

FOREST PRODUCTS NEWS

Gubernatorial Race Heats Up, MFPC Recognized as a Player

**By Patrick Strauch
MFPC Executive Director**



As part of MFPC's effort to build a strong and collaborative relationship with Maine's next Governor, Patrick and James have started meeting with candidates on an individual basis to introduce them to the Maine Forest Products Council issues, and get a feel for their views and any initiatives they have for our industry.

So far, we have met with Rosa Scarcelli, a Democrat, Bill Beardsley a Republican, Eliot Cutler an

Independent, and Steve Abbott a Republican. Peter Mills, Pat McGowan, Paul LePage, and Les Otten have all requested meetings as well. All meetings have gone very well so far, and the candidates seem very tuned in to the struggles and potential success of the forest products industry. It is interesting to note that all of the candidates have recognized that the success of the forest products industry is key to the economic and social policy success of Maine as a whole.

While MFPC does not endorse candidates, it is important to introduce candidates who are friendly to our cause to the membership. There has been some discussion about reviving the Forest Legacy PAC to inform the public and our industry about candidates who are friendly to our cause.

As part of this effort, we have schedule a gubernatorial forum on March 11, which will take the place of our regularly scheduled

(Continued on page 4)

Deer Wintering Area Management Guidelines Available to Landowners and Managers

As an ongoing commitment to the Department of Inland Fisheries

and Wildlife, and to the recommendations of the Eastern and Northern Maine Deer Task Force, the Maine Forest Products Council would like to remind members that a set of guidelines for the management of deer wintering areas is now available to members and the public. The incorporation of these guidelines by landowners is completely voluntary.



Gordon Gamble and Cindy Williams of Wagner Forest Management discuss management of deer wintering areas with Pat Sirois of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and John Pratte of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, recently in Western Maine.

(Continued on page 5)

IN THE NEWS



- Presidents Message Page 2
- Kerry Casey Leaving MFPC Page 4
- Maine's Gubernatorial Forum Page 5
- Legislative Updates Page 7
- Forest Inventory Data Page 9

President's Message:

The Road Ahead

Given that we have entered 2010, I thought that it would be appropriate to comment on what tasks the Council may want to pursue over the next year or so to meet the challenges of the coming decade. This is a subject that deserves more than my short discussion; perhaps others will care to pass along their thoughts in future newsletters.

Governance

Staff – We were fortunate to add a Communications Director to our staff in 2008 which filled a real gap in our ability to keep our membership aware of critical issues. Given funding circumstances, I can't recommend a lot of energy placed on staff expansion over at least the next 3-5 years. We should devote our efforts to help the staff be as productive as possible by, for instance, focusing on real critical issues rather than take on every cause (this takes a lot of discipline from everyone!), use the resources of our membership to augment staff efforts, use consultants to fill the gaps, fund major special projects through the generosity of folks getting the most benefit and cultivate non members having the same issues to help with our agenda. This list is not new but is more germane than ever.

By-Laws - Over the years our by-laws have been modified to fit changing circumstances. As we move forward, we must timely alert the Council membership if additional changes are needed and provide good reasons for such action. If the past is



Doug Denico

an indicator of the Council's ability to make the needed changes, we should remain in possession of a relevant document. A yearly review of the by-laws well in advance of the annual meeting should be institutionalized.

Executive Committee

We have in place a good process for a person to come onto the Executive and work through a number of positions and responsibilities. This process allows a person to become better acquainted with the breath of the Council's functions and issues. The structure also allows us to keep in place some very key expertise for positions like Treasurer which really benefits from having a person with an accounting/financial background. Unfortunately, the rather "mobile" nature of folks these days has made it difficult for some to work through the process. We also tend to have a "mature" executive with retirement often in the future of a few of its members. Occasionally a crisis within a business will also impact someone's ability to remain. What to do? We obviously need to find ways to overcome the attrition we are experiencing with our succession process. One easy step to take is to keep all executive positions full. I hate to say it being old but we may want to have some folks a good

