



Turtle Mountain Landscape Forest Stewardship Plan  
Working Group  
2-17-2023 9:00 AM via Teams

Working Group Members Present:

Liz Smith – Committee Chair, NDFS  
Cody Clemenson, NDFS  
Jodi Delozier, NDSU Extension  
Kevin Kading, ND Game & Fish  
Deric Deuschle, SEH Inc.  
Erin Budrow, SEH Inc.

Guest: Patrick Isakson, Conservation Biologist, North Dakota Game and Fish Dept

The January meeting was cancelled -the last meeting was December 16, 2022.

1. Northern Long-Eared Bat Update

Patrick Isakson provided an overview and update regarding the Northern Long-Eared Bat endangered status. Listing will be effective 3/30/23; 4D rule will no longer apply. USF&WS is developing a framework for projects in progress under 4D and other projects going forward and timber management strategies. State Agencies and USF&WS may develop a programmatic agreement which can cover both state as well as private lands or a habitat conservation partnership for activities within a defined boundary. The WG should be aware that the Little Brown Bat is currently being studied and could be listed by 2026. The Little Brown Bat is much more common in North Dakota.

2. Turtle Mountain Region 2023 Workshop(s)

The participants at the 2022 TMR tour expressed interest in more forestry workshops and suggested several topics. Liz reached out to Gerri Makay, NDFS Community Forestry Manager, about co-hosting a “Community Trees” workshop (Tree ID, community forestry grants, pruning, etc.) in Bottineau in June, utilizing the Forestry Park and surrounding neighborhood. Liz and Cody have developed a draft agenda for a “Forest Stewardship” (Tree ID, inventory techniques, interpreting data, management techniques) workshop in partnership with a private landowner in the TMR. The workshops could be formatted to run the afternoon of June 6<sup>th</sup> and the morning of June 7<sup>th</sup> with participants having the option to attend either or both. The working group will plan to meet in person in Bottineau June 6/7 and Liz plans to invite Jen Hensiek, USFS R1/4 cooperative forestry programs manager.

3. Legislative Session Update

The WG briefly discussed bills of note, including HB1258- Native Pollinators, HB2097-Wild & Scenic Rivers, and HB1260 to expand NDG&F private lands program. The influx of federal funding is a welcome challenge but is exacerbating staffing shortages.

4. Plan Development

Erin & Deric led a discussion of the progress of the LFSP and asked for WG feedback.

- Project Boundary. The group agreed to use the EPA Ecoregion (Omernick) boundary; Kevin confirmed that this is the same boundary that NDG&F uses in the SWAP.
- SEH has gathered a lot of GIS data, including government boundaries, transportation, land

ownership, ecological boundaries, land use/land cover, watersheds, lakes/rivers/streams, wetlands, geology, SSURGO soils, trails, fire districts, species ranges, aerials, historic aspen management areas.

- The Working Group discussed the proposed list of Stakeholders to be interviewed and the questions to be asked. SEH hopes to have the interviews completed in the next month. The group discussed adding an energy sector stakeholder; Liz will ask the State Forester for a recommendation.
- WG reviewed the proposed plan table of contents.

#### 5. Other Business

- WG reviewed and discussed the 1-page “stakeholder views” developed by NDG&F based on the summary report from the 2022 field tour. With a few small edits, it will be a great informational tool for distribution and posting on the website.
- The Bottineau Courant ran a front-page article about NDFS and aspen management in the Turtle Mountains and shared information about how landowners can get more information about technical assistance and cost-share.

Next Meeting:

April 6, 2023 at 9:00 AM via Teams

Notes Prepared by Liz Smith