

## MISSOURI FOREST RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Farm Bureau Meeting Room

Jefferson City, MO

December 13, 2011

### MEETING MINUTES

**Welcome & Introductions** – Chair Wayne Lovelace called the meeting to order and introductions were made. The following members were in attendance:

Lisa Allen, Mo. Dept. of Conservation

Joe Alley, Mo. Society of American Foresters

Bob Ball, Mo. Forest and Woodland Assoc. of Missouri

Anastasia Becker, Mo. Dept. of Agriculture

Peter Becker, Eastern Ozarks Forestry Council

Mike Brown, USDA APHIS PPQ

Scott Brundage, The Walnut Council

Gene Brunk, Missouri Community Forestry Council

Mark Coggeshall, Mo. Nut Growers Assoc.

Fred Crouse, Tree Farm Committee

Gene Garrett, Mo. Center for Agroforestry

Nate Goodrich, Natural Resources Conservation Service

John Heckman, Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation

Roy Hengerson, Missouri Chapter of Sierra Club

Steve Jarvis, Mo. Forest Products Assoc.

Shelby Jones, Mo. Consulting Foresters Assoc.

Ed Keyser, Conservation Federation of Mo.

Wayne Lovelace, Mo. Nurseryman's Assoc.

Steve Mahfood, The Nature Conservancy

Dave Murphy, Conservation Federation of Mo.

Kelly Smith, Missouri Farm Bureau

Hank Stelzer, University of Missouri Extension

Richard Stricklin, Top of the Ozarks RC&D

Steven Thurman, US Army, Ft. Leonard Wood

Jerry Van Sambeek, USFS Northern Research Station

Charly Studyvin, Mark Twain Nat'l Forest

**Others in attendance:**

Donna Baldwin, Mo. Dept. of Conservation

Michael Bill, Mo. Dept. of Conservation

Hank Dorst, Mark Twain Forest Watchers

John Fleming, Consulting Forester

Matt Jones, Mo. Society of American Foresters

Doug Kulik, Mo. Farm Bureau

Rich Dickerman, Mo. Farm Bureau

Bill McGuire, Bill McGuire Conservation LLC

Stuart Miller, Mo. Dept. of Conservation

Tony Parks, Current River Pole Co.

Lisa Potter, Mo. Dept. of Conservation

Brian Schweiss, Mo. Dept. of Conservation

Tony Stafford, Mo. Dept. of Agriculture

John Tuttle, Mo. Dept. of Conservation

Denise Vaughn, University of Missouri student

Chair Lovelace thanked Farm Bureau for providing meeting facilities.

**Marketing Forest Products** – Tony Parks gave a presentation on how improving forest health sustains rural communities. He noted that he is a native of Mississippi, and worked as a managing forester and eventually CEO for Anderson-Tully, the largest private wetlands timber company in the U.S.

Mr. Parks reported that his presentation today is about indicators of a healthy forest, and this is the first general meeting where he is presenting this data. He added that the data is not a snapshot of current conditions, but it's the best blurry picture we have, and represents the trends of our forests and forest health. He asked the group how we define a healthy forest? The group listed diversity (plant and animal), high quality wood products, sustains native fish and wildlife, net growth, stocking levels, water quality, absence of invasive species, stand structure, pest management. How do we know we are headed in the right direction with our forest management in state? Through measureables.

Shelby Jones reported that basically, the forest data came from FIA and TPO data that's gathered every year in Missouri. They looked at trends from 1989 to 2009. They picked several points to look at - acreage by ownership, total volume of sawtimber by ownership, growth, mortality, net growth. They had data from industry on market and market prices. They looked at statewide data, but also the 32-county "Ozark" region (Mr. Jones has a list). Each table has a different set of errors. When we look at county data, the error goes up to range of +/- 25%. On statewide basis, error goes up to range of +/- 2%. Since we did this study, there is 2010 data available.

