

Illinois Forestry Development Council Meeting – May 14, 2003

Chairman Gary Rolfe called the meeting to order. Nine Council members and 15 Task Group members and guests were present.

The March 19, 2003 meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Financial Report – Dick Little

A copy of the FY03 financial report was distributed. A balance of approximately \$2500 will be returned to the Illinois Forestry Development Fund. As of May 9 there has been \$855,906 collected in the 4 percent harvest fee. As of now it peaks the highest since the beginning of the program.

Newsletter Update - Jim Appleby

Jim reported he has articles for the upcoming issue of the Newsletter which will include the Annual Report for the Council. He received approximately a ten percent response on the Newsletter Survey.

Presentation – Jim Appleby

Jim gave a presentation on the Emerald Ash Borer. He reported there is a decline of Ash trees in the entire state of Illinois due to a yellow phytoplasma disease, bacterial branch infections, and the Emerald Ash Borer. The Emerald Ash Borer was identified in July 2002 in the Detroit and Windsor, Michigan area. It is a new exotic beetle from Asia that was first discovered feeding on ash trees in southeastern Michigan.

Forest Legacy – Dave Gillespie

Dave distributed copies of a request for the Council's approval to begin the development of a forest stewardship plan, the evaluation that DNR does to be sure a piece of property and the landowner intends to perform in the objection of the program. He has visited with the forest landowner and the site. A motion was made and seconded to give Dave approval to proceed with this evaluation. Motion carried unanimously. Dave received the formal letter from RC&D to establish a new formal legacy area that was discussed at the March meeting.

Presentation – Lyle Guyon

Lyle presented an update on the Illinois Sustainable Forest Criteria and Indicators Project. Lyle began with a brief overview of the scope of the project and an explanation of the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators utilized in the report. Important findings and/or examples of the type of information that was found to be available for each of the criteria for the state of Illinois were then presented in the main body of the presentation. Some of the major topics discussed were:

- Historical and current land cover
- Forest fragmentation
- Forest dependent species
- Forest health issues in Illinois
- Forest soils and water quality
- Forests and global carbon cycles
- Forestry, wood products and paper products industries (sales, employment, etc.)
- Outdoor recreation
- Legal, institutional and economic frameworks for sustainable forest management

The presentation concluded with a discussion of some the major data gaps identified by the project related to forest fragmentation, non-timber forest products, forest soils, water quality and riparian zones. Future directions for the project were discussed and included the posting the technical report on the Internet, the preparation of a summary report for publication, and how to integrate the findings of the report with forest planning and management.

Liaison Report – Dick Little

- Co-sponsored a meeting at SIU – 1st Special Forest Users Conference held at the Office of Economic & Regional Development
- Met with FSA to talk about CRP
- Met with John Edgington to discuss the “Forests of Illinois” publication
- Attended the IWPA annual meeting
- Working on Council brochure
- Preparing the Council’s annual report
- Met with Forest Service
- No change in Legislation
- Worked with Robin regarding some articles for Wooden Dollars
- Met with Shawnee National Forest personnel regarding the Forest Plan
- Traveled to Springfield, MO to see a Pellet operation
- Budget has been approved for next year (\$125,000 for Council; \$625,000 for Cost-Share)

Upcoming Events

- Finish Council pamphlet
- Prepare the Council Annual Report for the Newsletter
- May 20 – State Technical Committee Meeting to talk about EQIP, Ag Building, Springfield
- May 28 – RC&D quarterly meeting, DNR Building, Springfield
- July 14 -17 – Northeast Area nursery meeting (with Council display)
- July 27-28 – Illinois Association annual meeting (with Council display)
- August 7-17 – Illinois State Fair (with Council display)
- August 23-September 1 – DuQuoin State Fair (with Council display)
- September 23-25 – Farm Progress Show near Henning, Illinois (with Council display)

Old Business

FLEP – Kurt Bobsin

Kurt distributed –

- A flyer that announces the FLEP program (Forest Land Enhancement Program)
- 4th draft of the Plan (in this draft the various practices are addressed that are offered under the FLEP program and which ones Illinois will offer – 6 practices in Appendix 1).
- Appendices 1 and 2

Kurt asked Council members to take this draft back to their organization, circulate among their membership for a thorough review and send comments back to him. He asked those reviewing the Plan to carefully look at Page 6 “Forest Resource Issues”. If there are issues or concerns that should be addressed, please send comments to Kurt.

In the funding allocation there are four major elements – 1) the general administration of the program, 2) technical assistance program, 3) educational, and 4) cost-share component. Specific percentages were assigned to each of these areas. Discussion followed on the percentages assigned.

The Plan will be posted on three websites: <http://ifdc.nres.uiuc.edu>, <http://dnr.state.il.us/conservation/forestry/index.htm>, <http://treefarm.nres.uiuc.edu>

Deadline for comments on the Plan will be the first part of July.

With the Educational component, the idea for delivering educational money was to go through a grant proposal process that would be overseen with the Stewardship Committee. Kurt suggested working with a small group to develop an application process, criteria, and the focus in a proposal. Dick Little and Jean Mangun volunteered to work with Kurt.

Forestry Legacy Site – Bob Sloan

Bob has contacted two Native Americans that have been active and successful in projects such as this and he plans to meet with them soon.

New Business

Financial Budget for FY04

Dick distributed copies of the FY04 proposed budget: UI (Support) - \$10,000; UI (Field Office and Support/Newsletter) - \$64,732; UI (Criteria & Indicators-printing & website) - \$22,000; SIU (Policy Issue Paper)- \$20,000; Printing Council pamphlet - \$3,000; and Council travel allocation - \$5,000. Motion was made and seconded to approve the FY04 proposed budget as submitted. Approved unanimously.

