

**FOREST MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING (FMAC)
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
January 15, 2014**

FMAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Bill Manson, Michigan Snowmobile Association
Ms. Kim Korbecki, FMAC Assistant, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)
Ms. Amy Trotter, Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC)
Mr. Gary Melow, Michigan Biomass
Dr. Daniel Keathley, Michigan State University (MSU)
Dr. Terry Sharik, Michigan Technological University (MTU)
Mr. Bill O'Neill, MDNR
Mr. Bill Botti, Chair, Michigan Forest Association
Mr. Warren Suchovsky, Suchovsky Logging
Mr. Scott Robbins, Michigan Forest Products Council
Mr. Steven Shine, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)

FMAC ADVISORS PRESENT

Ms. Mary Doke, United States Forest Service (USFS), Huron-Manistee (via conference call)

PUBLIC PRESENT

Mr. Bill Taylor, Lewiston Fun Ones
Ms. Lou Ann Fedewa, MDNR
Ms. Julie Manson, MDNR

I. **Welcome**

Chair Botti called the January 15, 2014 Forest Management Advisory Committee (FMAC) meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. He welcomed everyone and asked for introductions. He also welcomed Ms. Doke as the newest advisor to the FMAC.

II. **Action Items**

- **Adoption of January 15, 2014 Meeting Agenda**
The January 15, 2014 FMAC Meeting agenda was adopted as presented.
- **Adoption of November 6, 2013 Meeting Minutes**
The November 6, 2013 FMAC Meeting minutes was adopted according to the 7-day Bylaw rule. **Ms. Korbecki** noted she had discovered some minor grammatical errors and will make those corrections before posting the minutes to the web.

III. **Public Comment**

Mr. Bill Taylor, Lewiston Fun Ones, reported to the FMAC concerns he is having with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). This relates specifically to Lewiston Fun One's trail area that covers 4 counties and 6 townships. His concerns include being denied grants, being denied putting in off-road vehicle (ORV) trails, problems on the trails with timber cuts, having to spend thousands to repair his quad/razor because of trail conditions related to timber cuts, and the inability to get answers from the MDNR Atlanta Management Unit.

Chair Botti asked Mr. Taylor if he received resolution for the problem with the clearcuts on his trails. He responded "no" but noted it is on the agenda for this meeting.

Mr. Manson asked Mr. Taylor what he believes should happen. **Mr. Taylor** responded the MDNR should allow his snowmobile trails to also be ORV trails for most of his area and he would then be able to use ORV funds to maintain those trails.

Mr. Robbins stated there are the same issues in the Upper Peninsula and that the MDNR should make it a priority to provide places there for people to ride their ORVs.

Dr. Sharik asked why the MDNR is hesitant to fix this problem. **Mr. O'Neill** replied the MDNR is committed to ORV trails but figuring out where to place more trails is complicated. Overlaying ORV trails on top of snowmobile trails has its own unique set of complications because most snowmobile trails are on private land and most private landowners are unwilling to open their land to ORVs. **Mr. O'Neill** stated the ORV and Snowmobile programs are self-sustaining and the MDNR cannot put in miles and miles of trails because those programs would then become unsustainable.

Mr. Taylor concluded he is unable to find out from the MDNR why he is unable to put in ORV trails in certain places. He would just like an answer to that question.

Mr. Suchovsky asked how much of Mr. Taylor's issues have to do with the MDNR Parks and Recreation Division (PRD). **Mr. O'Neill** responded the majority of Mr. Taylor's issues might be better addressed by the Michigan State Trails Advisory Committee (MSTAC), an advisory committee of PRD. **Mr. Taylor** said he has attended all of the MSTAC meetings and it is an information sharing committee, not a decision making committee. He wants to see documentation of decisions that have been made. **Mr. O'Neill** asked Mr. Taylor to provide him with documentation of denials and vocal responses, and he will get answers to his questions.

Chair Botti thanked Mr. Taylor.

Ms. Trotter introduced Mr. Matt Evans, the new Legislative Affairs Manager for MUCC. Mr. Evans provided the FMAC with his background.

