

The Planning News

Spring 2003

The Changing Face of State Forest Resource Planning

NFRPA hopes to get a better idea of the issues facing its members by sponsoring a survey of State forest resource planning activities. Anecdotal evidence indicates that the face of planning in State forestry agencies has changed in response to demands for sustainable forest management, the availability of high speed computers and geographic information systems, and numerous reorganizations affecting the distribution of planning functions within agencies and departments. NFRPA members targeted by the survey will help paint a comprehensive picture of what is actually happening at the State level. NFRPA will use the results to develop program to address the most pressing needs of its members.

Preliminary survey results will be presented at the NFRPA conference in August. Following the conference, NFRPA member conclusions and recommendations as well as survey results will be forwarded to the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters and the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area, which has traditionally provided assistance in developing State planning capabilities.

Michael Kilgore, Assistant Professor of Natural Resource Economics, and research assistant Reinty Salk of the University of Minnesota developed the questionnaire in cooperation with the NFRPA executive team (2002 and 2003). State planners Teague Prichard of Wisconsin, Larry Pedersen of Michigan, and Susan Francher of New Hampshire tested the first draft of the questionnaire, completing it in times ranging from 15 minutes to 2 hours.

Information gathered will include important aspects of State forest resource planning, such as information on the scope, focus, and outcomes of planning, processes and tools used, resources devoted to planning, and the future demand for planning within State forest resource agencies. NFRPA is sponsoring the study for the 20 States served by the Northeastern Area. The University of Minnesota will supplement the NFRPA study with outreach to other States across the country because they believe this information will be valuable as they prepare their natural resource graduates for work in State forestry agencies.

by Connie Carpenter

Focus Funding Suspended for FY 2003, Forestry Innovation Grants Planned for FY 2004

The competitive proposal process, known as Focus Funding, will not be conducted during Fiscal Year 2003. Due to delays in FY 2003 appropriations and uncertainty at the beginning of the year about receiving funds transferred for wildfire suppression in FY 2002, Focus Funding was temporarily suspended. For FY 2004, a revised competitive proposal process known as *Forestry Innovation Grants* will be offered, combining Focus Funding, Clean Water, and Inner City grants. Based on prior year's funding, this combined initiative would use a funding pool of \$2 million. Future funding levels will be subject to changes in annual budgets.

by Susan Lacy



2003 State Forest Resource
Planners' Conference

**State Forest Resource Planning:
Looking into the Crystal Ball**

August 17-20 Duluth, Minnesota

For more information see page 3.

Message from the President

I spent my Valentine's Day with 145 men . . . and about a dozen women, attending the Society of American Foresters Granite State Division winter meeting in Waterville Valley, NH. Throughout the morning, colleagues from a variety of natural resource disciplines spoke of the changes taking place that impact our forests and how we do business. Changes in land use, forest health, global demand for forest products, and social attitudes were only a few of the issues discussed.

As each speaker outlined the challenges ahead and offered recommendations on how to address these changes, I listened with interest but without surprise. After all, it's my job to know about these things—I am the State planner. As past president Jon Nelson said in our last newsletter, "Planners are often Jack's (and Jill's) of all trades in many States, called on to tackle a variety of special projects, initiatives, and organizational issues." As planners, we are expected to keep abreast of the resource issues impacting our States and our agencies. We are the futurists, the visionaries, the big picture thinkers.

Occasionally, however, it's a good idea for even planners to look inward, to look at the changes taking place in the planning arena and the actions we must take to respond to those changes. For the NFRPA, that means looking at the status and the needs of State forest resource planning. Each of you should have received a survey, sponsored by the NFRPA and the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area, and administered by the University of Minnesota (see article on page one). This survey is the result of a question posed at the 2002 conference regarding what States feel their need is for information, analysis, and assistance. I encourage all of you to take the time to complete and return the survey, and then attend the annual conference in Duluth this August to hear the preliminary results. Your participation will ensure that the recommendations developed in response to the survey will reflect your State's needs.

I look forward to seeing you all in Duluth.

Susan Francher

The Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP)

The Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP) is a new Forest Service landowner incentive program authorized in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-171). Through FLEP, State forestry agencies can provide a wide array of services to ensure that our Nation's nonindustrial private forest lands and related resources continue to provide forest products and safeguard the health of our water, air, and wildlife.

