

Mid-Atlantic Federal Partners for the Environment Meeting  
Municipal Building  
Philadelphia, PA  
October 16, 2002

Prior to the business meeting, a field tour of urban forestry projects was held. Despite the driving rain, eight individuals attended the tour led by Patrice Carroll, Forest Service. The three sites visited included, the Eastern State Penitentiary Park, project H.O.M.E., and Liberty Lands. All are community-based partnerships improving the quality of life in low-income neighborhoods.

The business meeting started at 11:00 with introductions by Kathryn Maloney, Area Director, USDA-Forest Service. Approximately 40 individuals were present at the start of the meeting. The agenda was reviewed. Several individuals indicated a need to depart before the end of the meeting.

1) Signing of Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the City of Philadelphia. Don Welsh, EPA, led the ceremony. The MOA commits the MAFPE signatories to working with Philadelphia to promote smart growth and sustainable development in helping to revitalize the city's urban landscape. Estelle Richmond, Managing Director of the City of Philadelphia, signed for Mayor John Street. Several other dignitaries from city government were present. The MOA was then signed by attending MAFPE Executive Committee Members.

2) Discussion on status of MOU that established the MAFPE. Dave Russ, US Geologic Survey, provided an overview on the structure and organization of MAFPE. A discussion followed on involvement of the Executive Committee Members and past activities. Dave has been active on the Working Group for Business Practices. The Group's effort is intended to provide a more formal structure for MAFPE meetings and actions. The membership of the Working Group was discussed and additional member participation was encouraged. John Wright (USACE) and John Nordin (FS) indicated a desire to participate. Mike Yurewicz (USGS) stated he had a current listing of the Working Group members. He will provide.

Discussion continued on the focus for MAFPE Executive Committee meetings. Several felt the meetings should be of longer duration, but on an annual or longer time interval. Most felt the Executive Committee meetings should focus on establishing goals/objectives and reviewing accomplishments.

3) Farm Bill policy overview and implementation. Gary Margheim, Special Assistant to the NRCS Chief, provided an overview of policy implications in the Farm Bill. He indicated unique coalition of supporters enabled passage. The legislation will require 96 new sets of regulations and pledged \$17.1 billion in conservation funding over the next 10 years.

Rick Swenson, NRCS Regional Conservationist, described the five major components of the Farm Bill: cost share, land retirement, incentive payment, compliance, and technical assistance. He acknowledged that 60% of the EQIP funding would go to livestock operations. Robin Morgan, FS, described the Forest Land Enhancement Program, which includes \$100 million for education, technical assistance, and cost share incentives for non-industrial private forest landowners over the next 6 years.

Swenson and Morgan urged consideration of Farm Bill programs as a complement to non-USDA programs.

4) The New York/New Jersey Highlands Study Marcus Phelps and Martina Hoppe (FS) and Otto Zapacza provided an overview of the Highlands Study Update, due to be completed in December 2002. They outlined the purpose of the study, including the study background, project partners, process, and products. The main part of the presentation included highlights from the hydrologic and terrestrial resource assessments, a discussion of the conservation values assessment methodology, the future change scenarios, and the econometric analysis. The final part of the presentation focused on the conservation strategies, and actions and expected outcomes associated with recommendations for the Highlands to be announced by the Secretary of Agriculture and Secretary of Interior in 2003. Kathy Maloney, Area Director for the Forest Service's Northeastern Area, led the discussion on the Highlands recommendations.

John Forren (EPA) reminded the presenters that all land use decisions are local. There is a need to package the information for local build-out scenarios. Eric Evenson (USGS) suggested the information be provided at a scale useful to county planners. Dave Reynolds (EPA) questioned the local interest in land acquisition.

5) Sharing of upcoming events by members.

John Wolfen provided information of the FWS's Delaware River and Bay Watershed Grants Program. This foundation-administered effort is intended to pool funding to provide a significant competitive source of funds.

Mary Anne Daniel (DOE) handed out a brochure on bio-fuels.

Walter Mugdan (EPA) asked for help in reviewing Watershed Initiative proposals. Several individuals offered assistance. Walter described efforts for removal of debris in Jamaica Bay.

Dave Russ (USGS) announced a workshop on collaborative approaches to contaminants in coastal ecosystems (Jan 7-9). He also mentioned an upcoming session on water availability in West Virginia. (ALSO mentioned – Atlantic Coastal Plain Hydrologic Initiative, NE coastal erosion, and the National Water Quality Assessment—*Dave/Mike Y. please provide details*)

6) Host for the next MAFPE meeting Rick Swenson, NRCS, offered to host the next MAFPE session. The meeting would most likely be held in the Washington area.