IV. **Review of FMAC Bylaws**

Chair Botti asked if there were any concerns. The FMAC discussed some edits to the bylaws. Ms. Korbecki will make those edits and send an updated copy to the FMAC.

V. **Election of FMAC Chair**

The FMAC discussed how to nominate its Chair.

MOTION: Mr. Manson moved for Chair Botti to remain chair; supported by **Mr. Shine**. Chair Botti accepted the nomination

MOTION: Dr. Keathley moved to close the nominations; supported by **Mr. Robbins**. Nominations were closed and the FMAC voted on the position of Chair.

VOTE: 9 ayes; 0 nays

Chair Botti was unanimously re-elected as Chair for a term of 2 years.

MOTION: Mr. Suchovsky moved to nominate Mr. Melow for Vice Chair; supported by **Mr. Manson**. **Chair Botti** asked for other nominations; there were none. Mr. Melow accepted the nomination of Vice Chair.

MOTION: Dr. Keathley moved to close the nominations and vote by a show of hands; supported by Mr. Suchovsky. Nominations were closed and the FMAC voted on the position of Vice Chair.

VOTE: 9 ayes; 0 nays

Mr. Melow was elected as Vice Chair for a term of 2 years.

VI. **FMAC Membership Representation**

Mr. O'Neill stated the Bylaws do not specify representation. He asked if the FMAC thinks it is adequately represented. If the FMAC thinks there is a significant void somewhere it can work to fill that void.

Mr. Manson mentioned there used to be an ORV representative. He stated the FMAC should have this representation; Mr. Melow agreed. Mr. O'Neill stated the FMAC should ask the MDNR Director to appoint someone to represent the ORV community.

Chair Botti asked the FMAC to consider this issue between now and the March FMAC meeting, and to be prepared to come back with recommendations. Mr. O'Neill stated if changes in representation need to be made, the FMAC should make a motion that can be taken back to the MDNR Director. Ms. Korbecki was asked to provide an updated membership list when she sends the draft minutes of this meeting to the FMAC.

VII. **FMAC Annual / Semi-Annual Subjects to Look at**

Mr. O'Neill asked the FMAC to consider if it needs standing discussion items. Chair Botti commented he would like to be guided by what would be helpful to the MDNR. Mr. Suchovsky suggested the FMAC consider something like the NRC work plan. Mr. O'Neill replied the NRC often gives Forest Resources Division (FRD) items it would like more information on. The FRD can provide these items to the FMAC for discussion. Mr. Melow stated the FMAC needs more regular, consistent information so it can work on issues in an efficient and more proactive manner. It needs timber sale data, snowmobile and ORV trail usage data, MDNR budget targets, etc. The FMAC needs a comprehensive picture of the resources so it can make recommendations that look forward and enhance the resources, and users of the resources, rather than dealing with things once it becomes a problem. Mr. Melow also mentioned that the FMAC has made several recommendations to the MDNR and has not been informed of any specific responses.

VIII. **FRD Strategic Plan**

Ms. Fedewa presented a PowerPoint presentation to the FMAC ([attached](#)).

Ms. Fedewa stated FRD has been working over the last year with Mr. Barry Meyers as the current facilitator. Mr. O'Neill commented that FRD involved not only division leadership, but other personnel classifications spread across the state to work on the strategic plan. Ms. Fedewa stated one reason for the strategic plan was to obtain funding (the Governor likes to see strategic plans when receiving funding requests). Mr. O'Neill commented FRD has worked hard over the last 24 months to forge new, and improve old relationships with all segments of MDNR's customers.

After the presentation, the FMAC discussed it and suggested some changes. Mr. O'Neill stated the FMAC received a link to a survey monkey so it could submit comments regarding the strategic plan. The next step for FRD will be to write action plans to meet the goals that are set in the strategic plan.

Dr. Keathley commented the plan was very complete and well put together. In terms of presenting, he recommended moving Goal 3 up to the beginning of the presentation.

Ms. Trotter stated the FRD needs to be focused on what the “marketing and utilization” person’s objectives should be. **Mr. Suchovsky** commented the plan involves multiple interests and asked how this would be reflected in the strategic plan. **Mr. O’Neill** responded that partnerships are very important to FRD. When it makes a decision to do something on state forest lands it is not just FRD making the decision. It is a co-management decision where all divisions contribute to the decision. **Mr. Shine** asked if the next step is to develop action plans will the budget-ask be after that. **Mr. O’Neill** responded the budget-ask is ongoing. There will be an action plan that identifies FRD’s direction but the strategic plan may be an evolving document based on the budget.