Maine Forest Products Council
535 Civic Center Drive
Augusta, Maine 04330
(207) 622-9288
FAX (207) 626-3002
www.maineforest.org

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Peter Triandafillou
John Gray
Steve Schley
Tom Gardner
Catherine Robbins-Jolliffe
Richard Robertson

Executive Director: Patrick Strauch
pstrauch@maineforest.org

SFI Director: Patrick Sirois
psirois@maineforest.org

Communications Coord.: James Cote
jcote@maineforest.org

Administrative Assistant: Sue McCarthy
smccarthy@maineforest.org

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(Continued on page 3)

Pres. Message. ... *(Cont. from page 2)*

ways off from retirement as well. We could also recruit folks that had a specific interest in moving up over time and thought they had a good chance of “staying the course.” As we move towards next year’s annual meeting and election of officers, more time and effort will be needed in recruitment.

The Board

I feel fairly confident we have addressed membership issues by enlarging the Board and extending the terms. We will continually be challenged to keep the Board up to speed on pending issues. Institutionalizing a process that insures Board input into their bi – monthly meetings should be pursued. No one wants to journey to Augusta unless there is value in a meeting.

Board of Advisors - This is a great group of folks we have failed to engage as much as their expertise deserves. By opening up the Board, though, we have provided a convenient way for Advisors to become more active in the Council if they choose.

Membership/Funding:

This is a huge issue. We have tried to increase both with mixed but in general insufficient results. It is apparent that Council members, for whatever reason, are not going to recruit at the rate needed for us to survive long term. We need to develop a new paradigm for this process. I would like to see a person dedicated to this task; someone considered one of us and highly respected in the industry but not a Council employee. Most every association I know off is experiencing difficulties in the membership/

funding area but we can't accept this nearly universal condition to lull us into complacency with our current performance.

Direction/Policy:

Just about ten years ago, the Council put together a policy document which has proven invaluable on a number of fronts. We have used the document to develop positions on legislative bills, create proactive legislation and sort out internal differences to name a few key uses. We are currently undertaking a revision of our policy. Although much of the current policy is still relevant, new issues like energy now need to be included. We have greater expectations for our future policy document. We hope it will influence platforms of legislative and gubernatorial candidates. We also need to be more

proactive in creating legislation in the future based on our stated policies.

The Council has done a great many things over the past few years that I greatly appreciate. A couple of endeavors I found particularly impressive include the construction of our new building and founding the Natural Resources Network.

A real frustration for me has been the continuing erosion of property rights and general reduced appreciation of what private ownership has and is doing for this State. We have seen the intentional transition from government addressing public resources to public interests, values and just plain wants. We have seen this perhaps at its worst in current planning for the LURC jurisdiction; a plan more appropriate for public lands. We are now seeing the appetite for public ownership expand to an unprecedented level with the need

based in part on mistrust of private landowners. Not a pretty picture but one that will require our continued attention if we are to survive.

So, we need a well funded Council with a growing membership that has a strong sense of what it stands for and leadership and staff that can help get us where we need to go. And we can all come together with our friends in a building we are very proud of.

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Exec Director. (Cont. from page 1)

Executive Committee and Board of Directors meeting. See invitation in this month's MFPC newsletter. Most of the major candidates have confirmed their attendance already, and the others are expected to attend. All members are welcome to attend.

As part of the forum on March 11, we will ask each candidate to pledge their participation, should they win the primary election in June, in a debate between the major candidates during the MFPC annual meeting in September. We'll also provide an opportunity for members to ask questions about issues of concern to them at the event.

We will be scheduling similar meetings with candidates for the legislature throughout the summer and fall. We also plan to hold our annual breakfast series with the candidates throughout the state. We believe that it is imperative to share our views with political candidates

early in order to gain support for our legislative initiatives during the next legislative session.

