

Draft



SFMA Advisory Committee Meeting – April 8, 2016

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Office, 650 State Street, Bangor, ME

Committee Member attendees: John Bryant, Jim O'Malley, Ken Laustsen, D. Gordon Mott, Bob Seymour, Craig Troeger, Aaron Weiskittel, Barrie Brusila, Rob Bryan, Philip (Chip) Ahrens, Joe Wiley, Shawn Fraver

Committee Member Absentees: Jeremy Wilson, Allison Kanoti, Andy Cutko, Emily Meacham, Alison Dibble

BSP staff attendees: Jensen Bissell, Director, Eben Sypitkowski, Resource Manager, Georgia Manzo, Park Secretary

Meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m by Chair O'Malley.

Sypitkowski introduced Shawn Fraver, Assistant Professor of Science, University of Maine, a potential addition to the committee. BSP Secretary, Georgia Manzo was also introduced.

Wiley motioned to accept the minutes of the SFMA Advisory Committee Meeting dated September 25, 2015. Laustsen said that an "s" was missing in the spelling of his last name. Ahrens moved to "accept the minutes as amended", seconded by Wiley. All in favor, with one abstention by Troeger who was not at the September meeting.

Fraver described a study done in BSP following the July 19, 2013 tornado that hit the SFMA. Researchers Shawn Fraver, Laura Kenefic, Bob Seymour et al installed traps and lures to collect spruce beetles and other wood boring insects to study the effects of the blowdown and subsequent salvage operation (that created three treatments for study). The bycatch resulted in the findings of several species of insects never before reported in Maine. This study is ongoing and includes looking at how the tornado affected forest structure in each of the three treatments, looking at trees live and dead, in fine, coarse and woody debris. Fraver offered to provide a presentation of this study at a future meeting. Bissell mentioned that this was a 100% windthrow event in which all material ended up on the ground in 400 acres of blowdown. Five thousand cords were salvaged of the 7,000 cords on the ground. Usually 60% of basal area is taken but in this case, 100%.

Sypitkowski outlined SFMA outreach efforts including field tours with Friends of BSP and UMaine Fort Kent, high-level self-guided tour material being re-written to grade school level, and a budworm trip to the North Shore of Quebec (looking at spruce-budworm-defoliated stands). Brusila mentioned a tour in Matapédia (Quebec) scheduled for July. She will let the committee know if there are openings.

The certification process (4-year audit) resulted in four minor CARs.

The activity presentation included summer/winter cut data in the northwest corner of the Park. The new John Deere processor is improving production (few breakdowns and minimal damage). The data collection will be useful following the learning curve. It was mentioned that three cords/hour seems low, but these are machine hour, not necessarily *productive* machine hours. The operator is paid by the hour and gets a bonus for production. Laying out/flagging the trails helps guide the processor operators and control the harvest and with that, productivity has gradually increased.

Discussion then focused around developing prescriptions for microstands, looking at how to dial-in the GIS and note-taking ability and using the Nexus 7 tablet and Microsoft OneNote and PDF maps to help with efficiency. O'Malley suggested In light cuts, forwarder activity is optimized if the spacing is pushed out. This is being done on an intuitive basis.

Silvicultural activities were highlighted and discussion included variations of gap harvesting, looking at stands with patchy regeneration and older, mature overstory, whether windthrow potential was a concern, and leaving a hedgerow in the stand to minimize blowdown where straight shear winds are a threat. Wood is salvaged where we know it exists, especially in larger wind events.

Mott mentioned that Prentiss & Carlisle is getting current, daily satellite imagery and will ask them what they use.

Seymour mentioned that the Ponsse is cutting 350 cords/week. (SFMA harvester peaked at 200 cords/week but did not have the benefit of multiple operators). More discussion surrounded operator efficiency and how to keep the operator in the seat and reduce downtime, as well as the need for oversight with new operators. Harvesters are more productive in the winter months. Harvest data provided (and available) included prescriptions used, value and net revenues, stumpage prices and current market conditions. Ken mentioned that spruce/fir stumpage prices are the same now as in 1970, considering inflation.

The BSP SFMA Sale of Forest Products Policy (12/8/2009) was discussed at length with regard to striking this last sentence: On a rolling five-year average the Park will not exercise this option for more than 30% of the annual allowable cut. (Refers to selling forest products harvested in the SFMA to mills and markets outside of the state of Maine when specified conditions are met.) Comments included keeping the intention but not limiting the SFMA when these conditions occur; specs are lower and prices are better in Canada; trucking costs are an issue (BSP does not see direct benefit from off-road trucking). In the nineties, the Authority's (informal) policy was no wood to Canada; BPL did not previously use foreign labor; exports to Canada discussion occurred publicly with the Authority; and Bissell would like the Advisory to come up with what the Authority should be responding to. It is the Authority's decision and it is the Advisory's role to provide the basis of a recommendation for the Authority to review. Political concerns and interests were discussed. There were various views on whether conditions will be better or worse in a year. Keeping the structure of the forest management intact is important. It's difficult to know what is a Maine company anymore. The advantage to those that are questionably Maine companies is that they employ Maine people. Sypitkowski will draft talking points for committee review. Mott moved that 'the Advisory Committee recommends that "the last sentence be removed from the Sale of Forest Products Policy". Brusila seconded the motion. All in favor, motion unanimously passed.

Operations discussion included the bridge replacement at Hinckley Brook that will allow access to planned cut areas. Sypitkowski also provided a silviculture report, showing gap cuts that did and did not need to be cleaned, as well as shelterwood and PCT sites in advance of the spruce budworm (looking for sites with lesser fir component).

The Outreach report included Storymaps – an ESRI product, a great multi-media tool for websites.

The five-year recertification was discussed (cost versus benefit/value). SFMA corrective actions are minimal; we're ahead of the certification curve. Alternatives were discussed. The Advisory committee has experience. Bissell was asked if the principle goal is for SFMA to do better, or prove to the public that we're doing what we should, and does the public ask? Bissell responded that the original intent was to use the certification standards and process to evaluate and improve operations and to stand on the outcome as public testimony to quality management in the SFMA. As the certification standards and process have changed, Bissell believes

these objectives are less valid. This advisory committee provides much of this management oversight. It was asked if we gain any market share? Sypitkowski's reply was no, and regarding the issue of scale, SFMA is small. Group certification was discussed. We have great oversight with the Advisory but must avoid conflict. If certification is dropped, it could be back in place in a month if needed. Cost is \$15,000/year for recertification and \$5-6,000/year for surveillance. SFMA has never substantially changed its management because of it. Laustsen moved that "the SFMA terminate their certification process". Troeger seconded the motion. Discussion followed that we need to be prepared; that in some circles, it will appear to be a repudiation of the certification process. Other discussion included joining a group like TNC. They have group certification in properties they directly manage. Ownerships share costs. Demonstrating sustainability to the public is always good. Laustsen revised the motion to "I move that the SFMA not renew their certification". Troeger seconded the amended motion. No further discussion, all in favor. Bryan abstained.

O'Malley made a motion to "table the Riparian Management Zone discussion since we had decided to end the meeting at 2 p.m.". Troeger seconded the motion. No discussion. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Georgia Manzo, Park Secretary