



IDAHO FOREST STEWARDSHIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Idaho Department of Lands Office
3780 Industrial Avenue S., Coeur d'Alene
9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Welcome new members and introductions - Oscar Baumhoff and Committee

Ara Andrea, IFSAC Secretary, introduced new voting and ex-officio members of the committee. New (voting) members are Ree Brannon, Clearwater RC&D council who replaces Kim Golden (now ex-officio), Serena Carlson, Intermountain Forestry Association, replaces Jane Wittmeyer, John DeGroot, Nez Perce Tribe (previously an ex-officio member), Ed Schneider, representing north Idaho NIPFs, Tom Davis, representing consulting foresters, and Gordon Harnasch representing municipal and county government.

A MOTION by Kirk David to approve IFSAC meeting minutes for April 8, 2009, seconded by Mary Terra-Berns, passed unanimously.

Idaho Department of Lands, Bureau of Forestry Assistance Report - Craig Foss *FSP and FLP Program Reviews, State Budget Outlook*

Craig Foss, Bureau of Forestry Assistance Chief, provided the committee with an overview of this year's FSP and FLP program reviews. The visit, by USFS regional staff, took place over two days this past July. The first day was spent with IDL staff reviewing program records and procedures. Day two was a field visit to Bonners Ferry to review Legacy projects (Clifty View Nursery & Bane Creek Neighbors) and stewardship sites (Al Farnsworth). During the review, findings and recommendations were developed. The final report will be presented by the S&PF Deputy Director to the Idaho State Forester. Craig will make the final report available to the committee once it's released.

Craig reported the ongoing budget reductions of approximately 27% of general funds in BFA FY09 and FY10 budgets, representing a reduction of \$309,000. Since last year, four temporary positions have been eliminated and four Private Forestry Specialist vacancies remain un-filled at

the Mica, Cataldo, St. Joe, and Maggie Creek offices, along with the Forest Health/Cost Share Program Manager vacancy in Coeur d'Alene. These vacant positions will likely be swept from the department and will need to be reinstated at some point by the legislature. Craig reported that both Clark Christiansen and Chris Gerhart have been covering the vacant position in Maggie Creek. Other vacancies have been covered by temporary personnel in Cataldo and St. Joe, as well as shifting coverage from adjacent area offices. Statutorily, PFSs must meet their Forest Practices Act responsibilities first and this makes it challenging to meet stewardship and technical service provider obligations. Craig reported S&PF funding for the Forest Stewardship Program has dropped \$100,000 over the past four federal fiscal years (FFYs). Craig explained funds that previously paid for a full-time FSP program manager have been shifted to partially fund the Program Planning & Development Specialist (Mary Fritz). It has been a challenge to fund this Program Planning position, so the Bureau has budgeted costs into the competitive federal grant applications in order to cover the position's salary and operating expenses. IDL has been successful receiving competitive grant awards. Craig reported that Technical Service Provider (TSP) funds received from NRCS have been helpful in filling budget gaps also. Craig discussed the requirements of fund integrity when funding various positions, i.e., work responsibilities must match the funding source. Craig also discussed the challenges of increasing statutory FPA (dedicated) assessments paid by forest landowners. Current projections show the account will remain intact/funded until 2013; however, the Bureau cannot bankrupt the dedicated fund. If there are additional general fund cutbacks, this will result in more difficulties for the Bureau. Craig asked the committee to consider appointing a subcommittee to work with the bureau to identify program delivery alternatives for these funding issues.

Discussion by the committee followed regarding developments adjacent to IDL lands and if they provide funding towards fire protection. Craig reported that there is an expectation by forest landowners that they will receive fire protection— IDL is responsible for wildland forest fires but structures are the responsibility of rural fire departments. IDL does receive funds through landowner assessments on timberlands for FPA and Fire.

Chris Schnepf reported on the funding situation at UI – funding reductions are absorbed mostly through attrition, but they are considering furloughs. In the extreme, they may cut as many as ten positions in District 1.

Kirk commented on retirements within the PFS staff and how this might impact the stewardship program in the future. Kirk asked if there had been any discussions at the state level regarding retirement buyouts. Craig reported there are currently ten PFS staff and half are eligible for retirement within the next year. There are many approaches that should be considered to address future vacancies, but there has been no discussion of retirement buyouts.