Chair Botti thanked Ms. Fedewa for the presentation.

IX. Update on Markers for Snowmobiles in Clearcut Areas

Mr. O’Neill talked with FRD’s Field Coordinator, District Managers and the Unit Managers on this issue. Those staff looked at the trails and some conversation with the club (Lewiston Fun Ones) took place. Not all issues were resolved. **Mr. O’Neill** has asked staff to arrange another meeting with Mr. Taylor to review the issues again. **Mr. O’Neill** asked Mr. Taylor to provide hard copies of documents related to this issue so he can review and follow-up to provide Mr. Taylor answers to his questions. **Mr. Manson** stated if the Michigan Snowmobile Association could assist with this, to please let him know.

X. Oil & Gas Lease Classification Process

Ms. Manson provided a packet to the FMAC and stated if it had questions to feel free to contact her. She also stated there was a website with a quick link to forms and procedures.

Ms. Manson discussed the classification process and the different classifications with the FMAC. She reported on the different types of classifications with in-depth detail. She stated that NREPA was responsible for her division dealing with all mineral rights, regardless of who managed the land. She said the entire lease process takes approximately 7 months.

Ms. Manson stated the classification review is conducted by state biologists, foresters and others. They then provide recommendations for appropriate use of the surface based on the natural resources features that are out there. Historically, the majority of recommendations are non-development. Over the last 10 years, only about 2/3 of what the MDNR offers actually gets leased.

Dr. Keathley commented he sees specific reasons for not putting lands up for lease. **Mr. Manson** added there is no oil and gas lease development in the U.P.; the majority is in the L.P.

Ms. Manson responded that FRD is the lead reviewer on these and the most restrictive recommendation is how the land is usually classified if there are conflicting recommendations.

Mr. Suchovsky asked if the leasing process for metallic minerals is similar to the process for oil and gas leases. **Ms. Manson** replied it is very similar and the classification process is the same.

Ms. Trotter asked about direct leases. **Ms. Manson** reported when someone requests a direct lease they have to show a proposed drilling unit and show that they have at least 50% of the drilling unit already leased. Direct leases often are requested to complete a drilling unit and those requests must include a development plan.

Chair Botti thanked Ms. Manson for her presentation.

XI. Member Updates on What Their Organization Does

Chair Botti asked Mr. Melow to do 15 minute presentation on Michigan Biomass at the March FMAC meeting.

XII. **Standing Discussion Items**

- **Timber Advisory Committee (TAC) Update**

Mr. Melow reported the TAC and USFS are working together to increase the USFS timber cut supply. The TAC will be meeting with them again to try to assist.

The TAC discussed certification of state lands, under which the MDNR needs to come up with a new biodiversity program. It also discussed the Regional State Forest Management Plans and the FRD Strategic Plan.

Mr. O'Neill provided the TAC with data on 2013 timber logging activity. **Mr. O'Neill** stated he will provide an update to the FMAC on timber output at the March FMAC meeting.

Mr. Melow reported the ICC Biomass Committee had its initial meeting last week. It is looking at biomass energy and forest resources. It brainstormed an initial action to put together a concept to address the U.P.'s power infrastructure issue.

Mr. Shine provided a handout of the status of the Qualified Forest Program as amended through the end of the calendar year, and reviewed the statistics with the FMAC.

- **Legislative Update**

November and December 2013, and January 2014 legislative updates were provided in the FMAC meeting packets for information.

XIII. **Next Meeting Date**

Wednesday, March 5, 2014, MUCC, Lansing

XIV. **Agenda Items**

Snowmobile and Trails Report – MDNR Field Staff

Update on Timber Output – Bill O'Neill, MDNR

Michigan Biomass Presentation – Gary Melow, Michigan Biomass

XV. **Adjournment**

Chair Botti adjourned the January 15, 2014 FMAC meeting at 4:16 p.m.