

Illinois Forestry Development Council – Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2017

Location: NRCS State Office, Champaign, IL

Attendees: Bill Gradle, Director (IFDC), Jim Zaczek (SIUC), Jake Hill (Legislative Rep.Senator Barickman), Brendan Cain (Shawnee N.F.), Cole Craft (IL Blk Walnut Council), Karla Gage (SIUC), Elliot Lagacy (IDOA), Jay Hayek (UofI), Reinee Hildebrandt (IDNR), Sravya Pamulapati (IDNR), Chris Whittom (IDNR), Lydia Scott (Morton Arboretum, guest), Wade Conn (NRCS), Mike Brunk (Urban), John Edgington (IFA), Tom Wilson (IDNR), Rob Sproule, (IAA), Patti Cludray, Recorder (SIUC)

Call to Order: 10:10 – The March 9th meeting of the IFDC was called to order and members were welcomed and asked to introduce themselves by IFDC Chair, Jim Zaczek.

- Bill Gradle distributed today's meeting agenda and the minutes of the IFDC meeting held on January 12, 2017. Minutes were reviewed and discussed by committee members.
- **MOTION:** Wade Conn, made a motion to approve minutes as written; seconded by Tom Wilson; Motion carries.

AGENDA ITEMS

Budge Analysis Review: Discussion led by Jim Zaczek.

- The question for consideration is whether to utilize available funding left in IFDC – SIU budget or to roll it back into the fund for future use if still available. The reason extra funding is even available is there were unused funds in several budget lines: commodities, contractual services and salaries (savings on Bill Gradle's fringe since he is still extra-help). Budget discussion open to group.
 - Bill is okay with his current extra-help position, however, he will only be allowed 900 hours. The Search Waiver to return him to his previous: AP-Director position has been sent forward and is pending approval. If approved then Bill will once again be in an AP position and fringe will once again be paid, so some of this saved funding will need to be used.
 - The AP position is currently on an annual contract. Tom Wilson notes that typically there is a 3 year budget contract in place for funding, however, these are unusual times – with the stop gap budgets and funding in question.
 - Jay H. asks if the budget numbers indicated takes into account printing of the manual or purchase of hats? Patti relays that the cost of those items have been taken into account when the remaining budget was calculated.
 - Chris W. indicates to the group if the funds are going to be used in a manner other than indicated in the budget then SIU needs to re-obligate the funding. Tom W. there shouldn't really need to be many modifications.
 - Jim Z. if the council rolls the remaining budget until the next FY would we be able to reallocate then. Wade C. so should the council wait until the next meeting in May to re-evaluate the budget. Reinee H. can the remaining grants be re-looked at for use of some of the funding?
 - There are a couple of other possible uses of some of the FY17 funding that the council may want to consider which are on the agenda.

Discussion on printing of the BMP Handbook and updating and printing the Forest Industry

Economic Impact flier: Open discussion of the agenda item.

- Wade C., is the Best Management Practices (BMP) handbook information still online. Yes, it is still available electronically. This manual was printed in the past, however, there are only about 300 of

the printed manuals left (at SIU). One case of those manuals was brought to the January meeting for distribution.