Landowner Forest Stewardship Plans (LFSPs) and FLEP Updates - Suzie Jude

Suzie Jude reported that, so far in CY2009, enrolled plans are up 32% over CY 2008, for a total to date of 92 LFSPs on approximately 15,000 acres. Of those plans, 39 were funded through the FLEP cost share program that reimbursed a total of \$46,100 to eligible landowners. CY 2009 practices funded through FLEP were up by 37% over CY2008, representing \$92,200 reimbursed to landowners and 614 acres treated. Suzie reported that all available FLEP funds have been spent and cost-share funding is no longer available to landowners through the program.

Forest Legacy Program Report - Ed Warner

Conditional Approval of 2010 Application

Status of Congressional Approval of 2009 Ranked FLP Projects

Ed Warner, Forest Legacy Program Coordinator, summarized the FFY10 Trow Creek Project donated easement. The Forest Legacy Program will provide \$15,000 along with \$25,000 from the Idaho Transportation Department towards easement closing costs. Also, Gold Creek – Phase II (FFY09 project) is scheduled for closing in December 2009. Ed reported funding of FFY10 projects (McArthur Lake (ranked #3 nationally) and Bane Creek (#15 nationally)) is currently pending in Congress. The President has recently encouraged the Senate to return to the original priority list and fund projects accordingly. Ed reviewed the proposed FFY11 project application—North Idaho Timber Communities Project. The property is owned by the Al Farnsworth family and consists of six scattered parcels across three counties in northern Idaho, totaling over 4,000 acres. Ed reported that if the FFY10 Bane Creek Neighbors project is not funded this year, they will put in another application for FFY11. Ed would like to have only one application for Idaho for 2011 (North Idaho Timber Communities project) unless the Bane Creek funding does not come through. The committee provided comments on the attributes of both applications. Ed commented that the North Idaho Timber Communities project will probably be phased-in over several years due to \$9M application; \$5M is the annual limit for funding Legacy projects. Frank Gariglio recommended ranking both applications should funding fall through for Bane Creek. Frank suggested if there is a short turn-around time on the applications, that Ed consider ranking the projects himself, according to established criteria, and without the rest of the ranking sub-committee present. Ed discussed the ranking criteria and some of the reporting limitations in the FLIS online application system. The committee discussed strategies on how best to present the North Idaho Timber Communities application, as well as how best the committee can embrace the politicization of the Legacy ranking process to support the Bane Creek project. The program can be fair, open, and honest but also political. Ree Brannon commented on the value of support from many interest groups and gave some suggestions on how to improve the North Idaho Timber Communities project map. Ed thanked the IDL GIS staff for putting together project maps. Mary Terra-Berns and Ed Schneider made additional suggestions for the project map— it would be improved if a geographic reference to similarly-sized areas on the East Coast were included.

A MOTION by Ed Schneider that if Bane Creek is funded this year, the North Idaho Timber Communities project be certified Idaho's #1 FFY'11 application, seconded by Gordon Harnasch and Tom Davis, passed unanimously.

Morning Break

Farm Bill Forestry Program

NRCS Forest Management Plan (FMP) Template - Greg Becker, Bill Love, Mike Wolcott, Ara Andrea

NRCS EQIP, CSP, CRP - Frank Gariglio

Ara Andrea, Bill Love, Greg Becker and Mike Wolcott performed a role-playing presentation on the interaction between IDL and NRCS staff and prospective landowners interested in either a Landowner Forest Stewardship Plan (LFSP) or a Forest Management Plan (FMP). They showed how a new landowner, without a plan, is introduced to the various IDL and NRCS options to develop a management plan while potentially taking advantage of cost-share funds through EQIP. Currently, Mike Wolcott and Inland Forest Management are the only registered FMP certified plan preparers in northern Idaho.

Kirk inquired about other landowner options for preparing a management plan. Bill responded that other options are discussed with landowners. Ara reported on efforts to develop a joint LFSP/FMP template for use by plan preparers. The template will provide the option of enrolling in the FSP while also applying for a cost-share funded plan through NRCS. The template is very close to being completed. Chris Schnepf commented that, within UI Extension, they have been utilizing an ecosystem management publication, developed through WSU, to complete "coached" landowner management plans. Chris commented the "coached" worksheets will need to be updated to align with the new LFSP/FMP template. Kirk recommended that the group also review Tree Farm management plan criteria to ensure that all its elements are included in the new LFSP/FMP template.

