

## Wisconsin Council on Forestry: Tuesday, November 19, 2024

*Rhineland DNR Service Center, Conference Room 1, 107 Sutliff Ave, Rhineland, WI  
and via Zoom – [Register for the Zoom meeting here](#)*

<b>Council Members</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tom Hittle, <i>Chair</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Henry Schienebeck	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> William Van Lopik
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Matt Dallman, <i>Vice Chair</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Hoppe	<input type="checkbox"/> Brad Dorff
<input type="checkbox"/> Heather Berklund, <i>Chief State Forester</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> James Kerkman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adena Rissman
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Senator Romaine Quinn	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Juris Repsa	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buddy Huffaker
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Senator Jeff Smith	<input type="checkbox"/> Jenn Youngblood	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rebekah Luedtke
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Representative Katrina Shankland	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jordan Skiff	<input type="checkbox"/> OPEN-Builders
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Representative Jeff Mursau	<input type="checkbox"/> Erik Rantala	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Warren on behalf of Heather Berklund
<b>Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 28, 2025</b>		

## Agenda

<b>Tuesday, Nov. 19</b>	<b>Notes: Decisions, Action Items, Assignments</b>
<b>9:00 AM</b> Welcome & Member Introductions (Chair Hittle) 20 min	
<b>9:20 AM</b> Chair Update 10 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2025 meeting dates were circulated to Council members and are posted online.</li> <li>• Hittle spoke at a State Forest Working Group last week to update on what the Council is working on and provide a perspective on the value of the state forests among other things.</li> <li>• Ron Eckstein, with GreenFire, provided update on a team that has been put together to develop a report on issues facing forestry. The report is planned to be released within the next month or so and will be sent to Council members.</li> <li>• Trees for tomorrow recently recognized GLTPA and Henry Schienebeck's commitment to stewardship and sustainable resource management across the region (<a href="https://treesfortomorrow.com/Media/">https://treesfortomorrow.com/Media/</a>).</li> <li>• Mill tours as part of Forest Products Week, Bill Van Lopik went to the tour on Menominee. <a href="https://fox11online.com/news/local/menominee-tribal-enterprises-hosts-forest-products-tour-in-neopit#">https://fox11online.com/news/local/menominee-tribal-enterprises-hosts-forest-products-tour-in-neopit#</a></li> </ul>

