

Missouri Forest Resources Advisory Council

September 7, 2016

Meeting Minutes

Welcome & Introductions – Rebecca Landewe welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. The following were in attendance:

Lisa Allen, Mo. Dept. of Conservation
Donna Baldwin, Mo. Dept. of Conservation
Lynn Barnickol, Mo. Consulting Forester Assoc.
Kurt Boeckman, Mo. Dept. of Nat. Resources
Mike Brown, USDA APHIS PPQ
Scott Brundage, Mo. Consulting For Assoc.
Gene Brunk, Mo. Community Forestry Council
Jack Courtney, USFS Mark Twain Nat'l Forest
Michael Crump, USFS Mark Twain Nat'l Forest
Susan Flader, LAD Foundation
Gene Garrett, Mo. Center for Agroforestry
Justine Gartner, Mo. Dept. of Conservation
Nate Goodrich, Nat. Resources Cons. Service

Jason Green, Pioneer Forest
Mike Hoffmann, Forest & Woodland Assoc. of Mo.
Jason Jensen, Mo. Dept. of Conservation
Rebecca Landewe, The Nature Conservancy
Brian Schweiss, Mo. Dept. of Conservation
Sherri Schwenke, USFS Mark Twain Nat'l Forest
Kelly Smith, Mo. Farm Bureau
Hank Stelzer, Univ. of Mo. Dept. of Forestry
Steve Thurman, US Army, Ft. Leonard Wood
John Tuttle, Mo. Dept. of Conservation
Jerry Van Sambeek, USFS No. Research Station
Dusty Walter, MU Ag. Exp. Station
Steve Westin, Mo. Dept. of Conservation

Review and Approve Minutes – Chair Rebecca Landewe asked if anyone had changes to the meeting minutes from the June 8, 2016 meeting. With no changes noted, Gene Brunk made a motion to approve them as written; the motion was seconded by Mike Hoffmann. The minutes were then approved as written.

Old Business

- Bylaws – Chair Rebecca Landewe noted that at last meeting we discussed revisions to the bylaws and asked a subcommittee to finalize the proposed changes. She noted that the two major changes included Council Procedures and Council Decisions. The revisions will better clarify the voting process and the way we keep track of council membership. The group then reviewed the exact wording of the proposed changes. Rebecca noted that because the proposed changes were not distributed the minimum of 20 days prior to the meeting, we will vote on these changes at the December meeting. If you have comments or changes, please send them to Rebecca in advance of the December meeting.
- Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri (FWAM) membership – Rebecca reported that we need to have an official vote to add the Association to the Council. Hank Stelzer made a motion to accept their membership. Scott Brundage seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Mike Hoffmann added that he has sent a request to organizations in FWAM to update their information, and asked that information be submitted to him by the end of October.

Feral Hogs in Missouri – Alan Leary, Wildlife Management Coordinator, with Missouri Department of Conservation gave a presentation on feral hogs:

- Background – originated by swine brought in from Spain in the 1500's. They are habitat generalists, omnivores, and opportunists. They have a high reproductive rate, start reproducing as early as 4 months of age, and have very few predators.
- During the past 10-20 years, populations and distribution have greatly expanded. Range is exacerbated by intentional translocations.