Mr. Parks reported he used FIA data to evaluate growing stock, saw timber volume, other health factors, for timberland only. He looked at acres of timber ownership: in 2009 – MDC at 693,191 acres, USFS at 1.4 million, and private land at 12.5 million. The healthy forest indicators were stocking level, stand age, volume per acre, and mortality. He looked at basal area classes on all three ownerships and also plotted what is the ideal curve (allows forest to be productive). He looked at the percent of land above 80% in preferred basal area. He looked at stocking level – and noted overstocked % acres is increasing on all three ownerships. For example, in 1989 the USFS had 9% of their acreage with a stocking level of 120 or greater; in 2004 it went to 19%, and in 2009 it's 24%. Black oak trees typically live 80-100 years, and we're approaching that 100 years now. He looked at stand age, mature % acres (81+) is also increasing on all three ownerships. Volume per acre is increasing in all three ownerships – nearly doubled since 1989. Mortality is increasing on all three ownerships. He feels our biggest issue is on private land – and how do you address that? He calculates volume and value of sawtimber growing stock on all three ownership is worth 6.4 billion dollars. He reported the economic impact of saw timber is for every \$1 of stumpage a landowner is paid, it returns \$5.10 to local economy.

Mr Parks admitted that MFPA's initial objective was to support requests for increased harvest on state lands, but they realized the error of this approach and were now focused on a desire to improve forest health.

In conclusion, 1) Missouri's forests are growing, but 2) the forests are aging 3) stocking levels are increasing, and 4) mortality is on the rise. 5) Missouri's forests are valuable and 6) forest health may be enhanced by more harvesting 7) sawmills need more timber to run at full capacity, 8) rural communities will benefit from much needed economic stimulus.

Peter Becker pointed out that the role of increased harvesting in improving forest health was not substantiated by the information presented and therefore represented an opinion, not a conclusion. He also noted that his analyses indicated that mortality standardized by acreage increased from 1989 to 2009, but that mortality standardized by volume was level over that period. Unfortunately, statistical analysis of these trends was not possible due to lack of access to data that would permit estimation of the appropriate errors.

Dr. Becker advocated that MFPA work with MoFRAC to set specific goals and timelines to improve forest management and harvest practices to improve forest health, but there was no response to this suggestion from Mr. Parks.

Hank Dorst asked Tony and he confirmed that he is negotiating a stewardship contract with the Mark Twain National Forest that will give him more access to timber.

Scott Brundage suggested that MoFRAC form a blue ribbon committee to discuss the issues raised in Mr. Parks' presentation, but no action was taken.

Chair Lovelace thanked Mr. Parks for presenting at today's meeting.

## OLD BUSINESS

- Minutes - Chair Lovelace noted we need to review and approve the minutes to the September 15, 2011 meeting. Ed Keyser noted he submitted a slight change to the wording in the discussion about prescribed fire to clarify his statement about the fact that any fire in hardwood forests may result in a decline in quality of trees/logs and lower profit in future log sales. Donna Baldwin will make the correction. With no further changes to the minutes, a motion was made by Gene Garrett, second by Gene Brunk, and approved. Chair Lovelace noted we also need to review and approve the minutes to the August 26, 2009 meeting. A motion was made by Richard Stricklin and seconded by Gene Brunk to approve the minutes as written. With all in favor, the minutes were approved.
- Website Disclaimer – Chair Lovelace noted a request has been received to add a disclaimer to the website regarding postings: *"Items posted on this website are for information only and may not reflect the position of all members."* Peter Becker suggested adding the word "organizations" at the end to conform with the notice on MoFRAC letterhead. He did not see the need for such a notice on the website,

but suggested that if it was posted, it be on the homepage but not all the individual pages. With no motion needed, the disclaimer was accepted as proposed.

- New Member – Chair Lovelace reported we received a request to officially accept The Quail & Upland Wildlife Federation as a member. Representative will be John Heckmann (alternate: Nick Prough). All were in favor so the new membership was approved.
- Bylaws - Vote to amend the by-laws as discussed at the September meeting: *"Section C. Council Membership : "The Council shall be composed of members as listed on Appendix A (attached), which will be revised upon approval of new members," and "Such entities shall submit a formal request for membership to the Council listing representative and contact information. This may be done electronically or by letter to any executive committee member. "* A motion was made by Richard Stricklin, seconded by Gene Brunk, to amend the bylaws as proposed. The motion was approved.

