

Council on Forestry Meeting
Trees for Tomorrow
519 East Sheridan Street, Eagle River, Wisconsin
May 21, 2014

Council Members Present: Henry Schienebeck (Council Chair), Jane Severt (Council Vice-Chair), Paul DeLong, Tom Hittle, Jim Kerkman, Kim Quast, Rep. Jeff Mursau, Sen. Tom Tiffany, Virgil Waugh, Paul Strong, Bruce Allison, Matt Dallman, and Mark Rickenbach

Council Members Absent: Richard Wedepohl, Rep. Fred Clark, Troy Brown, and Jim Hoppe

Guests Present: Libby Dorn, Trees for Tomorrow; Marta Nelson, WISCORC; Sarah Gilbert, LEAF Program; Allison Hellman, WDNR; Camille Solberg, Sen. Ron Johnson's Office; Nancy Bozek representing WWOA for Richard Wedepohl; Dennis Schoeneck, master logger & land owner; Fred Souba, Provision Forestry; and Tia Nelson, Executive Secretary, BCPL

Chair Schienebeck called the meeting to order at 9:10 am with introductions of Council members and guests present.

Meeting Minutes

Trees for Tomorrow introduction – Libby Dorn, TFT Executive Director
Originally located in Merrill, Wisconsin and relocated to its current Eagle River location in the 1960's, TFT celebrates its 70th anniversary this year.

TFT is a non-profit natural resources specialty school for middle and high school aged children using a combination of field and classroom studies to teach sustainable practices as well as demonstrate the benefits of contemporary resource management. The TFT mission is to deliver balanced, objective information on the management and use of trees, forests, and other natural resources.

<http://www.treesfortomorrow.com/>

Economic Summit – Allison Hellman
Since the last Council meeting a survey was sent out to individuals and organizations interested and involved in Wisconsin forestry to determine which of the nine goals should be considered Council priorities. Allison gave a summary of those survey results in addition to a list of individuals who volunteered to participate on various goal committees.

The sub-committee presented their recommendations to the Council based on the survey feedback. No action plan for number two however continue to report out on what Council is doing on each priority

DECISION: Paul DeLong made a motion to adopt the sub-committee's recommendation of developing goal committees for each goal statement selected (see list below). The goal committees will lead the action plan development process for the four suggested goal statements. In addition, the Council identified the goal to "Increase management of and increase timber production within Wisconsin's Federal Forests consistent with sustainable forestry practices" as a high priority issue. Since there are currently a number of parties already working on this issue, Council Chair Henry Schienebeck will convene those parties to discuss current efforts and determine if there is an opportunity to further the Council's participation in hopes of achieving this goal. However an action plan will not be developed for this goal. The motion was seconded by Mark Rickenbach. Motion approved.

Goal 1: Increase the workforce/proficiency of technical and skilled workers (i.e. manufacturing and timber producers) which support the forest industry as demand deems appropriate.

Council on Forestry Meeting
Trees for Tomorrow
519 East Sheridan Street, Eagle River, Wisconsin
May 21, 2014

- Goal 5: Improve management of and increase timber production within private forests consistent with sustainable forestry practices
- Goal 6: Grow Wisconsin's forest products markets
- Goal 8: Increase public understanding of the benefits of sustainable forest management

The following leads were identified for each of the Goal Committees:

- Goal 1: Workforce – Mark Rickenbach (lead), Bruce Allison, Virgil Waugh and Kim Quast on committee
- Goal 2: Federal Forest Mgmt. – Henry Schienebeck (lead)
- Goal 5: Private Forest Mgmt. – Kim Quast (lead), Mark Rickenbach, and Nancy Bozek on committee
- Goal 6: Markets – Troy Brown (lead), Bruce Allison, Scott Bowe possible committee suggestion
- Goal 8: Public Understanding – Jane Severt (lead), Dennis Schoeneck, and Matt Dallman on committee

Assignment(s):

- Allison will prepare an email to go out Wednesday, May 28 to all attendees informing them of the decision asking for committee participants and also identify items we are not able to address in case they would like to take them on. Also ask that they get back to us if they chose to do so. We would be happy to get the word out.
- Committees should be prepared to provide the Council with action plans at the September 17-18th meeting

WISCORC –

Marta Nelson

The closed Domtar Paper Mill in the village of Port Edwards was purchased in 2013 with an economic restructuring plan. Phase I of the business plan is projected to open in 2016. The proposed name of the facility is The Wisconsin Institute for Sustainable Cellulosic Operations, Research and Commercialization (WISCORC). Marta Nelson, Associate Planner of Vandewalle & Associates, Inc. stated the WISCORC Center will bring together various academics, industry representatives, and entrepreneurs in a dynamic, problem-solving environment to provide direct assistance to existing pulp, paper, feed, and food processing industries. In addition, WISCORC will enhance the biomass supply chain and workforce and accelerate and attract innovative biomass entrepreneurs and businesses.

