

Maine Forest Legacy Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 11, 2014, 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Harlow Building, 1st Floor Conference Room, 18 Elkins Lane, Augusta

Present: Alan Hutchinson, Catherine Robbins, Sam Morris, Sarah Demers, Don Mansius, Katherine Eickenberg, Wolfe Tone

Others: Diano Circo (TPL), Ed Meadows (DACF), Wade Simmons (MNAP), Tom Gordon (DACF/MACD), Miranda Hutten (USFS), Kate Dempsey (TNC), Gregg Caparrossi (TPL).

I. Approval of 5/21/14 Minutes – The minutes of the May 21, 2014 Forest Legacy Committee were accepted as written.

II. FLP Federal Update – Miranda Hutten (USFS) and Kathy Eickenberg

- A. FY' 14 – A total of \$14 million in funding was reprogrammed to five additional projects in fiscal year 2014 as result of leftover funds from previously failed projects or projects that didn't need as much funding as was allocated.
- B. FY' 15 - FLP Funding Status Update - Maine's Gulf Hugas Whitecap project originally ranked #10, but became #9 because a higher ranked projects received FY' 14 funding. FY' 15 would require a \$36 million allocation for Gulf Hugas Whitecap to be funded, and this seems likely. Big Six was ranked too low, and is therefore being resubmitted in FY' 16.
- C. FY' 16 – The Northeastern Area deadline is October 15th and the Mock Panel meets on Nov. 5th & 6th. Susan Francher of NH will serve on the Mock Panel and the National Review Panel, which meets Jan. 7th and 8th.

III. Funded Project and Other Updates– Kathy Eickenberg

- A. FY' 12 – High Peaks–Orbeton Stream: Final details of the forest management plan and baseline are being completed; closing is expected before year end.
- B. FY' 13 – East Grand/Orient: A site visit is scheduled in early October with the federal reviewer to develop the task assignment for the appraisal. The closing on this project is anticipated for March – June, 2015.
- C. FY' 14 – Moosehead Seboomook: The appraisal is in process, with no federal review appraiser required due to the size of the grant. The closing on this project is anticipated by year end.
- D. FY' 14 - Cold Stream Forest: A site visit is scheduled in early October with the federal reviewer to develop the task assignment for the appraisal. The closing on this project is anticipated for March – June, 2015.

IV. FY'16 Subcommittee Scoring Recommendations

The Scoring Subcommittee presented its project scoring results on the Perham Stream and Big Six projects to the full Committee. The Scoring Subcommittee report noted some concerns as to how the maple syrup asset would be protected by the conservation easement – although discussion at the meeting noted that the sugar maple trees constitute a late successional forest worthy of ongoing management as such and might be addressed as a special management area in this regard. Both projects were felt to need additional work to explain the threat of conversion to non-forest uses. The Committee made several suggestions as to how to make that case.

After deliberation, the Committee unanimously supported – with Wolfe Tone abstaining - forwarding both Big Six (with a funding request of \$4.4 million) and Perham Stream (with a funding request of \$1.725 million) for national consideration, without priority ranking. It was also agreed that Forest Society of Maine could choose to resubmit Gulf Hags Whitecap if it felt the project's FY'15 ranking was not high enough to reliably ensure funding in that fiscal year.

V. Maine Project Scoring Criteria Clarification

The Committee requested clarification on Project Scoring Criterion #3 and Minimum Required Criterion #5 (see below). By their current wording, the Committee felt it was unclear what is being required of applicants.

Minimum Required Criterion 5. To the extent that it has the legal authority to do so, the landowner must guarantee unencumbered foot access to the parcels.

Project Scoring Criterion 3. Describe access to the project for recreational purposes: (0 pts if foot access to the parcel is not being guaranteed and/or vehicle access to project will not be available; 5 pts if foot access to the parcel is being guaranteed and vehicle access to the project will be available; scoring will recognize that vehicle access to certain lands such as high elevation parcels may not be appropriate).

The Committee agreed to work on this issue before the FY'17 cycle, and to review how Maine's current criteria aligns with the federal criteria which has evolved over time. The following individuals volunteered to serve on this working group: Alan Hutchinson, Kate Demsey, Sarah Demers, Cathy Robbins. Miranda Hutten confirmed that proposed changes to Maine's Project Scoring Criteria would be viewed as a minor amendment, with review authority resting with the Northeastern Area. Jo D. was asked to facilitate this working group and schedule its first meeting in January.

VI. Next Meeting: tentative timing and agenda

Other: Kathy noted that she submitted comments on the proposed FL Program Guidelines. A working Committee will be meeting in October review all comments received. These new guidelines will not apply to FY'16 projects.

VII. Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,

Jo D. Saffair