

**FOREST MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
August 17, 2017**

FMAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Gary Melow, Chair, Michigan Biomass
Mr. William Manson, Michigan Snowmobile Association
Mr. Warren Suchofsky, Suchofsky Logging
Dr. Richard Kobe, Michigan State University
Dr. Terry Sharik, Michigan Technological University (MTU)
Mr. Scott Robbins, Michigan Forest Products Council

FMAC ADVISORS PRESENT

Ms. Cid Morgan, United States Forest Service, Hiawatha

PUBLIC PRESENT

Ms. Deb Begalle, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)
Dr. Mark Rudnicki, MTU
Mr. Dennis Nezich, MDNR
Mr. Eric Thompson, MDNR
Mr. Zack Bishop, MDNR

I. Action Items

- **Adoption of April 5, 2017 Forest Management Advisory Committee (FMAC) Meeting Minutes**

Edits were suggested on page 5; minutes adopted unanimously with suggested edits completed.

Chair Melow questioned if a letter of support for the fire program that was discussed at the April meeting was ever sent; he will follow-up on this.

II. Public Comment

- **Cid Morgan** (Forest Supervisor for Hiawatha National Forest): Is looking at all three forests increasing harvest and how to do it differently. The Hiawatha is limited for GNA projects because of the amount of sale areas that need road work. The 2018 Farm Bill does have some draft language that would allow some road work associated with GNA sales, as well as language regarding stewardship projects that would keep more money with the forest.

Ottawa National Forest: draft EA for forest roads coming out soon. Road inventory was completed. Roads that were closed to ATVs may now be opened since some counties opened its roads to ATVs, and the two road systems are interconnected.

Fire expenditures was 15% of their budget at one time. Now it's over 60%. Fire management is shared with Ottawa and Hiawatha. They are looking at increasing prescribed fires to reduce fuel load.

Forty percent of their timber sales are restricted to winter logging. A certain percent of sales need to be offered at a smaller cost.

GLRI funds are being used for work along the shoreline, using drones, looking for invasive species.

Challenges: Recreation funding is decreasing while Pure Michigan has ramped up and they are seeing a significant increase in visitors; invasive species; large turnover in staff over the last few years and more to come.

Looking at all types of trails across the forest, gathering as many recreational users as possible for review and to provide information. Process will end around the end of December, and then there will be a proposed action for public comment next year.

Provided handouts on Fall Friends Meetings and One on One Conversations.

Mark Rudnicki (MIFBI) reported two events. One in Iron Mountain; Lignin innovation forum (black liquor); MTEC SmartZone Investment summit in Sweden.

III. **PA288 Update** - Signage regarding timber sales along recreational trails.

IV. **Best Management Practices (BMP) Update** – Ms. Amy Lounds and Mr. David Price are lead for the Department of Environmental Quality and the DNR, respectively, to update the BMP manual. They are reviewing the comments received and will gather a small group (forest industry and others) to look at revisions. Issues were: harvesting techniques; vernal pool management; operating on contours; and buffer width.

V. **Concerns & Complaints from the Field** - Timber sale restrictions. Mr. Suchovsky reported that the Michigan Association of Timbermen (MAT) is pulling together DNR and MAT folks to discuss how to overcome this. There are too many winter logging sales. Cover type example - aspen winter cut only on USFS lands.

Discussion about an “umbrella” organization” or association of all forest interests, similar to southern states. And discussion about funding research and other projects. Cid –Explore selling timber as fiber vs the various products (pulpwood, sawlogs). Discussion about cruising methods.

VI. **Timber Advisory Council (TAC) Update:** Next meeting is tomorrow, August 18. The TAC is working on new goals and benchmarks.

VII. **Legislative Updates:** Legislative updates were included with the FMAC meeting materials.

VIII. **Member Updates:**

- **Rich Kobe**, MSU – has been serious about pursuing a CLT building on campus. Request for qualifications from architects.
- **Scott Robbins**, Michigan Forest Products Council - Industry understands it's been a tough year on the loggers. Some of it was weather related. Received three SFI complaints-rutting.
- **Terry Sharik**, MTU – Is going thru SAF accreditation process. He holds a Bachelor's of Science degree in forestry and natural resource management, and Masters and Ph.D. degrees in forestry. Emphasis in China-MOU with universities and institutes there. They seem to have a tight connection between research and technology transfer to businesses. Lots of money being invested in research and education.
- **Bill Manson**, Michigan Snowmobile Association - LEAN with snowmobile program. Ten recommendations made coming out of the process. #1-Equip equipment with

smart GPS technology. Asked MEDC to fund some money for equipment since for every dollar the state brings in is \$62 according to Pure Michigan.

- **Gary Mellow**, Michigan Biomass – Rate case before the Michigan Public Service Commission is through the litigation process. Issued partial order on July 31 and remanded some information back for review. The process has not been clean and the biomass plants are looking at approximately 12% rate cut. That doesn't meet margins to stay in business. Preparing for appeal and other measures such as legislation. Contracts run out next year for two more biomass energy plants. There are eight altogether in Michigan. **Mr. Suchovsky** asked if the FMAC should send a letter to the DNR for support of the bioenergy plants.
- **Warren Suchovsky**, Suchovsky Logging – There are tight restrictions on the specifications for wood going into the mills.

IX. Next Meeting Agenda Items

1. Draft Language for Signs Along Trails with Timber Sales
2. PA288 Follow-up
3. Gud Marketing Campaign Update

X. Next FMAC Meeting

November 1, 2017

1:00 p.m.

Michigan United Conservation Club, 2101 Wood Street, Lansing, MI 48912