



April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Google Meet 3pm – 5pm

Bryan Seipp, Interim  
Chair  
Ecotone  
Forest Hill, MD 21050

Kim Finch, co-chair  
MNCPPC,  
Prince George's Co.  
Planning Dept.  
Upper Marlboro, MD  
20772

Gary Allen  
Maryland Forestry  
Foundation  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Elizabeth Hill  
Maryland Forests  
Association  
Linkwood, MD 21835

Donnelle Keech  
The Nature Conservancy  
Cumberland, MD 21502

Bill Rees  
Catonsville Tree Canopy  
Committee  
Catonsville, MD 21228

Steve Resh  
Allegany College of  
Maryland (Retired)  
Cumberland, MD 21502

Tony DiPaolo  
Pixelle Specialty  
Solutions  
Delmar, Maryland 21875

Frederick Johnson  
M-NCPPC Department of  
Parks and Recreation  
Upper Marlboro, MD  
20774

SFC Members

Bryan Seipp  
Tony DiPaolo  
Bill Rees  
Kim Finch  
Gary Allen  
Steve Resh  
Fred Johnson

DNR Staff

Anne Hairston-Strang  
Daniel Rider

Guests

Action Items:

- Northern Long-Eared Bat subcommittee to meet 5/30

Interim chair to the Maryland Sustainable Forestry Council (SFC), Bryan Seipp, called the meeting to order at 3:02. Review of minutes was deferred until available.

Anne Hairston-Strang, Acting State Forester, gave a Maryland Forest Service update. Major staffing changes were reviewed following the resignation of Kenneth Jolly and Marian Honecny. The continued expansion of staff to implement the 5 Million Trees effort (at 5 of 13 positions) and an effort to revise forest stewardship approaches were noted. The upcoming Urban and Community Forestry Inflation Reduction Act national Notice of Funding Opportunity was outlined, with over a billion dollars in potential funding for disadvantaged communities over the U.S. (large and small communities), identified through the federal Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. The potential for positive contributions towards the 5 Million Tree goal was discussed, and Brian emphasized the need to address invasive species in caring for new plantings.

Gary Allen described plans for a future urban forestry camp at University of Maryland and the need to establish a positive direction for attracting young people to urban forestry and natural resources careers.

Legislative outcomes from the 2023 Session were reviewed. Gary described the Maryland Forestry Education Fund (SB0282/HB0289) that funds work by the Maryland Forestry Foundation to expand forestry awareness and engagement with forest landowners; it can support more extensive communication and stable staffing for important events such as the Natural Resources Career Camp and other forestry issues.

The goal of broader incentives for forest landowners was suggested for a future meeting. Gary suggested that the SFC provide input into the Private Forest Conservation Incentives Workgroup called for in SB 526/HB 723 on Forest Preservation and Retention. Anne mentioned that the significant changes in the Forest Conservation Act from SB 526 require a new FCA Technical Manual. Anne noted that the State Board of Foresters Sunset Extension bill, SB 715, was an Administration bill that passed readily was among the first signed by Governor Moore, in contrast to the extension several years ago where the Board of Foresters was proposed for elimination and significant stakeholder input was needed.

Kim Finch reviewed some concerns with SB 526, including terms with very broad definitions and vague wording, the role and questions around the forest enhancement options, and what might be in alternative requirements options.

Tony DiPaolo emphasized the importance of planning for wildlife goals, reflecting the shifting landowner goals in many areas; this need was echoed by Bill Rees and Bryan.

The effects on forestry of the Northern Long-Eared Bat listing as an endangered species on 3/31/23 were discussed. Because of the broad habitat used by NLEB (trees, with flaky bark preferred), the potential impact is broad, but wildlife agencies are using known observation mapping to limit impact. Areas along the Potomac River have more known observations than many other areas of the state. The ad-hoc subcommittee has met with DNR Wildlife and Heritage staff, and heard an update on the status of mapping and proposed setbacks for winter hibernacula and summer roosting areas. One issue discussed was the overlap of the time-of-year restrictions to protect maternity roosts with drier weather for forest harvesting in compliance with sediment and erosion control. Sediment and erosion control plans, already required in MD, are expected to be a typical path for compliance with NLEB requirements.

In response to questions about the Irreplaceable Natural Areas, Anne said that Wildlife and Heritage Service staff developing the regulations were in close discussions with the Forest Planning staff to address concerns for the practice of sustainable forestry, with draft regulations expected later in the year.

Future meeting dates were discussed for 7/6, 10/12, and 12/18. Potential topics included the IRA grant opportunities and the Economic Adjustment Strategy in the fall and Delmarva Woodland Stewards landscape scale approaches for winter. Requests for the July meeting included a staffing update, review of new legislation such as the Forest Conservation Act revisions, new stewardship/utilization staff job duties, Irreplaceable Natural Areas regulations status and public notice, and workforce development efforts from the Economic Adjustment Strategy.

Bill moved to adjourn, Fred seconded, and Brian adjourned the meeting at 5:05pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Anne Hairston-Strang