

# FOREST MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

April 6, 2016

## MINUTES

### FMAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Gary Melow, Chair, Michigan Biomass  
Mr. Bill Manson, Vice Chair, Michigan Snowmobile Association  
Ms. Debbie Begalle, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)  
Ms. Sarah Topp, Michigan United Conservation Clubs (representing Amy Trotter)  
Dr. Rich Kobe, Michigan State University  
Dr. Terry Sharik, Michigan Technological University (via conference call)  
Mr. Bill Botti, Michigan Forest Association  
Mr. Scott Robbins, Michigan Forest Products Council

### FMAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Warren Suchovsky, Suchovsky Logging  
Mr. Marvin Roberson, Sierra Club  
Mr. Steve Shine, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)

### FMAC ADVISORS PRESENT

Ms. Leslie Auriemmo, USFS Huron-Manistee (via conference call)

### FMAC ADVISORS ABSENT

Mr. Andy Henriksen, USDA Conservation District

### PUBLIC PRESENT

Dr. Mark Rudnicki, Michigan Technological University (via conference call)  
Ms. Margaret Spagnuolo, MDNR

#### **I. Welcome**

Chair Melow called the April 6, 2016 Forest Management Advisory Committee (FMAC) meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

#### **II. Action Items**

- **Adoption of April 6, 2016 FMAC Meeting Agenda**

**Ms. Begalle** requested adding an update on the Good Neighbor Authority.

**Chair Melow** requested that the next meeting date be changed to July 13, 2016.

Motion to adopt the April 6, 2016 meeting agenda, as amended, passed unanimously.

- **Adoption of January 6, 2016 FMAC Meeting Minutes**

**Mr. Botti** noted there were changes on page 2 under "Discussion and Adoption of 2016 FMAC Meeting Schedule", "Four to six per year" should be changed to "six to four per year"; also on page 3 under "Senate Bills 651, 652 and 653", change "certified" to "commercial" forest.

**MOTION: Mr. Botti moved** to adopt the January 6, 2016 FMAC Meeting Minutes, as revised; supported by **Mr. Robbins**. Motion to adopt the January 6, 2016 minutes passed unanimously.

#### **III. Public Comment**

None

#### **IV. Registered Forester Update – Debbie Begalle, MDNR**

**Ms. Begalle** reported that about a year ago the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) was asked by the Governor to administer the Registered Forester Program. A committee was formed and it drafted a proposal which has been reviewed by the Society of American Foresters (SAF) members, Consulting Forestry Association, and a few others. The committee gathered feedback by using a website, holding 2 public meetings, and by online survey. Questions arose as to whether registration should be voluntary or mandatory, and mandatory was strongly opposed. It was agreed the program will be housed by MDNR Forest Resources Division (FRD); the fee will be \$200 every 2 years and 24 continuing education credits every 2 years; and SAF will keep track of credits. Those foresters already registered will be grandfathered into the new program (current fee is \$80 every two years). A forestry board will be formed for purposes of application review and complaints. The MDNR's legal department is looking at writing the bill and attaining a sponsor. If everything runs smoothly, the effective date will be June 1, 2017.

**Mr. Botti** asked what the program would be accomplishing. **Ms. Begalle** responded that Ms. Brenda Haskill, MDNR and Mr. Bill O'Neill, MDNR, had conversations with key people who thought it was important, as well as non-consulting foresters who thought it had merit. It is not required that a person be a registered forester to write management plans.

**Dr. Sharik** added the issue of land surveys was part of the discussion about this program, and whether foresters are qualified to do surveys. **Mr. Robbins** commented the program needs to define what foresters are qualified to do, e.g., cutting, boundary lines, etc.

