

Meeting Notes

“MoFRAC Working Group on Woodland Management and Forest Industries”

Thursday, January 17th; 9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Copper Kettle Restaurant, Ashland

The following individuals attended this fifth meeting of the Working Group –

Gene Garrett, MU Center for Agroforestry (retired)
Scott Brundage, MCFA
Brian Brookshire, MFPA
Shelby Jones, MCFA
Brian Schweiss, MDC
Jason Jensen, MDC
Kelly Smith, MFB
Bob Ball, MoFRAC

Review and Approve November Notes

Gene Garrett

- Scott Brundage provided Bob with a few edits to the draft Notes. Edits had been received before the meeting from Kelly Smith and Tony Stafford.

Welcome & Strategy for the Day

Gene Garrett

- It was decided to start the meeting by focusing first on the “doables” with remaining work moving activities either complete or nearly complete towards the end of the day

- **Communicating the Benefits of Forest Management**

Scott Brundage

Before the meeting (via email) Scott shared the following (edited) updates on Communicating:

“At our last (Dec.) Blue Ribbon Committee meeting, Shibu Jose, Director, Agroforestry Center at MU/SNR, spoke with us and after considerable discussion and agreement, I felt good about the future of Green Horizons. Since then, I have heard nothing and know that no one has contacted the Missouri Consulting Foresters Association (MCFA) about staying on as supporting member (financial) and being on an Editorial Board to help obtain articles for each issue.

Last Thursday, Jan. 10, 2013, I attended the Agroforestry Advisory Board Meeting at the MU Union Building. Green Horizons was on the agenda, and it was discussed by recently appointed co-editor Mike Gold, Assistant Director, Agroforestry Center. The other co-editor is Mark Coggeshall, Agroforestry Forest Geneticist, whose plate is overflowing with research projects and teaching assignments.

To help improve the amount of Forest Management accomplished in Missouri, many of us firmly believe that a "How-To-Do-It" type newsletter/magazine is a must, and presently, Green Horizons is well liked, known, and accepted in Missouri. However, it is only received by about 1% of our woodland owners, and we all would like the circulation to greatly increase. To me, Green Horizons (or a similar magazine) is a must in our goal to improve forestry and forest management in Missouri. Since the last issue of Green Horizons and our last Blue Ribbon

Committee meeting, it appears nothing has been done to form or expand an Editorial Board, to improve funding, or to start getting the next issue published. I believe this lack of progress is unacceptable on this extremely important issue.

I volunteered again to represent the MCFA on the Editorial Board, and Lisa again offered (as the largest financial contributor (MDC Forestry Division)) would take over Green Horizons if the Agroforestry Center does not have time nor money to continue publishing. Shibu again said Agroforestry started it, still wants it, and mentioned the fact that the Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri (FWAM) is using Green Horizons as its members' magazine.

One last "food for thought" comment--we certainly do not want to exclude smaller organizations from being supporters of Green Horizons due to limited finances, but maybe suggest a tiered "do what you can to help" level of support such as \$100, \$250, \$500, or more. In talking with Shelby (MCFA), we thought \$500 would be too much for the Consultants, but \$250 would be OK. I know many past supporters that are very small perhaps can only give \$100, while only a few could afford \$500. Mike Gold mentioned the \$500 level only, and I would guess this would eliminate most supporting organizations which would not be desirable. What about FWAM, Missouri Farm Bureau, Conservation Federation of Missouri, Forest Keepers, etc.. If availability goes strictly to email, additional money is really not a problem.”

