

## **Montana Forest Council**

### **RDO Equipment, Missoula**

**June 22, 2022**

**Participants:** Gordy S & Scott Kuehn – Pyramid Mountain Lumber, Paul McKenzie – FH Stoltze, Brian Hobday – Green Diamond Resource, Bruce Rowland – Stimson Lumber, Peter Kolb – MSU Extension Forestry, Coleen Michael - MLA, Ben Super – U of M Forestry & Conservation, Zack Miller - Weyerhaeuser, Roger Ziesak – DNRC Forestry Division, Tom Agens – Packaging Corp of America, Sean Steinebach – Sun Mountain Lumber

**Guests:** Bryce Maxell – MT Natural Heritage Program, Gordy Mouw and Gregor Macintosh - SFI

**MFC Admin:** Julia Altemus

**Chairman's Welcome:** Gordy S

**Anti-Trust Statement:** Gordy S

**February Notes:** Corrected the spelling of Zack's name

**SFI 2022 Standards-Biodiversity/FECV:** Gordy M and Gregor – Gordy M, since the release of the playbooks on Fiber Sourcing and Biodiversity, several SICs have joined forces to do regional assessments on G1 and G2 species. Almost nearing completion and will be able to share at the next meeting. Gregor said the GHG, indicator 9.2.3 identifies a program regarding GHG within the company control under Forest Management. Have a program to ID what GHS emissions there are and what can be done to trend them down over time, i.e., right-size equipment for the job, running newer more efficient equipment, fuel switching. Not asking to put a number on the emissions, just identify and what can be done to trend down and not grow over time. Peter, sounds like the focus is on logging equipment and not forestry practices. Gregor, no, both are at play. Also, log haul within our control, getting the most weight on the truck that is legally allowed, different truck configurations for more efficiencies. Peter asked about forestry practices that reduce the risk of wildfire and will reduce smoke. Gregor, yes for sure that is an important practice to reduce GHG. There is a Climate Smart Forestry Playbook but for each company will have to identify sources of GHGs. Bruce, how about carbon sinks, that take more carbon out of the air. Young vigorous forests are less prone to catastrophic fire. Gordy S, during the convention where there any big feedback moments that came out of the convention? Gordy M, for the SIC general session, talked about assessments within Climate Smart and forest resiliency. Some of the new standard requirements were not as bad as people first perceived. Zack attended the conference, felt it has forward looking ideas as to the role of SFI. Roger, in terms of GHG reductions are road standards being considered? Gregor, yes if narrowing roads mean less time constructing and equipment size and haul time and haul speed.

**Montana SIC/MFC Risk Assessment:** Gordy S and Bryce Maxell – Bryce gave an overview of the Montana Natural Heritage Program. The program is under the state library and was established in 1982. They do a lot for mammals, reptiles, amphibians, wildlife data collection and research. Manage conservation status. Put all information in environmental summary reports. Responding to the MFC request to meet the new SFI standards, he was thinking of certain criteria such as plant community topics, forest habitat, wetlands, species info, establish an easily updated dynamic document, update

manually, provide as a PDF post online, navigate SFI, navigate environmental reviews, link to resources and protection of specific G1 and G2. The land fire layer (2016) is the new base and then the NatureServe at risk status. Talking about ecosystems and not individual species. Species: Mapping and information that can inform SFI certification. Bryce presented a flow chart for feedback. What does MFC want to see? Documented or predicted? Peter predicted can get us in a whole lot of trouble. Gordy S, since we can update annually, we could just go with documented. Bryce said there are 156 G1G2 species in MT. Probably will look at reranking and dropping some of them. Would the map be interactive so someone could zoom in within 1 sq mile? Bryce would rather have the information as a check list as to whether need an environmental summary report? Or is it easier to just produce the reports and not produce the map? Gordy S said there are 2 different tracks. Companies with forest lands will have a specific need and for the overall MFC, we are looking for a broader view so we can develop logger training programs. Bryce, the G1G2s some can only be identified by an expert and a member of the public may not have enough background to know what to look for. Bryce, maybe need to do a better job in the ESRs. Peter thinks the MNHP is a great tool. For the logger and landowner training is more of an awareness. Peter suggested that an APP would be more useful. Bryce says they have something similar in their snapshot on their website. Paul asked Roger if there could be a check box on the HRA that a landowner could check that they want to know what G1 and/or G2 species are on their land. Gordy, how big a task to crosswalk G1G2 to the BMPs? Bryce doesn't believe it will be too big of a task. Boundary for SFI consideration of G1G2 Layer? Is the statewide map too big? Better by regions or polygons or counties or just a GIS layer? Or by sub-region? Gordy S, probably need to focus on terrestrial and forest types. In MT we don't have any G1G2 forest types. Thinking about a training session on these topics for loggers. Forest types would be better. Gordy S, only forestland. Bryce said they can remove all the polygons on the map that are not in forest, except what about haul routes that may go through a polygon that doesn't have forestland but does has a G1G2 species. Gordy S, we really need to focus on forest types. Need awareness training. Paul thinks the crosswalk is important in order to narrow to specific habitat and mitigation that could occur. Roger suggested we substitute the word "predicted" to "potential". Need to focus on landowner outreach and then a different track is what the mill/forest owners need. How do we boil this down that actually makes a difference on the ground and get the appropriate information to landowners and through logger training? Roger, Zack, Bryce, Peter, Tim to work on educational documents. Have the ESR, others are private forestland owners and private tree farmers as a tool to attach to a management plan and a crosswalk to the BMPs. The G1G2 map is for the mills and a brochure which as the field guide and the crosswalk for education and outreach in a regionalized approach.