Frank Gariglio reported on annual EQIP contracts and funding increases for IDL FFY00-09. The EQIP changes in the 2008 Farm Bill have included new land uses and operators. Frank reviewed funding provisions for Forest Management Plans (FMPs) funded through EQIP. Idaho is a pilot state for EQIP FMPs. NRCS will accept management plans developed through many different avenues to open the door for EQIP cost-shared practices. Frank's interested in compressing the amount of time needed to process FMP applications for landowners. Chris commented he's heard about the delays in the EQIP time horizon and suggested NRCS develop information for landowners on potential timeframes to facilitate landowner planning efforts. Frank suggested that Ara and others present their FMP/LFSP skit at the next NIPF conference (Spring 2010). Frank reported that while there's no minimum acreage for EQIP FMP applications, there are limits on landowner/entity adjusted gross income (AGI). Frank reported that a single representative can be designated to sign EQIP contracts on behalf of an organization or group, but all individuals within the entity need to be identified. Frank reported seven EQIP

FMPs were funded by NRCS this year (FFY09). The plan for FFY10 is to keep building the EQIP program and enroll additional TSPs. Frank reported there were 41 EQIP contracts signed in Idaho for FFY09. The committee discussed funding decisions and local working committees (LWCs). Frank reported EQIP funds are available for practices throughout the state, but forest landowners still compete during the application ranking process with agricultural landowners. Ara commented that at the last NRCS State Technical Advisory Committee meeting it was reported that LWCs rank forestry applications separately from agricultural applications. However, the LWCs decide how much funding goes toward agricultural and forestry practices. Tom Davis commented politics are involved within LWC ranking. Frank is confident that most forestry applications are ranked highly and are awarded an EQIP contract.

Frank reported on the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) provisions in the 2008 Farm Bill. The program's purpose is to maintain existing conservation activities, adopt new ones, and allow forestlands enrollment in the program. NRCS will be conducting a CSP educational outreach to forest landowners. Frank also reported on the 2008 Farm Bill provisions for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The program has been extended to fund mid-management forestry-based practices (thinning, pruning, and prescribed burning). Also, the Technical Service Provider agreement could be expanded to include CSP and CRP forestry assistance from IDL (in addition to the EQIP work done now).

Lunch Break

Forest Practices Program Updates - Ara Andrea ***2009 Forest Practices Notifications Numbers*** ***2009 Internal FP Audit of Class II SPZ***

Ara Andrea reported on the progress of the IDL Interdisciplinary Team audit of Class II streams relative to forestry practices.

Ara also provided a year-to-year comparison of Forest Practices Notification/Compliance numbers for CY2005 through August 2009. There is a dramatic decline in timber harvest activity over the past few years. Clark Christiansen reported that in the Craig Mountain area, where there has been a dramatic drop-off in activity for 2009, NIPF landowners immediately respond to market conditions. The committee discussed the current historic downturn in timber prices/markets. Tom Davis reported on the ponderosa pine market in Idaho and surrounding states—Riley Creek (now Idaho Forest Group) in LaCleda has retooled and is now buying ponderosa pine logs. Log sorts were discussed in terms of large and small NIPFs. Chris Schnepf commented there may be potential in Idaho for (NIPF) mill cooperatives.

Strengthening Stewardship Skills - Chris Schnepf
Master Forest Steward Program Report
IDL-UI Extension MOU Updates

Chris reported that the Master Forest Stewards (MFS) program continues to move along. They are in the process of developing a program logo. This year, 19 individuals signed up for the program and have attended four one-day educational sessions. They have completed their last session and are now participating in “shadowing” activities with forestry professionals. Most participants will complete the program this December. Next Spring, a new cohort of participants will sign-up and the education element of the program will be updated depending based upon input from this year’s participants. Chris reported MFS participants are limited in terms of how they can use the MFS logo on their resume and other personal business materials. This year’s participants will start doing their “payback” work this winter. The MFS participants and Chris will meet three times per year to track their training and progress within the program. Chris is very happy with where the program’s at right now.

The committee discussed facilitating the use of the MFS volunteers. Flyers will go out soon to advertise volunteer service availability to interested landowners and others. Also, flyers will go out to recruit new volunteers. Information will be posted on the UI Extension web page regarding the volunteer training elements of the MFS program. Ree Brannon inquired if Chris would be willing to present information about the MFS program at the NIPF conference next spring as planning is currently underway for the conference.

