



Missouri Forest Resources Advisory Council

Promoting forest health, productivity, and sustainability

1607 S. Oaks Wardsville, MO 65101 573-230-6248

www.mofrac.org

January 27, 2016

Dr. Thomas L. Payne
Vice Chancellor and Dean
College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
University of Missouri – Columbia
2-69 Agriculture Building
Columbia, MO 65211

Dean Payne,

The Missouri Forest Resources Advisory Council (MoFRAC, or the Council) was established to facilitate communication among all who are interested in Missouri's forests to assure long-term forest health, productivity, and sustainability. Within this core purpose, MoFRAC serves as a sounding board or in an advisory capacity to agencies and organizations regarding forestry issues. Currently, more than thirty agencies and organizations are represented on the Council, including the University of Missouri School of Natural Resources.

In August of 2015, representatives of MoFRAC met with Dr. Josh Millspaugh and several of the forestry faculty. The dedication of faculty and staff to the forestry profession and the education of young men and women was evident. The meeting was informative and helped us understand the current challenges facing natural resources higher education.

Missouri's 15.5 million acres of forestland support a \$9.7 billion timber industry in the state, providing more than \$91.5 million in state sales tax revenue, and provides over 44,000 jobs. Key among these jobs are professional foresters, who are responsible for forest management across public and private ownerships to provide economic benefits while supporting diverse wildlife habitat, healthy rivers, and recreational opportunities. Professional foresters are the face of forest management in the state, serving as the point of contact between landowners, timber harvesters, industry, and the public. While this requires a diverse set of skills, the foundational element is a robust forestry education.

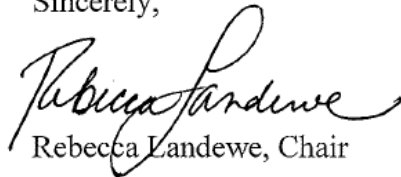
MoFRAC understands there are significant challenges facing the School of Natural Resources and Forestry program. Among these is the capacity to fill needed teaching positions within the School. One suggestion offered by MoFRAC members to help maintain the robust forestry education is temporarily fulfill teaching needs not currently supported by full-time positions with forestry professionals. We understand this is currently done on a limited basis, and would like to further discuss how to best meet the needs of students and the forestry profession under today's challenging circumstances. Our hope, however, is that the school will fill vacant positions with

new full-time faculty members. The Council believes filling vacant positions will provide students with the highest quality instruction, provide effective guidance for forestry students, help maintain accreditation through the Society of American Foresters (SAF), and reinforce the University's reputation as a leader in the forestry and related fields.

Currently, SAF General Accreditation Standards require a minimum of eight full-time equivalent faculty members to maintain accreditation. The Council understands that some of the full-time equivalent faculty may be met through other program courses or adjunct professors with the U.S. Forest Service Cooperative Forestry faculty on a temporary basis. We hope that you will give strong consideration to open positions needed to meet core professional forestry education standards. SAF accreditation is critical in ensuring graduates from the School of Natural Resources Forestry program are competitive in today's market for forestry professionals as many employers either require or prefer an education from an SAF-accredited program.

Dr. Hank Stelzer represents the School of Natural Resources on MoFRAC and we look forward to receiving his updates on changes within the School. To further discuss the School's status, the Council would welcome your attendance at any of our meetings, or we would be happy to meet with you on campus. MoFRAC looks forward to a response to this letter and we hope you take us up on our offer to meet with you.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Landewe, Chair

Cc: Dr. Joshua Millspaugh
Dr. Hank Stelzer

Enclosure: MoFRAC Brochure