



Partners News

Partners in Forestry Landowner Cooperative Newsletter

November/December 2004

The President's Corner

Joe Hovel, Chair

As president of the new Board of Partners in Forestry, I would like to see PIF continue to be a strong advocate for sustainable forestry in northeast Wisconsin. Forestry currently faces many challenges in this region, and it is important that they be addressed on a common sense level. Specific concerns that I see and hear of from members and the forest products community include loss of local markets and local zoning regulations that affect harvest productivity, and the reluctance by building inspectors to recognize the integrity of our softwood construction lumber. The destruction of the greater forest landscape by fragmentation and development continues to be one of the primary concerns in Wisconsin.

The PIF board has discussed these and other issues that are vital to the regional forest products economy. I encourage you, the members, to become involved in helping PIF address these, and other, issues. I would especially encourage members to contact us, to tell us what PIF can do to help you with your forestry concerns.

Annual Meeting, 2004

The annual membership meeting of Partners in Forestry was held on October 5th at the Holiday Inn in Rhinelander. The event was attended by members of PIF, as well as interested guests.

After introductions and approval of the minutes of 2003, the business meeting began with a review of PIF's activities of the past year. These include workshops such as chainsaw training, a maple syrup field day, and a Cost-Sharing workshop. PIF also passed several resolutions on matters concerning sustainable forestry.

Treasurer June Jones gave a financial report, and the attending members took a vote on the change in Partners in Forestry's by-laws. The board proposed an amendment to Section 4.1 of the by-laws, recommending that the entire section of 4.1 be deleted and replaced with "There shall be a Board of Directors of 7 members." This change was passed unanimously.

The meeting concluded with the election of the board and the election of officers.

Presentations by Hans Schmitt and Bryan Pierce followed dinner.

Hans Schmitt, forester with Kretz Lumber Company in Antigo, told of services that Kretz offers to landowners, such as management advice, writing management plans, and overseeing a contract and a timber harvest. PIF and Kretz are exploring a working relationship that benefits the members of PIF. For more information, please contact PIF.

Bryan Pierce serves as executive director of the North Woods Land Trust. He spoke of the many voluntary options available to landowners wishing to preserve their land, such as conservation easements, land donations, and limited development strategies. For more information, contact PIF, or Bryan, at (715) 479-7530 or www.northwoodslandtrust.org.

The New Board

For the first time in PIF's history, seven members were elected to the board. The four members elected at the annual meeting were Bob Dunbar, Rachel Hovel, June Jones, and Roland Rueckert. They joined the existing board members of Joe Hovel, Barb Loar, and Bob Simeone.

The board elected its officers, of Joe Hovel as president, Roland Rueckert and Bob Simeone sharing vice president, Rachel Hovel and Barb Loar as secretaries, and June Jones and Bob Dunbar sharing treasurer duties.

Welcome to PIF's New Members

PIF's newest members are John Gwyn, Rod McKinnon, and Phil Smith, all of Land O' Lakes, Elmer Engel of Eagle River, and Tom Church of Watersmeet. We welcome each of the new members, and look forward to their participation and input!

Board Meeting Highlights

All members are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings of the PIF Board. Following are highlights of the October 4th and November 9th board meetings.

October 4th:

The Board reviewed old business, including an update of the membership list and a discussion of past workshops. A temporary newsletter committee was established, consisting of Rachel Hovel, Barb Loar, June Jones, and Pat Oltz. New business included a discussion on an expansion in the size of the board, in the interest of diversity and efficiency, and proposed language for a corresponding by-law change was agreed upon.

Final preparations for the annual meeting were discussed.

November 9th:

The first meeting of the newly elected Board included several items of new business. The PIF standards for landowners, loggers, and foresters were created during the formation of PIF, and it was suggested by the board that these standards undergo a review. It was also agreed that the stated goals of PIF should be revised to include PIF's advocacy for forestry related issues.

The Board is seeking to form standing committees, such as the newsletter committee and workshop committee. Input and contributions from the membership are encouraged. New workshops and workshop topics were discussed, as well.

A calendar of events was created for PIF's activities in 2005. Board meetings are to be held on the first Tuesday of every month, at 5:00 PM at the Conover Town Hall in Conover. The Newsletter will follow a bimonthly schedule, and will come out at the beginning of the month beginning in January.

Upcoming Events

✂ WWOA (Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association) will sponsor a winter workshop in Wausau. This event, which is open to the public, is called "Bad Things Even Happen in Good Forests", and topics include tornado/storm damage, bad experiences with loggers or timber harvest, and damaging trespass. The workshop is day-long, from 9AM to 3 PM, and costs \$22. For more information, or to register, call the WWOA office at 715-346-4798.

✂ The next Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 7th, at the Conover Town Hall. It will begin at 5:00 PM. The first Board meeting of the new year will be held on January 4th, 2005.

Submissions to the Newsletter

All members are welcome to send any articles, announcements, or items of interest for inclusion in the Partners News. For items to be included in the January/February issue, they must be received by December 20th. Submissions may be emailed, faxed, or mailed to PIF.