- Have been present in Missouri for several years, but by the mid 1990's MDC started to get calls on hog damage from landowners.
- Common types of damage: agriculture crop damage, livestock predation, habitat destruction, endangered species predation, competition with game species, and disease threats.
- Known feral diseases include foot and mouth disease, pseudorabies, swine brucellosis, classic swine fever, African swine fever, anthrax, influenza, etc.,
- Governor's Feral Hog Task Force – executive order 07-26 in 2008 created a multi-agency task force.
- MDC developed a 5 year feral hog operational plan in 2012.
- Feral hog coordinators: Alan Leary (MDC) and Brad Jump (USDA Wildlife Services)
- 2014 Farm Bill: goal at the national level for USDA Cooperative Program is to reduce damage to natural resources, agriculture, monitor disease, and protect native wildlife species. In Missouri, the goal is total eradication of feral hogs.
- Feral hogs are very smart and are adaptable.
- Control efforts include trapping (variety of traps), aerial gun control, snares and night shooting, drop nets, toxicants might be an option in the future. No tool solves the problem.
- Eradication efforts: 3,000 hogs (in 2013 and 2014), 3,649 (in 2015).
- Put an end to feral hog hunting on public land. Allowing hunting seemed to just increase the interest, increased releases of new hogs, and also scattered the rest of the hogs.
- MDC passed regulations in June 2016 that prohibit the take of feral hogs on lands on or leased by MDC.
- Report FERAL hog sightings: 573-522-4115 x 3296 (MDC) or 417-895-6881 x 1642 (USDA Wildlife Services)
- In Tennessee, they are classified as a destructive species; hunting allowed on private land with a permit; very limited hunting allowed on public land; some captive hunting facilities grandfathered in, but no new ones allowed; transport of live feral hogs not allowed. In Kansas, they are classified as exotic, nuisance, invasive; landowner control is allowed on private land, with a permit; sport hunting not allowed. In Nebraska, classified as a restricted species; hunting not allowed on private land or public land. In Arkansas, classified as a public nuisance; hunting is allowed on private land; hunting not allowed on AGFC land but is allowed on other public land, no captive hunting facilities, live hogs may only be transported to a terminal facility. In Illinois, they are classified as invasive, exotic wild animals; hunting is allowed on private land during deer seasons or by damage permit; hunting is not allowed on public land.

The group then discussed the issue, and Rebecca stated that there is interest in developing a task force to look into this further. Susan Flader asked if MoFRAC should develop a resolution as an effort to get it in front of the legislators and "into the hopper" for the 2017 session of the general assembly. Susan proposed the following language for the resolution:

"The Missouri Forest Resources Advisory Council, having discussed and heard presentations on the rapidly growing problem of feral hogs in Missouri, supports the goal to eliminate feral hogs from Missouri as a public nuisance or as a destructive species and to see legislation to prohibit all hunting of feral hogs in Missouri. We encourage formation of a task force with private and public representation to research and develop appropriate provisions for a bill to be introduced in the 2017 session of the Missouri General Assembly".

Susan Flader made a motion to approve the above resolution, and Gene Brunk seconded the motion. Susan noted that it would be very advantageous to have a good bill in the General

Assembly and ideally we would go in with a strong coalition of organizations. If we can pass a resolution today, we would have an opportunity to present it to the Citizens Committee for Soils, Water, and State Parks next Friday.

Discussion ensued and edits were made to the resolution. Kelly Smith noted we need to be very careful about how you go about it, especially as it pertains to private land property rights. Gene, Kelly, and Mike Hoffmann suggested it be shortened to:

The Missouri Forest Resources Advisory Council, having discussed and heard presentations on the rapidly growing problem of feral hogs in Missouri, encourages private organizations and public agencies with conservation interests to work together to advance the eradication of feral hogs in Missouri.

Susan made a motion to adopt the resolution as edited above, Gene Brunk seconded the motion. Rebecca called for a vote of those in favor, all were in favor with one abstained (Kurt Boeckman). The motion passed.

Missouri Managed Woods Update – Steve Westin updated the group as follows:

- MMW is a private forest land management encouragement program. Approximately 83% of the Missouri woods are privately owned.
- Partner organizations passed resolutions urging MDC to re-energize or develop a new landowner assistance program. Rather than start from scratch, we chose to update the Forest Crop Land program.
- In 2014 and early 2015, internal deliberations began, and in July 2015, we presented the proposal to the Conservation Commission. In late summer/early fall of 2015, property tax and value research took place and was presented at regional county meetings. In November 2015, MDC presented the info to the Mo. Association of Counties.
- In January 2016, the information was presented to the Regulations Committee for approval of changes to the Wildlife Code. In March 2016, the Regulations Committee presented the changes to the Conservation Commission for their approval. Public comment period followed, and no comments were received. The regulation change became active at the end of July.
- Currently implementation rules are being developed.
- Forest Crop Land (FCL) is part of Wildlife code 3 CSR 10-2.010 and 10-2.020 and was established in 1946. Lands were classified as managed for timber and other benefits. MMW was designed based on the FCL model.
- Landowner obligations: landowner must sign the management plan and agree to at least minimum implementation and show progress within 5 years; landowner must agree to maintain enrollment in the Missouri Tree Farm program; livestock must be fenced out; must pay a 6% yield tax on timber sale revenue;
- Predicting enrollment is difficult – there is not a good way to do this. Are the factors that drive FCL enrollment in the 50's-70's still valid? Tree Farm acreage is probably the best initial forecast we have.
- What's next? Steve will make several presentations to partner groups and internally at MDC; staff training for Forestry and Private Lands staff, as well as development of materials and opening it up for sign-up will take place in early 2017.

