

**Independent Standards Review Panel
Third Meeting
March 30 - 31, 2009
Washington, DC**

Attendees:

Paul Pingrey, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Amelia Wright, Forest Owner
Steve Jarvis, Forest Resources Association
Doug Williams, Association of Consulting Foresters
David Ford, Forest Owner / Oregon Small Woodlands Association
Tony Lyons, NewPage Corporation
Ted Beauvais, USDA Forest Service
Cliff Schneider, MWV (retired)

Staff:

Bob Simpson, Executive Vice President, Center for Family Forests
Victoria Lockhart, Certification Manager, Center for Family Forests

Agenda (Day 1)

I. Welcome

The third meeting of the 2008-2009 Independent Standards Review Panel opened at 9:00 AM with a welcome from ISRP chair, David Ford, followed by a review of the meeting agenda and goals. Meeting objectives were to review proposed Standards revisions and revised glossary from the second ISRP meeting, review proposed Standards Prologue revisions from AFF Staff, discuss legal review comments, and solidify a timeline moving forward. Panel members were asked to keep in mind four criteria when discussing suggested revisions; (1) is the provision appropriate for the scope and scale of small ownerships, (2) does the provision say what we mean, (3) is the provision auditable, and (4) is the provision doable by a volunteer force?

Panel members presented questions from other members of their respective organizations. Questions and concerns regarding programmatic issues within the American Tree Farm System will be addressed by staff in a separate forum.

II. Review Standards Prologue

Panel members reviewed the revised Standards Prologue. The prologue is intended by the Panel to be approachable for landowners and foresters and was revised to better accomplish that goal while continuing to provide context for the document.

III. Review Standards Revised Language

Standard 1: Compliance with Laws – Panel members discussed the need to encourage landowners to seek out varied sources of information, potentially outside of the natural resources professional community as the Standards address a broad range of issues related to sustainable forest management.

Standard 2: Commitment to Practicing Sustainable Forestry – Panel members had discussed at the second ISRP meeting on February 19 and 20, 2009, the need to develop common management plan requirements between the USFS, NRCS, and the AFF Standards. The revised Standard 2 will reflect the resource elements and plan criteria stated in the most current USFS Forest Stewardship Plan requirements. Panel members elected to add the term “forest vitality” to the Standard to increase consistency with PEFC requirements.

Standard 3: Reforestation – No significant changes were made from the second ISRP meeting revised Standards.

Standard 4: Air, Water, and Soil Protection – Panel members discussed the scope of State Forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs) and the most approachable language regarding pesticides.

Standard 5: Fish, Wildlife and Biodiversity – Panel members discussed at length revisions to this Standard in an attempt to reduce the length. Several phrases were determined to be more appropriate for ATFS guidance documents and inspector training materials than the Standard itself and were removed. The Standard was constructed to clearly delineate landowners required actions under ATFS for threatened and endangered species versus those identified as desired species by the landowner. As with all of the revised Standards, the panel attempted to make the language as approachable as possible.

Standard 6: Forest Aesthetics – No significant changes were made from the second ISRP meeting revised Standards.

Standard 7: Protect Special Sites – Clarifying edits were made to the Standard and indicators. Phrases determined to be more appropriate for ATFS guidance documents were removed.

Standard 8: Forest Product Harvests and Other Operations – Panel members discussed at length revisions to this Standard in an attempt to reduce the length. Several performance measures and indicators were reordered to help with readability. Indicators regarding monitoring provisions will need further revision for clarity. Panel members discussed the inclusion of social responsibility and legal sourcing in Standard 8 and determined that these issues are not appropriate for the Standard itself and could be addressed through AFF policy statements. Recognizing that the AFF Standards are a vehicle for change

in the management of private lands in the United States, panel members endeavored to address contracts and fair labor issues within the Standard. With these issues, the panel was cognoscente of the need to ensure indicators are auditable. Proposed modifications to the standard that included creation of a contractor database were supported by the panel but determined to be inappropriate for a standard and more suitable as a policy for AFF. AFF will pursue this.