Chris provided an update on the Strengthening Stewardship Skills courses and presentations for Fall/Winter 2009-10. Chris reported that funding for Woodland Notes postage has been reduced. Therefore, UI Extension will mail out the Fall/Winter schedule only, but will have the Spring/Summer schedule available online. Chris reported on his and Mary Fritz’s efforts to organize a Forest Biomass Fair in Shoshone County, scheduled for 2011. Chris reported that funding from the Rathdrum Aquifer competitive grant will help sponsor the Forestry Short Course in Rathdrum this year; it will also fund the 2010 WA/ID Forest Owners Field Day in northern Idaho. Kirk suggested that the Al Kyle property might be a potential site for the WA/ID Forest Owners Field Day over Rathdrum Aquifer.

2010 State & Private Forestry (S&PF) Competitive Grant Applications - Mary Fritz
2009 Awarded Grant Projects—Updates
2009 Awarded Stimulus-Money (ARRA) Projects

Mary Fritz, IDL Program Planning & Development Specialist, provided the committee with an update on the S&PF grant program for Idaho. Competitive grants were reviewed as follows: (FFY08) Canopy Analysis over Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer; (FFY09) Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer – aquifer protection and forest improvement, Silver Valley – forest health and wildfire treatments, workshops & demo sites, Grimes/Mores – riparian improvement. For FFY10, Idaho will submit

two competitive-grant applications: the Treasure Valley Canopy Assessment, and a multi-state *Ties to the Land* succession planning program.

Mary reported on funds IDL anticipates receiving under the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Funds: Fire Bureau – \$2.3M for hazardous fuel treatments in four northern counties; Bureau of Forestry Assistance – \$3.1M for Shoshone County for forest health and hazardous fuels treatments and Ada and Kootenai Counties for forest health in urban forests. Other Idaho agencies that anticipate Stimulus Funds include National Forests (\$80M), other state & private entities (\$13M), and other natural resource agencies (\$5M).

Chris Schnepf thanked Kirk David for his efforts in getting the *Ties to the Land* program underway in Idaho through UI Extension. Chris commented that this is a great introduction for forest landowners to learn about other forestry educational programs. Ara Andrea reported the Washington Dept. of Revenue and the Society of American Foresters is planning to sponsor an East Side forest tax conference by year's end or early next year.

Statewide Assessment of Forest Resources (SAFR) Status- Dave Stephenson, Steve Kimball
Draft Composite Maps & State Response Plan/Resource Strategy

Dave Stephenson, IDL Urban Interface Planning Program Manager, has provided the committee SAFR updates for the past two meetings. Today, Dave has draft final maps for the committee to review. For states to participate in S&PF programs and receive competitive grant funding, they must complete a state assessment and develop a corresponding response plan/resource strategy. Dave discussed the SAFR process to date and the methodology utilized to develop the assessment. Dave identified forest threat and benefit issues and sub-issues, and weighting of these issues within the assessment. Individual issue maps/layers were discussed by Dave and Steve Kimball, Idaho National Fire Plan Coordinator. Dave explained how scores from the composite benefit and threat maps are incorporated into the final score matrix. The final matrix has been further refined to identify priority forest areas.

Dave explained that further discussion by the stakeholder group of the most recent draft final map will be required before a decision is made on the final priority map. Steve reported the assessment will be used to direct project work over the next 5-10 year period in key (priority) areas.

The committee suggested using a web application in order to view individual ownerships within the assessment's priority areas as ownership will be an important element within the response plan/strategy. Dave reported a website will be made available to view individual ownerships within priority areas. Future meetings for the response plan will involve a smaller core group to work on the response strategy; they will report back to the larger stakeholder group. Ara Andrea reminded the committee that the assessment and resource strategy will become the main driver for competitive grants and the basis for the Forest Stewardship Program's 5-year plan. Also, they will replace the Forest Legacy Program's Assessment of Need. SAFR Core team

representatives to serve on behalf of IFSAC include Chris Schnepf, Kirk David, and Serena Carlson. Frank Gariglio reported that NRCS is currently reviewing a draft of the *Guiding Principles for Delivery of Coordinated Planning Assistance to Private Forest Land Owners* with the idea that this will help NRCS focus on priority areas within assessments (like SAFR) in order to set NRCS priorities and rankings.

Kirk commented on the make-up of the SAFR stakeholder group—he thinks it is skewed too much towards agency representation and not enough private forest landowners. Dave commented that the SAFR stakeholder group should have many strategies and perspectives to consider when planning proposed projects. IFSAC members have the link to the SAFR website and Dave encourages members to go there, look at the maps, share them with others, and provide comments back to their representative(s) on the stakeholder group. The SAFR process goes back to the wishes of Congress to have a visual reference of where priority landscapes are and where to focus limited funding most efficiently and effectively.

