

**FOREST MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING (FMAC)
MEETING MINUTES
November 6, 2013**

FMAC MEMBER PRESENT

Mr. Bill Botti, Chair, Michigan Forest Association
Mr. Bill O'Neill, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)
Ms. Kim Korbecki, FMAC Assistant, MDNR
Mr. William Manson, Michigan Snowmobile Association
Mr. Marvin Roberson, Sierra Club
Dr. Donna LaCourt, Michigan Employment Development Corporation (MEDC)
Mr. Warren Suchovsky, Suchovsky Logging
Dr. Daniel Keathley, Michigan State University
Mr. Gary Melow, Michigan Biomass
Ms. Amy Trotter, Michigan United Conservation Clubs
Dr. Terry Sharik, Michigan Technological University (via conference call)

FMAC ADVISORS PRESENT

Mr. Barry Paulson, United States Forest Service (USFS), Huron-Manistee
Mr. Andy Henriksen, Natural Resources Conservation Service

PUBLIC PRESENT

Ms. Kerry Wieber, MDNR
Mr. David Price, MDNR
Mr. Bill Taylor, Lewiston Fun Ones, Lewiston
Mr. Drew Youngedyke, Huron Pines RC&D
Mr. Keith Creagh, Director, MDNR

I. Welcome

Chair Botti brought the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. **Chair Botti** asked everyone to introduce themselves.

II. Action Items

Adoption of November 6, 2013 FMAC Meeting Agenda

After discussion, the agenda was adopted with edits.

Adoption of September 4, 2013 FMAC Meeting Minutes

The minutes were adopted per the FMAC Bylaw 7-day rule. **Dr. Sharik** stated he had edits to the September 4 meeting minutes and he will work with Ms. Korbecki to have these edits made.

Adoption of FMAC 2014 Meeting Calendar

MOTION: Mr. Manson moved to adopt the 2014 calendar as presented; supported by **Dr. Keathley**. **Mr. Roberson** supported the calendar with the request that one FMAC meeting be held in the Upper Peninsula. **Ms. Trotter** pointed out the "June" date needs to be changed to July. Ms. Korbecki will make this adjustment.

Motion to adopt the 2014 meeting calendar passed unanimously.

The FMAC discussed holding field trips or scheduling meetings at different locations.

Mr. O'Neill suggested also visiting different industries (field trips) rather than having a formal meeting. Mr. O'Neill will look at alternative locations to hold the FMAC meetings.

III. Public Comment

Mr. Bill Taylor, Lewiston Fun Ones, discussed improper stump heights along trails following a timber harvest, and snowmobile trail damage from timber sales. He was told the forest would be restored to like-quality after the sale. He is requesting stumps along the trail be left 4 foot high within 4-5 ft. of the trail within the Atlanta Management Unit. He asked what the procedure is. **Mr. O'Neill** responded that the procedure varies depending on who owns the road and trail. He will look into what is going on at the Atlanta and adjacent management units. **Mr. Taylor** requested a copy of the prospectus for timber harvesting. **Mr. O'Neill** stated he would set up a meeting with all involved to find a solution to this problem.

Director Creagh, MDNR, thanked the FMAC for its letter of support for the DNR Managed Land Strategy. He thanked Chair Botti for his work on the current registered forester bill.

IV. Doctrine of Adverse Possession

Ms. Wieber gave an update on the Forest Legacy Program through the United States Forest Service. Projects include Crisp Point and the Pilgrim River project. The Forest Legacy Program is national and is very competitive. **Ms. Wieber** stated they are seeking letters of support for this year's proposal.

MOTION: Mr. Suchovsky moved to provide a letter of support for the Pilgrim River Forest project; seconded by **Dr. Keathley**.

Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Wieber explained the requirements for adverse possession and provided an excerpt from the statute ([attached](#)). The MDNR also has an encroachment initiative program dealing with long-standing trespass. The deadline to apply for this has expired, so all structures still remaining on state land will be considered encroachment.