#### **Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) Update – Debbie Begalle, MDNR**

**Ms. Begalle** reported the Master agreement was signed at the Governor's 2015 Forest Products Summit in October. Now MDNR and the United States Forest Service (USFS) are working on specific project agreements (SPAs) for each national forest which include specifics on finances and other details. The Ottawa agreement is complete and waiting for approval; Huron-Manistee and Hiawatha are in progress. Mr. David Price, MDNR, is the contact for this program. The GNA timber sales will total ~1,200 acres the first year. The MDNR has hired 2 new staff, one in Cadillac and one in Crystal Falls, to handle the extra workload. Their salaries will be reimbursed as revenue comes in from GNA timber sales.

**Ms. Auriemmo** reported the GNA SPA for Huron-Manistee will be signed in approximately one week; field trips will be planned - 1 per week for the next 3 weeks - to look at sales. The first year Huron-Manistee plans to harvest 6,000 ccf.

#### **V. Urban Forestry**

**Mr. Botti** will draft a letter in support of the Urban Community Forestry program. The letter will affirm the program in place and provide continuing support. **Mr. Botti** will contact Kevin Sayers, MDNR, for more ideas on what support is needed and possible funding sources. **Mr. Botti** will circulate the draft letter to the FMAC members.

**Mr. Robbins** commented he met with Mike Smalligan, MDNR, and Tree Farm to discuss the Wheels to Woods Program, which has already raised \$10-\$12,000. This program provides transportation for students in urban areas to experience forests. Ms. Ada Takacs, MDNR, State Coordinator, Project Learning Tree (PLT), recently had an outstanding response from 50 schools in Detroit and Grand Rapids for workshops to teach kids about forestry.

Some of MDNR's accomplishments in urban forestry are Belle Isle and the Outdoor Adventure Center in Detroit. **Chair Melow** commented there is a big interest in the urban forest experience with regard to forest health and quality of life. **Dr. Sharik** added that urban forestry is important from the standpoint of forest biomaterials in the amount of volume of dead ash in the Detroit area; there is little utilization of the product. A use for this material is needed, not just replanting.

## VI. Standing Discussion Items

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

**Chair Melow** reported that the TAC met twice since the last FMAC meeting. The TAC discussed the long-eared bat listing, and Plum Creek being acquired by Weyerhaeuser. **Ms. Begalle** added the TAC discussed the declining skilled labor force and secondary manufacturing bringing more value-added products. The TAC is looking where to focus its efforts next.

**Mr. Robbins** asked Ms. Begalle about Mr. Dave Neumann's (MDNR) progress on the industry index/directory. **Ms. Begalle** responded that Mr. Neumann has finished the mill survey and producer's survey, secondary manufacturers will be finished within a year's time, and the database is being updated. The MDNR does have funding to update the database and Mr. Neumann is visiting mills and finding new mills in his travels. Mr. Neumann and Ms. Haskill (MDNR) have split up the state for this purpose.

**Dr. Sharik** indicated that the nonprofit Michigan Forest Biomaterials Initiative, which acts as an intermediary for government, industry and academia, could facilitate a conversation with the state for funding projects such as the wood directory which are high priority to industry.

- **Legislative Update:**

[January](#), [February](#) and [March](#), 2016 NRC Legislative Update reports were provided with the FMAC packets.

**The committee** discussed the following legislation:

- Senate Bills [651](#), [652](#) and [653](#) – Transitional Qualified Forest Program. These bills extend the period when individuals have an opportunity to withdraw land from Commercial Forest Act and enrolled in Qualified Forest Program, with a phase in of the pop-up tax over 10 years. These bills were referred to the House Committee on Tax Policy.
- [Senate Bill 839](#) – Forest Roads, Pack & Saddle and ORV Use. This bill would allow pack and saddle animals and ORVs to retrieve game, require a forest road inventory, and require forest roads are open to motorized use by the public

unless designated otherwise. **Mr. Manson** commented that recreationists find it confusing as to where to ride; there is an influx of ATV and ORV use, which is affecting snow trails on private property. **Ms. Begalle** indicated that the key for MDNR is getting inventory and mapping done to show where roads are – county, state forest, etc.