**"Get to Know the Council"** - Chairman Lovelace noted it's been suggested to have a member to give a brief summary of their background that brings them to MoFRAC, and today it will be Shelby Jones. Mr. Jones noted he represents the Missouri Consulting Foresters Association (MCFA), a group of professional foresters with a total of 48 members. He noted the group has grown steadily over last 10 years and is now carrying a considerable work load in terms of management planning, timber inventory and timber sales. The workload will likely increase in the future as the Call Before You Cut campaign brings potential clients to them. The association needs younger foresters who want to build companies – the potential business is here. He concluded that MCFA is putting together a list of timber buyers that will only be available to their members to serve their client base.

**Report from the Nominating Committee** – The nominating committee chair, Scott Brundage, noted they put together a slate of potential officers:

- **Secretary** - need to elect a new secretary as Martha Clark is stepping down. **Hank Dorst** was nominated and accepts the nomination.
- **Vice Chair** – (Bob Ball will move up to Chair). Mr. Brundage noted he asked **Steve Jarvis** and he accepted the nomination.

Mr. Brundage added that they had received a request for 2 nominations per office, but the Nominating Committee did not think that was necessary, so we only have one for each. Chair Lovelace asked for nominations from the floor. With none received, nominations ceased. A motion was made by Ed Keyser and seconded by Tony Stafford to accept the nominations as submitted. Motion carried.

**Forest & woodland Association of missouri Update** – Bob Ball noted this was intended to be a working session, but in the interest of time, it may be a homework assignment. He asked folks to look at the new brochure he had distributed, and send him your feedback on how FWAM can achieve success (can email him at [fwam.trees@gmail.com](mailto:fwam.trees@gmail.com)) . Mr. Ball noted they must address 1) issues/concerns, 2) outreach/networking, 3) grow our opportunities for membership. Mr. Ball's goal is to have 2,600 to 3,000 members at the end of three years. He asked folks to jot down ideas or send him an email. Mr. Keyser added that you do not have to be a forest landowner to be a member of this organization.

Mr. Ball also reported that administration of Tree Farm will be turned over to FWAM and will continue to operate in same manner. He added that \$20,000 of FWAM budget comes from the Tree Farm administration side. There is a strategic planning session coming up. They are also applying for a USFS grant to develop a marketing plan to reach Missouri landowners and promote woodland management. He concluded by reporting the toll free number is 1-855-THE-FWAM.

#### **2012 Farm Bill Update** – Bill McGuire gave a presentation as follows:

The House and Senate Agriculture Committees were given a November 1, 2011 deadline to deliver \$23 billion in cost reduction to the Super Committee. The target date was missed due to delays that included budget scoring by the CBO –Congressional Budget Office. The product might have become the 2011 Farm Bill but the Super Committee effort was not successful.

Farm Bill programs without a baseline include: WRP, GRP, BCAP, SURE – Supplemental Agriculture Disaster Program, and REAP – Rural Energy for America Program (1/3 of 2008 Farm Bill costs that was not commodity programs, crop insurance or food stamps). This represents \$9-10 billion.

A bipartisan, bicameral proposal was reportedly crafted that would have reduced Farm Bill spending by the targeted \$23 billion with \$15 billion from commodity programs, \$6 billion from Conservation, and \$4 billion from the food stamp program. This provided about \$2 billion to help fund programs without a baseline. These reductions are on-top of reductions made by the 2012 Agriculture Appropriations Bill (\$1.2 billion between the Conservation and Energy Title mandatory funding – EQIP, WRP, GRP, WHIP, FRPP, CSP, REAP and BCAP were reduced).

