

Cooperating Forester Sub-Team Meeting Minutes Schmeekle Reserve, Stevens Point July 24, 2014

Participants: Bill Buckley (consulting forester), Peter Anderson (consulting forester), Ryan Medo (industrial forester), Dave Dhaseleer (consulting forester), Bethany Polchowski (industrial forester), Ron Gropp (DNR, private forestry team), Carol Nielsen (DNR, private forestry team), Jon Leith (DNR, field forester, NED)

Old Business

Review PLMT meeting minutes (February & May 2014)



2014_May



2014_Feb_11_PLMT

6_PLMTminutes (draft).docx

- Clarified the term “soft skills” when related to a foresters job. Soft skills were defined as listening to landowner concerns, and good interpersonal communication.

Review Team Charge / Role

- Use the correct avenues to let all involved with the private forestry program know where to access the minutes from the cooperating forester sub team & PLMT meeting.
- Look for a way to allow those not in attendance to comment on topics and issues discussed during PLMT and cooperating forester meetings.
- Reference the attached document



CF_Team_Charge.doc

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Annual Renewal Process

- Reviewed 1.) Annual Cooperating Forester Agreement 2.) WI Cooperating forester Accomplishment Report 3.) Stumpage Value Report
 - Questions were raised to make all 3 reports due at the same time (July 1st)
 - Potential survey question for cooperating forester meeting
- Continuing Education
 - Discussed finding a better way for tracking the 10 hours of continuing education requirement (WISFIRS?). Currently the hours are tracked in a spreadsheet in central office.
 - Suggestion was made to increase the mandatory 10 hours of training. Group consensus was no.
 - Discussed alternatives: idea of “rollover” continuing education hours to the following year if a cooperator exceeded his/her required training in the previous year.
 - Suggestion was made to charge a small fee for the cooperating forester program with the monies being used for WISFIRS maintenance or potential trainings. Group consensus was no.

MFL Efficiencies

Concepts and Current Status of Work



MFLTaskEfficienciesC
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Concept
summary_v8 revised

- Discussion was raised about all cooperating foresters being required to take the “filling out a cutting notice training.” Currently only CPW’s are required to take this training.
- Create a word document form of the current cutting notice for MFL lands. Typing space is too limited on the current form. Currently, many notices are filled with additional pages saying “see attached page for additional information.”

Concepts:

1 & 2) Criteria to determine when to invest in a field review to approve a cutting notice & Stand Evaluation- Providing a consistent method to evaluate a proposed selection harvest on MFL lands.

- Standard order of removal needs larger sideboards. In some cases (especially the southern areas) the standard order of removal cannot be applied to all stands.
- The current guide pertains primarily to only northern hardwood stands.

3) Cutting notice guidance – A new simple, webpage.

- Be sure to include the video tutorials from the “filling out a cutting notice training” on the new webpage.
- Question was raised about why the cutting notice for large accounts has change. The group felt that the old form was more than sufficient. Many in the room felt it was likely a certification issue.

4.) Expedite the development of electronic submission and review of cutting notices within WISFIRS.

- The length of the approved cutting was discussed and many favored extending the length of an approved notice from 12 months to 18 or 24. Often times loggers have jobs lined up for well over a year.
- When cutting notices can be filed and approved over WISFIRS it would be nice to have WISFIRS generate an email to the landowner/consultant/DNR forester letting them know their notice is soon to expire. 3 months prior to expiration seemed to be a time frame that all agreed upon.
- Find a way to remove landowners from receiving a mandatory practice letter once they have begun working with a consultant on sale establishment. Currently, the only way DNR can remove a landowner from this list is with an approved cutting notice. A suggestion was made that the landowner could be removed from this list with a signed contract with a consultant.

5.) Consolidate current S.O.P.’s for cutting notices

- No comments

6.) New cutting notice S.O.P.’s

- No comments

7.) Dynamic, timely, transparent, and institutional process for updating S.O.P.'s

- Make information available through the new webpage. Develop a monthly email similar to "The Resource" used by DNR to alert consultants of potential changes in policy or policy updates. Make sure the link to this webpage is attached in email.

8.) A clearly defined policy that defines sound forestry for MFL using the DNR Silvicultural Handbook and Wisconsin Forest Managed Guidelines (FMGs) as Generally Acceptable Practices (GAPs).

- FMG's vs. GAP's, which one are we supposed to follow?
- Decision was made that this issue is better covered by the Silvicultural Guidance Team.

9.) Review MFL Transfer Process for possible efficiencies (i.e. implement a Lean Project)

- No comments

Division Strategic Direction Implementation Steps

FY 2014

Step 1: Establish guidance for DNR Foresters to work periodically with Cooperating Foresters in the field establishing practices. Ensure that guidance does not conflict with the MFL efficiencies being developed.

- Group agreed that a conversation in the field or on site went a lot further than an email or phone call.
- DNR and cooperators can gain experience from each other with these visits.
- DNR foresters should have a scheduled amount of time spent each year with a consultant. This work could include pre sale walks, marking timber, or post sale cruise.
- Ron/Dave/Bethany/Jon will work together as a sub-team to make a draft which will define how this collaboration will work. (minimum or maximum hours allotted to this work?)

Step 2: Incorporate consistent DNR and Cooperating Forester cross training into in-services, MFL annual recertification sessions and other areas, district and statewide opportunities.

- Keep up the good work. Make more trainings available and have a place to advertise them. The new webpage seems like a good start.

Step 3: Standardize opportunities and build capacity of DNR training courses for Cooperating Forester (both opportunity to attend and material content.)

- Specific DNR courses, not in-services. Allow more opportunities for cooperators to attend these specific trainings. Often times these courses are advertised but filled with newly hired DNR personnel first. Offering these courses twice a year might help solve this problem.
- Look into a training needs assessment for cooperators. (possible survey question at next cooperators conference).

Open Forum

1.) Potential topics for 2015 Cooperating Foresters Meeting

- Nursery program, Pat Murphy
- Paul DeLong
- Concerns within Industry, Steve Courtney suggested to speak on this topic
- Swamp hardwood management

- New white birch chapter
- Round table setting like years past (DNR, Industry, Consultant)
- Panel setting giving different foresters scenario's on certain topics
- Having someone from certification speak (SFI, SFC, Tree Farm)
- Ruffed Grouse Society or the Young Forest Initiative
- Business practice, specifically marketing and incorporating social media

2.) WISFIRS Stewardship Plans

- Still 2-6 months away from being able to print management plans in WISFIRS. (more likely 6 months than 2 months)
- What to include in the plans? Length of plan period, reminder letters about suggested practices.
- Issue will be discussed in more detail at next PLMT on August 11, 2014

Next meeting date of Cooperating Forester Sub-Team – January 15, 2015.