



Missouri Forest Resources Advisory Council

Missouri Farm Bureau

701 South Country Club Dr., Jefferson City

Wednesday, June 8, 2016
Meeting Minutes

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

Joe Alley, Nat. Resources Cons. Service
Donna Baldwin, Mo. Dept. of Conservation
Brian Brookshire, Mo. Forest Products Assoc.
Mike Brown, USDA APHIS PPQ
Scott Brundage, Mo. Consulting For Assoc.
Gene Brunk, Mo. Community Forestry Council
Susan Flader, LAD Foundation
Justine Gartner, Mo. Dept. of Conservation
Mike Hoffmann, Forest & Woodland Assoc. of Mo.
Luke Holtschneider, Mo. Dept. of Eco. Dev.

Jason Jensen, Mo. Dept. of Conservation
Rebecca Landewe, The Nature Conservancy
Wayne Lovelace, Forrest Keeling Nursery
Rick Merritt, Missouri Tree Farm Committee
Bill Nightingale, USFS Mark Twain Nat'l Forest
Hank Stelzer, Univ. of Mo. Dept. of Forestry
Robert Stout, Mo. Dept. of Nat. Resources
Steve Thurman, US Army, Ft. Leonard Wood
John Tuttle, Mo. Dept. of Conservation

Review and Approve Minutes – Rebecca asked if everyone had a chance to review the meeting minutes from the March 2, 2016, meeting. With no changes noted, Gene Brunk made a motion to approve the minutes. Wayne Lovelace seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

Old Business

Bylaws Review Committee – Mike Hoffmann and Rebecca Landewe presented the proposed changes to the bylaws. Lengthy discussion ensued regarding what makes a quorum and voting procedures (by proxy or absentia). We currently have 29 member organizations. The committee will make revisions as discussed the meeting, and will send it out for review prior to the meeting in September.

MU School of Natural Resources Update – Hank Stelzer gave the following update:

- Administration - Dean Payne has announced his retirement effective December 31 of this year (2016). No Interim Dean has been named to date. We now have vacancies in three of the four leadership positions above the Department of Forestry: Director of School, Dean of College, and Chancellor of Campus. Of course, also searching for President of the University System. Effective September 1, the departments within the School will be dissolved. Faculty will be one within the School and will affiliate with one (or more) of the three new degrees. Director search is ongoing. Committee has met and is currently finalizing the position announcement. In a perfect world, we would like to see the position filled by January, 2017. But, given the open leadership positions above that level, it might be a challenge.

- New Faculty - We have been successful in hiring three of the four positions currently open within the School. Christine Li is our new Youth Conservation Education Professor. Christine starts August 1. Mitch Weegman is the new Avian Ecologist and Marissa Alhering is the new Wildlife Ecologist. Both start August 1. Water Quality candidates interviews will take place the last two weeks of June.
- Degrees - a new degree structure is emerging and will hopefully become effective August, 2017. The three new degrees will be Natural Resource Science and Management; Environmental Sciences; and Parks, Recreation and Sport. Within each degree will be transcribed Emphasis Areas. For Natural Resource Science and Management, the Emphasis Areas will be: Forest Resources, Terrestrial Ecosystem Management (or perhaps simply Terrestrial Ecosystems), Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences; and Human Dimensions. Curricula for each emphasis area is currently being developed. Do not know status of emphasis areas in the other degree options. Current curricula will be honored until the new ones are approved by the State Coordinating Board for Higher Education.
- SAF Accreditation - given changes to the curricula, School structure, and open leadership positions we are asking for another one-year deferral. SAF leadership thinks this is acceptable and should not penalize MU by placing the degree on probation. SAF accredits the degree and NOT the program.

Roundtable Partner Updates, Meetings, Events

Missouri Consulting Foresters Association (submitted by Lynn Barnickol) – the MCFA Fall meeting is planned for October 7-8 in the Boonville area. Topics include field tours of forestry cultural and wildlife habitat practices. We also plan to have a booth at the Chestnut Roast to be held at HARC. Additional details will be provided as we firm up tour stops.

Department of Natural Resources - Robert Stout reported the department is preparing for the transition when a newly-elected Governor takes office in 2017, identifying issues and preparing briefing documents to assist. They are also working with the Corps of Engineers on two major watershed studies: one in the Meramec River Basin and the other in the Grand River Basin. The department has signed an agreement with the St. Louis Corps District to conduct a study in the Meramec River Basin to identify actions that can be taken to effect ecosystem restoration. The Meramec basin is impacted by streambank erosion and excess sediment and the Big River, a major tributary of the Meramec, has additional impacts caused by historical lead activities resulting in high levels of lead contamination in its sediments. The department has partnered with a number of state, federal and non-governmental agencies to develop this study. The department is considering signing another agreement with the Kansas City Corps District to conduct a design study in the Grand River to address serious sedimentation impacts in that basin. Historical stream channelization, levees, and loss of streambank stability, have resulted in bank erosion and a heavy sedimentation loading in the system. Pinch points in Locust Creek near Pershing State Park and below have resulted in headcuts, avulsions, logjams and flooding. This study would identify engineered solutions to some of the hydrologic problems and identify locations and practices that can reduce sediment loading in the system. The department is developing partnerships to participate in this effort and looking for funding. And the renewal of the Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax is on the November ballot.

Missouri Forest Products Association – Brian Brookshire reported that it was good legislatively this year – secured \$2.5 million in wood energy tax credit. MFPA lobbied strongly on behalf of the Missouri Department of Agriculture to get funding for establishing new international marketing offices (4 new offices). Brian also reported he is disappointed that the harvesting tech program at Three Rivers Community College in Willow Springs has been dissolved. He noted Missouri State University and Three Rivers decided to eliminate the Willow Springs campus completely. Now they need to find another home for that harvesting tech program – good curriculum was developed, and MDC is still willing to invest financial support. Markets in industry are okay, holding their own, no major ups or downs. Blocking and pallet markets are suffering more than a number of years. Biggest concern is that tie market prices are falling, huge driver in the industry.

Missouri Department of Conservation – John Tuttle reported chronic wasting disease of deer is a big time consumer for MDC staff. Mandatory sampling will take place and all staff will be required to work opening weekend. An incident command system is in place for mobilization of staff and resources. Bear and hog trapping continue for MDC; these kinds of things are taking up quite a bit of forestry time. Bats were a major issue, made last year's numbers for timber sales to be down considerably. However, inventory numbers were as high as ever. MDC is looking at writing habitat conservation plans (takes 3 years) for “take” permits. The new Missouri Managed Woods program will replace Forest Crop Land, and new signups will be out in March next year. A Forest Certification Manager is in place to move MDC forward with forest certification; Marty Calvert will write manual and go through mock audits prior to an official audit. MDC is reviewing which conservation areas will be certified first – looking at up to 700,000 acres eventually. John also reported that the Tree City USA 40th Anniversary celebration will be held at Missouri Botanical Garden in September. And last but not least, MDC continues to struggle to fill forester position vacancies.

Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri – Mike Hoffmann reported they held the Annual Tree Farm Conference at the Steve Lovell Tree Farm in Annapolis MO, with nearly 50 in attendance. Steve was the 2015 Missouri Tree Farmer of the Year. FWAM received annual program support grant money from American Tree Farm System.

The FWAM board recently met, and Mike reported interest in serving on the board has dwindled, so they are looking at ways to recruit new board members. If you know of someone outside the forestry profession who has an interest in trees, let Mike know. Membership has fallen to approximately 150, but has never gotten above 250, so the Board has decided to offer a non-paying membership. The board will encourage sponsorships, grants, etc., to support FWAM. Mike added that the newsletter should go out soon.

USFS Mark Twain Nat'l Forest – Bill Nightingale – reported they will have over 60 million boardfeet in timber sales this year – highest volume in years. They currently have the forest health initiative in progress to look at oak decline, with surveys underway. They also have a lot of personnel turnover – mostly due to retirements, so there are lots of job openings. Bill noted he will be retiring soon, and Jack Courtney will also be retiring. Scott asked about the timber sale contracts, and whether a professional timber harvester is required. Bill noted they are put to bid at the national level, so that requirement is not there.

Department of Economic Development – Luke Holtschneider reported there are a couple events coming up: next week will be the Mo. Economic Development Annual Meeting on June 14-16 at the Lake of the Ozarks. Later this summer will be the Mo. Governor's Conference on Economic

Development in Kansas City on September 7-9. Rural communities are struggling with workforce needs to supply their existing industries. Statewide unemployment in April was 4.3%. The MoDED is continuing to work on expanding export opportunities for MO companies.

MU Extension – Hank Stelzer reported Forestry Extension is currently developing a stormwater education program for communities to meet EPA Phase II requirements that all communities larger than 10,000 citizens have some sort of stormwater education program available to the citizenry. The seven-hour program will be offered online, live or as a hybrid. Cost will be \$10 per unit or \$40 for the entire program. Participants who perform at least two activities from each unit will be eligible to become a 'Yard of Merit' and help educate other homeowners through peer-to-peer learning opportunities. Also working with the Dept of Elementary and Secondary Education to revise the Plant Sciences curriculum, of which Forestry is a part. This process is in the early stages. Will solicit professional foresters from around the state to review content as it is developed.

Fort Leonard Wood - Steve Thurman noted there are a tremendous variety of training missions that happen on the base, and natural resource management can be stopped anytime for military missions. In addition, they are also dealing with bats at this time, which affects the forest management but also military operations. They are currently doing bat surveys and will also conduct mussel surveys. Military lands have become a good place to raise endangered species.

USDA NRCS – Joe Alley reported on the following:

- NRCS staff are currently busy with EQIP and CSP planning. Total funding has not been obligated yet but it looks like, again, all forestry fund pool projects will be funded in EQIP.
- On April 1, NRCS' four "field foresters" were re-assigned as Area Foresters and placed on the Area Staff under supervision of the Area Conservationist. This is an effort to bring uniformity to their job duties from Area to Area and improve consistency across the state. The Area Foresters will be responsible for providing technical and Farm Bill program training to field staff, serve as the quality assurance lead for forestry practices and related programs within their respective area via practice spot checks and quality assurance reviews, and work closely with other area staff and partners.
- The NWTF/OHRP Forester position has been filled by Chad Doolen. This is a joint funded position sponsored by NRCS, NWTF, and USFS. For the NRCS part, Chad will serve as an outreach coordinator for the OHRP (Ozark Highlands Restoration Project), assist with conservation practice checkout and certification, and develop forest management plans.
- For FY16 and 17, NRCS is piloting a project in Chariton County to promote forest management on Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) enhancements. All activities on WRP require a Compatible Use Agreement (CUA). Additionally, a forest management plan (FMP) is required prior to developing the CUA. Increased interest in forest management – including harvest – in north-central MO on WRP easements has led to a backlog of requests for FMPs. To alleviate this situation, funds from the Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program will be used to complete FMPs on Chariton County easements only (highest concentration in the state). All easement holders were contacted about the opportunity and invited to a public meeting at Fountain Grove CA in April. As a result, 10-15 FMPs will be developed for FY16 contracts and more will likely follow in FY17 if funding is available.
- NRCS plans to add a specific EQIP fund pool for FY17 specifically for Agroforestry and Woody Crops. The intent is to promote agroforestry as a conservation practice and to

"level the playing field" among applicants. Prior to this, agroforestry projects would be competing against forest, crop, or pasture applications, depending on land-use. For FY17, funding will come from the regular forestry fund pool. However, over the last few years, we have not spent our entire forestry fund pool allocation and the dollars returned went to another fund pool. In essence, this move will allow us to target more dollars towards forestry and agroforestry. More details will be available at the next meeting.

MDC Private Lands Division – Jason Jenson report they coordinated about \$2.3 million in LAP cost share. The Missouri Outdoor Recreational Access Program (MRAP) started June 1st on a statewide level. This program leases property from private landowners to provide the public with additional sites to recreate. It also encourages active management on these tracts. Feral hogs continue to be major problem, both the resources and financially. MDC is considering new area regulations that would ban hunting them on MDC dept lands. The comment period has closed, and will be discussed at a future Commission meeting. Bill Nightingale asked if MOFRAC will take a position on this hog hunting ban? He added that the USFS will likely follow suit as well as National Park Service. He suggested this is a good agenda topic for a future meeting, and MoFRAC could invite MDC to present. Susan Flader added that it's an issue that affects forestry on both public and private land. Rebecca agreed and will add it to the agenda.

Missouri Tree Farm – Rick Merritt noted that 2016 marks the 75th anniversary of the American Tree Farm System.

USDA APHIS – Mike Brown noted that EAB continues to be detected in new counties. Most counties in SE portion of Missouri have been confirmed, and several new counties in the Kansas City area. He asked everyone to continue to report findings to the Missouri Department of Conservation or Missouri Department of Agriculture. He also reported gypsy moth is our other pest concern – trapping continues.

Missouri Community Forestry Council - Gene Brunk reported the annual meeting in St. Joseph was a huge success and made a little profit. It included a presentation by a civil engineer who talked about the difficulty of incorporating trees and city services (sewer, etc.). Gene also reported the 2020 Vision of Trees is underway and data from this spring will be entered. The Council is meeting tomorrow and will focus on bylaws and membership, and new officers will take office.

The Nature Conservancy - Rebecca reported she will host a timber sale tour tomorrow evening. Draft shortleaf pine restoration plan will be released later this year. Related to parks and soils tax, recently hired Holly Neill to help move it forward. Holly will be located in Springfield. They are hiring a watershed coordinator in the Meramec River basin. Doug Ladd will be retiring later this year as Director of Conservation, but will continue to represent TNC on various projects for another year.

White Oak Mortality Project Update – Dr. Sharon Reed, University of Missouri, gave the following presentation:

Project Timeline

- 2001-2003 – small pockets investigated by MDC
- 2003-2011 – little white oak mortality
- 2011-2012 – numerous reports
- 2013-2015 – decline in reports

First observations

- Mostly *Quercus alba*
- Larger trees
- Pockets or random distribution
- Occasional post oaks
- RWOM on lower slopes and drainages (the opposite of traditional oak decline)
- RWOM is not like traditional oak decline

Research timeline

- 2012 – applied for grant for 1 year study, received in October 2013
- 2014 - 1 year study took place (geographic distribution and site history, disease and insects associated with dying trees)
- 2015-2017 - 3 year study

Summary of 1 year study

- Most mortality that fits the RWOM pattern (drainages and lower slopes) is in the SE quadrant of the state. Mortality varies greatly among locations from small pockets of dead white oaks to mortality along the entire length of the drainage.
- Species affected: white oak, post oak, sometimes red oak. Mostly dominate trees, but also mid-story trees. Ages of living and dead trees approximately 70-80 years old.
- Associated pathogens: Phytophthora root rot caused by Phytophthora cinnamomi– plant destroyer, water mold, many species of phytophthora, P. cinnamomi also causes little leaf disease and ink disease. It is not the type of Phytophthora responsible for sudden oak death in the western United States.
- Hypoxylon canker – visual survey of all living white oak trees in plots; hypoxylon canker not visible on living white oaks; hypoxylon canker on almost all dead trees.
- Armillaria root rot – mix of aggressive and less aggressive Armillaria found in plots with dead trees.

Three year study: identify risk factors associated with white oak mortality:

- 50 study sites in Missouri (32 for 2015)
- Measure site and stand characteristics
- Gather soil data for all plots
- Associated pathogens
- Associated insects
- Growth rates
- Weather patterns

Take home point - preliminary results suggest that soil-water pH, slope position and available water supply may be important predictors. But this is preliminary! Need more plots.

New Business

Membership Committee - New Members – Rebecca noted the vote to add the Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri as new Council member will be tabled for lack of quorum.

Joint Meeting with Tree Farm – Rebecca reported we were approached to see if we'd be interested in hosting our December meeting in conjunction with Tree Farm in Jefferson City.

May start earlier with presentations throughout the day. The group agreed, and Mike and Rebecca will work out the details.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.