**Educational Brochure:** Roger/Peter/Zack – Under construction still.

**Spring 2022 Training Recap:** Coleen gave the report: 1<sup>st</sup> Aid – 1167, Fire Training – 1028, BMP/SMZ – 131, Forest Management Practicum – 5, Forest Stewardship Workshop – 18, Planning for the Future – 7, Staying Safe in the Workplace – 10, The "Perfect" Log – 27, Basal Area 101 – 16. Safety Conference – 14.

**Project Learning Tree:** Gordy M – The annual conference was shared with SFI and PLT. Any work that can be done collaboratively through SFI and the local SICs. Working on the Fire Resiliency Objective.

**MFC Financial Report:** Coleen said expenses are slightly down and income covers expenses. Roger said their in-kind contribution should be \$4000 instead of \$2500 and Brian said Green Diamond Resource is committed to an annual contribution of \$2500.

**Member and Partner Updates:** Paul said Stoltze is scheduled for an audit in October to the new 2022 standards. Zack, recent chain of custody audit for the mills and went well. Have an internal and an external audit coming up in 2023 and 2024. Ben, dramatic how much construction going on the campus. An increase in enrollment this fall and 300 new freshmen at the college. Hired a new manager for Luebrecht and Bandy Ranch. Fund raising for the new building is going relatively well and he has talked to some of the mill owners. Going into the next legislature, will need pledge agreements and the construction documents done so can really home in on what is needed. He and the Dean met with our senators and hope to have an announcement this fall. One in 10 graduates are from forestry college and really want to focus on this value proposition. New images and branding from the U soon. Roger, search for his successor is ongoing and winding down. Hopefully make an announcement within a week. Did the kick-off meeting for the field reviews yesterday. Looking at 41 sites. Roger will email the list to Julia to share. The new Roger will be very involved. Beth Dodson is the team leader for all 3 teams. Rewrite of the HRA software program. Have all the contracts signed and will get going soon. Target is the end of 2022. Will be able to submit online but cannot pay online yet. Will move to online payments but probably not by the end of the year. BMP Working Group will meet at some point when Roger's successor is on Board. Roger will share the committee with the council. Slash affidavits no longer need to be notarized. Sean, Sun Mountain put in a new planer which is up and going and nearly running at full capacity. Coleen, MLA hired a replacement for Bryan. Justin Doble. Tim will handle some of the federal issues until Justin is on-board. The training credit list will be ready first part of July. Bruce, inspecting roads because of damage to the rain. Restarting work on the Yaak fire. Held up by grizzly bear and road work. Have a surveillance audit on Oregon lands this summer. Brian, Green Diamond hired a new forester, Lucas Townsend. Had a contractor meeting in April. Had 6 contractors working for them, down to 5 at the moment. Had SFI audits last year, so none this year in MT. Matt House conservation and compliance manager. Helping out with SFI program in MT along with Brian Sugden. Jason Callahan is the new policy person, taking over for Patti Case. In process for a couple conservation easements. Working with USFWS and MT FWP that will hold the easements. First audit for carbon compliance in July for the Thompson projects. Gordy S, audit in October under the new standards. Tom, have good inventory and box plant is running well. Have audits coming up this summer. Bryce, doing a lot of monitoring on bats. 98% mortality lost this winter in one of the largest roosts in the country. White Nose Syndrome has hit MT. If bats are roosting individually, white nose won't have a big impact, but roosting in caves can be a problem. State Library looking to make their modify FTEs permanent. Probably won't get involved in the wolverine issue.

**Next meeting:** November 16<sup>th</sup> in person Julia will secure a location and let everyone know.