

FOREST MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FMAC) MEETING
November 5, 2014
Meeting Minutes

FMAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Bill O'Neill, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)
Dr. Dan Keathley, Michigan State University
Mr. Warren Suchovsky, Suchovsky Logging
Mr. Marvin Roberson, Sierra Club
Mr. Gary Melow, Vice Chair, Michigan Biomass
Dr. Terry Sharik, Michigan Technological University
Mr. Bill Manson, Michigan Snowmobile Association
Ms. Amy Trotter, Michigan United Conservation Clubs
Ms. Kim Korbecki, FMAC Assistant, MDNR

FMAC Members Absent:

Mr. Stephen Shine, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Mr. Bill Botti, Chair, Michigan Forest Association
Mr. Scott Robbins, Michigan Forest Products Council

FMAC ADVISORS PRESENT

Mr. Andy Henriksen, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Conservation District

FMAC Advisors Absent:

Ms. Leslie Auriemmo, USDA Forest Service, Huron-Manistee

PUBLIC PRESENT

Mr. Shawn Hagan, the Forestland Group, LLC
Ms. Kerry Wieber, MDNR
Mr. Steve Sutton, MDNR
Mr. Brad Garmon, Michigan Environmental Council

I. Welcome

Vice Chair Melow called the November 5, 2014 FMAC meeting to order at 1:09 p.m. and thanked all for attending.

• **Adoption of November 5, 2014 FMAC meeting agenda**

Mr. O'Neill added a topic regarding alternative forest management.

The November 5, 2014 FMAC meeting agenda, with modifications, was adopted unanimously.

• **Adoption of July 16, 2014 FMAC meeting minutes**

The July 16, 2014 FMAC meeting minutes was adopted unanimously, as presented.

• **Review and approval of 2015 FMAC meeting dates**

Mr. Roberson requested one meeting be held in an Upper Peninsula (U.P.) location. After discussion it was decided the March 2015 meeting would be held in the U.P.

The 2015 FMAC meeting calendar ([attached](#)) was adopted unanimously, as amended.

II. Public Comment

Mr. Shawn Hagan, Forestland Group, gave a Power Point presentation ([attached](#)) regarding road access on private lands in the U.P. He thanked the FMAC for the opportunity to discuss this issue. He stated he has presented this issue to the western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) in the past. Mr. J.R. Richardson convened a meeting of CFA landowners to discuss changes to these issues 3 years ago. It's now three years later, and not much has changed regarding this issue.

The issues that remain are:

- Liability; Road maintenance (culverts, bridges, and roads being returned to the condition it was in prior to the harvest);
- CF landowner "notification" (the MDNR is notifying rather than obtaining permission to cross these lands); and
- Timing. Many loggers assume access has been secured. With an approximate 18-month window between determination of a timber sale and when the sale is awarded, the access issue could be resolved prior to harvesting.

Mr. Roberson asked if Mr. Hagan was looking for anything in particular from the FMAC.

Mr. Hagan responded not at this meeting, but he would like this issue considered at future FMAC meetings and would like feedback either individually or as a group.

Mr. O'Neill identified the past meeting with J.R. Richardson and CFA landowners where all in attendance, including Mr. Hagan, agreed to the process being used today, a process of notification and changes to the state timber sale prospectus clearly identifying responsibilities for securing access. The same group met earlier this year to reevaluate how the process was working. All in attendance, and others unable to attend, said the current process was working well and agreed to continue. Mr. Hagan was invited but was unable to attend. **Mr. O'Neill** said loggers or owners of state timber sales have the responsibility to secure access across private land when necessary.

Vice Chair Melow thanked Mr. Hagan and asked if any action was needed regarding this issue.

Dr. Sharik commented that something needs to be done as there appears to be no consistency.

Mr. O'Neill stated the MDNR has made changes with notification. The district and unit managers have been charged with having more communication with the landowners, and to keep that communication open. **Mr. Suchovsky** asked if the process is starting early enough; is there a planning period before the sale is set up. **Mr. O'Neill** responded there is a pre-inventory meeting for foresters, etc. to discuss if there are any special conditions on the property.

Mr. Hagan said they have been looking at easement swaps. Easement swaps is one method that could be used to help address this issue. **Mr. Suchovsky** asked if the MDNR looked at guidelines, how consistent would it need to be - statewide or regional. **Mr. O'Neill** replied that easements and/or Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) are written according to region.

