

**AISWCD QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING
FORESTRY COMMITTEE
March 13, 2012**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Terry Davis
DATE & TIME: March 13, 2012 at 9:55 a.m.
ROLL CALL: 4 Directors, 7 advisors

PRESENT:

Terry Davis
Randy Molitoris
Darrell Roegge
Dave Bishop, RC
Dick Breckenridge, IEPA
Elliot Legacy, IDOA
Julie Gillmore, AC
Steve Stierwalt
Barb Klinger
Tom Beyers
James Todd

ABSENT:

Tom Anderson
Tim Keller
David McCormick, Chair
Wade Conn, NRCS
Mike Mason, IDNR
Dan Schmoker, IWPA

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The following additions were made to the Agenda under New Business:

Letter from Knox County regarding District Forester
Ray Herman's suggestions to the Forestry Committee
Tree Logging/Felling Workshops

Motion by: Steve Stierwalt; 2nd by Darrell Roegge Carried: Yes

UPDATES:

No updates were provided.

ADVISOR'S REPORTS:

- A. **IDOA:** Elliot Legacy stated that IDOA and IDOT have worked together to place exhibits about the Emerald Ash Borer at Illinois Interstate Rest Areas. He was careful to point out that IDOA does not endorse any particular chemical agent or treatment in eradicating the insect, but simply wants to caution the general public about the dangers of transferring infested firewood.
- B. **IDNR:** No Report given.
- C. **NRCS:** Elliot Legacy provided a handout given to him from Wade Conn, of NRCS. The sheet contains information about the EQIP program, including a guide to practices and payment schedules. It is expected that the federal government will increase the EQIP budget for next fiscal year.
- D. **IEPA:** No report given.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. *Workshops:*

Dave Bishop stated that the Winter Tree ID Workshop had so many people register that they had to split the workshop into two sessions. This may cause a problem due to the fact that the trees were to be identified as they appear in winter months, and the warm weather has many of the species already budding for spring. Registration was priced at \$15 per person, so any increase in the expense caused by holding the second session of the workshop will be minimal. Mr. Bishop also announced that he would be retiring from the SWCD effective April 20th, and the committee would need to find a replacement for him. At this point, Terry Davis spoke on behalf of the Forestry Committee and thanked Mr. Bishop for his time and commitment while serving on the committee.

B. *IFA Partnerships:*

Ray Herman sent a letter of suggestions to the Forestry Committee; it will be discussed under New Business. Jim Todd stated that John Gunther had scheduled a meeting for March 22, 2012 at the First Christian Church in Springfield. He said the several organizations had been invited, including the NWTF, IFA, AISWCD, Illinois Walnut Council, and other forestry groups.

C. *Grand Prairie Master Naturalists Partnership:*

Dave Bishop stated that the Grand Prairie Master Naturalists was involved with the Tree ID workshop held by his District. The organization has a few chapters in Illinois, comprised of knowledgeable members who must accumulate volunteer hours in order to obtain the title of Grand Prairie Master Naturalist. As a result, they are usually very willing to assist with workshops and other events. They can be contacted through Sharon Becker at the McLean County Extension Office.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. *Outstanding Forestry Award:*

IFA has announced that they will sponsor the award this year. Nominees were discussed by those present.

Motion by: Terry Davis to nominate Dave Bishop for the Outstanding Forestry Award; 2nd by Darrell Roegge Carried: Yes

B. *Nominee for an AISWCD Representative on the IFDC:*

The matter was discussed, and it was determined that clarification was needed on whether or not the representative needed to be a sitting SWCD Director, or if anyone involved with the AISWCD was eligible.

Motion by: Terry Davis to have Rich Nichols decide whether he would serve as representative to the Illinois Forestry Development Council, or allow David McCormick to serve as representative; 2nd by Darrell Roegge Carried: Yes

C. *Letter from Knox County SWCD*

Knox County SWCD recently submitted a letter to their Land Use Council (LUC) stating that they had written a formal complaint to IDNR about their District Forester. The SWCD has apparently received several complaints about the

individual's lack of professionalism and reliability. IDNR responded to the letter by stating that the District Forester is qualified to do the job, but that severe cuts in staffing have caused a backlog of work to be completed. IDNR asked that any future complaints about this individual be forwarded to them.

D. *Ray Herman's Suggestions to the Committee*

Ray Herman was absent for this meeting, but forwarded a letter with his recommendations for the future growth of the Forestry Committee. A few of his suggestions were that the Committee take a formal position on the Timber Tax issue, that the Committee work to obtain more grants to fund workshops, and that the Committee should offer breakout sessions at the AISWCD Annual Meeting in July. In regards to the Timber Tax issue, Tom Beyers stated he would approach his LUC about drafting a resolution that would insist upon having the Timber Tax funds used exclusively to fund cost-share programs, as was originally intended. Currently the funds are being swept by the State of Illinois and are being used for General Revenue expenses.

E. *Tree Logging/Felling Workshops*

Tom Beyers spoke at length about a Tree Logging/Felling Workshop held in Marion County. This workshop teaches attendees how to safely operate chainsaws to fell trees. Mr. Beyers feels strongly that there is a need for this type of workshop, particularly since the state of Illinois doesn't require any of its state employees to be certified in this type of activity before performing tree removal and/or maintenance. The workshops are expensive, however, and Mr. Beyers asked the Committee for suggestions on ways to promote the workshop and get further funding. He stated he had contacted other agencies, FFA teachers, corporations, and other organizations with no luck. Dick Breckenridge suggested contacting chainsaw manufacturers for possible sponsorship. Dave Bishop suggested that Marion County SWCD should contact the Grand Prairie Master Naturalists for their assistance and perhaps check with local tree trimming companies as well. Terry Davis recommended that Mr. Beyers send the information on the workshop to Sherry Finn at the AISWCD office so that she could publicize it statewide.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 2011 MINUTES:

Motion by: Terry Davis; 2nd by Darrell Roegge Carried: Yes

ADJOURNMENT: 11:00 a.m.

Motion by: Terry Davis; 2nd by Darrell Roegge Carried: Yes

Minutes taken by Julie Gillmore, AC, Menard County SWCD