

Forest Practices Advisory Board Meeting

March 25, 2009

Attendees:

Members: Damon Hearne, Joe Theroux, Tom Trowbridge, Mark Ashton, Christopher Martin

Guests: Eric Hammerling

DEP Staff: Doug Emmerthal, Jennifer Hockla, Judd White

Meeting minutes 1/29/09 review, Joe Theroux motioned approved minutes, Damon Hearne seconded the motion, unanimously approved.

Jennifer Hockla presented a pool of questions to the board to create the Forest Practitioner Certification Exam for Doug Emmerthal. Jennifer Hockla explained the selection process for each of the four sections – question selection process continued as meeting progressed.

Legislative Update:

Eric Hammerling stated Bill 6375 proposed elimination of boards and committees including the Forest Practices Advisory Board. Chris Martin told the members of the Board that if the Governor no longer sanctions the Forest Practices Advisory Board (FPAB) that he hopes the FPAB will continue to meet. Chris noted the useful feedback, valuable suggestions and direction provided by the FPAB.

Bill 6551 (1) allow price of cordwood to be raised from \$10 to \$25 for personal use

(2) Would flip revenue from timber sales

(3) Buffer for Blue Trail would be removed.

-bill should go to the Finance Committee, and is opposed by the Governors' Office.

Bill 5004 – This proposal would significantly modify the law regarding the unauthorized harvest of timber. Discussions followed on problems with the text of the proposal. It was noted that this proposal may not be addressed this session due to no availability of the Public Hearing Room.

The Governor's proposed budget would eliminate the Environmental Conservation Fund. The Appropriations Committee is not in agreement on this matter.

Doug Emmerthal mentioned Commissioner McCarthy's possible position with the US EPA.

Pallet Standards:

Doug Emmerthal discussed the new pallet standards proposed by the National Association of Fire Marshals. There is a possible increase in the cost of wood pallets and emphasis is

being placed on plastic pallets. There is some additional concern that Southern Yellow Pine pallets burn hotter than Oak Pallets. The change in pallet type would have significant impact on local pallet industries.

Insect and Disease Education efforts

Doug Emmerthal gave an Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB) update. He announced that the Division of Forestry presented programs for different groups including; municipalities, forest practitioners and arborists. Chris Martin also gave information about ALB. He stated that the New England Task Force on ALB discussed possible firewood movement and regulations. The New England Task Force will be focusing on inspection and detection. Federal dollars for ALB information and kicking off the “Don’t Move Firewood” campaign will be on Memorial Day. Two cities were identified as primary ALB detection cities in Connecticut, education and outreach will be focused on these cities. Damon Hearne noted that Connecticut Forest & Park Association has an education program on ALB with trails personnel and activities. Eric Hammerling stated that Steve Broderick will be giving an ALB presentation at the Trails Workshop.

Mark Ashton asked about Oak Die Back updates. Jennifer Hockla stated that the CT Agricultural Experiment Station is continuing studies and monitoring.

Mark Ashton noted that in Ashville, NC, they are dealing with Hemlock Woolly Adelgid infestation which is significant and there is extensive hemlock mortality. A lengthy discussion concerning the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid took place. Mark mentioned that Chinese Hemlock planting shows promise as a replacement. Mark explained the distribution of Eastern Hemlock and the reasons why hemlock exists.

Annual Reports Summary

Doug Emmerthal handed out and explained summaries of Annual Reports noting that 80% of all Certified Forest Practitioners comply with the requirement to submit an annual report. He noted that those that don’t submit a report are prohibited from being recertified upon expiration. Damon Hearne asked what the timeline on getting the 20% missing annual report responses. Doug explained how the percentage of compliance occurs and how it becomes resolved. Damon offered an alternative to Doug for the compilation of annual reports. Eric Hammerling asked who the audience is for the annual reports. Doug explained citing several uses and audiences for the information. Eric thought the Council on Environmental Quality could use the information from the annual reports. The Board discussed the uses of information from annual reports at length.

Ashton inquired about the increase in the number of management plans and the increase in acreage from 2007 to 2008. Emmerthal attributes much of the increase to water company’s plans but noted that some of the increase remains to be determined.

490

Martin spoke about 490 information and how it is used by the Council on Environmental Quality and noted the information will be submitted electronically in the future. Trowbridge asked about Certification of States Forest Land. Martin said we could but noted there are logistical problems. Martin and Trowbridge mentioned Massachusetts issued with publicity with harvesting in Massachusetts State Forests.

Division of Forestry Highlights

Emmerthal mentioned the Division of Forestry Weekly Highlights and asked if Board members would be interested in receiving the weekly highlights. Emmerthal explained that the highlights are a brief narrative of the activities of the Division of Forestry.

Stimulus Money

Martin stated that Stimulus Money may be available for Black Locust Utilization, \$5 million for roads and bridges in State Forests are probably approved. Martin noted the Governor's Office is administering the Stimulus Money.

Martin stated the Governor's CCC Proposal is \$7.5 million over the next 3 years to DEP. The CCC concept is to train young people for a job and achieve licenses in trades as necessary. The CCC is not approved because the budget has not passed at this time. Hammerling asked Martin about the administration of the CCC program. Martin responded that DEP would supervise projects and the some projects might be managed by private groups because the state is not hiring at this time.

Ashton suggested a State of State Report annually addressing Forests, etc., & the use of the report for PR purposes. The report could be distributed to the press. The report would highlight the Management of State Forests to include Wildlife Management activities. Ashton suggested using Graduate Students to compile the report. Martin stated the Connecticut Forestlands Council would be the responsible group for such a report. Discussion about benefits re: Ashton's suggestion we vigorous.

Next meeting date tentatively set for September 2009.

Respectfully Submitted,

Doug Emmerthal