Next steps for WISCORC project

- Feasibility study (May – August 2014)
- Focus groups (June 2014)
- Seeking input & Support
- Feasibility Study (End of June 2014)
- Finalize Business Plan (July – August 2014)

Assignment(s):

- Terrisa will send Marta's contact information out to the Council

Legislative Updates

Sen. Tom Tiffany – Sen. Tiffany is currently putting together 2015 priorities. One item the Senator plans to address is culverts and the excessive costs associated with replacement. He would like to see that completed without permits which would save time and tax payer's money. He continues to hear about

Council on Forestry Meeting
Trees for Tomorrow
519 East Sheridan Street, Eagle River, Wisconsin
May 21, 2014

Federal policies (waters of US, wood stoves, etc.) being the number one problem with natural resources at this point. He is interested in hearing other suggestions.

Rep. Jeff Mursau – Work on Forestry issues continues with a focus on MFL. He still hopes to pass a modified MFL bill next session. Rep. Mursau agrees with Senator Tiffany regarding the culvert issue and the need for road repairs in general as in many cases roads are becoming impassable and unsafe to travel.

Next legislative session begins January 2015

Forest Practices Study – Fred Souba

Fred Souba presented to the Council the RFP topics, descriptions, estimated time frames and budgets for the first round of research requests in Wisconsin Forest Practices Study. Received proposals were reviewed by the Council's Forest Practice's Subcommittee at a May 9 meeting in Stevens Point.

Topic #1: Availability of wood fiber now and in the future...impacts of ownership?

Next Steps: Fred and Ben to have discussions with the principal investigator on clarifying points raised by the subcommittee in their review of the proposal they selected as priority one.

Topic #2: Economic and ecological consequences (cost/benefits) of forestry policies, regulations and guidelines?

Next Steps: Fred and Ben will draft a revised request for this topic based on subcommittee discussions for their review with the intent of resending an RFP for this topic.

Topic #3: Competitiveness of forest-based manufacturing in Wisconsin?

Next Steps: Fred and Ben to have discussions with the principal investigators on clarifying points raised by the subcommittee in their review of the proposals.

Assignment(s):

- Fred and Ben will continue to move forward with work on the proposals. Once Jane and Henry approve them, Fred will send the titles and objectives to the Council via email for endorsement.

State Forester's Report – Paul DeLong

Northern long-eared bat (NLEB) – The NLEB is scheduled to be added to the Federal List of endangered and threatened species this fall. Draft guidelines have been issued that would affect forest management activities and raise major concerns regarding impact. This is of particular concern because the threat to NLEB is unrelated to forest management. It is estimated that more than 30 states could potentially be impacted. A meeting is scheduled for May 22, 2014, between State Directors and Regional Wildlife Service to discuss.

Assignment(s):

- Henry will work with Paul to draft a letter to USFWS from the Council.

NF insect & disease – Conference call with Washington took place Monday, May 20, 2014, and Governor Walker should receive a letter today stating all 21 areas submitted received designation. There were 35 governors that submitted requests for designation and all but seven were approved as requested, the others are begin modified in some way. The agency set up a website for the submissions, maps, and letters. The next step will be the identification of projects to be pursued under this authority.

Council on Forestry Meeting
Trees for Tomorrow
519 East Sheridan Street, Eagle River, Wisconsin
May 21, 2014

Budget Status – FY15/17 is still being developed internally at this point. The opportunity exists to make suggestions to the Governor about investments important for forestry in Wisconsin. Secretary Stepp will make recommendations to the Natural Resources Board in September.

Biomass Harvest Guidelines – Currently, the Biomass Harvesting Guidelines (BHG) are out for public comment and the field manual is under review by a subcommittee of the BHG Advisory Committee. The question was raised if it was better to hold off updating the manual until the soils work is completed. The Council should have received guidance through Govdelivery.

Wood Turtle – Concerns exist regarding distance guidelines and how they impact timber harvesting. Work is being done to get a draft scoping document for an incidental take permit for forest management, with the goal to have it in place before next season.

Marketing Specialist – Collin Buntrock, Anna Healy, and Sabina Dhungana recently filled three of DNR's four Forest Products Services Specialist positions. Paul recently met with them and they will be out in the field meeting partners this summer. Scott Lyons has been hired and will fill the fourth position at the end of June.

Future Agenda Items

Next Meeting – September 17-18, 2014

- Dennis's Tree Farm/Domtar – GLTPA for meeting (*tentative*)

Adjourned 2:21 PM

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Terrisa Mulder, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources