

## **Illinois Forestry Development Council Meeting – March 19, 2003**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gary Rolfe. Seven Council members and 11 Task Group members and guests were present at the Mason State Nursery.

Gary reported on the Great Rivers Research and Education Center at Alton, Illinois. It evolved out of a project with the Natural History Survey. The concept was to do more of a holistic look at watersheds, ecosystems, floodplain forests and the rivers as an entity and create a national research and educational facility. A partnership was created between the University of Illinois and the Lewis and Clark Community College which is located at Godfrey, Illinois and the Illinois Natural History Survey. They started working politically to generate funding for this program. Congressman Costello has secured one million dollars in program money for the facility and \$135 thousand dollars in architectural planning money for constructing the Field Station. The Field Station will be constructed at the Alton Lock and Dam on the Corp of Engineers property. There will also be a primary facility on the Lewis and Clark Campus. There will be a Groundbreaking on April 7 at 9:00 am at the Alton Lock and Dam. Council members and Task Group members are invited.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the January 15, 2003 minutes as submitted.

### **Financial Report – *Dick Little***

Dick distributed copies of the FY03 financial report with no change since the last meeting. A copy of the Forestry Development Fund prepared by Brian Clark was also distributed. A total of \$713,500.93 was collected from the 4 percent harvest and license fees in FY02 and a total of \$646,752.61 has been collected for FY03 through February.

### **Newsletter Update – *Jim Appleby***

Jim presented some preliminary results from the Newsletter survey that was conducted to gain feedback on the Newsletter. The final results will be published in the next Newsletter.

### **Presentation – State Annual Tree Inventory – *Bill Burkman***

Bill is with the North Central Research Station and is the field supervisor for the entire forest inventory going on at the North Central Station out of St. Paul. Bill presented an overview of the previous structure, current structure, current procedures, the status of the Illinois inventory, and future directions.

### **Council Liaison Report – *Dick Little***

- ✓ Prepared letter for support of an EPA grant for DNR
- ✓ Attended the Lumber Dealers and Materials Association Conference
- ✓ Attended two board meetings of IWPA
- ✓ C-FAR annual meeting was held at the U of I

- ✓ Attended a meeting with Dean Easter, College of ACES and Wes Jarrell, Head, Department of NRES to discuss the Council; also discussed the letter that was sent regarding the Extension position vacated by Mike Bolin
- ✓ Visited with the Bureau of Forestry in Chicago
- ✓ DNR will host the RC&D quarterly meeting
- ✓ Working with Joyce and Karen Nielson on updating the Council Website
- ✓ Mailed out more copies of the publication "Forest Resources 2002"
- ✓ Received letter from Karen May, State Representative asking for the Council's support of HB 422
- ✓ Distributed a copy of a letter from DNR regarding their Weekly Legislation Update
- ✓ There has been over 2000 bills introduced in the Senate and 3700 bills introduced in the House; forestry related issues affect 212 bills
- ✓ HB 2000 (Forestry Development Act) has been opened up as a shell bill

Kurt Bobsin recommended the Council make a case for the staff positions, what their role was and should be. Need to have an analysis of the positions and what the current status is so we can talk about the staff positions at the state level as well as at the district level.

The Timber Buyers License Act Rule is in its second reading. First reading had no comments.

2003 Urban Forest Conference will be held September 17-20, 2003 in San Antonio, Texas

Stan Curtis recommended the Council should respond to the Forest Service Plan. Dick will prepare a letter.

Gary asked Dick about the brochure that will be prepared to distribute to legislatures and others. Dick is working on putting ideas together.

## **Old Business**

### **FLEP – Kurt Bobsin**

Comments were received from Council members and incorporated into the document. The draft Plan will be finalized in two weeks. The Plan will be sent out for public review and comment. The Plan will be put on the Council and IDNR Website after approval at the May Council meeting. There are four elements to this program – (10%) in the Educational element; (5%) in the Resource Management and Technical Assistance element; (10%) in the Administration element; and (75%) Cost-Share Component. Discussion followed on the percentage allocated in each of these elements. A draft copy of the Plan will be mailed to Council members prior to the next meeting. They are encouraged to share the Plan with the membership of the organization they represent to get feedback. Chairman Rolfe made a comment that the Council should be very careful about the strategy in regard to being able to utilize new funding for existing positions. New funding should be used to create a new program and not used to fill in gaps.

