



## Missouri Forest Resources Advisory Council

Missouri Farm Bureau

701 South Country Club Dr., Jefferson City

**Wednesday, September 6, 2017**

**9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

### MEETING MINUTES

**Welcome & Introductions** - Hank Stelzer welcomed everyone to the meeting and the following were in attendance:

Lisa Allen, Mo. Dept. of Conservation  
Donna Baldwin, Mo. Dept. of Conservation  
Lynn Barnickol, Mo. Consulting Forester Assoc.  
Kurt Boeckmann, Mo. Dept. of Natural Res.  
Brian Brookshire, Mo. Forest Products Assoc.  
Mike Brown, USDA APHIS PPQ  
Scott Brundage, Mo. Consulting For Assoc.  
Gene Brunk, Mo. Community Forestry Council  
John Burk, Nat'l Wild Turkey Federation  
Marc Conlee, USDA APIS PPQ  
Susan Flader, LAD Foundation  
Michael Gold, Mo. Center for Agroforestry

Nate Goodrich, Nat. Resources Cons. Service  
Mike Hoffmann, Forest & Woodland Assoc. of Mo.  
Michael Joyce, USFS Mark Twain Nat'l Forest  
Rebecca Landewe, The Nature Conservancy  
Wayne Lovelace, Forrest Keeling Nursery  
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  
Dusty Walter, MU Ag. Exp. Station  
Collin Wamsley, Mo. Dept. of Agriculture  
Steve Westin, Mo. Dept of Conservation

**Review and Approve Minutes** – Hank Seltzer asked if anyone had changes to the minutes from the March 8, 2017 meeting. With no changes noted, the minutes were approved.

**USDA Forest Service Secure Rural Schools Program** – Kelly Smith welcomed Dr. Eric Allen, Superintendent, Alton School District, who came today to give an update on the Secure Rural Schools Program. Also in attendance were the following school superintendents: Doug Dunn, Oak Hill R1 in Salem, Eric Croter, Valley R-VI in Caledonia, Kim Hawk, Plato RV in Plato, and David Russell, Success RVI in Success.

Dr. Allen provided the following background information on the Secure Rural Schools Law (SRS). He noted the law was co-authored by former U.S. Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, and Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Oregon. The law was designed to provide a funding stopgap for communities in timber country. The idea is to replace the money counties and school districts used to receive from timber sales on federal lands. SRS funding represents a commitment from the federal government to help support communities on or near federal lands, such as national forests, that were removed from local tax rolls. But SRS expired over a year ago, and many rural school districts now face massive shortfalls that will erode educational opportunities for their students. The effects will be felt in pockets across the country: SRS funding supports 4,000 school districts in 41 states.

Dr. Allen presented the following information:

2015 Re-authorization: PL 114-10 Section 524 April 16, 2015

- Re-instated funding for FY15 and extended funding to FY16.
- With the lapsing of PL 114-10 at the beginning of FY17, funding has reverted to the 25% threshold with the other 75% of the funds being placed in the U.S. Treasury for general use.
- The annual payment is based on a multi-year rolling average of money generated by the federally owned lands across the entire country---that is why the amount is never the same year to year even when fully funded.
- The money generated by federal lands across the country are all put into one pot then redistributed based on acreage: You do not have to have timber harvest or other activities within your district to receive funds for a given FY.

Dr. Allen reported that he had written a letter to Senator Blunt expressing his concerns and funding needs. He noted that in terms of square miles, his district is the largest geographic district in Missouri, causing some students to get on a bus by 6:00 a.m. He showed a table which listed the historic trend of SRS payments to Alton RIV. The payments had dropped from \$414,440 at the highest in 2008-2009, to \$133,267 in 2016-2017, and how this compares to other schools in the SRS area. He also discussed transportation costs per child for the 4 schools in Oregon County. He noted that Senator Blunt came to Alton R-IV on April 7, 2015. He further reported that if SRS is not re-authorized before the end of 2017, schools would lose this funding source forever.

