

PLMT Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2014

Stevens Point

Members present: Carol Nielsen, Kris Tiles, Dennis Hutchison, Chris Plzak, Kris Wimme, Fred Hengst, Tom Piikkila, Nancy Bozek, Nina Carranco, and Drew Feldkirchner

- **FY15 revision to the quarterly report (Carol)**

(Was previously called accomplishment report). Plan is for WisFIRS to collect a lot of this information, but the tool for that still needs to be developed. Some foresters (e.g., Cooperating Foresters) will not have access to WisFIRS. This report allows us to collect data that we cannot get elsewhere. FOT has proposed a format, and FLT will discuss at their February meeting.

- Carol handed out a draft table with private land accomplishments that are being proposed for keeping / removing. The draft we reviewed is attached (please note that this is the draft that was prepared by FOT – this is not a final document.)



Quarterly Reporting
Recommendation_Dra

- Discussion about some of the items that maybe should be kept – opportunity to provide input to supervisors.
- Examples: 1) tree planting numbers can be gotten from state nurseries, but private nurseries being used more, and there is not a good way to capture these data; 2) Thinning and release – dropped since not part of fed report and most is done by cooperating foresters
- Carol shared and asked for comments on the definition of and what should be included under Landowners Assisted on the revised quarterly report (initial and follow-up)

Technical Assistance Discussion. A lot is being dropped related to outreach to landowners (especially to non-engaged). Some concern about how to track this since this is a priority now for the division. For example, a lot of time is spent making contacts and doing referrals (even though no field visit occurs), and this will not be captured the way the draft table is set up. Much discussion about this, whether additional categories are needed, and how to track this on the report.

Concern that if every contact is tallied, it will be a big change and artificially inflate the number of contacts /amount of effort over previous work.

Recommendation from the team is provided in the following attachment:



J.LandownersAssiste
d-reworked.docx

- **Strategic Direction Implementation Steps (Carol and Kris)**

Trying to address two steps from S.D. (PF3):

- a. *Establish a minimum level of service to provide to all new landowner contacts.*
Goal: create a recommendation
Prep Work: Come with a list of services you have provided to new landowner contact.
- b. *Establish a standard for walk throughs for new landowner contacts and identify minimum deliverable.*

At this meeting we will start the discussion and identify the assignments to prepare for the May meeting when we will draft the recommendation for the standard.

DISCUSSION:

- Need to know what the landowner wants which will vary from situation to situation. Give the landowner what they want and not a bunch of standard information they may not want.
- Some guidelines already exist in the Private Forestry Handbook (Specific Plan Standards)
- Discussed what Chris, Kris, Dennis, and Tom do on a walk through – what their purpose is, what they provide, etc. All said air photos were very valuable. Many other items vary by landowner.
- Differences among foresters in what the landowners generally are looking for in their areas – e.g., Dennis works with a lot of landowners that come to him already interested in MFL. Chris has a lot of landowners that are interested in other topics like rare spp, invasives, etc., so MFL is discussed later, if at all.
- Need for follow-up in writing to clarify, reinforce, and document what was discussed during the site visit. Letters used by cooperating foresters are helpful. This is especially needed for documentation if there were any technical recommendations made.
- Links are preferred for sending information to landowners if email is an option
- Takes time and experience to learn to ask the right questions to learn what the landowner really wants / needs. Issue of training and mentoring for new foresters to be able to effectively work with landowners. Etiquette, patience, etc., for getting the message from the landowner. Takes time to get to the landowner's needs, and sometimes that doesn't happen during the first visit
- Lots of discussion about the importance of soft skills and how to teach this to new foresters.

Recommendation for items a and b are in the following attachment:



PF3

ImplStep_contact anc

- **Update on the Education and Outreach initiative as it relates to Strategic Direction (Carol and Kris)**

Description from Kris.

