

MFL Task Efficiencies (TE) Concepts Implementation Summary

A. STAFF ROLES

1. **Project Manager**—Mark Heyde will serve as the overall project manager for implementing all MFL TE concepts. Responsibilities will include: monitoring the overall implementation progress of each MFL TE concept; progress reporting to Division of Forestry management and management teams; ensuring concept implementation teams are on-track to complete implementation within the specified timeframe; and ensuring teams are implementing the approved concept and not re-thinking the concept purpose.
2. **Team Lead**—a Team Lead for each concept will manage the team (i.e. set-up meetings and assign tasks to team members), work with the Project Manager on team needs and report implementation status to the Project Manager.
3. **Team Member**- fully participates and complete work assignments for the improvement of the statewide MFL program.
4. **Steering Team** – Jim Warren, Nicole Potvin, and Mark Heyde will act as a steering team to guide the work of the concept implementation teams.

B. CONCEPTS, TEAMS, TEAM CHARGE AND DECISION ITEMS

1. **CONCEPT: Criteria to determine when to invest in a field review to approve a cutting notice.**

Overview of concept: DNR Foresters will use a list of approved criteria to determine if a field review is warranted before approving a cutting notice. This process is intended to reduce the amount of field review time spent on routine, “low risk” harvests that have been established properly and lead to more consistent review of cutting notices statewide.

Timeframe: 6 months from team establishment

FOT approved these criteria:

Low Risk (Field Review usually not needed)

Complies with GAP’s (Generally Accepted Practices)
 Silvicultural prescription matches plan objective
 Coop. Forester or Master Logger involved
 Good track record w/individuals involved
 Mechanical thin, pulpwood, even-aged
 Easy regeneration (e.g. aspen)
 Small timber sales; one stand
 No concerns over BMPs, NHI, Arch., Hist.
 No concerns over soils, invasives, forest health

High Risk (Field Review Needed)

Does not comply with GAP’s
 Silvicultural prescription doesn’t match objective
 No Coop. Forester or Master Logger involved
 Poor/no track record w/individuals involved
 Order of removal required; un-even aged
 Difficult regeneration (e.g. oak)
 Large, complex timber sales
 BMPs, NHI, Arch., Hist. not adeq. addressed
 Concerns over soils, invasives, forest health

FOT approved an Ad Hoc team:

- Team leader: **Sue Crowley**, Mississippi Area Forestry Leader; Sue brings continuity to the process because of her previous involvement with MFL TE work
- DNR Foresters: experience with MFL program, approving cutting notices, and open to improving procedures
 - **Kris Wimme** – forester Juneau/Wood Team

- **Rob Strand** – Dunn County forester
- Cooperating Consultant – experience with MFL program, approving cutting notices, and open to improving procedures
 - **Matt Wittry** – M W Forestry Services and Real Estate, Wausau

The Team's charge: the team will work on implementing the use of criteria—drafting handbook language; sharing handbook language with PLMT and the Forest Tax Program; posting handbook language for public comment; reviewing public comments; and finalizing handbook language.

2. **CONCEPT: Stand Evaluation – providing a consistent method to evaluate a proposed selection harvest on MFL Lands.**

Overview of concept: Consistent use of a stand evaluation methodology can lead to better management of tax law lands, eliminate disagreements over quality of marking, and ultimately result in a more efficiently administered tax law program.

Timeframe: 6 months to 1 year from team establishment

FOT approved an FOT Ad Hoc team:

- Team leader: **Carmen Hardin**, Forest Sciences Section Chief (previously confirmed)
- DNR Silviculturist/Ecologist – Carmen will name a member of her staff
- Cooperating consultant foresters:
 - **Dan Pubanz**, Wolf River Forestry, LLC (confirmed 5/8/14)
 - **Andrew Komassa**, Weekly Timber and Pulp Inc. (confirmed 5/7/14)
- District representatives (Jim Warren will confirm):
 - NE District – **Ryan Severson**
 - NW District – **Larry Glodoski**
 - WC District – **John Schwingel**
 - S District – **Aaron Young**

The Team's charge: The team will review and evaluate the current stand evaluation tool. The team will bring to FOT a recommendation for any adjustments to the tool and a recommendation for the methodology for its use (when and how to use the tool). After approval of a recommended standard operation procedure, the team will draft handbook language and follow procedures for review, handbook approval and posting.

3. **CONCEPT: Cutting notice guidance - A new simple, webpage.**

Overview of concept: Development of the new webpage should increase efficiencies because landowners and partners will have a better understanding of the process and expectations for cutting notices providing more time for DNR Foresters to focus on reviewing the proposed harvest practices.

Timeframe: 6 months to 1 year

FOT approved a team from PLMT plus Web design support:

- Team leader: **Kristin Lambert**, Forest Tax Enforcement Specialist (Potvin will confirm)
- **PLMT or a sub-group from PLMT** (as determined by the PLMT)
- Division Web Design expert: **Scott Huelsman** (Potvin will confirm with Janel Pike)
- **Logger representative** (Jim Warren will seek a member from GLTPA in consultation with Henry Schienebeck)

The Team's charge: Develop a customer driven and user friendly webpage focused on the cutting notice. The webpage could be modeled after the "all about general permits" webpage utilized for waterway permits.

4. CONCEPT: Expedite the development of electronic submission and review of cutting notices within WisFIRS.

Overview of concept: Development and use of electronic cutting notice submission and approval through WisFIRS will save time because DNR foresters will be able to focus on content review.