- Also to consider is the reprint of the Forest Industry Economic Impact Flier. This is a good effective flier,
 - Paul D, for the council's consideration is the fact that within a year from now the council will pay 3 thousand to a different purveyor of statistics and data, this money will be a cash match on their grant-utilization specialists. There will be a report and we hope to have something close to the data in this flier for 20 states and it will be more detailed. Tom W., so should the council wait a year for this new data? Paul D., my advise is that we don't redo the flyer at this time, just wait a year. Jay H. would be interested in in looking at their methodologies. Wade C., so this will be a report but the data could be used to create a pamphlet if the council sees fit. Paul D. we have been waiting for the release of federal grant funding, so the data should be available in a year. Jay H. will this cover all the details such as urban issues and impacts. Paul D., notes there are 300 line items and that he will send information back out the to address the questions addressed here today. The State of Michigan is the author with the help of 10 other states. Brendan C. questions will they let us use their data before the final report is complete. Paul D., yes, is sure there will not be a problem, but will verify. Wade C., so, really it does not seem wise to update/reprint the pamphlet at this time.
- Bill G passed out some additional fliers/pamphlets for consideration of the council – Managing the Forests; and, Forests of Illinois. Council reviewed and considered the merits of reprinting these items.
- Jim Z., brought discussion back to agenda item: reprinting of the BMP manual. Patti gave cost of reprinting she received from SIUC printing and duplicating; to print 1000 of the current manual would cost \$2, 035.00. Discussion by the council on this item.
 - Jay H. is a hard copy of the manual sent to the timber buyers annually. Paul D., does not know that they have been sent the manual in the past 1.5 years. However, in the past they have been sent out to them with a personal memo. A lot of people use the BMP as a legal resource. Loggers have them and use them. Question, approximately how many use them? Well there are over 400 timber buyers, and there are 60+ consultants who could use them. Jim Z., how about the AG community and woodlots. Chris W., they could also be placed in the Forestry Offices around the state for public distribution. Karla C., it would be a good idea to put something in Farm Week, letting people know we have resources like this. Paul D., this is a good manual and it should be available to anyone who wants it. Jay H., it is a fact that we need to promote soil and water conservation; it seems that printing additional manual would be money well spent. Brendan C, has some concerns as to who will be implementing the practices outlined in the manual, since we can't reach all the landowners, will it be the timber buyers? Jay H., are there any requirements for loggers to give something like this out? Paul D., no not really, not unless it would be in the sales contract with the landowners. We can give them a checklist but have to get permission to reach out.
- So, if we want to give more of the BMP manuals out, do we want to have more printed?
- **MOTION:** Jay Hayek makes a motion to authorize the printing of 1000 of the BMP manuals at SIU for the amount of \$2,035.00. Karla Gage seconds the motion.
- Jim Z, asks for any further discussion; Motion carries.

Discussion of the Illinois Forest Action Plan – Final Draft. Paul Diezman led the discussion of the council. Copy of the final-draft was sent electronically to members; paper copies were distributed, Paul asked members to review document for a few minutes. Open discussion.

- Paul D. questions, have members had adequate time to review this document. This is supposed to describe the status of Forestry in Illinois and address problems. There are some issues that need to be addressed, such as, the job title needs to be capitalized. But are there any other suggestions.

Should we discuss the relationship with Shawnee National Forest. Currently, the narratives of 4 sections were edited for clarity by Paul D. and other edits were made as noted.

- Edits submitted by Mike Brunk on page 75 & 77 were reconciled.
- Type 0-s were corrected and sections that were set out as 1st Threats were edited:
- Hope that all figures referenced are numbered correctly.
- State forest section was just edited; as were the strategies that open and close the document,
- Paul as editor took liberties to make the document more concise.
- Paul D., is willing to review the edits and make changes as pointed out by the council. If there are errors in editing or information that needs to be included please contact him. Encourages the council to carefully read the document. Once the committee members are happy it can be released to the DNR (for review – through Tom), then it can be sent forward and will be good for 10 years. Tom W. so are we ready to ask for approval to release to IDNR? Discussion ensues.
- Reinee H., points out concerns that some narratives, when edited took out important points regarding at least one of our partners. Mike B. points out that he feels the current editing changed some real points that needed to be revised, but there are more that needs to be addressed. Karla G., has reviewed the entire document and that are more than a few edits that really need to be made before this document is ready for release.
- Tom W., notes since it looks like significant edits are needed, does Paul and the council think these can be made and implemented before the next council meeting?
- Paul D., yes with the cooperation of the council, 2 weeks prior to the next council meeting in May members can use Microsoft edits so their edits can be shared using track changes to keep members in touch with the editing process. The Urban section should be edited by the Urban committee, so those suggested edits should go to Chris.
- Paul D., With cooperation of the IFDC members; ideally the edits would be in 2 week cycles; first going to him then to full committee for review. Does that seem reasonable.
- **MOTION:** Tom Wilson makes motion for IFDC members to send their items for edit to Paul as soon as possible, so that the 2 week cycle of review and edit by Paul can begin, ending 2 weeks prior to the next meeting of the IFDC when Paul can make the final edits and a final-draft of the IFAP will be ready for review by council. Jim Z., asks for any further discussion.
 - Edits for the Urban section should be divided from the others and sent to the Urban Committee first, then they will send to Paul.
 - Jim Z thanks Paul for all of his hard work and requests that since all members need to review a common document that the latest version be sent to Bill for distribution to the membership. Paul notes that document 3.001 which was sent yesterday is the most recent so he will resend that for distribution to all.
- Vote is called for if no further discussion; Motion carries.