Mr. Sutton added that most MOUs are similar when using the word “easement”. **Mr. Suchovsky** asked if the MOUs are specific to use. **Ms. Wieber** responded the MDNR has easements for management use only.

Dr. Sharik commented that this is an issue that would be precedent-setting and it could get messy. It conjures up some interesting situations.

Vice Chair Melow thanked Mr. Hagan.

III. **Graymont Update and Discussion**

Ms. Wieber stated she attended the July FMAC meeting to update the committee on the Graymont land application, and originally the FMAC was going to take up the issue and make a recommendation to the MDNR at the September FMAC meeting. The September FMAC meeting was canceled, and since then the MDNR has received a new application proposal from Graymont. A highlight of the new proposal is [attached](#).

Ms. Wieber stated there are actually two transactions; a mineral exchange request and a revised application. Nothing has changed in regard to the mineral exchange. Graymont is now requesting a direct purchase of less acreage and to acquire land through a land exchange. The remainder is the purchase of mineral rights and a surface easement above the mineral rights. Graymont has identified a future potential plant site and is requesting an 800 acre buffer.

The recommendation that is made by the Land Exchange Review Committee will be made public prior to the public meeting so citizens have the opportunity to comment. **Mr. Roberson** stated that some people are concerned that the comments they have already submitted will no longer be valid or relevant. **Ms. Wieber** replied those people are welcome to submit additional comments, but all previous comments are still valid. Comments from the public help the MDNR Director understand what it feels regarding the project.

Dr. Sharik asked where the application is now. **Ms. Wieber** answered it is with the EUP District Supervisor for evaluation of the review from a regional perspective. **Dr. Sharik** asked if public review occurs at step #12 of the handout Ms. Wieber provided, which reads *“The DNR will host a public meeting in the proposed project area in order to offer the public additional opportunities to provide comments on the proposal, which the Director will use to help inform his decision.”*

Ms. Wieber replied that the public was notified as soon as the MDNR received a revised application so people could begin submitting comments. The public will be asked for comments again, once the Land Exchange Review Committee has released its recommendation.

Ms. Trotter said her understanding is that the 1,600 acres of land being requested for exchange doesn’t have specific land identified. **Ms. Wieber** agreed and said it is unusual and that the MDNR can only review what is provided for review. **Mr. Suchovsky** commented that the other acres being requested for exchange wouldn’t necessarily have to be adjacent to the project then.

Ms. Wieber responded correct, the acres could be anywhere.

Vice Chair Melow stated the FMAC wanted to determine its feelings toward the process being used on this land exchange. **Ms. Wieber** reported the proposal will not be going through any different sort of process, and there are actually extra steps being taken. **Mr. Roberson** stated the motion at the last FMAC meeting was to advise the Director of FMAC's support, or lack thereof, for this proposal and the motion died without support.

Ms. Trotter stated there are a lot of issues with the new application and the FMAC's role is to advise the MDNR director. At this point, the FMAC does not have enough information and 1,600 acres of unidentified land for exchange is unacceptable. Discussion ensued.

Dr. Keathley suggested tabling the issue; **Mr. Suchovsky** disagreed with that suggestion. **Vice Chair Melow** stated the FMAC has characterized the sale as going differently than most sales, and that it is a bit wishy-washy. He asked how different the proposal is in respect to things such as not identifying the acreage that would be involved in the exchange. **Ms. Wieber** stated the Graymont proposal is unusual. Typically, when the MDNR receives a land transaction application it doesn't have a huge addendum with it, but the MDNR is trying to handle it as it would any other application. **Mr. O'Neill** stated the proposal will not go to the Director before the January 7 FMAC meeting. The best case scenario is it will go before the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) as information in December, and the soonest action would be taken would be at the January 15 NRC meeting.

IV. **FMAC Recommendation on Graymont**

Mr. Roberson suggested a motion advising the Director decline the Graymont proposal at this time, listing FMAC's concerns with the proposal. **Dr. Keathley** stated he would support a motion to recommend the Director decline the proposal at this time only if it includes a list of FMAC concerns, but he doesn't want a blanket turn-down of the concept.

After discussion it was decided Mr. Roberson and Ms. Trotter would work on language that would be acceptable to the entire FMAC. After Ms. Trotter and Mr. Roberson completed the draft language, the FMAC reviewed the language that was presented.

