

Work Group 2 – Implementing and Funding Projects and the NSFC Coordinator**Group facilitated by Rebecca Bartol****Overall funding and project implementation**

The group focused in on our previous discussion about needing an inventory. The goal of getting an inventory is to identify areas of concern; priority areas to restore; (ie dying birch that is not regenerating); Have a product the public can see/understand; puts the ecological problem into context.

- Phil of Cook County SWCD will be talking with Clint Little about GIS info and will talk about possible info needs for the North Shore, for example can we get an inventory of where there are forest health needs
- Karen of MPCA will talk with staff about the possibility of a project with the NSFC, providing a grant to partners to get the inventory we need
- Consider setting up a subcommittee that would look at what data we have, what data is needed and how to evaluate
- Need to consider the appropriate scale, some issues you cannot see at the landscape level, needs to be at stand level and vice versa

Ideas for funding the coordinator

- Decide on how much we need. If we have been paying Duane about \$15,000 and he has been donating time, maybe we need more funding. 20,000? 30,000?
- Divide the amount we need among agencies/ partners (and grants). IE 10 agencies/organizations contribute 2,000 and you have the funding. (It was unclear whether this referred to agency-appropriated funds or giving/receiving grants.

Group facilitated by Myra Theimer**Project Implementation**

- We need to zero in on something and go with it, otherwise it is too huge.
- Describe what we already are doing to restore....a way to tell the story and is something they can do with limited available time.
- Develop a best management cheatsheet so landowners know what to do on their property or a link to resources including getting someone to visit their site and make recommendations.
- Help with things like climate change.
- We do have a technical committee, where are we with that committee?
- The group kept coming back to “What is the Goal?” The Mission statement was reviewed, but some still feel the goal needs to be defined better, like how many trees planted as an example. Is any tree planted considered success? Make it measurable.
- Do we need a committee for each goal from the mission statement?
- Where do we want to be in 5 years? That will help us know what to do now to get there. ex committee set the vision.
- Brooke of DNR is willing to gather the resources to answer the question of what the current picture is. We already have some of that information.
- Do the agencies need to focus more on the private sector? Agencies can share our stories for landowner’s knowledge.

- An annual report is needed to publicize accomplishments and monitor accomplishments. This was done in 2015, but is very time consuming, as different agencies collect data differently (acres planted vs trees planted; double reporting, etc) Need a template that each agency and group can fill out. Mike Reichenbach (Univ. Extension) is working on developing a way to tell the story of restoration accomplishments.

Funding

- Most folks don't have money to contribute to a coordinator or projects outside their regular work but could do some matching.
- There are grants out there but you have to know what you want to do first.
- Erin could share a list of grant possibilities and Myra will send her the grant info that Dave Ingebrigtsen started. It might focus what we would work on.

Group facilitated by Mike Crottea

Funding the NSFC Coordinator and Funding Projects

Potential Grants –

- Conservation Legacy Partnership grants
- Coast Sea Grant program, DNR Coastal Program funding for education, outreach, inventory
- Mn Forestry Association
- Try to find a mailing list for potential grants
- State & Private Forestry within USFS
- Mn Power Foundation – John Paulson
- Bush Grant – unique community-based solutions to problems
- Blandin Foundation
- North Shore Scenic Byway Committee
- LCCMR

Other sources of funds

- Increase the cost-share with the fencing, make participants pay a little more of their share, will leave more funding from Weeks for Coordinator
- Start to charge for rebar and weed barrier mat
- On the fencing form, put a place for participants to provide a donation
- Solicit donations from businesses, tourism industry, connect with Visit Cook County. Tourism industry will benefit greatly from a healthier (looking) ecosystem
- Develop a business “sticker” that businesses place in their front offices/windows that states that they are donors/supporters of the NSFC.
- Bumper stickers!?
- Sale of larger white pine and other trees to raise funds.

Others that need to be involved:

- The Nature Conservancy
- Private forests through MDNR, PFM, Fed\$ through Farm Bill/NRCS
- SWCD – limited \$\$ to spend on projects on private land; based on resource concerns
- Cost-share through SWCDs

There was also a focus on communications:

- Communication to land owners, pointing them to the SWCDs → start there first.

Group facilitated by Molly Thompson

Funding

- Foundations to research - Blandin, Schultz, Cargill, Butler
- Corporate sponsors - may need outside help pursuing them. Could possibly get a grant just for making a plan to pursue corporate sponsors.
- Coastal Program (of course)

Other thoughts:

- Need to better identify and advertise benefits of North Shore forest restoration beyond what we list in strategic plan. Include benefits for pollinators, birds, trout, etc. Also watershed health, tourism.
- Find fencing crews to help landowners (ask TNC who they use)

One landowner stated that she is going to start talking with neighbors about helping each other. This is exactly the kind of spirit that is needed to make North Shore restoration both a personal commitment and a shared responsibility.