Mr. Melow asked if adverse possession is normally brought by a private individual against the state. **Ms. Wieber** responded the public can claim adverse possession against the state, but only if a person can prove open, continuous, exclusive, notorious use since before March 1, 1973.

The FMAC discussed forest road issues in regard to encroachment.

V. Kirtland Warbler Initiative / Outreach for Jack Pine Management

Mr. Drew Youngedyke gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Kirtland's Warbler Initiative ([attached](#)). The initiative involves interagency work. The initiative was developed over 5 years ago. The Kirtland's Warbler is the rarest bird in North America and resides mainly in jack pine forest.

Mr. Roberson commented the recovery plan describes the Upper Peninsula as possible habitat areas.

Mr. Youngedyke stated the initiative is currently trying to pull in private funding so when the public revenue is taken away due to the warbler being de-listed as an endangered species, habitat funding will still be available. This means the management practices may need to consider the timber value in the management plan. **Mr. Melow** commented the value of the timber vs. chipping should be looked at and that is possibly something the FMAC could take on. **Mr. Melow** also asked if habitat management would qualify for stewardship funding and the answer was no.

Ms. Trotter asked who would benefit from being made aware of Kirtland's Warbler. Suggestions were communities in the area and local units of government.

Chair Botti asked Mr. Youngedyke what the implications of his presentation are to the FMAC. Mr. Youngedyke responded it was just for information and Huron Pines RC&D would appreciate the FMAC members making their other user groups aware of the initiative.

VI. FRD Strategic Plan

Mr. O'Neill provided an update on the Forest Resources Division (FRD) Strategic Plan. The FRD will be coming to the FMAC for comments. The FRD is trying to identify priorities for the next few years and will ask the FMAC if it agrees, or has comments or additions. The FRD strategic team met this week and identified goals and objective within the goals. It has also finalized its mission statement. **Mr. O'Neill** stated informal communication or formal communication by the FMAC would be appreciated and he will be updating the FMAC on a regular basis. **Mr. O'Neill** commented he will engage the FMAC more fully once the FRD has a completed product.

The FMAC discussed and provided some recommendations to Mr. O'Neill.

VII. Qualified Forest (QF) Program Stats

Mr. Shine was unable to attend this FMAC meeting to provide program statistics. Mr. O'Neill gave a brief update on the status of the QF program.

Mr. Manson asked if the QF program was the program with multiple acres the public is allowed to hunt and fish on. **Mr. O'Neill** responded that is the Commercial Forest Program, aka Commercial Forest Act (CFA).

Ms. Trotter provided the following information:

- **Existing QFP:** The first action of MDARD was to develop application materials for those existing landowners in QFP to enroll into the new program, sending out letters to the 767 existing QFP landowners. They have received more than 300 positive responses, while about 12 have indicated their desire to drop out. The deadline for existing QFP landowners to enroll in the new program is November 30 or they will lose their tax exemption. At least one more mailing will occur to those that haven't yet responded, but additional communications to this effect would be helpful if you connect to landowners.
- **Existing CFA** landowners also may transfer to the new QFP, of which there are many inquiries but only about 10 applications (covering about 500 acres) actually moving forward. There may be some issues with this requiring additional legislation. 1) The pop-up still occurs even if they transfer from CFA to QFP in the first year of this law (an amnesty period where no penalties are incurred). This is likely a major disincentive to transferring programs. 2) CFA landowners who transfer to QFP but then pulls out within the first 7 years may be responsible for BOTH the CFA and QFP withdrawal penalties (this is unclear and may also need legislation to clarify intent).
- **Treatment Schedule:** It seems as though many landowners with existing plans may be unfamiliar with what is actually in their plans in terms of treatment schedules. Filling out the paperwork on the treatment schedule (so that MDARD can provide reminders and monitor compliance) has proven difficult for some. Qualified foresters may need to assist their clients with this paperwork as an additional service.