As part of our effort to expose policy makers to our industry's issues, MFPC also continues to work on developing a new set of policy guidelines for candidates in 2010. James Cote will be scheduling a meeting of interested parties to finalize the guidelines in the near future. We'll also be scheduling a meeting to discuss our legislative agenda for next session. Please contact MFPC if you are interested in attending either of these meetings.

For more information on the election, the candidates, the forum or other political issues, please contact James Cote at MFPC.



Kerry Casey accepting a gift certificate to Longfellows from Executive Director Patrick Strauch

After almost ten years with the industry, the Maine Forest Products Council would like to send our best wishes to Kerry Casey our Office Manager as she makes the transition to her new endeavor. Kerry ended her employment on January 15. Kerry has been an integral part of our success here at the Council, and has ensured that membership dues are accounted for and being used as efficiently as possible. Both staff and members have counted on Kerry for her bookkeeping expertise. She is a trusted staff member and a good friend, and we all wish Kerry the best of luck in the future.

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DWA..... (Cont. from page 1)

You can obtain a copy of the guidelines by contacting the MFPC office, visiting our website (www.maineforest.org) or visiting the DIFW website (www.maine.gov/ifw).

The guidelines were developed as a recommendation of the Eastern and Northern Maine Deer Task Force through a collaborative process between DIFW, MFPC, and SWOAM. These three organizations, along with the task force itself, endorsed the guidelines earlier this winter.

As part of the Council’s commitment, we are encouraging forest landowners to implement the guidelines where possible. As part of the process, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife has committed to working with interested landowners to provide them with deer wintering area information specific to their land base. This information will include deer use data and appropriate polygons for mapping.

Landowners who are interested can contact John Pratte at DIFW, who will then schedule a consultation with the landowner and be available to answer any questions.

Informally, several MFPC member landowners have already reported an interest and willingness in using the guidelines, or some portions of the guidelines, on their land base.

“Working together with landowners to develop these guidelines was a critical step in understanding landowner objectives, the winter habitat needs for deer, and how the two can be compatible. Having these guidelines as common ground will facilitate the exchange of information between landowners and the Department. I am energized by the level of support from landowners and swiftness that some have adopted these,” says Pratte.

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative has also expressed in interest in developing workshop trainings in regards to the management guidelines as well.

For more information, please contact James Cote or John Pratte.



**Please Join Us for a Discussion with
Maine’s Gubernatorial Candidates
on the State of Maine’s
Forest Products and
Natural Resource Industries
Thursday, March 11, from 10 AM.
to 3 PM .at the
MFPC Headquarters in Augusta**

As the election for Maine’s next governor continues to heat up, the Maine Forest Products Council would like to provide you with the opportunity to see what the candidates are saying about Maine’s forest products industry. Most of the major candidates have confirmed their attendance, and more are surely to attend. A moderator will guide the discussion, and will ask your questions to the candidates. This is sure to be a packed event, don’t miss it!

The event is scheduled as follows:

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon- The Democrats

Who’s confirmed so far: Rosa Scarcelli, Pat McGowan, Steve Rowe

12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.- Lunch with the Independents

Who’s confirmed so far: Eliot Cutler

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.- The Republicans

Who’s confirmed so far: Peter Mills, Les Otten, Steve Abbott, Paul LePage, Bill Beardsley

(Continued on page 6)

Gubernatorial Candidates . . (Cont. from page 5)

Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to Sue McCarthy at smccarthy@maineforest.org, or 622-9288, ASAP. (This meeting will take place during the regularly scheduled time for MFPC Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings.)

For more information on the candidates, or on the format of the forum, please contact James Cote at jcote@maineforest.org.

INTERESTED IN SPONSORING THIS EVENT?

We are looking for four \$250 sponsors to cover the cost of the luncheon. Please contact Sue McCarthy if you are interested. Sponsors will be recognized throughout the forum and on any materials that are distributed.

Thank you!



SAVE THE DATES!!!