Timeframe: 1 year from establishment of the team

FOT approved a Forest Management Executive Team (FMET) Ad Hoc team with two additional foresters:

- Team leader: **Pam Freeman-Gillen**, Forest Tax Field Specialist
- FMET : **Nina Carranco, Krista Knight, Kathy Mather, Kristin Lambert, Nicole Potvin, Todd Pulvermacher, Ann Schachte, and Jim Warren.**
- Plus two additional DNR Foresters comfortable using WisFIRS (specifically want someone that has used WisFIRS Private Lands enough to generate ideas about how it could be better; why concepts are not working, etc., and is also familiar with tax law program and cutting notices):
 - **Eric Peterson**, forester Ashland/Iron Team
 - **Scott Mueller**, forester Price/Taylor Team

The Team's charge: Develop a tool in WisFIRS that facilitates completion, review, and approval of cutting notices. Note: FLT has directed the Bureaus of Business Services and Forest Management (i.e. McCown and Mather) to assess staffing levels needed to enable this concept to proceed without negatively impacting planned WisFIRS development.

5. CONCEPT: Consolidate current standard operating procedures for cutting notices.

Overview of concept: This action will increase efficiencies by providing DNR, Cooperating Foresters and others the ability to locate information quickly and consistently.

Timeframe: 6 months to 1 year from establishment of the team

FOT approved a concept team of PLMT plus a Forest Tax Program representative:

- Team leader: **Carol Nielsen**, Private Forestry Specialist
- **PLMT** or a sub-group from PLMT (as determined by the PLMT): utilizing PLMT will allow the team to incorporate perspectives of cooperating foresters and landowners to ensure that when consolidating handbook information, information pertinent to these groups is maintained.
- Forest Tax Program representative, with experience approving and reviewing cutting notices: **Jerry Crow.**

The Team's charge: Consolidate all elements related to the cutting notice review and approval in the Tax Law Handbook into one comprehensive section. Follow the procedures for review and approval of handbook revisions.

6. **CONCEPT: New cutting notice standard operating procedures (SOPs).**

Overview of concept: Starting on this task is dependent on other MFL TE concepts being implemented. For example, the criteria to complete a field review will need to be built into new SOPs once approved as well as instructions related to the WisFIRS cutting notice tool. As such, implementation of this concept may wait until other MFL TE concepts are completed.

Timeframe: 6 months to 2 years from establishment of the team

FOT approved PLMT as the concept implementation team:

- Team leader: **Nina Carranco**, Forest Tax Operations Specialist
- PLMT: **PLMT** is the preferred option for implementing this task because of their role in handbook review and because this team will be familiar with the other MFL TE concepts that require handbook provisions.

The Team's charge: Develop new SOPs that incorporate a process flow chart or charts and results of implementing other MFL TE concepts. Develop handbook language and follow procedures for review and approval of handbook revisions.

7. **CONCEPT: Dynamic, timely, transparent, and institutional process for updating standard operating procedures (SOPs).**

Overview of concept: Develop a two-prong approach to quickly get information on policy and program changes to the public. Notices may or may not become part of official handbook update.

Timeframe: 1 year from the establishment of the team

FOT approved an Ad Hoc concept implementation team:

- Team leader: **Ron Gropp**, Private Lands and Conservation Easement Specialist
- DNR employee with web-design skills: **Scott Huelsman**
- Forest Tax Program representative: **Nicole Potvin**
- DNR Forester:
 - **Austin Felts** – Adams County Forester
 - **Christine Walroth** – Monroe County Forester

The Team's charge: 1. Develop Laws and Regulations webpage with links to Handbooks, Notices, and Authorizing statutes and other official correspondence. 2. Develop a public notice system that is used to implement changes quickly.

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

Overview of concept: Reaffirm the definition of sound forestry, for the purposes of administering the tax law programs, to be the GAPs within the DNR Silviculture Handbook and FMGs. Incorporate this policy into handbooks.

Timeframe: 1 year

FOT approved an Ad Hoc group from the Silviculture Guidance Team plus others:

- Team leader: **Carmen Hardin**, Forestry Sciences Section Chief
- Three members of the Silviculture Team:
 - **DNR silviculturist/ecologist** (to be assigned by Hardin)
 - **Two members of the SGT** (to be selected by the SGT)
- **Matt Molback**, DNR Dunn County Forester; experience with MFL program, approving cutting notices, and if possible experience working with Silviculture team
- **Kathy Nelson**, Forest Tax Program and Policy Chief
- **Quinn Williams**, DNR Legal Services, forestry lead attorney

The Team's charge: review all background information including statutory definitions, program purposes, administrative codes, handbooks and policies to reaffirm the definition of sound forestry for the purposes of administering tax law programs. Incorporate this policy into handbooks; follow the procedures for review and approval of handbook revisions.

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

Overview of concept: This was not a concept put forth for comment by the MFL TE team. This concept stems from comments received. Specifically, "The MFL Transfer process received a large majority of comment as an area that takes significant time as well as expertise. Suggestions were made to review this process (lean) for efficiencies by identifying tasks and needed skills. Some suggested that the administration elements may be centralized to align skills with work tasks, but recognize field staff is need for certain elements.

Priority: Unknown.

Timeframe: Unknown, but FLT indicated this project could begin Late Summer 2014.

Decision Item: Who should serve on this lean team?

- Possible lean team members include:
 - Possible Team Lead: FOT member/Jeff Weatherly (suggested in FLT meeting notes);
 - Jim Warren;
 - Nina Carranco;
 - Kristin Lambert;
 - Pete Wisdom;
 - DNR Forester, in an area with high volume of transfers; knows MFL program; open to changes in procedure.