Gene said he had talked with Shibu Jose during the meeting today, and Agroforestry is committed to providing the needed leadership and administrative support for Green Horizons while keeping the purpose of the publication broad extending beyond Agroforestry. Shibu will be holding a meeting within two weeks inviting the primary players to expand the Editorial Board. Gene and Brian Schweiss will represent the Working Group. One purpose of the meeting is to decide how to substantially expand the Green Horizons audience. Gene also said the Conservation Federation of Missouri is receptive to distributing information to a selected list of their CFM members. Kelly Smith stated MFB will also assist as described in the November Notes. Brian Brookshire mentioned that a high percentage of woodland landowners do not read email. These folks only read hard copy publications. A role for MoFRAC could be:

- Supporting a process to get information on woodland management in the hands of woodland landowners
- MoFRAC partners need to know a year in advance of what their financial obligations could be to give them time to budget for those expenses. The October and November months would be ideal to get those cost projections out. Jason noted that public agencies must also budget their funds.
- It's very frustrating the current Green Horizons funding is not adequate to get the job done in a state where good forest management is such a priority.

Scott said he feels the regular mail distribution costs are so great we are nearly forced to rely only on email. We can't find dollars to reach the numbers we want using regular mail. It almost becomes email by default.

Gene expressed his feeling we can possibly find private individuals willing to support Green Horizons if they were approached. In fact, Dan Day with the U.S. Forest Service has already committed \$1,000 towards publishing Green Horizons. Shelby believes we need to target the audience and identify specifically who needs access to this publication versus distributing it widely. "We need a marketing plan".

Brian Brookshire said he feels we should invite Terry Truttman, MDC, to meet with MoFRAC and talk about his project dealing with "forest products branding". Bob commented that Jason had suggested Mr. Truttman as a speaker for the December MoFRAC meeting. Because that agenda was already full, Terry has been invited to the March 13th meeting. Terry Truttman is preparing himself to become a sound marketing expert of our woodland products.

Gene feels the University is not getting done what needs to get done because Extension funding levels over the years have not kept up with their growing workload. However, if Green Horizons were removed from the University setting, we could then seek out advertising to help pay for publishing and distribution. We can't ignore that "outside" approach.

Both Shelby Jones and Kelly Smith commented that Missouri Farm Bureau can sort their members by their commodity interests (woodlands), by location, and by age if necessary. But, maybe first a marketing survey is needed to determine what our audience thinks and needs. We need to find ways to get Green Horizons in the hands of private woodland landowners, but also in the hands of private industry.

Brian Brookshire felt we need to identify the steps to get the word out such as:

- Postings of back issues at key websites
- Encouraging organizations and businesses to forward Green Horizons to their members
- We need a process now to provide the MoFRAC partners with a tie-in between MoFRAC activities and the mission objects of their various boards and leadership bodies. Otherwise, the importance of "communicating" gets lost.

Brian Schweiss suggested advertising space be purchased in the Missouri Farm Bureau magazine for Green Horizons. This concept could also apply to CFM publications, etc. Kelly said this would be the Editor's call, but buying space in the MFB publication would be a new concept. However, they are working now with MDC on the "Call Before You Cut" program.

Kelly feels we need to include topics that woodland landowners are most passionate about then focus those articles to a targeted audience.

Jason mentioned that Joanie Straub, Outreach & Education Division, MDC, may be able to assist with how to expand the audience for Green Horizons.

Bob said he talked with representatives of “DJ Case and Associates” last June about the options for developing a marketing plan for Missouri. The following text is their proposal:

- “As we discussed, with a topic as broad and deep as “marketing,” there are a hundred different directions you could go and myriad strategies you could employ to achieve your various objectives. We believe the key will be to narrow the focus to a handful of strategies—informed by the best information and expertise available—and conduct pilot tests of these. Pilot tests are much less risky than rolling out fully formed strategies at the statewide level. You then build on what works, throw out what doesn’t, and gradually grow into your success.

We have worked with and conducted research among forest and woodland owners, and we can offer valuable insights and recommendations into potential strategies for increasing and sustaining membership, and methodologies for pilot testing these strategies.

We propose to work with you remotely to review and solidify specific objectives, previous/ongoing marketing history and trajectory, and intended outcomes. Based on this cursory analysis, we will develop recommendations for how you might achieve the objectives you select and specific methods to implement and test them.

This proposal does not include any actual research, media placement or other direct promotion activity. It is rather an opportunity to step back and look at an overall marketing approach and direction, building on what is working and charting a course for taking the next leap forward.