- Lots of input of wants; to include all would have ended up being a 1000-page document that would not be helpful.
- Product from the initiative will not look like a work plan
- Main questions: What do you want to change in the forest resource? Who do you want to reach?
- Seven main “silos” that make up foresters’ work (e.g., state lands, recreation, private lands, fire suppression, etc).
- Identified priority audience for each area
- Proposal establishes a new team: Forest Education Leadership Team to address issues that couldn't be done during the initiative. Would also be responsible for evaluating effectiveness of working toward goals.
- Proposal goes to FLT next week.

- **Coloring requirements of the Open MFL maps (Tom).**
Staff feel it is redundant to highlight open areas yellow on MFL maps when they are already shaded. (Old maps in files...this is taken care of in WisFIRS for new maps)
 - Highlighting came out of Lean Project. Highlighting was done to make it very clear to people which areas were open since there had been problems with the hashing / shading.
 - There are options available for scanning maps into pdf and getting help with the shading from Madison or, in some cases, local staff. Sometimes this is done electronically in the pdf.
 - ☒ Nina will send the document out to the team that describes the options for getting help with the highlighting. (note: this is done).
- **Plantrac to WisFIRS migration issues (Tom)**
Several questions were raised by Ashland / Iron Team. Nina and Nicky Martin already worked through a bunch of them prior to the meeting.
 - Information message that management objectives are needed for non-timber types. Forest Tax Law Handbook says this is not required. **Nina answer:** says to go ahead and migrate. Only a problem if it's an error, rather than a warning.
 - **Nina** – do **not** migrate expired plans. There is no need to have these data in at this time.
 - **Nina** - practice due letters being generated through WisFIRS in Central Office. They will not include the additional materials this time that were included in the past. There may be an option to include a map but probably not this year. This will happen soon after the migration is complete. The letters will be stored in WisFIRS under documents. A forestry newsletter article will notify staff when the letters are sent out. Letter will go out with local forester's address at the top.
- **Questions from the field.**
List of questions from NER based on Chris' preliminary agenda. Team will allow some time to review these issues in quarterly meeting agendas going forward.



Questions from the field.docx

- Field-checking mandatory practices. Should this be done every time now that vacancy rates are much lower than in the past? This would be up to FOT to decide – team cannot make this policy decision. Discussion about the many pros of doing these field checks.
 - ☒ Team recommendation: **field checks should be allowed (not required) prior to mandatory practices letters going out.** (Note there was support for making this required but because it was not unanimous the recommendation says “allowed”.)
- Is it possible to have a place to identify the number of acres we have walked to check cutting notices? **Answer is no.**
- Questions / suggestions to improve the online forestry locator to remove duplication and somehow address companies that come up in every county. Carol will look into options to see what improvements are feasible without a complete rebuild of the system which is not currently an option. **At the least, this will be added to the next work plan for PLMT.**
- Private Lands Toolbox for the Web for foresters and landowners to use. Could start a SharePoint site for gathering materials. **Add this to the next work plan.**
- WIFLGP and polypropylene fencing. If fence deteriorates and does not last the 10 years required by WFLGP, would the landowner be responsible? **Carol** – if it is because the fence

deteriorated, the landowner would not be held responsible and might be eligible for cost-sharing. If the issue is that the fence is not maintained (e.g., allowed to fall over and not replaced) the landowner would be responsible).

- Suggestion regarding the layout of the MFL template to make it more “reader-friendly.” Nina will bring it up in planned meetings over the next two weeks about the template. Some things may be difficult to change because of the coding required in WisFIRS.

- **Review standard WFLGP reports that are being developed and get feedback from PLMT (Carol).**
Carol has been working with the grants staff on these reports and combining historical Access data with the newer CAOS data. Cathy Burrows and Carol have identified certain reports for sending to DNR Foresters and others. Carol needs other reports for work planning.
 - ☒ If team members think of other WIFLGP reporting needs, let Carol know.

- **Membership**
 - Carol sent out a notice about the Cooperating Foresters subteam to seek self-nominations.
 - Still need a replacement for Dave Matheys from Wildlife
 - Chris Plzak’s term runs out in May.

Next meeting

May 6, 2014 in Stevens Point.