NRCS Updates – Nate Goodrich provided the following update:

- FY15 EQIP Obligations: total obligated: \$26,866,400 with \$22,365 the average contract. Fund pools include cropland, pasture/hayland, forestland, animal feeding/waste, wildlife, organic, high tunnel, On Farm Energy, etc.
- FY15 EQIP final fund distribution = \$19.1 million. Forestland is 5% of the distribution.
- FY15 EQIP top 10 practices by dollars obligated: fencing, forage and biomass planting, terrace, underground outlet, livestock pipeline, roofs and covers, waste storage facility, cover crops, forest stand improvement, and waste transfer.
- FY16 EQIP highlights: conservation planning occurring prior to obligations will lead to contracts that are implemented at a higher rate with less administrative burden. Strengthened screening and ranking questions to ensure application were prioritized by environmental benefit within land use subaccounts. Continued partnerships (RCPP, MRBI, NWQI AND OHRP) and created new initiatives (Strikeforce Initiative, Climate Change, and Monarch Butterfly Habitat Development Project).
- FY15 to FY16 EQIP comparison: FY15 - \$26,866,400 and FY16 - \$28,486,123
- FY16 General EQIP Fund Distribution - forestland = 6% (funding 100% of the applications)
- Funding summary – to date, FY16 EQIP funding increased by \$1.6 million from FY15. General EQIP subaccounts decreased from \$19.1 million to \$15.6 million. EQIP initiatives subaccounts increased from \$6.4 million to \$10.2 million.
- Forestry specific information: Forestland contacts = 122 contracts, with \$741,596.19 obligated on 11,900 acres. Ozark Highlands Restoration Partnership = 59 contracts, with \$420,926 obligated on 16,870 acres.
- Opportunities for FY17: Ozark Highlands Restoration Project is in final year, Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership RFP is underway, EQIP Agroforestry Fund Pool, and “reinvented” Conservation Stewardship Program will roll out in FY17.
- CSP Reinvention Overview for Partners: statewide informational teleconference 9/21/16 at 2:00 pm

Roundtable Partner Updates, Meetings, Events

The Nature Conservancy – Rebecca reported that Doug Ladd, their Director of Conservation in Missouri, is retiring. On October 14th is a Livestock and Land Improvement Farm Tour hosted by multiple partners in Carter County.

Missouri Extension – Hank Stelzer reported and submitted the following:

- New SNR faculty: Christine Li (Youth Conservation Education Assistant Professor); Rebecca North (Water Quality Assistant Professor); and Mitch Weegman (Avian Ecology Assistant Professor).
- Director search ongoing. Application deadline is September 15th. Search committee will begin the review process shortly thereafter.
- CAFNR Dean search is just beginning. Provost is assembling the search team. Will also use an outside headhunter firm to help facilitate the national search.
- As of September 1, the departments within SNR have been dissolved. All one big happy family now to encourage more collaboration across the disciplines within the School.
- As a result of department dissolution, the School has proposed a new degree structure that is currently making its way up through the university system and eventually the state’s College Board of Higher Education. If approved, the new curricula will become effective Fall, 2017. The new degree structure is as follows:

