



December 6th, 2022

Google Meet 2pm – 4pm

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
Beth Hill
Tony DiPaolo
Bill Rees
Donnelle Keech
Kim Finch
Gary Allen
Steve Resh
Fred Johnson

DNR Staff

Anne Hairston-Strang
Daniel Rider
Kenneth Jolly

Guests

Jason Dubow, MDP
Mark Buscaino

Action Items:

- Doodle poll for 2023 meetings

Interim chair to the Maryland Sustainable Forestry Council (SFC), Bryan Seipp, called the meeting to order at 2:05. Bill Rees moved to approve the minutes from the July 2022 meeting, Beth Hill seconded, and the minutes were approved with a provision for an additional week of review.

Kenneth Jolly, State Forester, gave a Maryland Forest Service update. He reviewed leadership transitions, MFS priorities, and forestry position classification needs. Transitions included the new administration with Governor-elect Wes Moore and Lt. Gov.-elect Aruna Miller, Kenneth's appointment as State Forester, Anne's new position as Deputy Director, a new Associate Director position, Policy and External Relations, to lead the 5 Million Trees program and urban forestry programs, and the new Tree Planting Supervisor hired for 5 Million Trees. Kenneth emphasized that everyone is welcome in MFS and values diversity. New funding for priorities includes state funds for the 5 Million Trees goal (Tree Solutions Now Act of 2021), federal funds for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act over the next 5 and 10 years respectively, a five-fold increase in state funds for the Mel Noland Woodland Incentive Fund,

sales-tax-based funding for off-road vehicle trails, and EV charging stations. The MD Forestry Economic Adjustment Strategy was another priority, to be aided by the BIL funding. Dan Rider explained the MFS application for the temporary bridge for forest harvesting practices and link to local crane mat producers. Updates on wood energy were provided, including the MD Commission on Climate Change recommendation to consider woody biomass for thermal renewable energy credits, with constraints to assure positive climate outcomes. Anne reviewed the schedule for developing the regulations around the Irreplaceable Natural Areas bill; mapping was expected by Dec. 13th and draft regulations open for public comment after January; MFS staff was participating in internal DNR review, and SFC is on the list for outreach following internal review (probably a separate meeting, like the Risk Assessment involvement).

The Baseline Sustainability Risk Assessment for Maryland's Forests has been completed and is posted on the Western MD RC&D website, <http://wmrcd.org/a-foundational-bridge-baseline-sustainability-risk-assessment-of-marylands-forests/>. Thanks were conveyed for SFC members involvement in review and to the Rural Maryland Council for funding.

The Maryland Forestry Technical Study carried out by the Harry R. Hughes AgroEcology Center was briefly reviewed and links to the webinar and the full report (listed below). Gary noted that demand for forest conservation is likely to be a continuing important policy issue. Fred suggested that parks were an important elements in conservation. Tony followed up on the invasive species and forest health issue raised in the report and noted its association with fragmentation. Kim questioned some of the assumptions surrounding the Retention Mitigation Banking section, particularly related to why counties use it, where it fits with land protections and features such as extensive stream valley park networks; she explained how Forest Conservation Act (FCA) retention mitigation banking augments long-term conservation. Gary suggested that the policy argument for retention mitigation banking needs to be laid out clearly, and with data on whether FCA has resulted in great retention in counties where it has been used. Beth noted that Joe Hinson, MD Forest Association president, has been appointed to the Harry R. Hughes AgroEcology Center board, and could share concerns about incomplete analysis around retention mitigation banking.

Beth shared information about the upcoming Frederick Forestry Forum at Mt. St. Mary's. Susan Minnemeyer with Chesapeake Conservancy, the mapping contractor for the MD Forestry Technical Study, was a confirmed speaker, and other speakers covering local forest product operators, state programs and data, national experts on forest cover and supply analysis, and local permitting and zoning officials were on the agenda. Gary suggested making sure that FCA coordination for Frederick County was included.

Gary reviewed expected legislative actions, including related to FCA, forest education, green space equity, and noted that legislative re-organization and leadership assignments were expected mid-December.

SFC members discussed meeting planning for 2023, with suggested issues of revisiting no net loss of forest/tree canopy (how to prevent further loss of forest in the face of continuing growth, minimizing fragmentation), urban forests/parks and green equity with disproportionate impacts of past land use patterns, tree planting and forest stewardship/markets, rare species issues such as the upcoming endangered species list of the Northern Long-Eared Bat, and other topics. Suggested dates were late January, March or April, a June event, September, and November.

Beth shared information on the Forestry Day planned with MD Forests Association and Society of American Foresters on January 31st in Annapolis, bringing attention to forestry issues for legislators and staff.

Beth moved to adjourn, Fred seconded, and Brian adjourned the meeting at 4:05pm

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Hairston-Strang

Links:

MCCC 2022 annual report

<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Air/ClimateChange/MCCC/Pages/MCCCReports.aspx>

Forestry Technical Study video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u21DOvf7n6U>

Forestry Technical Study link <https://agnr.umd.edu/technical-study-changes-forest-cover-and-tree-canopy-maryland>