MOTION: Mr. Roberson moved to present the proposal to the Director with #3 of the language included; if it will not pass with this language, then remove #3; supported by **Ms. Trotter**.

MOTION: Moved to amend by striking #3; supported by **Dr. Keathley**.

In favor of amendment: 4 aye, 2 nay

In favor of motion as amended: 4 aye, 1 nay, 1 abstention

Motion to approve language, as amended, adopted via voice vote. Members that were present to vote will be listed on the letter to the Director.

MOTION: Mr. Suchovsky moved that a recommendation be sent to the Director in the form of a formal letter; supported by **Dr. Keathley**. Motion was adopted unanimously.

V. **Registered Foresters**

Mr. O'Neill reported that the Governor vetoed the registered forester part of the bill, and asked the legislators to consider legislation that asks the MDNR to fix the issue. The MDNR will be scheduling a meeting sometime during the summer of 2015 to meet with stakeholders.

VI. Management Guidelines Along Recreation Corridors

Mr. O'Neill stated a guidance document ([attached](#)) has been created to help staff when managing state lands next to recreation trails. The purpose was to let trail users and loggers know their needs are being considered, and to notify staff that these are considerations that must be made. The document has been reviewed by the Resource Bureau and the MDNR management team as a tool that can be used when managing land. The document was approved by the MDNR management team.

VII. Summary of Outcome of Michigan Biomaterials Initiative Strategic Planning Session

Dr. Sharik provided a handout to the FMAC ([attached](#)) and gave a PowerPoint presentation ([attached](#)). He reported the group met on Sept. 4 at MSU to flesh out a strategic plan with 5 key topical areas. The group worked through four in detail, but did not get to the fifth (on policy issues). They created a draft document that still needs some work.

The group decided to focus on creating some sort of organizational construct for this effort. They met again last Thursday and Friday; about a dozen attended. Three proposals were submitted; one university-driven, one industry-driven and one government-driven. The group reviewed the three organizational models. The private-sector industry model was the most reviewed because of its complexity, and consisted of three components: a biomass supply/access cooperative; a policy, advocacy, education, and strategic/tactical alliance; and a products cooperative. There were two other models that were advanced, one from the USDA Forest Products Lab that was academia driven in that it would be administered by MI Tech and MSU, have an Advisory Board with diverse members, and a Director with oversight by the Executive Committee. The third model was put forth by State Representative Diandra's aide who is interested in doing something immediately. This model would fund research, focused on the forest products industry, similar to Project Green in the agricultural industry and would be administered by either MDNR or MDARD. Funds could be quickly dispersed with this model.

The group decided it needed to complete the strategic plan by revising sections 1-4 and add number 5 on policy issues, and then map the models onto the strategic plan. They also decided they need to write a proposal to secure base funding. They will then revisit the vision and mission.

A one-page document is to be completed by Dr. Sharik and Dr. Richard Kobe, MSU, to present to the MDNR and MDARD, to establish short-term funding aimed at FY15.

Dr. Sharik stated it is important to turn our forests into something valuable, to make it transformative. There is a general sense that we narrow the focus and make it the "Michigan Forest Biomaterials Initiative."

An interim board of directors was created that includes representatives from academia, industry, and government.

Dr. Sharik has been contacted by the automotive industry to bring people together that can discuss how woody biomass could work into the industry. They also want to work with other

groups that are dealing with the wood industry, rather than doing things separately. Mr. J.R. Richardson is going to try to bring the other groups on board.

The Board of Directors will be meeting monthly.

Vice Chair Melow thanked Dr. Sharik for his update.

VIII. Alternative Forest Management

Mr. O'Neill reported the MDNR has been receiving a lot of suggestions on how the MDNR should manage state forest lands.

IX. Standing Discussion Items

- **Timber Advisory Committee Update**

None

- **Legislative Update**

The updates were included as information in the FMAC meeting packets.

X. Next Meeting Date

January 7, 2014, 1:00 p.m., Michigan United Conservation Clubs, 2101 Wood Street, Lansing.

XI. Agenda Items

FSC's International Generic Indicators; Michigan's Concerns – David Price, MDNR
FMAC Attendance in Relation to Bylaws

XII. Adjournment

Vice Chair Melow adjourned the November 5, 2014 FMAC meeting at 4:29 p.m.