CoF on the [State of Wisconsin’s Trillion Trees Pledge](https://us.1t.org/pledge/state-of-wisconsin-forest-conservation-and-tree-planting-pledge/) that included information about the history of the initiative, what is being proposed as a pledge, Wisconsin’s involvement, and timeline. | | |
| **Agenda Item** | **Decisions** | **Assignments/Follow Up** |
| Legislative Updates  **Presenter:** Representative Mursau, Senator Bewley, & Representative Meyers |  |  |
| Currently working on the state budget:   * ***Mursau***: Big talking point is stewardship funding and hoping that land for sale in Northern Wisconsin will have conservation easements to keep the wood in the state. * ***Bewley***: Trying to get a good budget and help Wisconsin’s paper mills. * ***Meyers***: Citizens must advocate to their representatives and the JFC for programs that are important to them. | | |
| **Agenda Item** | **Decisions** | **Assignments/Follow Up** |
| State Forester Updates  **Presenter:** Heather Berklund |  |  |
| Heather Berklund, Chief State Forester, gave CoF updates on COVID & Forestry operations, forest industry, stakeholder input on Forest Tax Law Handbook, seedling distribution, and fire.    Paul Strong, Forest Supervisor of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, had to leave early so he could not give his report in person, but Tom will email it to the CoF members after the meeting. | | |