We propose to conduct this consultation at a rate of \$95/hour for up to 60 hours, totaling \$5,700. Upon completion, we will deliver a simple document that captures our recommendations and lays the foundation for a more fully formed Marketing Plan after pilot testing is complete. Please let me know if you have questions about anything here, or if there is anything else I can provide.” As per Phil T. Seng, Vice-president, D.J. Case & Associates, 317 E. Jefferson Blvd., Mishawaka, IN 46545, 574-258-0100, Fax: 574-258-0189, Cell: 574-532-5485, phil@djcase.com, www.djcase.com.

Bob also described how the Missouri Forage and Grassland Council, MFGC, utilize “grazing schools” to inform and educate livestock producers about the ways to maximize forage production. Schools are held all over the state annually using highly respected speakers combined with local landowner success stories. The MFGC website provides details on the locations and offered topics. Attendance is very high ranging from 50 to 500. Scott felt these grazing schools could be an effective way of reaching many woodland landowners since most livestock producers usually own at least a few acres of woods. However, it would be most ideal if we had our own woodland workshops or woodland management schools.

Kelly suggested we market to these landowners the idea of using professional foresters to bring in additional dollars of farm income. Then, over time, gradually introduce the idea of fencing cattle out of the woods and the long term benefits of that management practice.

Gene routed around the group samples of outreach materials developed in Minnesota for forest landowners which included a Minnesota Agroforestry Demonstration Sites binder. Brian

Schweiss scanned the “Woodland Advisory Class Calendar” and provided the file via email to the group. He suggested presenting these sessions could be a good activity for the Forest and Woodland Association of Missouri.

Scott identified three topics that could be discussed by the Working Group if we wanted to continue meeting. Gene highlighted those topics:

- a. Invasive Species
- b. Burning the Woods
- c. Grazing the Woods

These topics, and more, could be presented during workshops around the state.

Bob suggested we consider making a recommendation to MoFRAC that a letter be sent to the University of Missouri encouraging more funding be allocated to support Forestry Extension.

• **Timber Price Trends Report** **Jason Jensen**

All MDC Field Foresters have received orientation training in the use of the revised report. He is now trying to:

- a. Get broader distribution of the report over the state;
- b. Trying to line up feature articles from key folks on timber production;
- c. Working with the U.S. Forest Service Contracting Officer to gather feedback from the Forest Service on federal contract timber sales;
- d. Additional information will be included in future reports as it becomes available;
- e. Emphasizing the use of professionally trained foresters;
- f. Achieving a Goal of having at least 3 sales before including pricing in the report. Including Cedar may be one exception to the number of reports needed.
 - Cedar is an underutilized wood product
 - There is considerable interest in selling cedar
- g. Including comments about local market conditions, and
- h. Reminding MDC Field Foresters about their responsibilities in collecting report data for timber sales in their areas of the state.

Shelby suggested MDC needs to make the Timber Price Trends Report easier to find on their website. Plus, more links are needed with key organizations and groups to make the Report even easier for woodland landowners to find when they need it. The Missouri Consulting Foresters Association will be offering training during their annual meeting to increase the use of this report by consulting foresters.

The site location within “MDC Online” for archived reports is:

<http://mdc.mo.gov/search/google-appliance/timber%20price%20trends%20report>

• **Promote the Use of Demonstration Sites** **Scott Brundage**

The following message from Scott was sent to Working Group members prior to the meeting and it summarizes the work of the committee:

“The Missouri Forest Resource Advisory Council (MoFRAC) has worked to increase forest management in Missouri in recent years. To help improve this positive situation, MoFRAC has appointed a Blue Ribbon Committee, chaired by Dr. Gene Garrett. Its key members are from forest industry, MU School of Natural Resources, MDC, Consulting Foresters, MDA, forest

landowners, NRCS, Farm Bureau, etc., and have been asked to come up with ideas and suggestions to increase and improve forest management and other forestry activities in Missouri. The recent changes in the Missouri Timber Price Report are an example of our efforts. Changes include greatly increasing the report's availability on websites and hard copy locations.

