

MEETING SUMMARY
NC Mountain Resources Technical Advisory Council
December 9, 2011
10:00 AM – Noon
Blue Ridge Parkway Headquarters
Asheville, NC

Members in Attendance: Jim Fox, David Ray, Rick Wooten, DJ Gerken, Eric Romaniszyn, Karen Smith, Marvin Hoffman, Todd Cherry

Others in Attendance: Judy Francis, Rob Bell, George Santucci, Susan Weatherford, Nina Hall, Caroline Dougherty

Call to Order

Chairman Fox called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM and welcomed all in attendance.

Approval of November 1, 2011 Meeting Summary

Chairman Fox asked everyone to review the draft summary of the November 1, 2011 meeting that was previously circulated. DJ Gerken made a motion to approve the summary as presented. Karen Smith gave a second to the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Discussion of Regional Sustainability Report Card

Chairman Fox delivered a PowerPoint presentation overview that will be delivered later to the MRC. The emphasis is on the natural, human, built, and economic environments, and the interplay of those four sectors with potential external threats such as climate change. David Ray said the word “threat “ may be controversial. Perhaps a better word to use is “stress”. He then demonstrated ways that the map viewer can illustrate how the metrics can be analyzed together. He said that his staff has worked very hard (Greg Dobson, Nina Hall, Susan Weatherford, Caroline Dougherty) on the project and gave them much of the credit for compiling and integrating the data.

The presentation showed how the project homepage sets up categories and color-coded information. It can be viewed on various screen sizes to fit PCs, smart phones, and tablets while maintaining functionality. DJ asked about the term “ecoregion” and wondered if it was too technical. Jim said that it was a term used in the original USFS document, but perhaps the term “ecological setting” would be better. Then the term “ecoregion” could be introduced in the narrative. There also should be a term that captures “foothills” as well. The Executive Summary will need to be written by the MRC and include points about what they want to accomplish with the tool.

The TAC then reviewed each metric category and approved them with the following comments:

- There should be additional narrative about slope categories. DJ will provide additional narrative to the NEMAC staff.
- There should be a short narrative on each river basin as per George Santucci's request. Include information about T&E aquatic dependent species. Put links to NCDENR Division of Water Quality information into the narrative.
- Biodiversity and natural communities data has useful information for non-scientists by incorporating the NCDENR Conservation Planning Tool assessments.
- The concept of Ecosystem Health should be incorporated into the "natural" narrative instead of being a discrete category.
- Highest degree attained maps and graphs need further clarification. Todd will get that information to the NEMAC staff.
- The craft heritage data is for 2007 and is the latest available. Collecting more recent data would be very expensive. Robb Bell is collecting more data about creative professions, and he will send the narrative to go with it to NEMAC.
- Karen Smith will check with her staff to determine what data is available to measure housing affordability. Judy Francis said Mike Butrum may be able to help find data on that issue as well.
- The narrative on forest fragmentation is short, but since this is web-based, it will not have a lot of words. Jim Fox said he will look for ways to collapse or abbreviate the longer narratives.
- The transportation metrics are important, but there need to be revisions to the information about unpaved roads, such as terminology clarification and building standards.
- It would be helpful to have the two energy usage pie charts side by side. Also, add Duke Power hydropower facilities on the Catawba River.
- Rick Wooten will resend the narrative about landslides.
- Correct the poverty levels map by including information for Rutherford County. Put recreation information under tourism.
- Need further clarification about business size and employment numbers.

Jim Fox said that a pdf is getting uploaded to the webpage that is optimized for a print copy of the project. They will add the glossary to the end. They will get MRC feedback today. The Original timeline was the end of January, but it will likely stretch out until after the February 17 MRC meeting.

Judy will send out link to webpage. The NEMAC staff need the TAC feedback ASAP. Comments must be received in by Friday, January 6th in order to make the February cut.

Discussion of MRC Action on Recommendations

Judy Francis gave a brief update about the status of MRC recommendations and how they will be communicated to legislators and the Governor's Office. This will be discussed in more detail at the MRC meeting later in the day.

Next Meeting Date

Jim Fox said it would be advisable to meet before the 2/17 MRC meeting. All agreed to meet on Friday, February 3' 2012 at RENCi at 10:00 AM.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at noon.