<p><b>9:30 AM</b> Open Forum for Council Members 30 min</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jim Kerkman: Website updates; looking to format the additional resources page; some error is occurring with the video recording – DNR is working on this. Next website update will be in December.</li> <li>• Make sure you complete the training requirements if you have not yet. Email the DOA website address in the training email if you have issues.</li> <li>• Tom Hittle: Red Pine and Oak resources in WI; disproportionate distribution of red pine, oak, and red pine plantations and the impact on markets. Wanting to get feedback from the Council if this is a topic that the Council wants to pursue. After discussion, this is a fit for the Council and it warrants further discussion. Topics that came up in the discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Issue that other states are facing as well (Lake States among others)</li> <li>▪ Large cost implications</li> <li>▪ Lack of capacity, especially in site prep</li> <li>▪ Market concerns</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Rebekah Luedtke and Tom Hittle to develop next steps. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adena Rissman, Shawn Brantmeier have volunteered; DNR available as well</li> <li>▪ Deliverable is likely a position paper from the Council that provides the background (what the issue is and why its an issue) and recommendations on potential solutions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>10:00 AM</b> State Forest Action Plan Report Out (Vice Chair Dallman)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Action Item: Approve Forest Health Position Statement (Adena Rissman);</i></li> <li>• <i>Action Item: Approve Transportation Letter (Henry Schienebeck);</i></li> <li>• Open discussion</li> </ul> <p>30 min</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Profile Committee has posted articles on the website.</li> <li>• Forest Health Position Paper (Adena) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Would be good to have another document that has references that support the numbers included in the position statement.</li> <li>○ Reconcile timber industry contribution number with the recent Forest Product Industry Economic Contribution fact sheet from the DNR; Carmen Hardin will work with Adena to make sure we are using the right number and have the correct references.</li> <li>○ Put this under a “Forest Health Initiative” on the website.</li> <li>○ Motion to accept the position paper as the final product. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rebekah Luedtke motioned</li> <li>▪ James Kerman seconded motion</li> <li>▪ Motion Passed</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Next Steps: finalize document, post online</li> <li>○ Options for dissemination: include in upcoming budget conversations with legislators, email legis all distribution list, set up one on ones with new legislators, doing a presentation for all legislators on a lobby day, 3-minute video message, stakeholders from the Council can hand it out at relevant avenues.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Transportation Letter (Henry) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Motion to accept this letter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Jim Hoppe motioned</li> <li>▪ Rebekah Luedtke seconded motion</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Motion Passed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Next steps: will be distributed to relevant individuals</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Important to keep making the connection between forest management, recreation and healthy forests</li> <li>○ Shortage of housing is a big issue for legislators</li> <li>○ Put together list on the importance of forests from different angles that can be used to supplement talking points and other documents; Matt Dallman will start a document for January; #forestproud may be a good resource (SAF); connect back to SFAP where possible</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>10:30 AM</b> Dispute Resolution Process (R.J. Wickham, DNR Tax Law Section Chief; Sound Forestry Committee Members) <del>Action Item: Approve Council position on proposal</del> 30 min</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound Forest and Policy Committee met with DNR to talk about proposal to modify the DRP. Discussion and feedback from the committee focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When a third-party consultant is involved</li> <li>○ Landowner role in the process</li> <li>○ Who pays for the third-party consultant</li> </ul> </li> <li>• DNR is working on incorporating this feedback and modifying the proposal ahead of the 21-day process.</li> <li>• The proposal will go to a 21-day input period early in 2025. Council members can weigh in individually at that time.</li> <li>• Additional question to consider: Will the Council have any role going forward? Currently the Council receives annual reports on DRP outcomes. Henry Schienebeck voiced concern that the council would not be connected in the current modified proposal.</li> <li>• Council is available to provide additional input to the DNR if they seek additional input.</li> <li>• Council requests presentation on final proposal prior to or during the 21-day input period, either at committee meeting or full Council.</li> </ul>
<p><b>11:00 AM Break, 15 min</b></p>	
<p><b>11:15 AM</b> Follow-up on September Easement Discussion (Ron Gropp, DNR Private Forestry and Conservation Easement Specialist) 30 min</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PowerPoint included on the Meeting Materials web page</li> <li>• In WI, typically we consider larger landscape at 1,000 acres, no standard rules</li> <li>• WPFAC is engaged when applications are received; generally, an appointed sub committee ranks projects and brings back to full committee for consideration</li> <li>• WPFAC generally meets twice per year, but can meet more if needed</li> <li>• WPFAC appointments are made by the State Forester</li> </ul>
<p><b>11:45 AM</b> State Budget Process Update (Maggie Hutter, DNR Budget Director) 15 min</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PowerPoint included on the Meeting Materials web page</li> </ul>