Note: change to Agenda order: Since Bill is next on agenda, but stepped out to order lunch, Tom Wilson is called on to give IDNR report.

IDNR Report: Points of discussion presented by Tom Wilson.

- The IDNR will be losing 2 staff members due to retirement, in addition Jeff Harris will be resigning his position. Human Resources people are promising a re-hire will be done, but due to budget situation all are concerned and rehire is uncertain. Will need special permission.
- Mason Nursery – goods news; is staying open. This is due mainly to the fact that Dir. Rosenthal observed the operations and got to know the nursery staff. Since budget was uncertain, the nursery is pretty cleaned out. Packets are available for \$40 - \$50 to be mailed out; mill mix 100 sq ft. Council discussion on nursery.
 - Reinee questions is this mix honeybee friendly. Tom W., well Dave has been conveying concerns so he has been very careful, it may not be 100% but they are pretty confident this is a

very good mix. Karla G., has the mix been weed tested? Tom W., yes to best of their ability. Karla G., has a suggested list of DNA testers if that could help? Jim Z., is that kind of DNA testing cost prohibitive? Karla G, not really,

- Fire – Burning ban in place, it looks like this spring is going to be an active season. Not much we can do with fire when there are high winds and no real rain/moisture. Trying to keep on top of things with, i.e. Red flag warning, etc.
- State passed a budget to finish up FY 17 now working on the FY18 budget (trying to remove Federal funds); as separate pots of money, so this funding can be used; Fish and Wildlife are saying if you don't get this state budget figured out IL may lose Federal funding. We need to re-allocate the District Map for right now to cover open as much as possible.
- Tree Forever – website is available for those interested. There is an option being discussed of trying to get funding for a professional to go into areas to do assessment; looking at creating work plans. Team is assembled; IEMA, FEMA who have been trained to help with assessments in impacted communities. This is not limited to only Tree City, US communities; this group is targeting concerns of those who do not have the resources; they are there to fill in the gaps by 1) deploying group 2) assessment of path trees 3) looking at problems that need to be addressed – Tree Risk Assessment. Open for discussion of council.
 - Brendan C., how do you decide who to go to. Tom, the hope is that the group will reach out to the southern part of the State.
 - Reinee, there are some private grant funds available to replace trees; They are working with Trees Forever, but is for public trees only.
 - Tom W., crew was sent in to Starve Rock state park to help get them straightened out. In a recurring disaster situation; it is suggested people with qualifications will be in a data base so can be called on as needed.
 - Tom will send the url's for videos on how to get the information out to those who need it.
 - Jim Z. thanks Tom for providing this report.

LUNCH – Break at 11:50. Jimmy John's provided by IFDC for members and guests.

12:30 Bill Gradle recognizes Kurt Bobsin (Tree Farm Rep) who joined the meeting.

Update on the Council's RCPP Project on Improving Oak Hickory Forest Type. Presented by Bill Gradle.

- Letter was given to Director Rosenthal for review, thanking him for keeping the Mason Co. nursery open with no impacts to the staff.
- RCPP program is using Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding. NRCS approved 57 management plans using regular EQIP outside of this project. Jay H., 100% of all who applied were accepted.
- Proposals: There was a cutoff of January 20th and the 31st of March 400 applications will be ranked in the 4 targeted areas. This is competitive. The staff are ranking now and by March 31 they will be submitting the point spread of all proposals submitted (to Bill). After that time, discussion will commence on funding ranked applications; we should know the results in the next 2 months.
- Jim Z., thanks Bill for this update.

Committee Reports:

Stewardship/Legacy Report, presented by Chris Whittom (IDNR).

- There have been no Legacy applications so this committee has not met. Chris adds that he has not pushed for applications; he has made a few phone calls but he feels those interested will come to him.
- Stewardship program – database is online now. There can be proper cost-share to promote proper Forest Management. 2 months ago they received d-base but some records did not transfer properly so

they had to take the time to straighten that issue out. Cleanup at a district level – making sure they are current with all requirements of their management plans. Enforcement has been good. Are there any questions. Open discussion by council.