Issue Paper Project

John Phelps distributed copies of Phase I “The State of Illinois Forests: A Regional Perspective” proposal. The proposed project outcome will be an illustrated document that will identify resource issue “hot spots” by Illinois regions/zones.

Council Brochure

Dick distributed a draft copy of the Council brochure he prepared. Please send comments back to Dick in the next week. He plans to finish the project this fiscal year. Chairman Rolfe asked Dick to create a new logo for the Council.

MOU – Forest Service & Other – Mississippi River Partnership

Copies of a Memorandum of Understanding between the USDA Forest Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Conservation Fund, and the Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Regional Joint Venture and Southern Illinois University Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Aquaculture Center, and Cooperative Wildlife Research Laboratory were distributed. This is an agreement to cooperate, lets the Council look at other opportunities and provides communication. There are no financial commitments. Chairman Rolfe said we would sign and become a partner.

Agency Reports

AISWCD – Bob Sloan

Direct Seeding Handbook – Grant money has been received and printing of Chapter 3 is being done. Once printing is complete the handbooks will be assembled and distributed.

Summer Tree ID Workshop will be held at Funks Grove on June 17.

Forestry Workshops. Prairie Rivers RC&D and Marshall-Putnam SWCD are planning to hold two forestry field days in October.

Daysville Forest Legacy Site. Bob Sloan and Joe Standing Bear are exploring the history and origin of the Native American burial mounds in preparation for applying for the return of all the artifacts that were removed.

Shitake Mushroom Workshop was held at the M-P Fairgrounds in Henry on April 12. It was very well attended with approximately 80 people. Eighty oak logs were inoculated and sold.

Crawford County reports that the new mobile cooler is in use and working quite well. Seed was stored over the winter and it is being used this spring to store seedlings.

DNR – Brian Anderson

Brian moved from the Office of Scientific Research and Analysis in DNR to the Office of Resource Conservation. He reported the situation with Forestry is severe and he will do what he can quickly to hopefully stop the decline. There is a critical situation financially in the State. There will not be any new headcount in the near future. Brian has gone out and talked with people in the Regions having listening sessions and has completed that process. He will be bringing the senior Managers and the Agency together to look at the structural problems. Brian is committed to rebuilding and restrengthening forest resources in the State of Illinois and the Department of Natural Resources.

Department of Ag – Rich Nichols

The first annual stewardship meeting was held May 1 with the Department of Agriculture, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Economic Opportunity, EPA and other private groups in Springfield. There were 47 stations dealing with natural resource issues and approximately 1200 fourth grade students from 24 schools attending.

IWPA – Lee Rife

The IWPA annual meeting was held on May 2. Dr. Bill Luppold from the Northeastern Research Station, Princeton, West Virginia talked about marketing and globalization. The furniture industry in the Carolinas and Virginia has been devastated. Manufacturing operations are being moved to China and some to Europe. Dr. Luppold stated they might be looking at another species in the future to make furniture – sycamore and soft maple. Visited two new sawmills in the State – Paris Wood Products just north of the Schuyler County line on Illinois 99; Jenkins Hardwood Products, Inc. just north of Chanderville. Traveled to Springfield, Missouri to look at a wood mill operation.

NRCS – Tom Ward

Direct Seeding Handbook

500 color copies of the Illinois Direct Seeding Handbook are assembled in 3-ring binders and ready for distribution. USDA Service Centers and IDNR District Foresters will receive the first copies.

Forestry in EQIP

Draft ranking criteria for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program includes points for Forest Stand Improvement to improve habitat for “at risk species”. Other benefits that are expected to accrue from application of this practice include reduced soil erosion, improved water quality; increased biodiversity and timber stand improvement.

Tri-State Forest Stewardship Conference Keokuk, Iowa

A forest landowner conference for the IL-IA-MO area was held on March 22 at Keokuk, IA. About 170 enthusiastic landowners attended, with more than half coming from Illinois. The interagency planning committee will meet this summer to plan the 2004 Sinsinawa and Keokuk Tri-State conferences.

Crawford County Forestry Workshop

21 forest landowners attended an all day workshop sponsored by the Crawford Co. SWCD and the Wabash Valley RC&D on March 26 near Robinson. Topics presented included: Forestry in the 2002 Farm Bill, Tree ID, Tree Planting, Direct Seeding and Forest Stand Improvement.

Upcoming Events

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.

AISWCD Tree ID Workshop at Funks Grove, McLean Co. July 24. To register call Dave Bishop at 309/452-0830 X 3. For more information call Tom Ward at 217/353-6647.

SIU – John Phelps

The Dean at SIU decided to step back in the academic ranks; SIU is going through an Interim Dean search. They are looking at scenarios of 4, 6 or 8 percent budget reductions next year. Projects currently going on with – Forest Service, University of Missouri and other universities in the area on cooperative ecosystem studies units; DNR on the Intern program and the Illinois Wood Products Association through DNR. Graduation was held last weekend. John reported the job market looked good for the graduates. Student numbers for enrollment are up a little for next year.

Jean Mangun asked if the Council had a weatherproof exhibit. On October 4 the SIU Forestry Club will be hosting the Collegiate Midwestern Forestry Conclave and the students would like to have some educational tools to “show-case” forestry in Illinois.

Forest Resource Center – Diane Murphy

Stewardship Week was held the last week of April with 3,200 students attending from 41 schools in 14 counties. There are 1,700 students on a waiting list that will be given priority next year. Over 40,000 students have attended Stewardship Week. On May 16 the Resource Center will have their first tour of the forestry demonstration area where they are experimenting with TSI and burning, oak hickory regeneration. This will also be the RC&D Forestry Committee Annual Meeting.

The next meeting is September 17, 2003 in Champaign, IL

Meeting adjourned.