# Maine Climate Council
## Natural and Working Lands Work Group
## Forest Carbon Subgroup Meeting #3 Agenda
**Wednesday, March 29, 2024, 9 am – 12 pm**
**DACF's Bolton Hill Facility, 2870 North Belfast Ave., Augusta**

For Zoom attendees, register in advance **here**:

**Desired Outcomes -** By the end of this meeting, we will have:
- Finalized draft forest carbon recommendation to submit to the Natural and Working Lands Work Group
- Answered the six questions in the Deliverables Template for each recommendation
- Provided an opportunity for public input

## Agenda

| What | When |
|---|---|
| Welcome and Agenda Review | 9:00 – 9:10 |
| Discuss and Finalize Draft Recommendations for NWL Work Group | 9:10 – 10:15 |
| Discussion of Deliverable Template Questions for each Recommendation | 10:15 – 11:40 (w/break) |
| Public Input | 11:40 – 11:50 |
| Upcoming NWL Work Group Meetings<br>• April 10, 10 am – 1 pm, Deering 101<br>• April 30, 10 am – 1 pm, Marquardt 118<br>• May 15, 10 am – 1 pm, Deering 101<br><br>Closing Feedback | 11:50 – 12:00 |

Note:  Agenda item times are subject to change based on the progress of the subgroup

# Maine Climate Council Natural and Working Lands Work Group
## Working Agreements

- Meetings will start and end on time.

- When meetings are held in person, Committee members will make every effort to attend in person to maximize learning, communication, and collaboration.

- Cameras will remain on during virtual meetings to facilitate communication and understanding.

- Meeting materials will be shared in advance of meetings with sufficient time for review.

- Come prepared, having read meeting materials and completed assignments.

- Be present and engaged.

- Strive for equal airtime, enabling all to participate fully.

- Listen with curiosity and an openness to learning and understanding.

- Adopt a creative problem-solving orientation.

- Name the tension, kindly.

- Humor is welcome!

The Natural and Working Lands Work Group will strive for consensus in its recommendations through a facilitated, discussion-based process, and will not hold votes on specific decisions. The Work Group may choose to include a significant minority opinion as part of its final recommendations.

**Forest Carbon Subgroup Recommendations**
**3.14.23 DRAFT**

**Introduction**

Maine's forests are an important contributor to carbon sequestration and storage and play an essential role in Maine's ability to achieve its climate commitments of decreasing greenhouse gas emissions by 45% (from 1990 levels) by 2030 and 80% by 2050 and achieving net-zero by 2045. Maine's forests also play an integral role in regional efforts to offset GHG emissions and achieve regional climate goals. The management of Maine's forestland directly impacts its capacity to provide these and other important ecosystem services, including supporting local and regional wood markets.

Climate-friendly forest management practices and forest carbon inventorying and accounting are actively evolving fields, with new programs and methodologies constantly emerging. For example, private and non-profit forest carbon programs targeting smaller woodland owners are being introduced across the U.S., including Maine, and research efforts are underway in Maine to identify ways to increase carbon sequestration and storage on commercial forest land while maintaining or enhancing harvest levels. State lands also present an opportunity for exploring management regimes that increase carbon sequestration and storage. Maine is also engaged in multi-state efforts to learn with and from other states about efforts to account for and manage forest carbon. At the same time, there is an increasing need for landowner and public education on the role of Maine's forests in meeting state and global climate goals.

Informed by these ongoing activities, the following recommendations aim to increase carbon sequestration and storage in Maine's forests while at the same time maintaining a robust forest economy. Specifically, the recommendations are aimed at helping forest landowners and logging contractors apply climate-friendly practices. To do so, Maine must: 1) have better data to support sound decision-making for policy-making and outreach program development; 2) expand technical assistance, training and education to landowners and logging contractors to increase the application of climate-friendly forest management practices; and 3) provide financial incentives to increase the application of climate-friendly forest management practices.

1. **Improve forest carbon data and monitoring to support forest policy-making and outreach program development.**
   a. With further funding, the Maine Forest Service's (MFS) Forest Resource Assessment program should work with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the University of Maine (UMaine) to develop a climate-focused forest data and monitoring program that produces more accurate information about forest carbon sequestration and storage in Maine's forests and better informs climate-friendly forest management practices and public policy.

2. **Provide technical assistance, training and education for forest landowners and logging contractors to increase the application of climate-friendly forest practices.**
   a. MFS should develop materials and provide training on extreme weather BMPs to supplement MFS's Best Management Practices for Forestry Manual.
   b. MFS should target outreach to specific landowner groups such as landowners of over 40 acres, new woodland owners, and farmers, and identify underserved landowner groups,

to increase the acreage under active management using climate-friendly forest management practices.

    c. MFS should develop and maintain an up-to-date guidance document on forest carbon programs for landowners and other decision-makers including key components of each program and key considerations and questions to consider when evaluating and/or enrolling in a program.

    d. MFS should develop outreach materials on Maine's current use taxation programs to promote enrollment as a means of keeping forests as forests and increasing carbon sequestration and storage through forest stewardship.

    e. MFS should work with partner entities to address the lack of forestry-related natural resource professional capacity by supporting forestry interns and other efforts to increase opportunities for forestry students, and recent high school and college graduates.

3. **Provide incentives to forest landowners and logging contractors to increase the application of climate-friendly practices**

    a. The Maine Forest Service and other entities should identify additional technical and financial resources for training on climate/carbon-friendly forest management and timber harvesting practices; provide cost-share assistance to logging contractors to purchase low-impact harvesting equipment and implement carbon-enhancing forest management practices; and support the voluntary use of third-party-certified harvesting companies.

    b. Given the rapidly evolving availability, content, and geographic focus of carbon-offset and practice-based forest carbon programs for forest landowners, Maine should continue to evaluate potential partnerships with one or more external entities interested in working with the state to design a forest carbon program that meets the unique needs of Maine's forest landowners and increases forest carbon sequestration and storage while maintaining a robust forest economy.

    c. With further funding, MFS should expand the WoodsWISE incentives program and include climate-friendly management strategies in forest management plans.

    d. The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry's (DACF) Bureau of Parks and Lands (BPL) should investigate the potential benefits of engaging in a practice-based and/or carbon credit-based pilot project that could result in increased carbon sequestration and storage on state-owned lands while also contributing to the knowledge base of BPL, other forest managers, and the public on climate-friendly forest management practices.

    e. Maine's open space current use taxation program should be reviewed to identify incentives for forest owners to adopt climate-friendly land management practices.

**Commented [SJ1]:** In reference to this recommendation, should there be:
- Specific reference to third-party certified harvesting companies?
- Specific reference to other third-party certifications, including foresters and forest managers?
- Other independent monitoring or verification, by MFS or others, of "third-party certified" practices (such as BMPs), management, or systems?

**Commented [JS2]:** Placeholder if LD 1648 doesn't pass, to encourage reintroduction of bill in the 132nd legislature.