Hank thanked Dr. Allen for his report and discussion ensued by the group. Hank Stelzer asked what can we do if the Missouri delegates are already on board? Dr. Allen noted that every voice that puts a little more pressure helps out as they continue to bring it to the forefront. Hank encouraged everyone to reach out as individuals and speak their mind. Kelly Smith added that this issue affects everyone at this table, and he hopes that MoFRAC would write a letter to our national legislators so they can see that the forest community is concerned about this issue. Kelly added that various agencies can opt if they need to. Rebecca Landewe made a motion asking the executive committee to draft a resolution; the motion was seconded by Kelly Smith. Hank suggested that MoFRAC's brochure would go with the letter. Hank and Brian Brookshire will draft a resolution or letter of support from MoFRAC suggesting reauthorization of the legislation. Gene Garrett suggested the letter contain the names of the supporting agencies or organization, and not list the ones who opt out. With all in favor, the motion passed. Draft Motion: The MoFRAC chair and vice-chair draft a letter to the Congressional Delegation asking to re-authorize funding for rural schools, PL 114-10. A copy of the MoFRAC brochure containing the names of the agencies is to be included with the letter.

**Gypsy Moth Monitoring in Missouri, Funding Update** - Robbie Doerhoff presented about the Slow the Spread campaign that included a map reflecting captures of the moths from traps during the period 1980-2016. The campaign has been very effective in Missouri. Now the funding is at risk. She noted the need for the campaign to continue in Missouri. Missouri has 13.5 million acres of oak forests, and oaks are among the preferred host for gypsy moth. Oak decline is already an issue. She noted that gypsy moth would already be in Missouri without the Slow the Spread campaign. With help of the campaign, 70% of susceptible US forests are not infested.

Gypsy moth impacts forest resources, water quality, wildlife habitat, has economic impacts involving recreation, tourism, and human health. The campaign reduces gypsy moth spread from 13 to 3 miles per year, is estimated to prevent invasion of 300 million acres over the next 30 years, with a benefit to cost ratio of 3:1. The campaign identified and treats distinct colonies

before they merge. Mating disruption flakes are often used on small populations as a method to slow the spread of the colonies.

Robbie asked MoFRAC to write a letter to support continued funding for the program. Robbie can provide a template. Scott noted he is in favor of sending a letter to our congressional people and copy in Rick Cooksey, Director of Forest Health Protection. Sherri Schwenke agreed, noting that congress distributes the funding.

Lisa Allen added that this is just one of several funding items that is being cut. The Southern Group of State Foresters has sent letters to the USFS regarding continued funding of STS. The Northeastern Area of State Foresters will do the same soon. Lisa felt that MoFRAC could send a letter to support STS to the USFS, but a letter to support funding for all programs might be helpful as well. Action Item: Lisa will send the list of proposed cuts to Hank so he can draft a letter on behalf of MoFRAC.

**MU Center for Agroforestry (CAF)/ Green Horizons Update** - Dr. Mike Gold, Interim Director, noted that Green Horizons is now about 21 years old. From the beginning, MDC has supported CAF to produce Green Horizons, but due to continued budget constraints, the funding has ended. He noted that the cost of the newsletter production is approximately \$4,000 annually for 3,300 hard copies and \$3,000 in postage). He added that all of the work from editorial side is volunteer time; however, they pay an intern to help put it together. He reported they will continue to produce the newsletter, but will likely be strictly electronic. His concern is the group of folks who like to get hard copies. The next issue will be the last hard copy, and it will contain a blurb about signing up for the electronic issue.

Scott asked why MDC discontinued the funding. Steve Westin reported that this had been an unusual year for all agencies, MDC included, and it's strictly a lack of funds. Gene Garrett added that in addition to MDC's funds, they also had other entities donating to the newsletter. He asked Dr. Gold if he can send out an "SOS" to those other agencies to ask for funding? Mike noted that the Center has not approached the contributors. Sherri added that they could send a postcard that directs folks to read it at their local library or print it there. Action Item: Dr. Gold agreed, and added he could also send them to the extension offices. He thanked everyone for the great ideas.

**Missouri Managed Woods Update** - Steve Westin gave the following presentation:

- Missouri Managed Woods (MMW) is a voluntary MDC program that encourages sustainable management of privately-owned forested lands.
- MMW provides services, as well as property tax reduction, to promote long-term management on lands enrolled in the program
- Participating landowners are required to carry out responsible forest management in exchange for the benefits of the program.
- Minimum contiguous forest acreage is 20 acres.
- Maximum land value is \$3,500 per acre
- Enrollment commitment is 15 years.
- Payment to counties in lieu of taxes is \$1.00/acre
- No structures or large water bodies allowed on MMW lands
- Landowner must sign the management plan and agree to at least a minimum implementation and show progress within 5 years.
- Expectation is that the landowner will join the Missouri Tree Farm Program.

- Livestock must be fenced out of the woods.
- Landowner must clearly mark property boundaries
- Landowner must pay 6% yield tax on timber sale revenue.
- Benefits include priority assistance, forest management plan, timber basis evaluation, timber sale assistance, increased MDC cost share rate, 6% incentive payment for a timber sale directed by a professional forester and implementation of bmp's, forest certification through the American Tree Farm System, and reduced property taxes.
- Efforts to date have included stakeholder engagement: MDC staff, state tax commission staff, state assessors association, and MoFRAC.
- Outreach efforts have included presentations to Mo. Tree Farm Committee, Mo. Consulting Foresters Association, and Missouri Woodland Conference. In addition, an introductory mailing was sent to all Tree Farm members, with a follow-up mailing in August.
- Internal training has been conducted with Forestry and Private Lands Services Divisions.
- To date, we've received 15 applications for 3,475 acres of woodland. These applications are well distributed around the state in 13 counties.
- What's next? Foresters and private land conservationists will continue to promote MMW as they work with landowners; will do a mailing to county assessors; will include an article in the fall issue of Green Horizons, and will have an article in the Missouri Conservationists in 2018. We are developing a data storage application, and recognition signs.

Hank and the group thanked Steve for his presentation.

### **Roundtable Partner Updates, Meetings, Events**

**University of Missouri** – Hank Stelzer reported that Chris Dauber, the new dean of College of Agriculture, is meeting regularly with folks to get up to speed. Shibu is settling in as Director, and numbers are up across the school. He reported they are writing their self-evaluation for SAF accreditation. In February, folks will be invited to come and talk to the accreditation team. He also reported they are seeing a major reorganization within Extension, and he will update more on that in December.

**The Nature Conservancy** – Rebecca Landewe reported there are two upcoming landowner workshops in the Current River area. On September 30<sup>th</sup>, MDC is hosting with partners a Farm and Forest Landowner Field Day in the Mahan's Creek area. On October 6<sup>th</sup>, Carter County Soil and Water Conservation District, NRCS, TNC, MDC and MU Extension is hosting a Farm and Stream Landowner Tour near Fremont, MO. Also, TNC is hiring a winter/spring burn crew based out of Van Buren, MO. Our watershed coordinators are working on streambank restoration projects in the Elk River and Meramec River watersheds.

**Pioneer Forests** – Susan Flader reported they have a new, young crew, and things are going good. John Karel will be stepping down a president in October.

**Missouri Consulting Foresters Association** – Lynn Barnickol reported that the MCFA Fall Meeting is to be held October 11 and 12, 2017, at the Bunker Hill Retreat, located on the upper Jacks Fork River, north of Mountain View. The program includes the following topics: archaeological awareness training by Department of Natural Resources State Historic Preservation and Mark Twain National Forest staff, feral hog awareness training by Department of Conservation staff, and Mike Black with the Shortleaf Pine Initiative - Great Tree, great wood

and an opportunity for management. The meeting will include a tour of shortleaf and oak management on properties managed by Norfork Natural Resource Consulting LLC and tour of a scragg mill processing declining oaks harvested from shortleaf pine sites.

**Missouri Dept. of Natural Resources** - The Department has added to the executive staff since the March meeting. Dru Buntin is the Deputy Director and previously served as Deputy Director for the department from 2000 to 2012. Most recently, Dru has been serving as Executive Director for the Upper Mississippi River Basin Association for the past 4 years. Ed Galbraith is the Director of Division of Environmental Quality. Ed brings almost 30 years of environmental experience to this leadership role in our agency. Ben Ellis is the Director of Division of State Parks. Ben comes to us from Alaska, where he most recently spent six years as director of the state's Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

Upcoming events for the Department include three meetings September 12-14 in the Grand River Basin to discuss a study with DNR, MDC and US Army Corps regarding natural resource and farmland loss, stream bank erosion, infrastructure threats and log jams within the basin. For more information Kurt Boeckmann said to contact him at 573-751-8424 or [kurt.boeckmann@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:kurt.boeckmann@dnr.mo.gov).

**Missouri Department of Conservation** – Lisa reported that we are in season for submitting the U.S. Forest Service LSR grants. It's a great opportunity to tap into federal resources. One page proposals are due September 15<sup>th</sup>, and if selected, final proposals are due October 13<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Brian Schweiss if you'd like additional information.

The Department is in the process of awarding more Fuel for Schools grants, and we are excited about sponsoring new projects. She encouraged everyone to attend one of the Department's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open House events – tomorrow will be at Powder Valley Nature Center, with others still to come. This week, the Department is undergoing a field audit for SFI certification on approximately 6,000 acres. The audit started yesterday and will continue through Thursday. Lisa noted it's been a very interesting process.

Seedling orders are being accepted September 1-April 15.

**U.S. Forest Service** – Sherri gave and submitted the following report:

US Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell retired September 1<sup>st</sup> after around eight years as Chief. He has been succeeded by our new Chief, Tony Tooke, an Alabama native who has spent most, if not all of his career in the East. Here is a youtube of his swearing in: <https://youtu.be/eLxCT5YKK04>

Flood recovery has occupied much of our time since May 1<sup>st</sup>. The Regional Office (engineering) and our Washington Office (Deputy Chief for the National Forest System, Director of Engineering, & Director of Recreation) have been on the Forest to view the damage incurred. While here, we were also able to show them our CFLRP project on the Eleven Point district.

Also, supporting the efforts to fight fire out West. Over 50 Mark Twain National Forest employees are assigned, and an additional Missouri state, Iowa state, other federal agencies, and private citizens have also been assigned. Many people have been out at least twice, some three or four times. The current fire situation has been at a high level for over a month with no season-ending events forecast.

Timber target for the Mark Twain was met in mid-July. We expect a similar target in FY18. A decision should be out for the Forest Health project in December. This project focuses on oak decline over 45,000 acres across the Forest. We anticipate 180 MMBF will result from implementing this project.

As an agency, we are looking at ways to improve how we do our work, including managing the timber resource. To date, the Forest has implemented contracts for archaeological surveys and for landlines. These are “static” resources that we can invest in well ahead of a proposed sale. We will also be initiating consultation with many of the 26 tribes we work with to develop a Programmatic Agreement which could reduce the amount of overall projects we will need to consult on in the future and allow the tribes to focus on the ones that are of the most interest to them rather than every single project.

If you have ideas, thoughts, a perspective you'd like to share on how we do our work, please contact me and share them! We are open to change. We discussed this opportunity at the recent MDC, MFPA meeting in June (which was a great meeting itself!). I know you have ideas!

Hiring has resumed and involves an intensive process for which each position must receive Departmental approval. To date, we have had 6 positions approved since June. However, the agency will be engaging in a hiring event at this year's SAF convention in Albuquerque. The Mark Twain National Forest plans to advertise 7 positions as part of this hiring event. If you know of students or recent graduates that are interested, please let them know of this event.

The Capitol Christmas Tree will be coming to Springfield and Poplar Bluff! On the 21<sup>st</sup> of November it will be in Springfield at Bass Pro. On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, it will be at Poplar Bluff at the Menard's parking lot. This tree comes from the Kootenai National Forest in Montana. The Chamber in Poplar Bluff is coordinating the efforts there – if you'd like to be involved, please contact them.

**Missouri Forest Products Association** – Brian Brookshire reported they are excited about the new logging school which is set to launch October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The school will be held at the camp at the old University Forestry at Lake Wappapello. It's worth going to see what the camp looks like now – significant makeover. The students will be housed in dormitory. Brian reported they are in desperate need of students, the class will accommodate 15. Cost is \$5,000 for 10-week program, and scholarships are available. The school is partnership with Mo. Forest Products Association, Department of Conservation, and private industry. The curriculum is in place and instructors have been hired. Outreach efforts have targeted FFA and agriculture students, and it's been advertised nationwide.

**Natural Resources Conservation Service - Nate Goodrich gave the following update:**

- Working with Steve Westin on revision of Missouri Common Plan template for forest management plan development is almost complete and will be released in the very near future. This plan will meet requirements for NRCS programs, Forest Stewardship Plans, Tree Farm, and MMW.
- FY-18 EQIP sign-up is underway with a deadline of November 17.
- Forest Stand Improvement is looking like it will be approximately the 5<sup>th</sup> most contracted item for FY-17 across all land uses and fund pools.
- Agroforestry subaccount will still be available for FY-18. Info will be in Green Horizons.
- FY-18 General CSP sign-up will likely be in the calendar year 2018.

- NRCS is working with our partners to add capacity at the field level for additional forestry support. At this time we are working to finalize an agreement with MDC and NWTF. We will have more details in the future regarding location once everything is in place.

**Mo. Society of American Foresters** – Nate reported that MoSAF will be holding a joint fall meeting with Iowa SAF on October 30-31. Meeting will be based out of Kirksville and the theme will be Private Land Forest Management in an Agricultural Landscape.

