

Timber Advisory Council (TAC) Meeting Meeting Notes

December 2, 2016

Attending: Sue Tangora, Donna LaCourt, Gary Melow, Mike McCuiston, Jon Lamy, Deb Begalle, Bill O'Neill, Ben Schram, JR Richardson, Nick Monkevich, Larry Leefers, Brenda Haskill, Dave Neumann, Jerry Grossman; on the phone: Charlie Becker, Margaret Minerick, and Dan Kennedy

1. Gary Melow moved to accept the minutes of the previous meeting; supported by Jerry Grossman. Motion approved.
2. Review of 2017 meeting dates and times as noted on the agenda. The August meeting will be adjusted to align with the Upper Peninsula State Fair in Escanaba and potentially be held at the Verso office.
 - a. Jerry Grossman moved to accept the 2017 meeting dates with the proposed change in August as noted above; supported by Gary Melow. Motion approved.
3. Dr. Larry Leefers gave his report with a supporting PowerPoint for three reports he has produced in 2016. He provided the Timber Advisory Council (TAC) with some key takeaway points and items to consider as 2017 goals are developed.
 - a. 2014 data was reviewed in which the \$20 billion goal and 10% increase of forest related jobs was met (from Forest Products Summit goals).
 - b. 2) Regional data
 - c. 3) Larry reviewed draft data of the DNR's contribution to the forest products economy.

The council members took turns offering items as possible goals for 2017 and they are noted below:

Possible Targets/Goals for the next 5 years starting in 2017 for the Timber Advisory Council

- a. U.S. Forest Service timber sale acreage increase and increase forest management
- b. Bio energy: substitute markets for residue; build an ally with Board of Education for vocational training importance
- c. Create an international branding scheme for Michigan wood products, specifically hardwoods
- d. Increase bioenergy in Michigan
- e. Vertical integration
- f. Improve markets for by-products
- g. Increase vocational training and increase the value placed on trades
- h. Project 10 year sustainability harvesting on state land; (include QF lands once database is able to include CF; can be done now with state land information - being careful how we aggregate the information)
- i. Use partners proactively to reach private landowners more effectively (Grouse Unlimited, etc.)
- j. Increase enrollment of private lands in forest management; only 5-6% private lands currently enrolled

- k. Investigate areas that need additional study/information; what needs to be researched and studied further? (Example: lost revenue study on FS timber: what are our opportunities in value-added “stuff”; what are our value-added opportunities in Michigan; is there a volume type of study that would be helpful in some way; pick 3-5 study areas and use the talented people we have to nail it down; lack of wood is not our issue; figure out where our gap is through analysis)
- l. Research what factors affect businesses; power, shipping, taxes, etc.? What are the stumbling blocks to improving the environment for businesses in Michigan?
- m. Improve forest productivity: forest health improvement; fire management improvement, reduce risk of catastrophic events; and generate broad public support for good forest management
- n. Increase capital employment; get the next generation employed/interested in logging;
- o. Make sure vocational tech includes forest industry skills
- p. Get new landowners into the QF program that aren’t predisposed for management (the hard sell category)
- q. Assist in creating long-term (K-12) educational tools & information on the forest industry
- r. Promote policies to support existing industries and create new industries
- s. Find champions for our industry and tap their knowledge base
- t. Maintain what we have – no back sliding – make sure the business environment in the state doesn’t move backwards
- u. Focus on infrastructure improvement in Michigan; specify what needs to be improved
- v. CLT plant; target and achieve a company to build it
- w. Develop a more targeted forest marketing campaign
- x. Gap analysis for industries: what is made here and what is not; identify the ones that complement and strengthen the existing
- y. R&D; develop more marketing for Michigan wood products both statewide, nationally, and internationally
- z. Initiate a study on underutilized tree species; find a use for a product that no one currently wants or that there is an excess of

The listed options for goals will be circulated and ranked by vote by each council member before the next council meeting.

- 4. Dan Kennedy provided an update on the northern long-eared bat. White nose syndrome has been found on the west coast in California; disease continues to spread. Handouts were circulated to the group.
 - a. Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP): all forest management activities included and anything associated with timber harvest practices will be included; bat distribution across all 3 states (MI, MN, WI) and how timber management activities affect bat populations/habitat;
 - b. Four bat species covered in the HCP: Indiana Bat, NLEB, tri-colored bat, little brown bat (not currently federally listed but being reviewed to see if it should be listed by USFW, may happen by 2023)
 - c. 90+% of the species have died in last 5 years, no idea if the last 10% will survive or not. The path is likely that the bat will end up on the endangered species list; Bill conveyed his concern that the reprieve we got from the 4(d) rule will go away and the impacts could be immense.

The council needs to stay connected and have a voice in the HCP, and provide a resource to those crafting/authoring the HCP.

JR Richardson moved to set a subcommittee to stay connected with the HCP members on NLB; supported by Jerry Grossman. Motion passed. Volunteers for the subcommittee are Charlie Becker and Mike McCuiston. Don Mankee, DNR, will also be part of that.

5. Bill O'Neill provided the forest marketing update:
 - a. Recap of that how the Wildlife Council was set up; \$1 from every hunting and fishing license goes towards education and marketing campaign. The DNR/FRD has started an enhanced marketing campaign for FY 17 and asked for additional investment next year to expand. ; FRD through its contractor is doing research to determine what the public knows about sustainable forestry.
 - b. GUD Marketing has been hired by FRD to help us tell its story.
 - 3-5 year plan on marketing DNR forestry, sustainable forestry and public land management
 - same marketing firm That the Wildlife Council uses;
 - \$400-500,000 worth of work in FY 17, possibly doubling next year up to \$1 million per year;
 - 80% of the conversation will take place south of Mt. Pleasant where 80% of the population lives
 - hoping to have initial results back from first survey before the next TAC meeting
6. Sue Tangora provided an update on Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) and Heterobasidion Root Disease (HRD); Current recommendation is to treat the stumps of Red pine plantations within a distance of known outbreak. DNR is considering a distance of 5 miles. The Department is discussing the implications of HRD and the treatment advisory zones. The DNR will be reaching out to loggers, industry people, and others because treatment of stumps will have a cost and the need for equipment. Jerry made the suggestion to involve Scott Robbins working with SFI training. Jerry was also going to send a link to Pesticide application license exemptions
7. Brenda Haskill provided a one page update upon achievements in the marketing & utilization program. Plans for outreach and trainings to the logging and sawmills sectors is planned along with continued connections between FRD staff and industry representatives through key meetings in 2017.
8. Donna LaCourt gave a good overview of the exporting of forest products in Michigan, how well it aligns with other states, and the large picture of international exports. Donna will provide a short summary to the council with a request for how it can support the export work that is ongoing.
9. Gary Melow gave an update on current energy legislation related to various bills and issues – bills sitting on the floor waiting for Lame Duck – only 6 more days of session as of December 2, 2016.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:05 pm.