Funding for FLEP will total \$20 million in Fiscal Year 2003; an additional \$80 million will be distributed over the next 4 years. State forestry agencies can use FLEP funds to provide financial, educational, or technical assistance to landowners to achieve a broad array of objectives, including forest stewardship plan development, afforestation and reforestation, forest stand improvement, agroforestry implementation, water quality improvement and watershed protection, fish and wildlife habitat protection, forest health and protection, invasive species control, wildfire and catastrophic risk reduction and event rehabilitation, and special practices.

FLEP replaces two previous conservation incentives programs: the Stewardship Incentive Program (SIP), managed by the USDA Forest Service, and the Forestry Incentives Program (FIP), managed by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Eligibility criteria for FLEP are slightly broader than for SIP and FIP to allow more participation by Native American tribes, those who manage land that they rent, and land under tenure systems other than outright ownership.

States will utilize a Web-based system to report program accomplishments. The system will track practices completed by landowners as a result of direct financial assistance, as well as technical and educational assistance provided by the States using program funds.

Program implementation will commence after a 30-day comment period following publication of the interim rule in the Federal Register. A formal 60-day comment period will take place after the final rule is published.

For more information, visit
www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/flep.

“State Forest Resource Planning: Looking into the Crystal Ball”

August 17–20, 2003, Duluth, Minnesota, Radisson Hotel Duluth–Haborview

This year’s annual conference will put the NFRPA’s coveted Crystal Ball to work to take a glimpse back to the origins, assess the current status, and look into the future of State forest resource planning in the Northeastern States. Clearly, there have been shifts over the past 10-plus years in where States are channeling their forest resource planning energy. A key objective of this year’s conference will be to develop a better sense of the most appropriate and effective roles for NA and NFRPA in supporting State forest resource planning in the future.

The site of this year’s conference is on the shores of Lake Superior in beautiful Duluth, Minnesota. In addition to being an international shipping port, Duluth is a regional center for tourism, education, and medical care; home to major forest industry (e.g., Sappi, Potlatch, Stora Enso); and a gateway to Minnesota’s scenic “north shore,” millions of acres of forest land (including the Superior National Forest), numerous State parks, hiking trails, and trout streams, and much more. For those with a little extra time, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness is within a 2-hour drive (entry permits required). For more information about Duluth and surrounding area, visit www.visitduluth.com.



The northeastern “arrowhead” region of Minnesota has been a hot bed of forest planning activity in recent years, with a national forest plan revision underway, regional landscape forest resource planning under the auspices of the Minnesota Forest Resource Council, and various landscape forest planning efforts by the MN Department of Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy, and others. We hope to highlight some of these efforts, adding to the conference’s local flavor.

Other conference highlights include a presentation of draft results of a nationwide survey on the status of State forest resource planning (see related article), an invigorating field trip (details still in the works), updates on the NAASF/NFRPA C&I efforts, and, of course, the Crystal Ball Dinner.

We will be issuing a call for posters to highlight other forest resource planning initiatives, tools, and techniques that are developing across the country, so start thinking about worthy efforts.

Look for registration details later this month. There will be block of rooms at the Radisson (but don’t call them yet). Numerous lodging and dining alternatives, as well as the popular Canal Park area, are within walking distance of the hotel.

by Jon Nelson

Criteria & Indicators Posters—Two informative posters on the NA/NAASF sustainability criteria and indicators (C&I) initiative are available. One poster presents the results of work looking at 60 existing indicator projects and the relationship of indicators from different efforts to the Montreal Process C&I. The second poster provides background on forest sustainability indicators and presents information on the NA, NAASF, and NFRPA collaborative effort, presenting the 18 base indicators. Both posters and abstracts can be downloaded from an FTP site or sent on a CD by mail. For more information, please contact Sherri Wormstead (swormstead@fs.fed.us).

NFRPA Welcomes New Members

Bill Moulton } VT Dept. of Forests,
Bob DeGeus } Parks, & Recreation
Phil Wagner—IN Division of Forestry
Jeff Horan—MD DNR, Forest Service

NFRPA 2003 Executive Committee

President—Susan Francher (sfrancher@dred.state.nh.us)
Vice-President—Teague Prichard (Teague.Prichard@dnr.state.wi.us)
Secretary—Dan Devlin (ddevlin@state.pa.us)
Treasurer—Jon Nelson (jon.nelson@dnr.state.mn.us)
Web site: <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/sustainability>