The Blue Ribbon Committee believes one way to reach more forest landowners and teach them more "how to" on forest management, timber sales, tax cost basis, planting, weed control, deer protection, etc., is to identify forest management demonstration woodlands that could be made available for field days. Our goal is to have one or more such areas available in each county and to make this information available to anyone that may be involved in organizing field days or even having one-on-one inspections by foresters and landowners. A summary of information is expected to be on a key website with links on various other important forestry websites. This could be a valuable source of information to many forestry/conservation organizations in Missouri.

Brian Schweiss will contact MDC foresters and Tree Farm Inspectors. I am sending my request to Missouri Consulting Foresters Assn. members and Walnut Council Board members. My request is for the names of outstanding woodland owners you have worked with who have done some forest management and would not mind if their woodland is used as a field day area or even a site where a professional forester could take an interested landowner out to view and discuss the management example (i.e., a recent tree planting, TSI, timber sale, crop tree release, pruning, etc.). The beauty of "hands-on" in the field discussions is that they have always proven to be one of the most successful ways to sell forest management. The key is that the landowner whose name and information you provide has actually completed some forestry practice worth seeing and is willing to share this information with other interested parties and/or is willing to let a forester use the land for one-on-one discussion with interested landowners. Other considerations before providing us with a landowner's name, address, phone number, email address, woodland history and primary completed practices, are the following:

MISSOURI WOODLAND DEMONSTRATION AREAS DESIRABLE QUALITIES

Minimum Acres Woods

10 acres or more preferred of trees, exceptions could be unique species plantations of trees (fruit or nut trees, Christmas trees, biofuels, bamboo, etc.)

Access

There are three important factors that must be met. (1.) Highway access--must be accessible by hard surface and gravel at all times (no dirt roads impassable during wet weather or weak, old, narrow bridges). (2.) Landowner must have adequate parking for Field Day--some rock solid grass pasture (mowed) nearby. (3.) Woodland area must be nearby and accessible by foot, tractor/wagon, ATV/Mule (no standing water creeks with steep banks, no very steep hills, no blockage to woods by livestock in pasture, crop fields, etc.).

Management Plan

Prefer woodland owners who have a Management Plan and are properly following the Plan recommendations.

Condition of Woods

Prefer to have had some previous management work completed, i.e., tree planting, weed control, corrective pruning, coppicing, deer proof fence, TSI, veneer log pruning, crop tree release, timber sale, etc. Best if the entire woods is not completely managed so before and after comparisons can be made. Nearby unmanaged woods could be used for comparisons when needed.

Additional Amenities

Barn, shed, etc., with electric and water for indoor programs, lunch, etc. Restroom would be great; otherwise rent portable toilet. If no barn or shed is on the property, we would need meeting/lunch room nearby (hopefully no more than five miles away). Churches, schools, nursing homes, etc., have all been used for registration, business meetings, speakers during rainy weather, lunch, etc.

All of you have worked with many favorite woodland landowners who have a Management Plan and follow through with completing all management recommendations and would love to share their knowledge and show off their work to others. We need a list of their names and woodland information.

Please help us. Thank you.

Scott Brundage
Certified Forester #1443

P.S. Fred Crouse, Jeremy Wilson, Harlan Palm and I all have woodlands that will, hopefully, be included in the list.”

The above information, when finalized, needs to be posted at key websites and elsewhere to get the word out about the availability of these demonstration sites. They are hoping to get the names back within a few weeks to begin building the list of selected sites. The above criteria have been sent to the Missouri Chapter Walnut Council and the Missouri Consulting Foresters Association for distribution to their members.

Shelby suggested several decisions still need to be made that include:

- a. Signs for the sites
- b. Brief descriptions of what will be seen at each site
- c. Liability concerns by the landowners must be addressed

Kelly mentioned the “Agri-Tourism Protection Act” covers inherent risks on a working farm. Individuals must first register at the “Agri-Missouri” website. Missouri Farm Bureau provides signs for agri-tourism events at a cost of \$8.00 for MFB members and \$38.00 for non-members. They initially printed 500 signs.