Some reductions reportedly in the aborted 2011 Farm Bill are:

- Total reduction to the Conservation Title – 6.3 billion over 10 years.
- CRP - \$3.8 billion (32 to 25 million acres)
- CSP – reduced by \$2 billion (10%)
- Combine EQIP and WHIP and funding reduced by \$1.865 billion (10%)

- Combine the Cooperative Conservation Partnership, Agriculture Water Enhancement Program, Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative and Great Lakes Restoration Initiative into a single program and fund at \$1 billion
- WRP, GRP and FRPP combined into a single easement program with a 10-year baseline of \$3.2 billion
- Energy Title – REAP funding reduced but continued and BCAP allowed to expire but could receive up to \$75 million in annual appropriations

Failure of the Super Committee to strike a deal triggers automatic budget cuts (sequestration) but there is a 1 year gap before they take effect. This gives Congress time to find a better way to reduce spending. Sequestration would mean (regarding the Farm Bill):

- \$15.6 billion reduction is the reported estimate.
- Food stamps and CRP are exempt from sequestration.
- Largest reductions would likely be to crop and revenue insurance.
- Doesn't change reductions to conservation and energy programs already made by the 2012 Agriculture Appropriations Bill.
- Doesn't change challenges of no baseline for some programs.

The Farm Bill timing could go several ways.

- 2011 – not likely
- Spring of 2012 – could happen but it is an election year and attention will increasingly be diverted to campaign issues
- Fall of 2012 – not likely because of election issues and potential for a changed political landscape
- 2013 - one year extension of the current Farm Bill is the most likely scenario for reasons including the impact sequestration could have on a new Farm Bill

The above concepts and Ideas are likely to stay alive in continuing Farm Bill deliberations but might or might not become reality. Much can happen between now and completion of the next Farm Bill.

Farm Bill aspects of forest interest as the process continues:

- Reduced EQIP funding could lead to less funding for forest conservation projects.
- Reductions to funding for conservation programs is likely to further stress USDA technical assistance budgets and capacity to deliver or obtain technical assistance support.

- Reductions to WRP will mean less forested wetland restorations.
- Loss of WHIP (as a program or via funding reduction) would mean less attention to forest management opportunity on the wildlife side of technical assistance.
- BCAP (if the program survives) lacks safeguards to deter conversion of diverse native forest or plantation forest to energy crops (including herbaceous crops) with program funded assistance.
- Crop insurance is not linked to Conservation Compliance or Swampbuster so if crop insurance becomes the “safety net”, forest conversions (particularly forested wetlands) could increase.

**Sandstone Mining in the Missouri River Hills Forests?** – Stuart Miller gave the following presentation about the rising demand for high quality, silica sand used in the recovery of natural gas by hydraulic fracturing. He noted when you look at a generalized geologic map of Missouri, commercial deposits of the St. Peters sandstone are found in an arc along the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers, beginning in central Missouri, through the St. Louis area, down to Cape Girardeau. Missouri's deposit are of very high quality and close to cheap rail and barge transportation to carry the sandstone to the natural gas sites in the Eastern United States, Texas and in the Great Plains. Some well-known outcrops include Graham Cave State Park, a significant cultural resource area, the glades at Danville CA and the watershed and bluffs of LaBarque Creek CA in St. Louis County. The St. Peters Sandstone has been mined since the 19<sup>th</sup> century for commercial glass and high quality crystal ware. The uniformity of sand purity, grain size and shape are very important commercial concerns when used in the hydraulic fracturing process. The St. Peters sandstone deposits also are thick enough and close enough to the surface to mine cheaply.

He showed a photo of a typical mine site in Franklin County which gives idea of topography and landscapes we're talking about. One of the things we need to understand is that this mining does not require the same level of reclamation as in coal mining. In Missouri, we won't see a lot of hydraulic fracturing like they will see in other states, but they are shipping the sandstone all over the world. The last portion of the presentation explained the hydraulic fracturing process including how the sand is used to hold open the fractures in the shale deposits to recover the natural gas.

On November 10, 2011, the Energy Department warns of environmental toll of current gas drilling practices – a federal energy panel issued a blunt warning to shale gas drillers and their regulators today, saying they need to step up efforts to protect public health and the environment or risk a backlash that stifles further development.

Bottom line – there is not likely to be hydraulic fracturing in Missouri, but mining of the sandstone will continue.