### **Forestry Legacy Site – *Bob Sloan***

Bob did some further investigation regarding some of the Indian remains that were removed from the Forest Legacy site west of Oregon, Illinois. He contacted the owners and they had no objection with the remains being returned and were very supportive. Bob has been in contact with two Native Americans that have been active and successful in projects such as this and he plans to meet them at the Site. He was told that in the investigation, if the remains had been claimed by another tribe we would not be able to bring the remains back.

### **New Business**

#### **Forestry Legacy – Kaskaskia River Basin – *Dick Little***

Dick distributed a handout prepared by Dave Gillespie (a proposal to add a new Forest Legacy area) to the Forest Legacy Plan. He is requesting approval from the Council for the establishment of a new FLA in the Lower Kaskaskia River basin. Stu Pequignot made a motion to approve moving this area to the Forest Legacy Plan. Kevin Koenigstein seconded. Motion carried unanimously to establish a study process for a new Forest Legacy Area. Chairman Rolfe asked that Dave bring back to the Council a proposed area with specific boundaries for the Council to review.

#### **AISWCD Annual Conference**

Dick requested \$250 to put the Council exhibit up at the AISWCD Summer Conference to be held July 27-29. A motion was made and seconded to approve the request. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Agency Reports**

#### **DNR – *Stu Pequignot***

A new director (Rep. Brunsvold) has been named by the Governor, but has not been approved by the Senate. The Department is going through some difficult budget scenario processes. There are likely 41 positions that will be lost and could possibly be as high as 51; also equipment and line item money would be given up.

#### **Illinois Farm Development Authority – *Kevin Koenigstein***

IFDA is not affected by the State budget. Will wait and see what the Governor will do.

#### **NRCS – *Tom Ward***

Direct Seeding Handbook. IEPA reports that 1,000 3-color copies are printed, shrink-wrapped and ready to ship. A \$6,400 Conservation 2000 Sustainable Agriculture grant was awarded to the Marshall-Putnam SWCD to print 500 full color copies of a Species Identification chapter and purchase 3-ring binders and tabbed dividers. The grant money was to be transferred to the Marshall-Putnam SWCD by mid-March but the funds were sequestered due to state budget deficits.

Forestry in the 2002 Farm Bill. A subcommittee of the Illinois State Technical Committee is working on ranking criteria for EQIP, including forestry practices. Forest Stand Improvement may be a practice that will receive considerable attention in EQIP ranking criteria due to the multiple benefits that accrue with application of this practice.

The 2002 Farm Bill increased the emphasis on the use of Technical Service Providers (TSPs) in implementing the Conservation Programs created or funded by the Farm Bill. There is now a website where potential TSPs may register and obtain information about opportunities for private sector contractors to provide technical assistance in planning and completing forestry and other practices, <http://techreg.usda.gov/>.

The USDA budget, which funds NRCS and several federal programs, passed in February and is now at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) where specific appropriations decisions will be made. Actual funding amounts should be known by the end of March.

Forestry Job Sheets in the NRCS Electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG). New Job Sheets for Tree/Shrub Establishment (both Direct Seeding and Tree Seedling Planting), Forest Stand Improvement, and Forest Trails and Landings will be available soon on the NRCS eFOTG. The eFOTG is available on the Internet at [www.il.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.il.nrcs.usda.gov). Click on Section IV for Job Sheets and Conservation Practice Standards.

Upcoming Events. Tri-State Forest Stewardship Conference: March 22, Keokuk, IA. Forest landowner conference for the IL-IA-MO area. A very well attended and highly recommended conference that draws 200+ people. Registration is allowed the day of the conference but early registration ends March 16, after which the registration fee goes from \$35 to \$40 per person. For more information and a registration form go to: <http://www.ag.iastate.edu/departments/forestry/ext/keokuk.pdf>. Contact Tom Ward for more information at 217-353-6647.

