

## **Montana Forest Council**

**November 16, 2022**

### **Zoom**

**Participants:** Gordy Sanders/Christian Cahoon – Pyramid Mountain Lumber, Coleen Michael/Tim McEntire/Justin Doble – MT Logging Association, Roger Ziesak/Marc Vessar – MTDNRC, David Nikonow – National Wild Turkey Federation, Christine Johnson – Nine Mile Venture, Zack Miller – Weyerhaeuser, Bruce Rowland – Stimson, Cameron Wohlschlegel – FH Stoltze Land & Lumber, Tom Agens – PCA, Cindy Peterson – MSU Extension Forestry

**Guests:** Bryce Maxell - MNHP

**Program Administrator:** Julia Altemus

**Chairman's Welcome:** Gordy Sanders

**Antitrust Statement:** Gordy Sanders

**June 2022 Notes:** No edits

**SFI 2022 Standards/Regional SIC Coordination-Climate Smart Forestry:** Gordy believes there are more questions than answers regarding the new Standards and the auditors are struggling with interpretation of the language. SFI is contemplating 3 different Climate Smart Forestry webinars. Gordy said SFI wants to know if the MFC wants to join a northwest regional effort on CSF. This topic affects landowners more than those that are fiber sourcing. SFI has a meeting in January 2023 to talk about some of the issues and different interpretations of the Standards. SFI will put new interpretations on the website. The downside to this approach is the Standards are evolving over time and we never really know what to expect. A new interpretation could all of a sudden become a new Standard in June of next year which could cause issues with upcoming audits. The audits that were earlier in the year didn't fair as well, there were more OFIs. Gordy wanted to know how the council feels about weighing in on a regional CSF effort? The topic in general. CSF doesn't impact fiber sourcing. Gordy volunteered to stay involved to see how it goes. Bruce felt that involvement would be helpful in order to know what is going on.

**Montana SIC/MFC G1-G2 Species Habitat-MNHP:** Bryce showed PP slides providing information and a map regarding G1-G2 Habitat Summary. Bryce provided a summary of the discussion at the last meeting. 178 G1-G2 species in MT. Only 101 of these have observations that can be mapped reasonable precisely. 57 are in commercial forests of which 16 only potentially encountered while accessing forest habitat, 25 are aquatic or streamside species and 16 occur in terrestrial forest habitats – of these 16, 12 are known from only 1 – 4 locations. The MNHP has created a spatial tool for mills meant for fiber sourcing. Bryce wanted to know who would be the end user, besides mills? Based on feedback, they have created a spreadsheet that highlights 4 points: 1) Forests (Occur in Forest Habitats) 2) SMZ 3) Access (potential to be encountered while accessing forest habitat and 4) Unlikely (Occur in non-forest habitat). Users can zoom in on the map and open tabular data and turn on background maps, etc. This information will be on the internet that can be accessed for free but cannot provide precise location of species that would involve private timberlands. If this isn't enough information, then the user can contact the program for more precise information. There is a modeled habitat link that is on the spreadsheet as well. Bryce is looking for feedback on how to best share this information. This

information should be in brochures. The spreadsheet is downloadable, and you can add your own notes. If the user has questions about the information, the program can point the user to the brochure or put in a request, then the MNHP can provide a map and specific information. Bryce is looking for feedback, this not a final product. Cameron suggested a quick link to get simple information. Bryce suggested they could expand the table and list out those management recommendations. Cameron, as long as the table is specific to their sourcing area. Cameron does like what they have provided but need really simple and quick information. Council members will review this information and send comments to Bryce. Gordy said it would be way to separate information for loggers and landowners, maybe with an asterisk. Need to narrow the scope down to where we can have the greatest impact. Zack given us the spatial area to focus on, if not in that spatial area, then can check the box. If there is a species, then can hone in on that site or hand a landowner a pamphlet that lets them know they have a species on their site. We can meet the need of the SFI program and protect the species. Roger, quite often the area enormous and can be overwhelming, a little concerned about the criteria being used to develop potential habitat. Bryce, started modeling potential distribution of species back in 2007 on a 4<sup>th</sup> iteration of modeling efforts. Have 1400 species now. Have had then externally reviewed. Includes 63 environmental impact layers. When there are 5 to 6 observations, lends to pretty good modeling. Run models for all species, but do not put them out to the public unless they are very comfortable with model output. Roger, are they looking at high or low potential? Bryce, yes they are doing that. Bryce said that in the spreadsheet they could add another field, they could put a management field. Bryce will take a stab at this for the next iteration. Tim, doesn't know to what extent do we need to train the loggers? Talking just an hour or two then maybe at a contractors meeting. If need a full-day class and also do they need to train everyone? Cameron, they put this on the contractor meeting and maybe just a general knowledge of a G1-G2. Zack agreed. It's up to the procurement people to do a deeper dive for presence of G1-G2. Gordy, would it be beneficial to target the SFI advanced course? Include a reference since it tiers to SFI. Cameron, it would be worth sharing the MNHP tool to FS, DNRC, etc. Tim, it would be good for someone to come in to the SFI advanced program and go into the SFI background and touch on the G1-G2. Gordy, how do we share this with private forest landowners? Or do we need to get the message out? Cameron, incorporate in Landowner Stewardship. Cindy, this could be included for sure. Bryce will work on the table a little and present the updated table next time. Bryce is not sure how to move forward on the brochure? Gordy, it would be helpful to incorporate reference MNHP work. Bryce, leave the first page the same, and make the table oriented differently and add the management field to the spreadsheet.