- o B.S. Environmental Sciences with emphasis in either (1) Atmosphere, (2) Land and Soil, (3) Outreach and Education, or (4) Water.
 - o B.S. Natural Resource Science and Management with emphasis in either (1) Fisheries and Wildlife Science, (2) Forest Resources, (3) Human Dimensions, or (4) Terrestrial Ecosystems.
 - o B.S. Parks, Recreation and Sport with emphasis in either (1) Natural Resources Recreation Management, (2) Recreation Administration, (3) Sport Management, or (4) Tourism Development
 - o The emphasis areas will show up on a graduate's transcript. But, the title of the diploma will be one of the three B.S. titles above.
- SNR faculty are being asked to self-identify with the above degrees. A faculty may choose more than one degree program.
- SAF has received a letter from the Provost requesting a second year of deferment to allow the new degree structure to take effect and also to allow time for leadership positions to be filled.
- The School will seek accreditation under SAF Guidelines as follows:
 - o Forest Resources – General Accreditation Standard
 - o Terrestrial Ecosystems – Natural Resources and Ecosystem Management Standard - It should be noted that Terrestrial Ecosystems is a revised, updated, and condensed version of the former Dual Forestry/Fisheries and Wildlife Degree. While a student receives a single degree, course content has been basically left intact. Only difference is that there has been a de-emphasis in fisheries science. This shift in focus away from fisheries and towards wildlife was based on past enrollment data in the dual degree program and what positions taken after graduation. This now allows a student to complete his/her degree in four years as opposed to five-plus years.

MDC – Justine reminded folks of the October 16th Poosey Fall Color Driving Tour.

MU Ag Experiment Station - Dusty Walter reported that the Station will be hosting field days and will interact with several thousand high school students.

Center for Agroforestry - Gene Garrett reported that on September 16th, they will be hosting a walnut field day at Hammons Products Co. in Stockton; a Specialty Crop Field Day at Univ. of Missouri's SW Center on September 23rd; the Missouri Chestnut Roast will be held at the Center for Agroforestry in New Franklin on Oct. 8th; and the Great River Roads Chestnut Roas will be held at Forrest Keeling Nursery in Elsberry on Oct. 15.

Northern Research Station - Jerry Van Sambeek reported that Tony Ferguson, former director for the Northeastern State and Private Forestry program, is the new director for the Northern Research Station and the Forest Products Laboratory.

Pioneer Forests – Jason Green reported that timber sales are still coming along, but are challenging with wet weather. Anticipated is another sale this winter. MU Extension asked them to participate in Beef Days at the Dent County Fairgrounds, during which they will encourage young people to get involved in the forest products industry.

Mo. Consulting Foresters Association - Lynn noted they lost a member recently – Bruce Vawter passed away. New consultants include Phil Sneed, Michael Gaskins, and Jacob McMains – they are now up to 42 members. They will have a fall meeting October 6th and 7th including a tour of private land forest practices in Howard and Boone Counties.

Missouri Farm Bureau – Kelly Smith distributed 3 brochures on the Soils and Parks tax which is up for renewal. They have a committee that is gearing up to get information out, will order 10,000 yard signs to distribute across the state through the county Farm Bureau offices and Soils offices. The campaign will include PSA's on radio and in other media outlets. Kelly then reported that Clean Line Energy is trying to put a powerline across the state from Kansas into Illinois and into Indiana. They are trying to get the Public Service Commission to use eminent domain to get rights to install the powerline. Landowners are getting organized to oppose it. Farm Bureau has filed suit along with the landowners. In Illinois, their Public Service Commission had approved it, but when their Farm Bureau went to bat, and the judge reversed the decision.

Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri - Mike Hoffmann reported he attended the Conservation Federation of Missouri's (CFM) Affiliate Summit in Springfield a few weeks ago. CFM supports the soils tax. Next CFM meeting will be held in conjunction with the Chestnut Roast. And finally, they have a Tree Farm Committee meeting on October 6th at the Conservation Employee's Credit Union meeting room in Jefferson City.

Missouri Department of Natural Resources - Kurt Boeckman reported that Joe Engel retired in July; Joe worked in the Director's office. He will be active in Missouri River Relief. One of the programs, Our Missouri Waters, included signups which started yesterday. Nine watersheds are eligible.

APHIS - Mike Brown reported that gypsy moth surveys are winding down, 8 catches from around the state. This shows the benefits of the Slow the Spread campaign. As for emerald ash borer, we had several new finds this summer, bringing the positive counties to 29. Visible impacts are starting to show.