IV. Discuss Timeline

Panel members discussed the timeline moving forward. AFF Staff to have the revised Standards, revised Glossary, and meeting minutes to the full panel on April 3. Members will be asked to submit comments on the revised Standards to staff by April 10, after which the Standard will be sent to a professional editor for review on April 15. The Standards will be sent to the panel for final review before public comment on April 24. The second public comment period is tentatively scheduled to open May 1, 2009, and will last for 60 days.

V. Review of Potential Areas of Interest from ISRP Opening Meeting

The following is a list of potential areas of interest identified in the opening meeting of the ISRP to be evaluated and considered during the standards review process. Please see italicized notes for Panel actions.

Forest Health

- Invasives (*Addressed by Panel in revised Standard 4 – Reforestation*)
- Forest fuels (fire prevention, prescribed fire) (*Addressed by Panel in revised Standard 5. Fire prevention identified as an education need*)
- Forest vitality (maintaining forest productivity/forest vigor) (*Addressed by Panel in revised Standard 2*)
- Pathogens (insects, disease) (*Addressed by Panel in revised Standard 5*)
- Impacts (animal populations (ex. deer browsing), extraction of non-timber forest products (NTFP), harvesting, acid rain) (*Addressed by Panel in revised Standards 6 and 9*)
- Climate change (*Addressed by Panel under Standard 2 through adaptive management plan*)
- Monitoring (*Addressed by Panel in Standard 2*)
- Forest owner knowledge (*Will be addressed by Panel in Standard 9*)
- Required/encouraged landowner interaction with professional resource manager (*Addressed by Panel in revised Standards 1 and 2*)

Compliance with Federal, State, and Local Laws (*Addressed by Panel in revised Standard 1*)
Carbon and Ecosystem Services (*Discussed by Panel*)
Non-Wood/Timber Forest Products (*Addressed by Panel in Standard 8*)
Utilization (*Addressed by Panel in Standard 8*)
Biomass (*Addressed by Panel in Standard 8*)
Consultation (neighbors, other stakeholders) (*Identified as unnecessary and unrealistic for small private landowners*)
Public Use (liability, access) (*Panel recognizes the private rights of landowners and provides Tree Farmers with the opportunity to consider recreational values in forest management plans as covered under revised Standard 2*)
Indigenous Rights (*Addressed by Panel in Standard 1. PEFC will address at the international level*)
Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) (*To be addressed in a separate AFF Policy document*)
Conversion of Natural Forests (*To be addressed in a separate AFF policy document*)
Recreation (*Addressed by Panel in revised Standard 2*)
Forest Safety (*To be addressed in Standard 8*)
High Conservation Value Forests (*Addressed in Standards 2, 5, 7*)
Research, Outreach and Education (*Addressed with the larger AFF organization*)

VI. Discuss Legal Review Comments

Staff submitted the revised Standards from the second Panel meeting for legal review. No issues arose from the review.

VII. Other issues

Staff informed Panel of the request from the Center for Family Forests' Certification Committee to share information from the field with the ISRP and gain a better understanding of the Panel's intent, as the Certification Committee will serve as the interpretations committee for the Standards once they are finalized. Chair David Ford will coordinate discussions with the Certification Committee, with help from the staff.

Agenda (Day 2)

I. Review Revised Standard Glossary

Panel members discussed the addition of several new terms to the Standards glossary and edited existing items. Members discussed the scope of forestry BMPs and clarified the intended requirements for landowners through the BMP definition. Definitions for standards elements such as performance measures

and indicators will be moved to a separate appendix for guidance on the structure of the Standards document. The appendix will be referenced in the Standards prologue.

II. Discuss Labor Issues

Panel members discussed the addition of suggested language regarding labor issues and contractors. PEFC requires standards operating in countries that have not ratified the ILO core labor standards to show how the program supports these labor issues. Panel members discussed at length the suggested language and attempted to address the issues while keeping in mind the four criteria stated during the chair's welcome and ensuring that the Standards do not open landowners up to undue liability. Members felt that the labor issues were not directly related to the practice of sustainable forest management on the ground and could be more effectively addressed through education efforts by ATFS and AFF. AFF will be working with IMAAW to educate Tree Farmers about fair labor practices.

III. Meeting Close

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 AM (Eastern).

Respectfully submitted by Bob Simpson, Senior VP Forestry, AFF