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Legislative Update

Comprehensive Land Use Plan

On February 3 the Legislature's ACF Committee held a public meeting on LURC's tentative draft of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, as is required by legislation that was passed in 2009. LURC Commissioners presented the plan to the members of the committee who were able to ask questions about the plan. After a presentation by LURC, four organizations were afforded the ability to present their views of the plan.

Representatives of Maine Audubon and the Natural Resources Council of Maine both suggested that while the plan had some flaws, they were happy with the plan and urged its adoption. Bob Meyers of the Maine Snowmobile Association did a nice job of representing members of the Governor's Landowner-Sportsmen Relations Advisory Board in articulating the concerns of those who are working on recreational access issues- very supportive of private landowner concerns. Finally, Sarah Medina of Seven Islands represented the Maine Forest Products Council, and outlined our major remaining concerns with the CLUP. Sarah also proposed an amendment to the plan which would make the forest products industry much more comfortable with the plan prior to its adoption. MFPC will continue advocating for the proposed changes, until LURC finally approves the plan at their regular monthly meeting in March.

LD 1607, An Act to Update the Transportation of Firewood

MFPC has been working closely with ACF Committee members, Dave Struble of the Maine Forest Service, and other stakeholders to craft language more friendly to the commercial movement of forest products. It appears that the Committee will most likely vote in favor of a Resolve that directs the Maine Forest Service to use existing authority to restrict the movement of firewood into public lands, when they secure funding. Currently there is a large fiscal note on the bill which would make it very difficult to pass through the Appropriations Committee. This effort is favorable to the original bill.

Department of Conservation/ Maine Forest Service Budget

MFPC has been working diligently to protect the forest products industry, specifically landowners in many cases, against proposals to increase taxes or fees to fill short term budget holes. Currently, the Maine Forest Service is facing a \$400,000 hole due to the fact that many legislators have resisted the sale of the Jet Ranger helicopter and that it did not sell in the last round of bidding, and a \$200,00 +/- hole due to lack of support by legislators for the sweep of the fire suppression account. MFPC has been involved in several sub-committee meetings of the ACF Committee to try to identify alternative funding sources which could help fill these holes. Current thinking, and a recommendation which will be supported by the ACF Committee suggests that the State should identify those qualifying landowners who are not paying into the Commercial Forestry Excise Tax (projected 1+ million acres by the Maine Forest Service) and begin assessing them the tax. The Maine Forest Service will work with the Maine Revenue Service to identify and bill these landowners, and is hoping that of the 1+ million acres they believe are not paying in, will find approximately 700,000 acres, which would roughly fill the \$600,000 budget hole. MFPC is supportive of this initiative rather than increasing fees on harvest notifications and amendments, or increasing the CFET tax. The ACF Committee is expected to go before the Appropriations Committee on February 12th to discuss their recommendations. We are also closely watching any recommendations surrounding the consolidation of the State's four primary natural resource agencies, which could create other budget holes and budget cuts. MFPC will continue to report to the membership on the progress of the budget.

LD 1536, An Act to Amend the Standards By Which Game Wardens May Stop All Terrain Vehicles when Operating on Private Property

This bill continues to be working in the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. A divided report is expected. During one work session, Representative Paul Davis offered an amendment that would allow law enforcement officials to stop ATV's on privately owned land without reasonable and articulable suspicion, however, could not stop them with reasonable and articulable suspicion if they were riding on a state sanctioned ATV trail, which was

(Continued on page 8)

Legislative Update *(Cont. from page 7)*

located on private land. The reasoning for this amendment is because anyone riding on a state sanctioned ATV trail would be assumed to have permission because the trail would not exist without that permission. The bill has recently been tabled and will be worked at a later date.

LD 1538, An Act to Close Loopholes in Environmental Laws

MFPC continues to work with members of the Natural Resources Committee, the Department of Environmental Protection, and other stakeholders to develop language that would address the concerns of DEP, but not expand the bill to include forest management roads which may have secondary uses, such as accessing developments. It appears that the section regarding the consolidation of nonconforming shorefront lots will be eliminated from the bill. Stakeholders are expected to meet on this bill during the week of February 15, and the bill is expected to be worked on February 17.