Dave summarized the goal of the assessment by asking the question—if you have a limited amount of money to use (on forest landscapes), where would you use it and how?

Afternoon Break

Other Business– Committee

Timber Exemption Appeal - Gordon Harnasch

Gordon gave background on the Kootenai County timber exemption program and his involvement with it. Tighter controls by the county brought about management plan requirements in 1991. In 1992, upgraded management plans were required. At that time, a single landowner had difficulties with plan preparation and he eventually wound himself through the administrative and court systems. Kootenai County prevailed and their timber exemption system is still in place despite this court challenge.

Gordon reported that the Kootenai County timber packet has been sent to Rod Brevig, Idaho State Tax Commission, who is working with other northern Idaho counties. Clearwater County now has a forester on its staff.

Tree Farm Recognition - Kirk David

Kirk reported on the Idaho Tree Farmer of the Year celebration for Brad Little. IFSAC Chair Oscar Baumhoff attended the celebration and signed up as an Idaho Tree Farm Member. Kirk presented Oscar with his Tree Farm membership certificate and Tree Farm sign.

IFSAC Officers Nominating Committee - Committee

The committee reviewed the list of current voting and ex-officio members and noted updates to contact information.

A MOTION by Ed Schneider that the committee vacate the requirement for today's meeting that officer nominees have a written declaration of their willingness to serve and, instead, make it oral, Gordon seconded. Further discussion followed regarding Robin Miller's absence. Mary Terra-Berns commented that perhaps Robin may not want to continue to be Vice-Chair due to her status as a new mom.

AMENDED MOTION by Ed Schneider to only those officers here present, Tom Davis seconded, passed unanimously.

Discussion followed about forming a nominating committee either today or by email. Oscar commented that he will continue to serve as Chair if that's the committee's desire.

Kirk NOMINATED Oscar for second term as Chair, Chris Schnepf seconded, nomination passed unanimously.

MOTION to close nominations, seconded by Mary Terra-Berns, nominations closed.

A MOTION by Ed Schneider to move ahead with nomination of Vice-Chair based upon her acceptance of the position to serve a second term, seconded by Chris Schnepf. If Robin wants to decline this position and if Oscar wants to move off the committee as Chair later on, we can take this up at the next meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Ree Brannon announced the state RC&D meeting on February 5 & 6, 2010, in Lewiston. The meeting will include presentations by the Clearwater Basin Collaborative, economic issues, and the State Assessment of Forest Resources.

Kirk David discussed sub-committee representatives for the Forest Legacy Program sub-committee and the Forest Stewardship Program nominating committee. Chair Oscar Baumhoff will accept volunteers to the FSP nominating committee. Kirk David, Mary Terra-Berns, and Gordon Harnasch volunteered.

Discussion followed about when and where to have the next IFSAC meeting. Ara will email members two potential dates for their consideration.

Meeting adjourned.

List of Attendees

Oscar Baumhoff, IFSAC Chair	Idaho Forest Owners Association
Ara Andrea, IFSAC Secretary	Idaho Department of Lands
G. Kirk David (member)	Idaho State Technical Committee
Gordon Harnasch (member)	Kootenai County
Mary Terra-Berns (member)	Idaho Department of Fish & Game
John DeGroot (member)	Nez Perce Tribe
Chris Schnepf (member)	Cooperative Extension System
Tom Davis (member)	Consulting Forester
Ed Schneider (member)	Non-Industrial Private Forest Owner
Frank Gariglio (member)	USDA – NRCS
Ree Brannon (member)	USDA – Clearwater RC&D Council
Craig Foss (ex-officio)	Idaho Department of Lands
Randy Brooks (ex-officio)	Cooperative Extension System
Clark Christiansen (ex-officio)	Idaho Department of Lands
Mike Wolcott (ex-officio)	Consulting Forester
Greg Becker (guest)	USDA – NRCS
Mary Fritz (guest)	Idaho Department of Lands
Bill Love (guest)	Idaho Department of Lands
Ed Warner (guest)	Idaho Department of Lands
David Stephenson (guest)	Idaho Department of Lands
Suzie Jude (guest)	Idaho Department of Lands
Chris Gerhart (guest)	Idaho Department of Lands
Thomas Stundze (guest)	Idaho Department of Lands