



# Sustainable Forestry Council

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## SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY COUNCIL

March 26, 2013

### Minutes

#### Attendees:

Eric Sprague  
Don Outen  
Gary Allen  
Kim Finch  
Kirk Rodgers  
Connie Hoge

#### DNR:

Don VanHassent  
Steve Koehn

Called to order at 10:05 AM.

Don VanHassent briefed the Council on legislative activity to date. The Departmental “Forestry Omnibus” bill (HB 706) has passed the House on a 107-27 vote. Several amendments were approved that the Department considers “friendly”. It will now go to the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee. Other legislation of interest to the forestry community are as follows:

HB 210/SB 236 – extends sunset of Board of Foresters from 2015 to 2025 – passed unanimously in the Senate but was killed in committee in the House.

HB 728/SB 211 – would prohibit a licensed tree expert (LTE) from supervising more than one tree care company – passed unanimously in the Senate but was killed in committee in the House.

HB 572 and SB692 – 2 separate bills that would reduce the apprenticeship period requirement from 5 years to 3 years to be eligible to take the LTE exam (HB 572) and would establish a “continuing education” requirement for LTE’s (SB 692). The Senate bill died in committee but the concept was amended into the House bill which then passed 134-0. It will now go to the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee.

SB 564/HB 1025 – would exempt Frederick County Schools from complying with the Forest Conservation Act. This was killed in committee in the Senate and withdrawn in the House.

SB 457 – would allow Calvert County to use FCA fee-in-lieu funds to pay staff salaries. After its’ hearing no further action has been taken by the committee.

SB 797/HB 1084 – has been amended to create a task force to study and make recommendations on the incorporation of thermal energy into the State’s Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS). This bill passed unanimously in the Senate and by a 128-9 vote in the House. A hearing on the Senate bill is scheduled for March 28 in the House.

Discussion on work plan for the coming year:

1. Woodland Incentive Fund – we need to review the draft letter prepared by Gary, revise as necessary and try again. We will also invite someone from the Department of Assessments and Taxation (DAT) to explain the process and ask questions after the letter is sent.
2. Request another briefing by the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Fund (MALPF) on amounts of forest included in their easements.
3. Wood energy – what role can the Council play in advancing the use of wood for energy. The task force created by SB 797/HB 1084 will have a representative from the Council.
4. Local government planning guidance – Don Outen has been in contact with Peter Conrad of the Maryland Department of Planning who is willing to meet with us to discuss revising guidelines. Assuming HB 706 passes DNR, SFC and other interested parties will have to provide local jurisdictions with guidelines, recommendations and technical assistance on policies and standards to protect forest land and urban tree canopy from adverse effects by January 1, 2015.
5. Private landowner outreach – We need to figure out a better way of reaching private forest landowners. Steve will report at the next meeting on a new model being tried in Wisconsin.
6. Forest certification on private land – invite some guest speakers with experience in group certification of private landowners. Could the Forest Conservation and Management Agreement (FCMA) program serve as the “group”? Could the Woodland Incentive Fund be used to fund the audits for such a group certification?
7. Develop the next generation of forest conservation leaders – The University of Maryland Urban Forestry Program is struggling. How can we assist? Invite Joe Sullivan to meet with us and discuss opportunities? The University of Maryland – Eastern Shore (Princess Anne) is also trying to establish a program but more along the lines of using arborists and tree care professionals to do much of the instructing. This program is in the early stages of development. Other possibilities are developing a scholarship program, holding an Aldo Leopold Foundation class in Maryland and meeting with John Jastremski and Steve Resh of Allegany College to discuss their program.
8. Support forest-based industries – work with the Department of General Services to try to get more Maryland grown, Maryland produced wood and paper products used in State government operations.
9. Easements – There are two main issues – availability of dollars and the content (language that does not constrain sustainable forestry). Is there a model easement already in existence that doesn't constrain sustainable forestry? If not, can we develop one? Meet with Land Acquisition and Planning (LAP) and Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) to discuss.
10. Forest Conservation Act and Critical Area Programs – Are program funds being used correctly? What is Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) and what is mitigation? Is it legal to use existing forest within a MALPF easement as a “mitigation bank”? Invite Marian Honecny and Anne Hairston-Strang to future meetings to shed some light at a future meeting. Marian will also be available to discuss the audits that have been conducted on several local FCA programs.

Greg Purnell will be leaving the Council. Steve is working on a potential replacement.

The minutes from the two previous meetings (11/27/12 and 1/22/13) were distributed. Connie moved approval. Kim seconded. Minutes were approved.

The next Council meeting will be May 7.

The meeting adjourned at 12:40PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donald VanHassent