**Call Before You Cut Update** – Brian Schweiss gave the following presentation:

One of Forestry Division's stretch goals is "*engaging Missouri landowners to actively care for their woods*". We implemented the Call Before You Cut campaign in 2009, with the goal of reaching landowners considering a timber sale. Parts of the campaign include a website, hotline number, paid advertisements, and news releases. Folks that call the hotline get a packet of information that includes:

- Brochure on using a consultant
- Master Logger and Professional Timber Harvester training
- Consulting foresters directory
- Timber sale how-to guide
- Sample timber sale contract
- Educational brochures on water quality and forest management

How to service requests:

- MDC Foresters
- MDC Private Land Conservationist
- NRCS Foresters
- Missouri Consulting Foresters Association

MDC's timber sale assistance guidelines are:

- Provide timber sale assistance only to landowners practicing sustainable forestry via implementing non-timber sale practices:
  - Certified Tree Farms
  - Implemented Project plans
  - Implemented Stewardship plans

Challenges and Opportunities:

- The need for greater awareness on how to conduct a timber sale
  - Forester professional advice on timber sales and management of woodlands
  - Information in the hands of landowners
  - Awareness of trained professionals in the timber industry

Mr. Schweiss reported that MDC has done quite a bit of advertising the campaign – in newspapers, Rural Electric Coop magazine, the Missouri Conservationist magazine, the deer and turkey regulations booklet, etc. In May of 2009, we averaged about 25 calls per

month, and then things dwindled off. They picked back up in the fall of 2011, especially in October and November, to approximately 260 calls in November. He reported we've had a total of 660 calls so far. We are tracking acreage of callers, and we see about 40% are 50 acres or less. Good distribution of acreage owners. Total of 80,740 acres reported. We're received good feedback through Consulting Foresters. A bit of negative feedback that assisting small landowners is not cost effective for them, and a few vocal loggers complaining to MDC and MFPA about the program.

Question that arises, again, is how to deal with those small landowners and encourage them to get professional assistance? Mr. Brunk noted that MDC may need to redirect their attention to those small landowners - they like personal attention. Even if MDC can't help with the timber sale, they can make initial contact and refer them to a consulting forester. They appreciate the help and feel good about the service. Mr. Brundage noted the other side of that is when they get a small acreage of low value timber; it's not enough to get a logger interested – economically the consultants can't come out ahead with that. He added that he does not like the sample timber sale contract in the packet. John Tuttle noted that MDC supports it. Mr. Brundage noted it indicates to that landowner that he can do it himself, and that sends them down the wrong road.

**MDC Silvicultural Standards Detail Position** – Michael Bill reported he has been tasked with developing the Sustainable Forest Management Guidelines for Missouri, a comprehensive set of BMPs. He reported he grew up on a small family farm in Illinois and understands what it means to have a good land ethic and provide for future generations. He received a BS and MS in Forestry at SIU, and research focused on forest roads effects on stream channel morphology. He worked as a college instructor for West Virginia for 2 years. He also has worked as resource forester in Eminence on Sunklands CA, and through that has had the privilege to collaborate and work with several of the groups represented on MoFRAC.

Definitions:

- Stewardship – the conducting, supervising, or managing of something, especially the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.
- Sustainability – meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need.

What are the Sustainable Forest Management Guidelines?

- Comprehensive set of best management practices that are scientifically sound and socially acceptable, that are the minimal standards which will conserve and maintain the State's water quality, wildlife habitat, soil productivity, cultural resources, visual quality, and timber resources for present and future generations.

Mr. Bill showed a matrix comparing other states with BMP manuals. He's looked more closely at other states with voluntary Sustainable Forest Management Guidelines – Pennsylvania, Minnesota, and Wisconsin (for example).

