

**Timber Advisory Council, March 22, 2019**

**Gaylord Customer Service Center, 10 am – 3 pm**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Members Attending:** Rich Bowman, JR Richardson, Jon Lamy, Gary Melow, Mike McCuiston, Larry Leefers, Charlie Becker (via conference call), Tim Biewer, Jerry Grossman, Nick Monkevich, Deb Begalle (DNR), Donna LaCourt (MDARD), Ben Schram (MDARD)

**Guests:** Bernie Hubbard, Glenn Mroz (via conference call), Jason Stephens (DNR), Brenda Haskill (DNR)

Chair Richardson started the meeting at 10:02 am. He suggested the TAC gets on the radar for the new legislature and Governor's office. The Governor should be sent a letter saying who the TAC is with a brief history and introduction. It's unknown what her knowledge of the timber industry might be.

**Larry Leefers: Goals and Objectives**

Review of where the group is in the process and some details of the why and how of the information that Larry Leefers provided.

1. **First objective** - Motion to accept Tim Biewer; supported by Mike McCuiston. Motion passed for the first goal/objective.
2. **Second objective** – increase private land goals. Discussion and extra details from Ben Schram. Discussion on the need to account for all three certification options and the lands enrolled in them. So moved, with amendments to the enrollment numbers by Jerry Grossman, to increase lands enrolled by 2023 to 4 million; seconded by Rich Bowman. Passed unanimously.
  - a. Gary Melow questioned if there is any need to track the various plans people enroll under if all that is needed is a total of acres.
3. **Objective 3** – continue to develop and maintain marketing surveys and assure that the path is moving in a positive direction. Motion to accept by Gary Melow; seconded by Jon Lamy. Passed unanimously.
  - a. JR Richardson recommends a deadline to get the letter out/cover page regarding the goals and objectives. Deb Begalle noted that it would be best to meet with the director before sending it to the Governor.
  - b. Ben Schram noted that the order of the goals is important, and readers would assume that the first one is the most important.
  - c. Glenn Mroz: Make the point that the fabric of the forest holds it all together and if defines our other resources.

**Heterobasidion Root Disease (HRD) discussion** - Stump treatments or winter cutting will be required in some areas of state land that have HRD, but it will be decided on a case-by-case basis and be assessed by risk. Rich Bowman noted the need to do an analysis on red pine sustainability statewide. Deb Begalle said they plan to have that started this year.

1. Question from Rich Bowman – would fire kill the disease (HRD)? Brenda Haskill gained information during the meeting from our Forest Health program staff and the answer is no.

**Regional State Forest Management Plan (RSFMP) revisions** – Deb Begalle updated the group on the error in the model that overestimated harvest acres. Next quarterly meeting will include an update on this along with the new staff person that is being sought to assist in RSFMP revisions.

**Proposed FY20 Budget from the Governor**

1. Marketing and Outreach money wasn't what was expected. Got the ongoing funds of \$500,000 but not anything additional. Timber sale receipts are being used for that.
2. Capital outlay projects, land management, silvicultural treatments and studies such as the Walters-Roloff Project has proposed increased funding, that includes a study of lowland conifers and other cover type management.
3. Jon Lamy asked about when there might be results or an update on Walters-Roloff. Deb Begalle will follow up on the status of the project. Jon noted that they would be good options for PR and put some signs up. (Deb will follow-up on signage.)
4. Need to add a note in firewood permits not to cut in research areas.

**Donna LaCourt** reviewed her work plan that the MEDC /MDNR/MDARD is working on. She needs input from the TAC about what is needed to best support the forest industry and who should make the presentation at the July rollout of the portfolio work plan for each of the 10 prosperity regions. Nick Monkevich and Rich Bowman will be assisting Donna in getting things together for the rollout plan.

**Multistate economic contribution study** (Larry Leefers) – work is being done regionally now that includes 20 northeast and Midwest states. Three conference calls were done. Making sure the data being collected and analyzed is identical. Jagdish Poudel, DNR, and Larry are working together to create a Michigan model that all the other states will mirror. Maple syrup production is the only sector that we have not studied in Michigan and it will be added. Some state-to-state adjustments will be made. There is a United States Forest Service (USFS) grant to support the report. Kudos to Dave Neumann (DNR) as being the catalyst and the one who pulled it off and got the grant. Until now, each state has been doing their own report and there has been no way to compare apples to apples.

**Lowland management update** (Deb Begalle) -

1. Controversial in certain areas especially for deer management. Forest Resources Division (FRD) would like to do some research into the issue. Deb feels that the communication of how we manage these forest types is critical.
2. Deer management and lowland forest management is primarily in the UP.
3. Should the TAC invite others to come in and discuss the issue.

**Timber Management Technical Team** Jason Stephens gave a full update on the Timber Management Technical Team and the change in cruising methods and bid prospectus.

1. Rich Bowman suggests we start now with a disclaimer on the bid packages giving the heads up far in advance of the change.

**Discussion on finding a new TAC member.** JR Richardson is interested in stepping away. Glenn Mroz may be interested in becoming a TAC member.

**Timber sale prep project** – Jerry Grossman noted that the timber sale prep project with DNR has ramped up and the consultants are doing all they can to handle the flow but it's difficult.

**Next meeting:** May 24, 2019

Rich Bowman motioned to adjourn; supported by Larry Leefers.