

Wisconsin Council on Forestry Research Subcommittee
Draft Research Direction
For Review at May 8, 2019 Council on Forestry Meeting

Wisconsin Council on Forestry (COF) Research Subcommittee met on March 29, 2019 in Rhinelander. Tom Hittle, Henry Schienebeck, Jane Severt and Jordan Skiff participated in the meeting. The subcommittee reviewed Council priorities developed at the October 23, 2018 meeting, COF website contents, and 2019-2021 Wisconsin DNR Division of Forestry (DOF) Research Agenda.

1) Rutting - When developing priorities, COF requested DOF include rutting as a research priority. We respectfully request DOF Research Agenda item j. under Statement I. (page 10 of DOF Research Agenda) be considered a priority in research, possibly with broader objectives and additional considerations. Topics should include information balancing costs and risks; risk of ecological impacts versus costs of operational constraints, and overall impacts on wood supply chain.

2) Weight Restrictions – When developing priorities, COF identified the need to share information regarding transportation policy impacts on forest industry with local communities, town boards, foresters, and others. This information could be shared in a variety of ways, including posting on COF website. Subcommittee suggests having interested members work together on developing credible information. Henry offered to participate, it was suggested Wisconsin Department of Transportation representatives, Jim Hoppe and Representative Mursau may also be interested in assisting.

3) Marketing/Promoting the Use of Wood – The subcommittee feels DOF Research Agenda item h. under statement D. (paged 4 of DOF Research Agenda) compliments COF priority to host a summit to promote wood products with an audience focus of architects, builders, home supply outlets, etc. We respectfully request this item becomes a priority joint project of DOF and COF.

4) Water – Wisconsin Governor and Wisconsin Legislature have placed a high priority on clean water. Is there adequate research regarding the important contributions from forests (both rural and urban) in providing clean water? Research efforts are currently underway in Fond du Lac. Item b. under Statement B., item c. under Statement I. and Item f. under Statement K. in DOF Research Agenda all relate to this topic. How can we motivate people to care about this? Focus on public health benefits or storm water credits? Is there sufficient research to emphasize water quality dependence on trees and the ties to healthy managed forests? Does our Wisconsin Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality monitoring provide enough support?

5) Regeneration – Regeneration of forests is essential. Items a. and b. under Statement A. in DOF Research Agenda lead to a possible additional research topic; are operational restraints affecting successful regeneration of certain tree species? We respectfully request this be considered as a priority research topic under forest regeneration.

COF Research Subcommittee defined the above as “action” items during our discussion. In addition, there were important topics identified as “informational” items.

1) Biochar – Under “Utilization of wood products and increased marketing” in Council priorities, obtaining more information on biochar was identified as a priority. COF should continue to seek out additional information on biochar.

2) Forest Carbon Markets – COF should seek out credible, up-to-date information regarding forest carbon markets and possibly provide the information to Wisconsin’s forestry community in a variety of ways, including providing information on COF website.

3) Carbon Offsets – Is there a role for COF in providing information regarding the role of forests (both rural and urban) for providing carbon offsets?

Recommendations for updating COF website

1) Under Initiatives – Remove Forest Sustainability Framework

Remove Tax Law Dispute Resolution Process

Replace these with new updated initiatives based on identification of current priorities.