VIII. Regional Forest Planning Process & Audit Update

Mr. Price provided an update of the Regional State Forest Management Plans ([attached](#)). The FRD now has three finalized plans for comment and approval by the MDNR Director. The plans will be going for information to the NRC at the November 7 meeting. If there are no issues, the plans will then be going to the NRC for action at the December meeting.

Mr. Price provided an update on the FRD certification audit held October 7-11, 2013 ([attached](#)). The SFI auditors looked at four management units. The FSC auditors looked at 3 management units. The auditors expressed their thanks to FRD for a good audit.

Chair Botti asked if the SFI and FSC standards are consistent. **Mr. Price** responded FSC is developing new standards in 2015 based on international indicators. The SFI is also suggesting changes to its standards and FRD expects that to happen somewhere in the future.

Mr. Melow asked if anyone (i.e. the state, people of the state, forest products industry) has benefited from certification. **Mr. Price** responded he believes research is taking place to determine the answer to that question. **Mr. O'Neill** added there is some analysis going on as well. **Mr. Melow** asked about the benefits of certification. **Mr. Price** responded one benefit of certification is that it has changed how FRD manages state forests. The FRD improved documentation, public communication and regeneration scheduling.

Mr. O'Neill stated that if the FMAC would like to discuss forest certification further he would be happy to have FRD staff attend another FMAC meeting. He also commented, for information, that FRD has never had a major correction action request (CAR).

Chair Botti requested FRD keep the FMAC updated.

IX. Standing Discussion Items

• Timber Advisory Committee Update

- The TAC met last month and took action that had to do with the recent federal report on renewable energy which was taking a broad look at the global energy policy. The TAC made comments on the draft report with respect to biomass power being overlooked in the federal report.
- The TAC is moving forward with an inter-department biomass group. The group is doing two things: 1) educating the forest community on the role of biomass; and 2) examining policy and influence policy to make biomass more of a presence in Michigan.
- The TAC met with the USFS last week to try to understand the process of timber sales on USFS forest lands.
- Dr. LaCourt gave a presentation on the MEDC and how it relates to the forest products industry.
- The TAC talked to the sustainability group which gave an update. This group would like to talk about supply geographically.

Biomaterials Conference Update

Dr. Sharik provided an update on the Biomaterials Conference that took place in October in Traverse City. The proceedings of the conference will be made public soon on the Michigan Tech and SAF websites. **Dr. Sharik** asked the FMAC their opinion on how to move forward. **Mr. Suchovsky** mentioned secondary and tertiary manufacturers who might in the future consider biomaterials in their processes that were not present at the conference. **Dr. Sharik** responded there needs to be a group that can determine who would best fit in and can contribute to this effort. Discussion ensued.

Dr. Sharik will be sending out the proceedings to all who attended the conference and will try to identify who the key constituents that are needed and were not represented at this conference. **Mr. O'Neill** commented he believes there is a need for further biomaterials discussion.

Mr. Suchovsky asked about the FMAC weighing in on the FRD budget. **Mr. O'Neill** replied that would probably still be a few months out.

Mr. Melow asked what the FMAC needs to look at annually or semi-annually to assist the DNR. He suggested putting this subject on the next FMAC meeting agenda.

- **Legislative Update**

The legislative updates were provided in the FMAC meeting packet (attached).

X. Next Meeting Date

January 15, 2014

Location: MUCC, Lansing

XI. Agenda Items

Review of Bylaws

FMAC Membership Representation

Election of Chair

FMAC annual/semi-annual Subjects to Look at

Oil & Gas Lease Classification Process

Members Give Update on What Their Organizations do

Mr. O'Neill stated the FMAC should inform him if there are subjects it would like a presentation on.

XII. Adjournment

Chair Botti adjourned the November 6, 2013 FMAC meeting at 4:03 p.m.