Mo. Dept. of Agriculture – Collin Wamsley was not able to attend the meeting but submitted the following update: The field portion of our 2016 thousand cankers disease survey, conducted in cooperation with the Missouri Department of Conservation has concluded, but we are still processing trap samples. So far, no walnut twig beetles or signs of thousand cankers disease were detected in 2016. The annual gypsy moth survey is finishing up. So far 10 moths have been captured from around the state, up from two moths last year. Higher populations in the east will result in higher captures in Missouri in following years. To date, however, gypsy moth has never been established in Missouri. Many new emerald ash borer detections were made in 2016 in Missouri. It is now confirmed in 29 Missouri counties and the city of St. Louis. MDA has continued surveying for EAB to help local communities and homeowners make management decisions based on proximity to known infestations, and also to help drive biocontrol releases. Information on 2016 detections will be updated soon on www.eab.missouri.edu.

Missouri Department of Conservation - Lisa Allen shared the new publication "*Missouri Forests Snapshot 2015*", an annual report that provides information on the program areas Forestry Division delivers. She reported on the vacancy of the director position – national search is underway and the Commission will schedule interviews. Lisa reported that MDC still struggles with recruitment of foresters, there are just not a lot on the market due to fewer graduates, a lot of retirements, etc. What do we need to be doing at the high school level to get students interested in the field of forestry? Looking to the future, getting Missouri Managed Woods up and running, and get through our first audit for SFI. Finally getting everyone back from western fire crews. Jason Jenson reported the MRAP signups ended in early July – 27 landowners in the program so far. Program provides public access to those properties for hunting or fishing, depending on what the landowner signed up for. Encourages active management of the

property. Discussion about another signup soon. Position open with City of Columbia for community conservation planner, a cooperative position that is open.

LAD Foundation - Susan Flader urged everyone to get behind the passage of the Parks & Soils Tax. Please visit www.soilwaterparks.com for more information.

USFS Mark Twain Nat'l Forest – Sherri Schwenke noted they have several new personnel, including a new ranger at Poplar Bluff, and two new staff officers: planning and public services. Forest Fire Manager is retiring at the end of this month. The national holiday tree is coming from Idaho and will be passing through Missouri. Jack Courtenay noted on the timber program, they have done pretty good this year. Looking at increasing harvest for next year. Still working on the Forest Health Initiative. Hopefully will have final decision by early next year. Tony Crump reported the Forest Service has identified a couple events where they will focus hiring efforts: the national SAF convention in Madison, WI. He noted that Region 9 will have 40-50 positions to fill. Mark Twain Nat'l Forest will have four – 3 technicians and 1 forester. He asked the group to encourage applicants to apply early.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service - Nate Goodrich reported that MoSAF has an upcoming fall technical tour for October 19 and 20 in Van Buren and touring shortleaf pine management on Mark Twain Nat'l Forest.

Missouri Community Forestry Council - Gene Brunk reported the annual conference will be held March 7-9 in Springfield.

Future Meeting Topics:

- Scott Brundage reported that the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation sent him a brochure about joining, and he noted he does not know anything about the Foundation, what they do, etc., and he would like to hear all about their work. He added that they have a new Executive Director and he'd like the Director to be invited to come speak at a meeting. He added that the Foundation could possibly become a MoFRAC member organization. In addition, the Nature Conservancy could have Rebecca do the same, noting that he knows nothing in detail about what they do, how they operate, etc., and would like to learn more about them. And last, Scott also added that he recently received a card in the mail from a logging company who said they provide written forest management plans to the landowner. He'd like to hear more about it, such as will NRCS/FSA accept it to get TSI Cost Share? Nate Goodrich would be a good speaker on this. Can a landowner get into the Tree Farm Program with a logger-written management plan? Rick Merritt, Past Tree Farm Chairman and MoFRAC member, would be a good speaker.
- Jason Jensen suggested carbon credits for a future meeting topic.

Review New Business – Rebecca then reviewed the discussions of today and new business for the next meeting. She noted that we have a proposal to hold the December 7th meeting in conjunction with Tree Farm Committee Meeting here in Jefferson City if logistics work out. She reported she asked Mike Black, Director of the Shortleaf Pine Restoration Initiative, to give a presentation on the restoration plan that was just released.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.