

**Forest Management Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
December 07, 2005
Michigan United Conservation Clubs Conference Room
2101 Wood St., Lansing**

Attendees:

FMAC Members: Steven Arwood, William (Bill) Bobier, Lynne Boyd, William (Bill) Cook, Leland Crawford, Thomas Dunn, Susan Holben, Mark Janke, Desmond Jones, Daniel Keathley, Frank Ruswick, Warren Suchovsky, Sam Washington, Gordon Wenk, Anne Woiwode, Leanne Marten (committee advisor), Kerry Gray (staff support).

Joel Blohm, John Fowler, Margaret (Peg) Gale, William (Bill) Manson were absent.

Other Attendees: Katie Armstrong (USFS), George Berghorn (Michigan Forest Products Council), Cara Boucher (MDNR), Tim Brown (Delta Institute), Erin McDonough (MUCC), David Wright (Michigan Forest Association)

Welcome

Lynne Boyd welcomed FMAC members and guests.

Lynne has received communications from groups that are interested in serving on the FMAC. She said the FMAC can discuss additions to the current Committee and if interests are not represented they can invite additional groups to join.

Agenda was reviewed. Sam Washington suggested that "New Business" be added as a permanent agenda item.

Meeting Summary

Sam Washington motioned to approve October 17, 2005 FMAC meeting summary. Steven Arwood seconded.

Right to Forest Act

Cara Boucher from the Forest, Mineral and Fire Management Division of the DNR provided an overview of the Right to Forest Act. In summary, nuisance lawsuits could not be brought against a forestry operation that is conforming to generally accepted forest management practices (GAFMPs) or sustainable forestry practices. GAFMPs and sustainable forestry practices are those accepted and approved by the Natural Resource Commission (NRC). These standards would apply to both public (State and Federal) and private lands. Currently there are not NRC approved GAFMPs or sustainable forestry practices.

The role of the FMAC is to make recommendations on GAFMPs and sustainable forestry practices to the NRC, for their approval and review.

There are examples of other State's GAFMPs and sustainable forestry practices under the tab "Examples" in the committee members' binders.

A discussion developed on the background/reasons of the Right to Forest Act, understanding of the Act, creation of GAFMPs and sustainable forestry practices (i.e. how other states' and agencies have created them), DNR Forest Certification and development of standards and the methods the FMAC should use to create GAFMPs and sustainable forestry practices.

- Gordon Wenk provided committee members with copies of the Michigan Commission of Agriculture's approved agricultural GAFMPs. He described the process by which the agricultural GAFMPs were created.
- Warren Suchovsky discussed issues that he has encountered auditing loggers in three states. He identified several critical areas: lack of forest management plans (or plans that are too complex for the landowner), lack of harvest plans and need for technical engineering assistance. He thinks these items should be addressed in GAFMPs and sustainable forestry practices.
- Bill Bobier suggested a method to begin developing GAFMPs and sustainable forestry practices is to divide up practices into particular topics. Anne Woiwode suggested using the topics listed under #4 in the Right to Forest statute as a starting point in creating the components.
 - From the Right to Forest Act:
 - “(4) As used in this section, a public or private nuisance includes, but is not limited to, allegations of nuisance based on any of the following:*
 - (a) Visual changes due to the removal of vegetation or timber.*
 - (b) Noise from forestry equipment used in normal, generally accepted forest management practices.*
 - (c) Removal of vegetation or timber on a forest adjoining the property of another landowner.*
 - (d) The use of chemicals normally utilized in forestry operation, and applied under generally accepted forestry management practices.”*
- Thomas Dunn inquired how the State's certification efforts applied to FMAC creating GAFMPs. Cara Boucher described the third party certification program as an environmental management system but it does not address/create GAFMPs. Lynne Boyd said some information gathered through the certification process may be useful in developing GAFMPs and sustainable forestry practices but they would not be an exact fit.
- The NRC reviews GAFMPs and sustainable forestry practices annually, the next review will be April 2006.
- Four working groups* were created based on the four issues listed in the statute.
 1. **Visual management**- George Berghorn, Michigan Forest Products Council will serve as Chair, Susan Holbern, Thomas Dunn, Warren Suchovsky, DNR staff person and consider identifying someone from the tourism industry to join working group.

2. **Noise/Dust**- Bill Bobier, Warren Suchovsky, DNR staff person will be Chair
3. **Removal of vegetation**- Steven Arwood will serve as Chair, Desmond Jones, Sierra Club designate, Leland Crawford, MUCC designate
4. **Chemicals**** - Anne Woiwode will look into identifying a group in the Upper Peninsula to join working group. DNR staff person to take lead.

*Members are encouraged to identify other groups that may have input on GAFMPs/sustainable forestry practices to serve on working groups.

**GAFMPs may already exist for the use of chemicals because pesticide applicators must be certified by the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA). MDA may have GAFMPs already.

- FMAC members discussed different resources they can use to create practices including Wisconsin's guidelines, Minnesota's guidelines, US Forest Service guidance. Any materials FMAC members have that will assist in the creation of these practices should be sent to Kerry Gray via email or mail so she can distribute to FMAC committee and working group members.
- The topic of only looking at practices for the four topic areas mentioned in the statute was discussed. FMAC members agreed that this was only a starting point to begin the process and they are aware there are other issues that will need GAFMPs and sustainable forestry practices created.
- There is no DNR enforcement of the GAFMPs or sustainable forestry practices written into the Right to Forest Act.
- Creation of GAFMPs should be scientifically and socially acceptable.
- Working groups will present an update at the February 8, 2006 FMAC meeting.

Top Issues Facing Michigan's Forest Resource

Tabled until next FMAC meeting, January 4, 2006

Public Comment

None

Michigan Forest Legislation

Lynne Boyd provided copies of and discussed the forestry legislation, House Bills (HB 5453-5458, 5462) and Senate Bills (SB 916-919), that was introduced in November 2005. The DNR is currently examining the bills to identify their position on each.

Two of the bills, HB 5453 and SB 918 address limiting factors. FMAC members discussed the DNR's limiting factors and the opportunities that the public has to comment on forest management activities and limiting factors that affect State Lands (through the Compartment Review process).

Next Meeting

Wednesday, January 4, 2006 at the Michigan United Conservation Clubs Conference Room (2101 Wood St. in Lansing) from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sam Washington offered the use of the MUCC Conference room for all FMAC meetings held in Lansing provided there are no scheduling conflicts.

Agenda item: Top Issues Facing Michigan's Forest Resource
New Business

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.