



# Sustainable Forestry Council

580 Taylor Avenue – E-1 • Annapolis, Maryland 21401 • 410-260-8531

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December 1, 2015

Conference Call 1-888-450-5996  
11am-12 noon

Eric Sprague  
Alliance for the  
Chesapeake Bay  
Annapolis, MD 21403

Donald Outen  
Natural Resource  
Manager  
Baltimore County DEPS  
Towson, Maryland 21204

Gary Allen  
Center for Chesapeake  
Communities  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Kirk Rodgers  
Private landowner  
Woolford, MD 21677

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

Kenneth Roberts  
Verso Corporation  
Westport, MD 21562

Alberto Goetzl, chair  
Dream Catcher Farm,  
LLC  
Adamstown, MD 21710

Bryan Seipp  
Center for Watershed  
Protection  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

## Minutes

### Attendees:

Al Goetzl  
Don Outen  
Gary Allen  
Bryan Seipp  
Kirk Rodgers  
Kim Finch  
Eric Sprague  
Bryan Seipp  
Ken Roberts

### DNR and Guests:

Anne Hairston-Strang, MFS

### Action items:

- Eric develop questions for Forestry Boards to ask local Rural Legacy sponsors
- Work with Don VanHassent to follow-up with tax office on implementing definition of 100% wooded parcel.
- Follow up on status of nomination for vacant position, Christine Cadigan.
- Follow up in January on concerns regarding MFS budget levels and trends.
- Request Dan Rider to update the summary of economic impact of forest biomass.

## Minutes

Al Goetzl opened the meeting at 10:05. Anne reviewed expected legislation in the upcoming General Assembly in January. An administration bill will be introduced regarding tree expert licensing, removing the sunset clause to be able to retain the two-year licensing term since it has worked well. Reintroduction of a State lands fee bill to guarantee payments to counties based on acreage of State lands is expected. Anne updated the council on progress in encouraging active forest management on State lands. A forest management plan is under development for Warrior Mountain Wildlife Management Area, guided by forest habitat goals from the overarching WMA Management Plan, and work is beginning on a second WMA. State Parks have been reviewing examples of ecologically focused forest management in Baltimore County, and have worked with MFS and others on an invasive plant control plan for Sandy Point State Park; an overview of forest management plans was presented at the State Park Managers' Meeting in November, and further progress is expected.

Eric provided an update on possibilities of Woodland Incentive Fund income from Program Open Space, following a recent meeting with DNR Land Acquisition and Planning. LAP suggested that the greatest potential lies in developing forest management partnerships with local sponsors for Rural Legacy, and also coordinating with MD Environmental Trust, MD Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF). Al suggested that Forestry Boards be a

partner to reach out to local Rural Legacy sponsors. Gary noted that the Sustainable Forestry Act required Forestry Boards to meet annually with Soil Conservation Districts, typically involved in referring MALPF projects. Eric agreed to develop questions that Forestry Boards could use as part of a conversation with local Rural Legacy or other land conservation organizations. Eric reported on interest on following up with the State Dept. of Assessments and Taxation to review appropriate application of current rules for land transfer taxes on wooded parcels going to fund the Woodland Incentive Fund.

Gary updated the Council on a proposed Biomass Energy bill, refining earlier bills from the last 5 years. Sponsors are still being developed, and it is expected to be introduced through the Economic Matters Committee. The information contained in the economic impact of the biomass energy bill developed by Dan Rider was noted as very important in communicating with the legislature, and an update to reflect a new proposal was requested.

Gary also provided an update on the Task Force on broader Woodland Incentive Fund funding authorized by the 2015 MD Legislature. An extension request is being prepared for authorization during the 2016 session, to be able to build on work from a related Task Force on land protection that is reporting out in December. The proposal is to extend WIF Task Force authorization for a year, reporting out in December 2016.

Anne updated the Council on MFS funding, noting the substantial decline in staffing levels since 2002, and the problems with budgets based on shifting fund sources in recent years that are resulting in substantial reductions in basic operating costs. The Council discussed options for funding that will support functions needed to meaningfully implement the Sustainable Forestry Act and Forest Preservation Act legislation.

Suggested dates for a next meeting were: Jan. 19, March 22, May 24, and September 27, and a possible December call. Options were discussed for a meeting closer to Western Maryland (Frederick or Green Ridge) and a possible field tour, and continued use of conference lines to maximize member engagement despite busy schedules. Previously discussed were forest landowner social outreach (Christine Cadigan) and Tree Farm update (Kenneth Jolly). Members requested notice of opportunities to assist with key issues, including new harvesting BMP regulations and possibilities for streamlined forest harvest permitting.

Al Goetzl adjourned the meeting at 12:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Anne Hairston-Strang  
MD DNR Forest Service