**COUNCIL ON FORESTRY MEETING**

**Date:** 9/17/20

**Location:** Zoom

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| **Council Members:** | | **Guests:** | | |
| Tom Hittle, *Chair* | Kenneth Price | R.J. Wickham - ***Presenter*** | Cory Bruce | Heather Poltrock |
| Matt Dallman, *Vice Chair* | Paul Strong | Kelliann Blazek - ***Presenter*** | Sean Kennedy, *DNR* | Randy Cooper |
| Mike Warnke, *sub* *Chief State Forester* | Jordan Skiff | David Falk – ***Presenter*** | Gretchen Marshall | Jeff Nyquist |
| Senator Janet Bewley | Jason Sjostrom | Faye Bokelman, *DNR* | Mitch Ohly |  |
| Senator | William Van Lopik | Rebecca Diebel, *DNR* | Nancy Bozek |  |
| Representative Beth Meyers | Gary Halpin | Tim Gary, *DNR* | Richard Wedepohl |  |
| Representative Jeff Mursau | Michael Bolton | Heather Berklund, *DNR* | Tim Eisele |  |
| Henry Scheinebeck | Adena Rissman | Jim Warren, *DNR* | Nels Huse |  |
| James Hoppe | Buddy Huffaker |  |  |  |
| James Kerkman | Rebekah Luedtke | **Next Meeting:** November 18, 2020 | | |
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| **Agenda Item** | **Decisions** | **Assignments/Follow Up** |
| MFL Risk Assessment Discussion and Q&A    **Presenter:** R.J. Wickham (*DNR)*, Huffaker, Price |  |  |
| R.J. Wickham, DNR Tax Law Section Chief, gave a presentation to the Council on NR46.18 (9) – identified risk in Managed Forest Law (MFL) and answered member questions.  Council members Ken Price (*Valley View Forestry*) and Buddy Huffaker (*Aldo Leopold Foundation*) spoke to the Council on the concerns related to identified risk in MFL. | | |
| **Agenda Item** | **Decisions** | **Assignments/Follow Up** |
| WEDC Update on Forestry and Rural Prosperity Work  **Presenter:** Kelliann Blazek (*Office of Rural Prosperity, WEDC*) & David Falk (*ND Paper)* |  |  |
| Kelliann Blazek of WEDC’s Office of Rural Prosperity gave a presentation to the Council on the creation of the Governor’s Blue Ribbon Commission on Rural Prosperity (BRCRP) and the current work being done by the Commission. She then asked the questions BRCRP is using when interviewing stakeholders to the Council in order to collect their feedback on the challenges, opportunities, and future of rural Wisconsin. | | |
| **Agenda Item** | **Decisions** | **Assignments/Follow Up** |
| Committee Updates:   * Transportation – *Schienebeck* * Profile – *Kerkman/Van Lopik* * Funding – *Hoppe* * Utilization – *Skiff* * Sound Forestry & Policy – *Rissman* |  |  |
| * **Transportation Committee** – *Schienebeck*   The Transportation Committee did not meet since the last Council meeting. CN Rail has resumed some service to Park Falls.   * **Profile Committee** – *Kerkman/Van Lopik*   The Profile Committee had a discussion with Menominee Tribal Enterprise on how to revitalize Earth Day and met with several legislators. The committee will bring more information about these items to the Council at an upcoming meeting.  State statute requires that the Council prepare a biennial report on the status of the state’s forest resources and forestry industry and submit it to the Legislature. The DNR feels that the existing statute is too restrictive, creating the report requires a large amount of staff time, and much of the information is available in the DNR’s 10-year forest action plan that has a five-year update schedule. The DNR would like to adjust the language of the statute to allow more flexibility and focus on contemporary issues.  The Council could assist this goal by drafting a letter of support to the DNR Secretary. The Council can work with a legislator sponsor the revised legislation.  The Council unanimously approved the changes recommended by the committee. Diebel and Hittle will investigate if there are other changes that should be made and report to the Profile Committee. The committee will then draft a support letter to the DNR and bring it to the November Council meeting for approval. The Profile Committee will also work with Representative Mursau’s office to bring the changes to the Legislature at their January session.     * **Funding Committee** – *Hoppe/Dallman*   The Funding Committee would like to send a letter to the Governor supporting the maintenance of current funding levels for Wisconsin’s forestry programs and to ask for additional spending authority for the Council on Forestry priorities in the 2021-2023 State Budget. The committee will work with Senator Bewley to draft the letter and will bring it to the November Council meeting for approval.   * **Utilization Committee** – *Skiff*   The Utilization Committee had a conference call with DNR’s Forest Products Team and is drafting recommendations for Council including regional markets for raw materials and pulpwood, climate change, what role the Council could play in driving research and promoting wood use in construction. The Committee is also looking for a guest speaker on one or more of these topics to present to the Council at the November meeting.   * **Sound Forestry & Policy Committee** – *Rissman*   The Sound Forestry and Policy Committee met and drafted a letter to urge Governor Evers and the Blue Ribbon Commission on Rural Prosperity to make forests, and the forest economies and rural communities they support, a prominent part of their report. The letter contains information on how forestry is linked to rural prosperity, identifies forestry issues in the state, and gives recommendations on how to enhance rural economies.  The Council reviewed the letter, made edits, and approved the letter with the edits discussed at the meeting. The Council also agreed that Tom or Matt could approve any final edits to the letter without Council input. | | |
| **Agenda Item** | **Decisions** | **Assignments/Follow Up** |
| Updates from:   * Legislators * State Forester – *Mike Warnke* * CNNF - *Strong* |  |  |
| * **Legislators:** Representative Mursau’s office will work with the Council’s Profile Committee to bring the suggested changes to the biennial report to the Legislature at their January session. * **State Forester:** Mike Warnke, DNR Forestry Services Deputy Administrator, updated Council on the status of operations in the Forestry Division:      * **CNNF:** Paul Strong gave the Council an update on the status of operations at the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (*see report*): | | |