- **FMAC Program Updates**

- **MFA – Mr. Botti** reported the 4<sup>th</sup> annual teachers workshop will be held June 21-24, 2016 for school teachers or anyone interested in education; cost is \$100 for one week which includes room and board at Higgins Lake; the application is on the website at [www.michiganforests.org](http://www.michiganforests.org), or email for more information at [info@michiganforests.org](mailto:info@michiganforests.org). MFA has a new office at US-27 South and part-time staff.
- **MFPC – Mr. Robbins** reported being busy with logger training in Wakefield this week. Talent search is a big issue. MFPC is working on a UP State Fair display of Michigan habitat. Thousands of kids go through the fair, and it is an important public relations and marketing event. MFPC will be at school job fairs and colleges this year. MFPC has developed a new computer “Farm Game” to introduce kids to forestry through games. The game will be tried out for the first time at the MAT convention in Frankenmuth.
- **MSU - Dr. Kobe** reported that MSU hired a forest pathologist who will start in August. There are also 3 searches ongoing for forest policy and economics, human dimensions, and forest biomaterials. MSU Forestry also has a new communications coordinator starting next week. This position will be tasked with promoting a new message with a contemporary edge.
- **MUCC – Ms. Topp** reported there were no legislative updates. Currently MUCC is working on 6 habitat projects: hinge cutting, aspen-Allegan State Game Area, and 14 scheduled tree plantings. Next year MUCC will be working more with private landowners.
- **Michigan Snowmobile Association (MSA) – Mr. Manson** reported it has not been a good year for snowmobiling, mostly spotty with thaws and freezing. There were 25 fatalities this year which is up over the last 5 years. Sixty percent of fatalities were alcohol related, but he has no final report from law enforcement. Technology of new sleds results in faster riding which leads to more accidents.
- **Michigan Biomass - Gary Melow** reported at the beginning of the second quarter, energy legislation has stalled. There are closed door negotiations going on and the legislature may introduce substitute bills. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) could not implement a Clean Power Plan (CPP) until pending litigation is completed. The CPP is an environmental initiative, representing the EPA’s effort to control greenhouse gas emissions under the Clean Air Act.

- **MDNR – Ms. Begalle** reported there is a new 1.5 minute video out from MDNR on forestry/timber which has received positive results. The MDNR is looking at other ideas and opportunities for marketing. Chair Melow will forward the video to the committee. The MDNR's Forest Resources Division's 2017 budget has passed senate and house subcommittees and is positive with funding for marketing and outreach, road and bridges, and fire equipment. Revenues are strong due to higher stumpage prices and higher volume produced.
- **USFS - Ms. Auriemmo** reported timber program manager Mike Stimak is retiring in June so the USFS is recruiting a replacement. The USFS will be hiring 20 entry level positions across the forest. **Ms. Auriemmo** asked Drs. Sharik and Kobe to pass along this information to any interested recent graduates. The USFS is preparing for active fire season.
- **MTU - Dr. Sharik** reported MTU has 4 positions open; if the FMAC has any interested candidates please pass along information. MTU will be getting ads out soon. Two openings are faculty positions in remote sensing and forest biomaterials. MTU interviewed 45 applicants for each and is ready to make offers.
  - a. **Dr. Rudnicki** reported he recently returned from the North American Mass Timber Conference in Portland, Oregon. While attending this conference he observed that Portland has many tall buildings, 5-10 stories high, made almost exclusively of wood. He wants to help promote this concept in Michigan.

## **VII. Next Meeting**

July 13, 2016

Location: Detroit Outdoor Adventure Center; one other suggestion was Belle Isle.

## **VIII. Future Agenda Items**

Update on MDNR's new and improved website – Jeff Schmidt/Beth Fults, MDNR  
 Letter supporting Urban Forestry – Mr. Botti, Chair Melow  
 Michigan Forest Biomaterials Initiative – Dr. Sharik

## **IX. Adjournment**

**Chair Melow** adjourned the April 6, 2016 FMAC meeting at 3:30 p.m.