**Educational Brochure G1-G2 Training? Or Tethered Logging, Thinning/Stocking on hold:** The BMP Working Group about tethered logging. Is there a brochure on tethered logging, if not would it be helpful? Marc, it might give agencies a little more comfort. Where to go, what they can or cannot do. Tim, don't have a lot of tethered logging in MT yet, but it's coming and anything we can do to help educate would be good. Gordy, the WG talked about providing a little more latitude in terms of scope. Marc was going to work on this. Gordy, Is a brochure like this helpful for MFC? Zack, maybe for newer agency folks or people coming into the industry, maybe just an understanding of equipment used, not necessarily impacts on the ground. Cameron has been looking into this operation and labeled it, steep slope mechanized logging. Some operate on slash mats, some don't. Bruce, site specific. Not widespread yet. It may work on some slopes and not others. It's a developing. Not sure we are ready for a specific brochure yet. Gordy, thinks that even though it's early, some information would be beneficial. Zack, for helping with sale layout. Who is your intended audience? Roger, we have been hearing about

this process for the past 5 years, seems to be evolving still. It's too early for a brochure. MT hasn't settled on a preferred methodology or do we even want to continue to move forward with tethered logging. A brochure would have to be very general since there are multiple kinds of systems. Almost promotional. Roger, need some hard and fast data in MT, a brochure needs to be selling point, why we are going to develop BMPs, plan sales, etc. Where is it applicable? Still some refinement that needs to be done prior to developing a brochure. Gordy, as more agencies are allowing them on timber sales, then it might be time for a brochure. Gordy, the Thinning/Stocking brochure is on hold. Is Marc going to work on the brochure and Peter was going to lead the effort. Gordy will poke Peter.

**Spring 2023 Training:** Tim and Justin, contracting and grant class to focus on state and federal and add GNA and in the afternoon focus on grants. Another class, diversifying the business. Options as to how to grow their business. Would like to have the Department Commerce come in and talk about the RLF. Also, a safety summit and drug class. First Aid training, no motels in Seeley Lake any more so moving to Luebrecht, Advanced SFI, and forest stewardship. Intermountain Logging conference has opportunities for credits there. Tim going forward is going to be more federal policy and Justin will be taking over the training program.

**Project Learning Tree:** Cindy, working on the new MOU. It's expiring. The MOU is good for 5 years. The steering committee has morphed into Project Wet and Project Wild. No events at the conferences this year but did have a table at the MT Science Convention and at the regular educator's convention. Had professional development events for educators at Helena, Great Falls and Kalispell and working with a U of M grad student that is in the environmental education program. Has an ongoing grant from the FS and the DNRC. Stewardship, Cindy is waiting for confirmation from Bozeman. As soon as she gets that, she will get the word out. The workshops will be in Kalispell, Bozeman, Trout Creek, Frenchtown, and Corvallis. Zack, what kind of demographic is signing up? Cindy, a lot of new owners, a few younger owners, but still a lot of people that are retiring and now have time to work on their property.

**MFC Financial Report:** Coleen's report shows \$23,750 cash commitments, \$21,250 in-kind commitments for a total of \$35,000. Expenses total \$25,315.

**Member and Partner Updates:** Bruce, audit past September, recertification audit. Had 5 OFIs. Summary should update Stimson website regarding indigenous people, and had some issues regarding Climate Smart Forestry, and a finding under BMPs and fiber sourcing of woody controversial sources and should add this to the log purchase agreement. Barry Dexter is retiring in July. Andy Stockwell will officially start January 1, 2023. Andy worked in MT in the 1990s and then went to Stimson. Currently the Plummer procurement manager. Tim, continue to work with FVCC. Participated in Forest Products Week. Tim worked with Zack and took people out to Mike Newton's sale and Zack took them through the mill. Justin talked to FFA in Bozeman. Would like to see more forestry and mill folks talk to the FFA kids. Need to have a booth. Roger, SMZ violations that were settled. All three were warning letters. No takeovers since July 1<sup>st</sup>. Marc, the BMP working group is reconvened and the 2022 Audit Report is done for those that want a copy. Everyone was above 95% in every category, need more teams member next time. Cameron, Stoltze passed the recertification audit no OFI and no non-conformance. Zack, WY completed the chain of custody last year and just finished an internal audit and working to add the new SFI standards. Working on trucking capacity, and succession planning. Christine, MWPA started a Foundation and will be getting scholarship and grant applications out to help with workforce development. Tom, PCA had a surveillance audit on fiber sourcing and chain of custody. Auditor felt

that they met indicator 1, especially in MT but felt lacking in indicator 2 to get the message out to the loggers. Would be in favor of adding simple G1-G2 information into the MLA training program. Gordy, have a new forester Zoe ?, she will join at the February meeting. PLM had a audit in October, everything was good. They raised a lot of questions, and the auditor is going to forward to SFI.

**Next Meeting:** February 14, 2023, via zoom. Coleen will provide the zoom link.