- Kurt B., did you talk about Admin Rules yet? Chris W., no not yet. Now, on first notice. Came off of public comment 02/13/17 – there was one comment which was addressed then it went back to legist. JCAR review is next Wednesday and until JCAR says this is a done deal, it isn't.
- Jim Z., asks for any further discussion. Thanks Chris for his report to the council.

Urban Committee Report, presented by Robert Sproul (IAA).

- The Urban Committee has been active, they met last week in Champaign. Working on a draft of bylaws – the committee vision document will be brought to the council at a later date, possibly as soon as the May meeting, for review and approval. The annual report will be available for the council's review at the next meeting. A sub-committee has been formed to look at forest survey planning approach costs.
- The Urban Committee's focus. One of the reasons we exist is to look at something before it is put out there. We need to get the word out that we are here to do that. Not sure the legislature is aware that the IFDC could provide a lot of information to clarify complex issues like this (i.e. there is an active bill in the senate/house for neonicotinoid ban in Illinois). We are not lobbyists but it would have been nice if IFDC would have been consulted on this pesticide issue. Council needs to be more pro-active to get the word out that if there is a bill or issue related to trees, ask us. Open for discussion.
 - Council agrees that it would be a good idea to try to get the word out that IFDC can provide technical advice on this type of issue. Jay H., since the Senator (Jason Barickman) is now officially a member of the council could he possibly help promote the IFDC as a group which could be consulted. It might be a good idea to use a service; is the council familiar with the website where you can do a number search for a specific house bill #, so the sponsor can be identified. Rob S., it may help if a standard letter went out to the sponsor from the IFDC saying we can provide assistance with no strings attached.
 - There are currently 5 shelved bills with IFDC tags on them; 3 senate and 2 house bills, as of 2-3 days ago nothing is going on. Wade C., sometimes we don't know what these bills are; they would need to be looked up. Reinee H., is or could there be a Forestry associated sub-committee to keep track of bills that come in. Rob S., before a bill is presented it would be nice for the sponsor to ask for assistance. Wade C., what would be the best way to get the word out? Jim Z., put it in the Annual Report, that the IFDC is a resource hot-line. Paul D., IFDC could render an opinion every 2 months.
 - The Farm Bureau have groups who have lobbying powers. If there were IFDC unbiased professionals offering consultation would they be stepping on toes. Elliot L., we must be careful to stay within the bounds of our mission. Wade C., Informal assistance – discipline specific assistance should be our mission. Reaching out through our website may be the most appropriate way of contact since our mission is clear. Using other means of contacting legislature we may risk looking like we are trying to influence; by addressing in advance. So, really should this be done as a council or as individuals; letting sponsors know that we should be included in the pre-development of bill addressing forest related matters. Jim Z., is it our charge to let legislature know, as a group, we have problems. Reinee H., that has been done before, when there was council consensus about an issue then suggestions could go forward. Jim Z., in the past when Rich Little was on the council he was very involved. Chris W., if the council felt strongly about an issue a position statement could be prepared and submitted. There are many people who don't know the council exists, this would bring us to their attention. There should be information about this on our website.

Other Business: Group

- Bill G., currently working with Lydia on next meeting, to be held at Morton Arboretum. One focus of meeting will be exposure to Oak Restoration work/ Oak system Restoration. Lydia S., an Oak Science workshop is upcoming. Looking to our land managers through a survey to decide what issues are important. These issues will be addressed at the workshop and then put into recommendations. The workshop will be a forum for landowners and scientists.
- Thank you to Jake Hill (Sen. Jason Barickman Aide) for attending this meeting. In 14 years of IFDC council meetings, this is the first time we have had a Representative of the Senate in attendance. Jake notes that if anyone has questions email the Senator, he will always see your messages.
- Reinee introduces Sravya Pamulapati, a Public Service Graduate Intern working with the Urban Committee until June.
- MOTION is made to Adjourn by Elliot Legacy and seconded by Tom Wilson. No further business, motion carries. The March meeting of the Illinois Forestry Development Council adjourns at 2:45.
- Next Meeting of the IFDC will be May 11, 2017, at Morton Arboretum, Lisle, IL.