He then outlined Missouri's resources already developed:

- Watershed Protection Practices manual
- Woody Biomass BMP's
- Forest Land Action Guidelines
- Forest Action Plan (formally known as the Forest Resource Assessment & Strategy)
- Forest Management for Missouri Landowners

Process:

- Stakeholder driven process through MoFRAC.
- Will cover most, if not all, aspects as it relates to Missouri forest sustainability.
- Will build upon existing documents
- Will remain voluntary
- Site-level (this will not be landscape planning tool)
- Guidelines will help explain how to protect and sustain the resource not whether to manage or which management activities are needed.
- Guidelines will be scientifically-sound, practical, and economically feasible.
- Will be periodically revised and monitored for success.

How it will be used:

- Intended audience is resource managers as well as landowners and contractors.
- Will help landowners and resource managers conduct forest management while ensuring long-term sustainability of the forest resource
- Will be referenced by land trusts to be included in conservation easement language.
- Could be integrated into Professional Timber Harvester Training.

Final Product:

- Will look similar to Wisconsin's manual
- It will integrate the Woody Biomass BMP manual, the Watershed Protection Practices Manual, but will not replace them.
- Will have a companion booklet to handout to landowners that will generally address each issue
- Will be available on the web and CD

- Will have a revision schedule every 5 years or when regulations change.
- Adoption by MoFRAC.

Peter Becker suggested that use of the Guidelines should include being referenced in timber harvest contracts so they can be shortened to a manageable level. He also wondered why the Guidelines could not replace the Woody Biomass BMP Manual and the Watershed Practices Manual if these would be incorporated. This could help to avoid confusion resulting from multiple versions.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Party Woody Biomass Harvest Verification Update/Recommendation** – Mr. Brundage noted that at the March meeting of MoFRAC, the chairman appointed a committee to take the lead and bring recommendations back to the group. Links to the background information and recommendations were provided to the group prior to the meeting and he hoped people had time to review them prior to today's meeting.

- Professional foresters will do the audit (any individual who holds a BS in Forestry from a regionally accredited college or university with a minimum of two years' experience).
- Will include a two day training course provided by MDC, MFPA, and MU. Curriculum has been developed.
- Training sites will vary but will likely correlate to woody biomass harvest sites.
- MDC will give each course participant a certificate upon completion of training and verify their satisfactory completion of the course.
- Audits will be completed as soon as practical after harvest.
- Criteria was determined but not ranked.
- The woody biomass harvesting entity will pay for the audit.

Gene Garrett asked about appeal process for those that don't agree with the audit? Scott noted the auditor will turn their score/report over to the entity commissioning the audit report, and they will make final determination. Mr. Stafford noted he thought it would be the state agency that is awarding the subsidies to the biomass facility.

Kelly Smith asked if the reports will be made available to the public or anyone who requests them. Discussion ensued about whether it's public record. Mr. Stafford stated that it's possible that the Sunshine Law would require the records be released. Hank Dorst felt that if landowner's names were simply omitted from the audit form, there would not be an issue.

Chair Lovelace asked if the group would like to vote on supporting the committee report as submitted. Dr. Becker stated he doesn't think we're there yet – that Eastern Ozarks Forestry Council feels strongly that some issues still need to be addressed. Specifically, EOFC would like to see erosion control structures, retention of 1/3 of harvest residues,

minimal stand stocking levels, and the 10% limit on skid trails and log decks moved to the Pass/Fail section. EOFC also believes that the curriculum must specify the sampling procedures to be employed in assessing compliance.

Mr. Ball asked if the committee can come back at the March meeting with final document? John Tuttle noted they feel this is final. Mr. Keyser made a motion to vote on accepting the report, seconded by John Tuttle (on behalf of MDC). Gene Garrett asked what accepting it does for us? Mr. Brundage noted the progress made to date will be accepted. Gene amended the motion to accept the document with the stipulation that it's still a work in progress with additional revisions required. The motion was seconded by Steve Mahfood. With only two members opposed, the amended motion was approved. Mr. Ball noted it should be understood that it will reflect today's discussion.

**Unregulated Logging Industry Update/Discussion** – Scott Brundage asked this topic be tabled for today.

**Wrap Up and Future Meeting Dates** – March 6, June 13, September 11, and December 11. All at Farm Bureau.

The meeting was then adjourned.

**DRAFT**