



SFEC all-member meeting notes

17 November 2008

Cloquet Forestry Center

Present

Cheryl Adams, UPM Blandin Paper Co
Greg Bernu, Carlton County Land Dept
Dave Chura, MN Logger Education Program
George Host, UMN Natural Resources
Research Institute
Beth Jacquain, Aitkin County Land Dept
Louise Levy, Sustainable Forests Education
Cooperative

Steve Olson, Fond du Lac Tribal Forestry
Cynthia Osmundson, MN DNR Wildlife
Mike Reichenbach, UMN Extension
Jim Sanders, Superior National Forest
Dave Schipper, MN DNR Forestry
Ron Severs, UMN Cloquet Forestry Center
Greg Snyder, Beltrami County Land Dept

Meeting summary

9 SFEC member organizations (out of 39 total) attended this meeting. The meeting notes are organized to present action items, action item details, additional information on staffing and funding, and other comments as recorded during the meeting by Louise Levy.

The [Continuing Education Task Force Final Report](#) is the result of much thought and deliberation regarding the next decade of continuing professional education for foresters and wildlife biologists, other forest resource managers, and loggers. It recommends a two-step process for forming an integrated, more responsive and more efficient state-wide program. Whether or not the dual-integrated program model is eventually adopted, there is strong support for increased collaboration and linkage between forest resource manager and logger continuing professional education.

**Please note that the multi-faceted transition for SFEC (staff replacement, adoption of the Continuing Education Task Force's recommendations, possible new administrative home with the CFANS Department of Forest Resources) is occurring at the same time as a University hiring freeze was announced. This demands heightened diligence and creativity by SFEC members and partners to assure SFEC's continued operation. University administration needs to hear that this program is valuable to its members.

Action items

***ACTION #1**

An interim advisory board/working group/transition team will form to bridge the period from now until a new SFEC Coordinator is hired in spring 2009, at which time a formal advisory board should be created.

***ACTION #2**

SFEC members, individually or collectively (e.g. through the MN Forest Resources Partnership, the MN Association of County Land Departments, etc.) are advised to compose letters of support for SFEC.

***ACTION #3**

Louise will assemble a collection of historic and new supporting documents for the transition team's work.

Action item detail

***ACTION #1**

An interim advisory board/transition team will form to bridge the period from now until a new SFEC Coordinator is hired in spring 2009.

- The interim board/transition team will contain a subset of SFEC members, Louise Levy, and Dave Chura.
- Louise will contact individual SFEC members to serve on the interim board/transition team; volunteers are encouraged.
- Purpose of the interim board/transition team:
 - o Develop a position description for the new SFEC coordinator, and identify specific highly desirable skills that the new coordinator should have.
 - o To select from its members the SFEC coordinator search committee.
 - o To examine in more detail the Continuing Education Task Force final report and begin brainstorming about how to implement its recommendations.
 - o To take a first stab at drafting by-laws.
 - o Additional tasks as determined by group.

***ACTION #2**

SFEC members, individually or collectively (e.g. via organizations such as the MN Soil and Water Conservation Districts Forestry Committee, the MN Forest Resources Partnership, the MN Association of County Land Departments, etc.) are advised to compose letters of support for SFEC.

- The letters will be addressed to Louise Levy, SFEC Coordinator, and copied to Ron Severs.
- Suggested points to highlight in the letters include:
 - o Encouraging continued University financial and institutional support citing:

- The University's responsibility to serve Minnesota via its land grant mission by facilitating transfer of forest research findings to forest resource practitioners;
 - The University's self-promotion as a nexus (link) between research and serving public needs. SFEC is an established, cost-effective program that implements this message.
 - Solid funding from the host education institution to support one or more staff assures programming exploration and delivery that addresses real training needs, rather than being at the whim of grant availability or topic.
- SFEC has a solid, 10-year plus track record serving Minnesota forestry continuing professional education needs by offering coordinated, multi-organization training opportunities, publishing regular calendars of events, collaborating in various ways with key entities (MN Forest Stewardship Program, MLEP, MN Extension, Bemidji and Grand Rapids natural resource seminar consortia, MN Society of American Foresters, The Wildlife Society), and offering services such as registration and assistance getting SAF Continuing Forestry Education units.

***ACTION #3**

Louise will assemble a collection of historic and new supporting documents for the transition team's work.

- Transition blueprint, including timeline (these should be considered working documents)
- Draft position description for the transition team to work from
- Information packet for new coordinator: calendar of annual SFEC activities, tasks and responsibilities
- For the December 11th DNR Forestry Managers meeting, Louise will provide to Dave Schipper copies of historic SFEC documents that describe the goals, objectives and mission statement of the education cooperative.

Staffing

Administrative assistant

The recently announced UMN hiring freeze will affect our ability to have any administrative support staff. Negotiations with Extension regarding coordinating support staff needs are on hold, pending a hiring decision from their Dean. That said, it is probable that SFEC will manage to retain one-day per week administrative support, creatively cobbled together.

Coordinator

It's a big unknown if the hiring freeze will prevent filling the upcoming Coordinator vacancy. The best we can do is to proceed as if we will be able to

hire a replacement, recognize the critical role that SFEC members play in demonstrating support for SFEC, and act accordingly. The role served by SFEC in facilitating the University's and CFANS' commitment to transfer of University research findings to Minnesota's forest resource management should be highlighted in all communications, letters of support, etc.

Funding

Two sources of outside funding for SFEC are being pursued at this time, Minnesota Legislature and the Blandin Foundation. Language for legislative funding support for SFEC is written for inclusion with DNR and with the University requests. A proposal to the Blandin Foundation Vital Forests Vital Communities Initiative Advisory Board has been drafted by Alan Ek and Louise Levy and will be presented to the VFVC Advisory Board in the near future.