- **Increasing Landowner’s Use of Professional Foresters & Loggers** **Gene Garrett**

Gene reported on an informal meeting Monday, January 7th with the U.S. Forest Service leadership at the Mark Twain National Forest office in Rolla. Jerry VanSambeek, MoFRAC Chairman, Bob Ball, Immediate Past Chairman, and Gene Garrett, Past Chairman, represented MoFRAC. Gene provided some history and an overview of MoFRAC as well as describing the operation of our Working Group with our intent of improving forest health in the state.

The primary purpose of the meeting was to encourage the USFS to make greater use of professionally trained loggers when conducting logging operations on their lands. Bill Nightengale, Forest Supervisor, pointed out that federal contracting procedures are extremely rigid and do not accommodate modifications in the contract language that would allow awarding of federal contracts only to professionally trained loggers. In order for this approach to occur, the federal contracting language would need to be revised and that is very unlikely.

Bill and his staff offered to run this approach up through channels to see exactly what the response would be. Gene offered to make contacts in Washington, D.C. to support our recommendation if that would be helpful. We provided their contracting officer with a copy of MDC’s “State Land Timber Sale Best Bid System”.

Highlights from our discussions include:

- a. The contracting officer gave us an excellent overview of their requirements in federal contracts for timber sales that benefit forest health. Their stipulations are numerous and rigorous. Contractors who fail to adhere to their specifications as determined by follow-up evaluations onsite may be excluded from the opportunity to bid on future timber contracts. It may take repeated violations on timber contracts in order for them to “delist” a logger or contractor, but it has been done successfully in the past.
- b. It is unlikely they will be able to “certify” loggers because of rigid contracting procedures and policies.
- c. They suggest we focus more on incentivizing the landowner via a break in their property taxes for following their management plan. We discussed the 3% of 6% provision within our forest tax law, and pointed out this is a weak incentive as currently enforced, however, additional incentives are being considered.
- d. We discussed the possibility of talking with insurance companies and health care providers serving private logging companies. These businesses may see merit in requiring their insured clients to become professionally trained loggers to reduce liability and insurance risks.
- e. The Forest Service will gladly provide MDC their timber sales values if those numbers will help bolster the Timber Price Trends Report.
- f. It was suggested MDC provide the Forest Service contracting officer with copies of maybe two key woodland management publications which they will then give to contractors and loggers attending their bid announcement and contract award meetings.

- **Missouri Forest Tax Law** **Brian Schweiss**

We have taken the information discussed at the meetings and are in the process of preparing a concept paper to provide to MDC Administration. This includes services that we will offer to participants and the benefits of the program and budget needs for the Department. We are currently waiting on permission from Administration to move forward.

- **Forest Health Sub-Committee Report**

Bob Ball

Harlan Palm and others have been meeting to draft a potential addendum to the state developed TCD Action Plan. It's their intent to first gain input and approval of the Missouri Chapter of Walnut Council before sharing their document with this Working Group. Potentially, if this Group concurs we could offer a motion to the full MoFRAC council seeking their support on inserting this addendum into the state plan.

It was decided by the Group members present that any product from this sub-committee must first have the full support and approval of the Walnut Council Chapter before the Working Group would consider reviewing their document. The science of how to best fight this disease is not exact, but there are strong opinions held by many. Without the endorsement of the local Chapter first, it would be improper for our Group to take any action.

Key Points from Today

Gene Garrett

- The topics suggested today for the Working Group to consider can be addressed by information and education articles through Green Horizons. These potential “doables” do not need to come before our Group for some progress to be made.

Schedule Future Meetings

Bob Ball

- The Group decided to not schedule a future meeting, and to go into a mode of waiting until called upon by the MoFRAC Chairman to provide some assistance. For now, our work is done, but we are “on call” waiting on further direction.
- “Thanks” to everyone for your commitment of time and your dedication to helping make our work meaningful and successful!

ADJOURN