**Nat'l Wild Turkey Federation** – John Burk reported that NWTF had just completed their 2017 fiscal year which also put them at the halfway point of their Save the Habitat, Save the Hunt, a 10 year initiative. The initiative goals at the national level included enhancing and conserving 4 million acres, to create 1.5 million new hunters, and gain access to an additional 500,000 acres. NWTF at the national and local level (Missouri) are on track to exceed our enhanced and conserved acreage goals. Missouri's portion of the national goal is 300,000 acres and the majority of those acres include forestry related work on both public and private land. He went on to mention that we are in the process of hiring a Project Forester for the St. Francois Knobs area through a cooperative agreement with NRCS and the Private Lands Division of the Missouri Department of Conservation. This position will assist with providing technical assistance primarily on private forest lands. The position should be posted in the near future. He also mentioned that the existing Project Forester (Chad Doolan) was getting his feet under him and showing good progress. Chad's position was created through another cooperative agreement between NRCS and the Mark Twain National Forest. This position was designed to make better use of the Stewardship Authority on the Mark Twain by developing stewardship contracts and agreements. The position assists with outreach efforts designed to promote Farm Bill related forestry programs primarily in the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) area. John also mentioned that he would be posting an RFP for the MONWTF super fund grant program in the next couple of weeks at <http://www.monwtf.org/super-fund/> and that funding through the Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative (MoBCI) grant program was also currently available with an end of September deadline at: <https://mobci.net/>

**APHIS PPQ** – Mike Brown reported they are completing routine activities, insect survey work, export inspection and certification are on-going. Emerald ash borer regulatory monitoring and outreach continues throughout the state. Notice of Proposed Rule Making has been submitted to OPM to review possible rescinding of federal EAB quarantine. The rule-making process is a long one. If this proceeds there will be opportunity for public comment. USDA has been involved along with the Missouri Department of Agriculture in the distribution and release of EAB parasitoids, operating primarily in SE Missouri.

**Mo. Department of Agriculture** – Colin reported they are continuing to work with partners on gypsy moth surveys and thousand canker's disease surveys. They are working on biocontrol releases for EAB on select areas.

**Missouri Nurseryman's Association** - Wayne Lovelace invited everyone to the field day at Forrest Keeling that will be held September 14<sup>th</sup>. They have over 200 people registered. The main theme is healthy soil. The field day will include tours, and lunch is furnished. Dr. Andrew Neal from United Kingdom will present.

**University of Missouri** – Dusty Walter noted they have had a complete turnover in leadership, and he invites everyone to meet with the new leadership.

**Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri** – Mike Hoffmann reported that printed copies of the FWAM Forestry Resources Directory are available today for MoFRAC members. Organizations included in the directory are asked to review their information and send updates to Mike. Additional printed copies are available for distribution upon request.

Mike reported that Jim and Schatzi Ball, the 2016 Missouri Outstanding Tree Farmers, were selected as the eleven state North Central Region Outstanding Tree Farmers and were in the running for the National Outstanding Tree Farmers. Thanks for the assistance of MoFRAC members in voting for Jim and Schatzi, but unfortunately they were not selected. As Regional winners, they have been invited to participate in the American Forest Foundation's Fly-In Capital visit on Oct 3-4. If any MoFRAC members have forestry issues they would like to have presented, get them to Mike Hoffmann and he'll pass them on to Jim and Schatzi.

The annual FWAM membership meeting will be held on October 7 at the Missouri Chestnut Roast.

### **New Business**

New Membership - Brian Brookshire noted that we received a request to add the Great Rivers Habitat Alliance to MoFRAC. No one with the Alliance was in attendance at the meeting. Since no one knew who they were, this was tabled. Action Item: The group asked that we put them on the March agenda to find out who they are. Nate Goodrich suggested that in the future, groups who want to be added should attend a meeting to introduce themselves prior to the Council voting. The group agreed.

Action Item: Brian noted that this will require a change in the bylaws, and stated that this bylaw change will be placed on the agenda to be approved at the next meeting.

Nominating Committee – Brian reported it's time to appoint a nominating committee to come up with nominees to fill the Vice Chair position in 2018. Lynn Barnickol has agreed to continue as Secretary. Mike Hoffmann and Rebecca Landewe have agreed to lead the committee to seek nominations for Vice Chair.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be held December 6, 2017.