Tri-State Forest Stewardship Conference held at Sinsinawa, WI was a big success this year. There were 650 in attendance and 30-40 people who had pre-registered were turned away. Tom reported that registrations for next year should be made as early as possible.

Crawford County Forestry Workshop: Wednesday March 26, Robinson, IL. Contact the Crawford Co. SWCD at 618/544-7517 x 3.

Illinois Invasive Species Symposium: Saturday April 5, ISU, Normal, IL. Learn more about the insects and plants that threaten our native trees, shrubs and wildlife. More information is available at <http://www.bio.ilstu.edu/invsymp/> or by calling 800/877-1478. Registration deadline is March 25, 2003.

2003 Northeastern Forest and Conservation Nursery Association Annual Meeting: July 14-17, Crown Plaza Hotel, Springfield, IL. Theme will be "Seed for Tomorrow's Forests" and will emphasize seed procurement and handling techniques in nursery

operations. Early registration fee is \$175, after June 15 the fee will be \$200. For more information contact Dave Horvath at 309/535-2185, [dhorvath@dnrmail.state.il.us](mailto:dhorvath@dnrmail.state.il.us).

**Forest Service – Bruce Slover**

- ✓ Public meetings were held on the Forest Plan. The Planning Group is refining the draft alternative with the target date for the end of May. The next target is to have a draft environmental impact statement and draft Plan by the end of this calendar year. The target date set for the Final EIS and final Plan is September 2004.
- ✓ The FS now has to look at all their government jobs and decide what portion is inherently governmental and what is not and what is not may be available for competition in the private sector.
- ✓ Doing a series of studies nation-wide on various categories on Information Technology. Trying to pull together a group of agencies and MGO's that have some interest in conservation in the Middle Mississippi River (Missouri River down to the Ohio River).

**Illinois Department of Agriculture – Rich Nichols**

- ✓ A new director has not been named yet for IDA
- ✓ Same budget concerns.
- ✓ Have completed two training workshops for Watershed Parks. Forty-three Ag coordinators have been certified to teach or train lesson plans for Watershed Park as well as Project Wet, Project Wild and Wild Aquatics. There will be a hands-on training in Jacksonville on April 10.
- ✓ Earth Steward Day will be held on the Fairgrounds on May 1 with 1200 children.

**IWPA – Lee Rife**

The Annual IWPA Meeting will be held on May 2 at the Casino Queen in East St. Louis. A speaker from the Experiment Station in Morgantown, West Virginia will speak on Hardwood Marketing. Other topics to be covered will be “Where will downstate Illinois be headed in the next 10 years in wood products” and “palletizing wood waste”.

**AISWCD – Bob Sloan**

- ✓ A winter Tree I.D. Workshop was held at Funks Grove on February 11<sup>th</sup> with good attendance and positive feedback.
- ✓ Summer Tree I.D. Workshop will be scheduled at Funks Grove and a winter Tree I.D. Workshop will be held at a yet to be determined site in the southern region of the State.
- ✓ The grant submitted to fund the printing of chapters on the Direct Seeding Manual was approved for \$6400.00 on costs. Prices and other expenses were researched at great lengths. With this result they were able to come in with a total expense slightly less than the grant. A request was made to Mike Rahe to release the funds to Marshall-Putnam Soil and Water Conservation District, but now the grant money has been sequestered.
- ✓ The summer conference speaker will be Ray Herman on how SWCD's can make money collection, buying and selling seed.

- ✓ The last of the three planned T.S.I. workshops was held at Blackburn College and was well attended.
- ✓ Then Walnut Council held a Forestry Herbicide workshop at Eagle Creek Lodge on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Over 50 attended and there was so much positive feedback that another one is planned for next year.
- ✓ The Committee is working on a brochure for District's to use listing the seed sources; planting contractors; spraying contractors; available equipment; consulting foresters and nurseries. These would be made available to landowners who have planting plans.
- ✓ A Shitake Mushroom workshop will be held at the Marshall County Fairgrounds on April 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. Call (309) 364-3979 for information.
- ✓ A committee has been formed to plan a forestry field day this fall; site not yet determined but will be somewhere between I-80 and I-74.

The next meeting will be held May 14 in Springfield.

Meeting adjourned.