PIF Contact Information:

Partners in Forestry

6063 Baker Lake Road
Conover, WI 54519

Phone: (715) 479-8528

Fax: (715) 479-8528

Email: logcabin@nnex.net

Update: NHAL Boundary Expansion

The Master Plan of the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest is currently undergoing revision. This process, which occurs approximately every decade, includes an Environmental Impact Statement, and acts as the guide for all management, planning, and activity on the State Forest. The Master Plan review is also an opportunity for new proposals to be considered and possibly included.

One of the proposals during this Master Plan review is for the expansion of the project boundary for the NHAL Forest. This possible expansion would not directly result in an increase in acreage of the State Forest, but it would expand the area in which the State may pursue opportunities to protect rare habitats and natural communities by purchase of available tracts of land from willing sellers. This will enable the expansion of forestry, wildlife, and recreation management on State Forest lands. As stated by PIF's resolution in support of the boundary expansion, a move to enable the State to purchase available tracts has many advantages. These advantages include

- A valuable and necessary land base for the practice of forestry and forest-based economy in Northern Wisconsin, including the industries of logging, consulting forestry, and forest-product manipulation,
- The mitigating effect against fervent forest fragmentation,
- Allowing access to lands by the public for uses such as hunting, hiking, horseback riding, berry picking, sightseeing, and fishing,
- State lands make payments in lieu of taxes to local municipalities at an equal rate, while offering opportunities for the public to enjoy forest lands,
- Acting as an economic stimulus for the North Woods, both in sustaining forest products industries, and in attracting tourism to the region,
- Environmental benefits to flora and fauna.

Comments on the proposed expansion to the NHAL may be sent to Dennis Leith, NHAL Forest Superintendent, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, 8770 Hwy. J, Woodruff, WI 54568. You can also email comments to dennis.leith@dnr.state.wi.us.

Update: Forest Legacy

Earlier this year, PIF passed a resolution in support of a member's application for the Forest Legacy Program (FLP). This program is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture through the Forest Service, and uses this money to purchase conservation easements on privately owned forestlands across the country. The easements ensure a long-term forest base of private lands by prohibiting fragmentation and development, and by requiring the sustainable management of the forest. This project, referred to as the Land O' Lakes Project, was ranked as the number one project in the state of Wisconsin this fall by the FLP's criteria of bio diversity, size, resource quality, and threat of conversion to non-forestry use such as development. PIF is excited that land of their membership did so well in this competitive process.

The Northwoods Initiative

A main criteria for success in ranking with the FLP is the amount of acreage of the project. In an attempt for smaller private forestland owners to be included in this process, several groups in Northern Wisconsin have joined together to promote the "Northwoods Initiative", which seeks to pool private, non-industrial woodland owners from North Central Wisconsin into a single viable project. This concept has been successful in the southern part of the state.

PIF and the Northwoods Land Trust are the two groups working with landowners in North Central Wisconsin. For more information on the FLP or the Northwoods Initiative, or to inquire if your property would be eligible for inclusion in this program, please contact Joe Hovel of PIF, or Bryan Pierce of the NWLT.

Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee
In other news, Partners in Forestry became the cooperative represented on the Wisconsin Forest Stewardship Advisory Committee when Chair Joe Hovel was nominated and accepted to the committee. This committee is responsible for ranking Forest Legacy projects on the state level (though Hovel was excused from a portion of this process because of the Hovel Family's project), and serves as an advisory to the State DNR for forestry related issues.

If you know of anyone who might be interested in PIF, or who might find helpful PIF's mission to assist landowners in sustainable management of their woodlands, please contact us. We would be happy to send them information on PIF, a copy of the newsletter, or any other information that could assist them.

Meet the board

So that our members may become more familiar with the PIF Board, Partners News will periodically include a feature on one of the serving Board members. In this issue, Vice Chair Bob Simeone shares his background and his goals for PIF.

As the consultant forester on the Partners in Forestry Board of Directors, Bob brings to the board many years of experience and a keen understanding of forestry issues. Through his business, Sylvania Forestry, Bob works with landowners in regions bordering the Sylvania Wilderness Area and the Ottawa National Forest to develop management plans unique to each situation, with the interests of the landowners and long-term sustainability in mind. Bob regularly works with Master Logger and fellow board member Bob Dunbar when timber harvest is prescribed.

While he still maintains his connection to the landowners of Northern Wisconsin, much of Bob's work is with the forests of South America. In a location where deforestation is an urgent concern, Bob pursues markets and product developments for the woods of South American forests, encouraging a viable and sustainable forest economy in the region. Bob also is one of the six original founders of the Forest Stewardship Council. The FSC is an organization of third party certification, with over 100 million acres in 52 countries, that accredits sustainably grown forest products under the SmartWood label.

Bob and his family manage 68 acres of forestland at his residence in Land O' Lakes. His woodlands are predominantly maple sugar bush, with wetland and some pine. He manages his land for maple syrup production, and has applied alternative forest uses with growing ginseng and shiitake mushrooms. This year, he hopes to establish a five-acre pine plantation.

Bob has been involved in PIF since sitting on the original steering committee. He sees PIF as filling an essential gap for the woodland owner. Over 70 percent of forestland owners do not manage their lands, many because of distrust of foresters or loggers. PIF sets high standards of practice for both forestry and logging, and establishes trust by acting as an advocate for the landowners' interests in management. It is Bob's goal that PIF effectively encourages woodland owners to create long-term plans of responsible management for their lands, ultimately benefiting both landowners and the forest products economy of Northern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.