

MFRP Board of Directors' Meeting
21 March 2019
Minnesota Power, Duluth, Minnesota

Present: Officers: Kirk Titus, Chair (*Cass County*), Kory Cease (*Itasca County*), Craig Halla Vice Chair (*Molpus Woodlands Group*), Quintin Legler (*UPM Blandin*), Bob Milne (*DNR*), Mat Radzak, Treasurer (*MP*), Craig Schmid (*DNR*),

Staff: Kathleen Preece

Board members: Greg Bernu (*Carlton County*), Rich Courtemanche (*Aitkin County*), Craig Engwall (*Minnesota Deer Hunters*), Mike Kilgor (*Univ. of Minnesota*), Nate Eide (*Lake County*), Craig Engwall (*Minnesota Deer Hunters Assn.*), Ray Higgins (*MFI*), Mark Lohmeier (*Hubbard County*), Jim McFarland (*USFS*) Dick Moore (*Beltrami County*), Ryan Simonson (*Crow Wing County*)

Guests: Heather Baird (*Minnesota DNR*), Kate Hagsten (*Leech Lake Band*), Keith Karnes (*Leech Lake Band*), Kim Bern-Melhus (*The Conservation Fund*), Drew Janke (*MP*), Emilee Nelson (*The Conservation Fund*), Rachael Nicoll (*Minnesota DNR*), Rachel Peterson (*MLEP*), Mike Schrage (*Fond du lac*), Rob Slesak (*MFRC*)

The agenda was approved by consensus.

The minutes of the December 2018 MFRP Board of Directors' meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved on a motion by Ray Higgins; second by James McFarland. The motion passed unanimously.

The Financial Report was given by Treasurer Matt Radzak as follows:

March 15 2019 Financial Report

February activity:

- Starting Balance on Feb 1, 2019 was: \$40,008.55

- **Deposits were:**
\$16,421.04 (multiple assessments)

- **Expenses were:**
\$4,267.00 to Director (salary)
\$180.00 (Paul Bunyan Communications...Web Hosting)

- **Ending Feb balance** is \$51,982.59 (ledger matches the bank statement!)

- **2019 Assessments:**
\$47,055.61 paid
\$8,400 outstanding (USFS)

Kathleen Preece reviewed the board packets, pointing out the news release pertaining to Kim Berns-Melhus' appointment to the Conservation Fund director position, and the Forest Friendly Brewery project poster.

PRESENTATIONS

Dovetail Partners: An Update, including forestry influence on Water Quality BMPs in Midwest Ag Landscapes Report. Katie Fernholz, President/CEO, Dovetail Partners

Katie Fernholz discussed the Water Quality BMPS in Midwest Ag Landscapes Report, describing that it includes a "Track record of what we (forestry community) has done to balance regulation/good training/monitoring. The purpose of the report is to highlight the challenges of agriculture and uses forestry as a role model. The report is posted on the Dovetail Partners Web site.

Katie also provided updates on:

- Work being conducted by Dovetail Partner's associate Jim Bowyer pertaining to consumer impacts of food waste.
- The addition of former Aitkin County Land Commissioner Mark Jacobs' joining the Dovetail team.
- The appointment of Katie Fernholz as CEO/president of Dovetail. She said an announcement had gone out for Dovetail's need to hire an executive director.
- Biochar and discussion of whether forestry can be competitive in this potential industry. A report appears on the Dovetail Web site.
- Firewise program in St. Louis County being coordinated by Gloria Erickson
- Mass Timber: Katie discussed the mass timber conference she had just returned from in Oregon as well as the recently released mass timber study report that noted Minnesota's infrastructure and workforce were its strengths, and not necessarily the wood supply for this industry.
- The North American Forest Partnership, branded under "Forest Proud" which tells the story of not just forests, but at the products of our forests.
- Annual forest products review: UNECE: Forest Products Annual Market Review 2017-2018 which looks globally at all forest products. The report is available online. Reports been done for decades which provides the opportunity to see trends/what was going on 30 years ago.
- The decline of chain of custody certificates annually. She discussed the reason for the decline, including consolidation and closure of mills, as well as the age of certification and how business decisions are changing. She also discussed the partnership of SFI and Tree farm regarding family forest certification.

Elk Restoration Project Update– The Fond du Lac Band and the University of Minnesota are focused on three potential restoration areas — the Cloquet Valley, Nemadji-St. Croix and Fond du Lac state forests. Final report is due to the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources in June 2019. *Mike Schrage, Wildlife Biologist - Fond du Lac Resource Management Division.*

Mike Schrage discussed all aspects of elk restoration, including history; social, biological, and ecological considerations; funding; and legalities. He said a final report on the feasibility of introducing elk will be completed summer 2019.

2019 Results: Research and Advisory Committee Report: *Robert Slesak*
Director of Applied Research and Monitoring-Minnesota Forest Resources Council

Rob Slesak discussed the themes of the report, including:

Enhancing Forest Economies (forest industry and communities)

Maintaining forest health and function

Forest Management for the 21st Century

Rob noted the importance of promoting the application of research findings in operational settings, which is a key focus of the RAC.

Minnesota Conservation Fund: Background/History including work with the BWCAW. *Kim M. Bern-Melhus-Minnesota State Director-The Conservation Fund*

Kim, with the assistance of Emilee Nelson, discussed the details and complexities of the land exchange involving the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. She stated it was a 10-year process.

Introduction and 'State of the Forest Health' Address: *Rachael Nicoll: Forest Health Specialist/Brainerd Region*

Rachael Nicoll noted that the annual Minnesota Forest Health Team's annual report for 2018 would soon be posted on the DNR Web site.

She discussed the unique phenomena of "bloody aspens" in Itasca County. In the 'good news section:' Rachael reported:

- Forest tent populations have been relatively low for several years, with 2013 the last big outbreak. The good news is that outbreaks are minimal/only occurring in small scattered areas.
- Jack pine budworm populations crashed in 2018. They may peak again in north central Minnesota around 2025
- Bur oak blight was barely noticeable in central Minnesota. It is believed a dry period in May 2018 reduced BOB. One dry spell can knock back bur oak blight.

In the 'predictable section:'

- Spruce budworm is causing the usual problems in the Arrowhead Region of Minnesota. Three to five years of infestation will cause mortality, so we will be seeing mortality in spruce.

- There are continued larch casebearer defoliation (a nonnative). This has been occurring since 2001/much on state land. No sign of this stopping in near future

- There were new EAB infestations in 2018. A new quarantine county: Wright County
New infestation was found in Clearwater.

- Oak wilt is an invasive fungal pathogen, particularly of red oak. It moves very slowly and inefficiently. The DNR feels it can have an impact on its spread An Oak Wilt Suppression Project in Morrison County, which includes SWCD partners, starts 2019. It is a suppression and eradication oak wilt project that is pending legislative approval.

- There were super abundant seed crops in 2018; some type of environmental influence across numerous species appears to have caused this. The forest health specialists don't know what the environmental influence was.

- Severe winter drying killed young conifers in southern Minnesota last spring.

- Arborvitae leafminer infested northern white cedar in Cass, Itasca, and St. Louis counties

- Small bur oaks twigs were infested by an undetermined wasp and failed to leaf out in May 2018
Pine leaf adelgid affected white pines in the Arrowhead Region. Likely we will see impacts for a few more years.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:16 p.m. on a motion by Quintin Legler; second by Craig Engwall. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted 1 April 2019 by Kathleen Preece