LD 1725, Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Portions of Section 10: Stream Crossings within Chapter 305 Permit by Rule Standards, a Major Substantive Rule of the Department of Environmental Protection

Even though there is a forestry exemption in this Resolve, MFPC continues to watch this bill closely. The Maine Municipal Association continues to oppose this, as many believe this to be an unfunded mandate. The Department of Transportation has also been exempted. MFPC will continue to defend our exemption. There is support by many Natural Resource Committee members to support. The bill has been tabled and will be taken up again in coming days for discussion and a vote.

LD 891, An Act to Amend the Site Location of Development Laws to Include Considerations of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Senator Seth Goodall, the sponsor of this bill, has proposed a Resolve which requires DEP and LURC to report recommendations on ways to achieve carbon neutral development. The bill was slated to be taken up in a work

session in coming days, however, in a sudden turn of events, Senator Goodall took up the discussion on Thursday, February 11, and called for a vote. Only seven committee members were present. MFPC opposes this Resolve, in particular, section 5 which overrides the existing work and direction of LURC on this issue in their Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The resolve was voted ought to pass by the committee, however, two champions of the forest products industry, Senator Doug Smith and Representative Peter Edgecomb voted ought not to pass. MFPC will report back on this legislation after a final vote in the House and Senate is taken.

Tree Growth

The Legislature's Taxation Committee recently held a public hearing on LD 1635, An Act to Avoid Unnecessary Removal of Land From the Maine Tree Growth Tax Law Program. This was a SWOAM bill and is aimed at clarifying certain provisions of the program, basically allowing landowners who failed to renew their management plans by the 10th anniversary of the existing plans an extended time period to submit their plans to the State. MFPC testified in favor of the bill. We were concerned that MMA would offer an amendment to the bill which would have posed significant policy changes, and asked the Taxation Committee to provide a stand alone hearing on any major policy changes which may have been suggested during the hearing. There was a lot of support for the bill and for the Tree Growth Tax Program during the hearing. The bill is expected to be worked on Wednesday, February 17. MFPC will provide an update as soon as new information becomes available.

Bonded Labor

The two major bonded labor bills which MFPC is concerned with are scheduled for public hearing on February 25. Senator Jackson is working on a new draft of his bill, LD 1545, which we will try to share with members as soon as it is released. More information is forthcoming. Please contact James Cote if you plan to attend this hearing. Member participation will be critical to a successful outcome.

Input/Comments on Forest Inventory Data

There will be two opportunities for interested parties to provide input on report content for the pending new Northern Research Station publication "The Forest of Maine: 2008," an updated and comprehensive look at Maine's forest resources. The new report will focus on current 2008 inventory estimates and changes that have occurred since 2003.

Members of Maine's Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA) Users Group and any others with an interest in Maine's forest resources, FIA data, and data uses are invited to attend one of the planned meetings:

- Tuesday, February 9th from 9 am to noon at the Clarion Hotel Portland, 1230 Congress Street, Portland. (This is the former DoubleTree Hotel located adjacent to the Downeaster Amtrak station, with easy access from I-295)
- Wednesday, February 10th from 9 am to noon in Room 2, Wells Commons and Conference Center, University of Maine, Orono. Parking permits will be available at the center upon arrival.

If you plan on attending, please pre-register with Kenneth M. Laustsen at the Maine Forest Service at (207) 287-3135 or ken.laustsen@maine.gov. For more information on either meeting, please contact Ken Laustsen.



Ken Laustsen presented the FIA data to the MFPC Board of Directors at the January Meeting



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MFPC Calendar

March 11 -	9am-10 am	Exec. Committee
March 11	10am-3pm	BOD Gubernatorial
April 8	9am-12pm	Exec. Committee
May 13	9am-12pm 1pm-4pm	Exec. Committee BOD Meeting
June 10	9am-12pm	Exec. Committee
July 8	Summer Golf Tournament	