<b>12:00 PM Lunch, 45 min</b>	
<b>12:45 PM</b> Overview of Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program (Jim Lemke, Real Estate Operations Chief) 30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warren Knowles-Gaylord Nelson Stewardship Program – Legislative Fiscal Bureau Informational Paper 66:  (<a href="https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/misc/lfb/informational_papers/january_2023/0066_warren_knowles_gaylord_nelson_stewardship_program_informational_paper_66.pdf">https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/misc/lfb/informational_papers/january_2023/0066_warren_knowles_gaylord_nelson_stewardship_program_informational_paper_66.pdf</a>)</li> </ul>
<b>1:15 PM</b> Council Position Related to Knowles-Nelson Program (Chair Hittle) <i>Action Item: Determine Council position</i> 30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looking at language within the budget doc as proposed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Comments around a potential for the Council to propose the governor initiating another gubernatorial blue-ribbon commission to think about long term solutions.</li> <li>○ Will/can we revisit after the Governor’s budget comes out (prior to the letter going to legislators)</li> <li>○ General consensus around including generic statement of support for the KN program to keep forests as forests (similar to what the Council had in their 2019 letter) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Approval to be taken up with budget letter in next agenda topic</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>1:45 PM</b> Council Priorities for the State Budget (Jim Hoppe and Vice Chair Dallman) <i>Action Item: Approve Council Budget Letter/Priorities</i> 30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motion to approve budget letter subject to confirming dollar amounts and filling in the gaps in descriptions as noted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Jim Kerkman motioned</li> <li>○ Rebekah Luedtke seconded the motion</li> <li>○ Motion passed?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Amend motion to include rewording of Knowles-Nelson language to the more generic statement used in 2019 and deletion of second two bullets in the forest health section. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Motion accepted</li> </ul> </li> <li>• State forester abstains from vote</li> </ul>
<b>2:15 PM Break, 15 min</b>	
<b>2:30</b> Industry Initiative Update (Chair Hittle) <i>Action Item: Approve Request Letter and Whitepaper</i> 30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern that the figure around paper mill jobs in the challenges document paint the picture more negative than it really is, paint the picture more (paper mills), innovation – use the figure that is closer to 42% (2011-2024)</li> <li>• Motion to approve the letter and whitepaper, subject to changing the figure around paper mill jobs to the 2011-2024 figures and the potential addition of Nicolet Hardwoods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Motion to approve – James Kerkman</li> <li>○ Motion to Second William Van Lopik</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>3:00 PM</b> Legislative Updates 15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sen Smith’s office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Budget is #1 priority</li> <li>○ Dems picked up a few seats in the state senate</li> <li>○ Will have a better sense of priorities in the new legislative year</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Interest in helping with a lobby or informational day for legislators</li> <li>● Rep Shankland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Retiring this year</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>3:15 PM</b>  State Forester Updates  National Forest Updates  30 min</p>	<p>Chief State Forester Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Division is currently at a 7.1% vacancy rate; required to maintain at least a 5% vacancy rate</li> <li>● Julie Church has left the Executive Staff Assistant and moved over to the Forest Tax Law Operations Specialist</li> <li>● Jerry Crow (NC Tax Law Team Leader) on extended leave and retiring in June.</li> <li>● BMP monitoring wrapping up - 2 of 8 groups left to complete monitoring. Deadline is Thanksgiving. Federal and Large Landowner groups. Initial data looks good, no real issues.</li> <li>● Grants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wood innovation – FS Wood Innovations Grants (due 12/11), Community Wood Grants (due 12/18), and Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance Grants (due 12/18) are currently open. FPS staff are available to help applicants with the application process and application materials.</li> <li>○ IRA sub-grant– Jay and UF Coordinators have completed in-person grant origination meetings with all 13 grantees. Virtual IRA Grantees Networking Meeting held on November 12 where grantees discussed their projects and provided mutual support as they worked on their initiatives. Project summaries for all thirteen projects can be found on our <a href="#">IRA Grant webpage</a> which includes an interactive map. UF IRA Grant Coordinator (Dampier) accepted into the Forestry Leadership Development Program.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Seedling orders are open and have over 1,000 orders already entered with over 2.5 million seedlings spoken for. We still have good quantities of red pine, jack pine, and oak species available. Fourth Grader Arbor Day free seedling orders are also now open. Seedling sales are progressing nicely, although a little behind last year’s pace. This is primarily due to a handful of large projected orders not coming through this year due to failure to get site prep done. Lack of site prep options continues to be a bottleneck for large scale conifer re-plant sites.</li> <li>● 2025 Urban Forestry Grant application deadline was Oct. 1, 2024, and 67 applications, totaling over \$1 million in funding requests were received. In total, \$629,680 is available in grant funding for 2025, allowing 43 grants to be awarded, covering 56% of the dollars requested. Cities, villages, towns, counties, tribes and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations in or conducting their project in WI are eligible to apply for an Urban Forestry Grant. Grants are awarded to projects that align with state and national goals for increasing the urban forest canopy and the benefits it provides. Grants are in effect from Jan. 1, 2025 through Dec. 31, 2025.</li> <li>● 228 fires for 1,058 Acres from sept 12-nov 13. Roughly a <b>250% increase</b> over the 5 yr average. Structures: 103 Saved, 20 Lost. Suppression Cost: \$107,715.</li> <li>● Division of Forestry mobilized DNR employees on 74 out-of-state assignments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 4 Assignments were in support of GLFFC Partners, MB, MN, MI</li> <li>○ 38 DoF employees were mobilized as Trainees.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- DoF continuing work on the Fire Program Review.
- Approximately 1,541 MFL applications were approved for 2025 enrollment. Applications to be effective January 1, 2025.

**3:45 PM  
ADJOURN**