

# Missouri's Forest Resource Assessment and Strategy (FRAS)



## **Brief Overview of FRAS and this Website:**

**Missouri's forests are at a crossroads!** Missouri's trees and forests have the potential to play a pivotal role in many of the serious challenges society is currently facing – energy demand, water quality and climate change just to name a few. At the same time, Missouri's forests are under serious threat from a number of influencers, and available resources for addressing these threats are limited. In order to determine the best path forward, the Missouri Department of Conservation is currently embarking on an effort called the Missouri Forest Resource Assessment and Strategy (FRAS). Once completed, FRAS will include a comprehensive assessment of the key threats and opportunities facing Missouri's urban and rural forest resources, a vision for desired future forest conditions, and a road map for achieving this vision. The success of this effort depends on the involvement and collaboration of people like you.

**The intent of this website** is to provide forest stakeholders an opportunity to review and provide feedback on draft documents associated with FRAS. If you are planning on attending one of our Missouri Forest Stakeholder Summit Meetings (see attached flyer), this information can help you prepare for the meeting. If you will not be attending one of these meetings, a survey form is attached so that you can provide feedback without attending a meeting (if the survey form is not attached, it will be soon). This site is being continually updated with documents added as they are developed. By May 1<sup>st</sup>, we hope to have most of the following documents on line:

1. **Overview/Q&A**
2. **Survey Form** for submitting comments.

3. Draft list of **Desired Future Forest Conditions**
4. Draft **Issue Write-ups** (Threats and Opportunities)
  - Issue One: Private Forest Landowner Demographic Trends, and Corresponding Land Use Changes
  - Issue Two: Challenges and Opportunities for Private Forest Landowners
  - Issue Three: Climate Change
  - Issue Four: Maintaining High Quality Soil and Water Resources
  - Issue Five: The Role of Fire in Missouri's Forests
  - Issue Six: Missouri's Growth, Harvest and Consumption of Forest Products
  - Issue Seven: Exotic and Invasive Plants, Animals and Diseases
  - Issue Eight: The Role of Trees and Forests in Making Cities more Livable and Sustainable
  - Issue Nine: Public Lands which Provide Multiple Benefits to the Public
  - Issue Ten: Maintaining Biological Diversity
  - Issue Eleven: Public Awareness of Forests and their Benefits and Issues
  - Issue Twelve: Legal, Institutional and Economic Considerations
5. Proposed **Methodology for Determining Priority Forest Landscapes**
6. **FRAS Stakeholder Meeting Announcement and Registration Form**

## Questions and Answers:

### What information will be included in FRAS?

At minimum, FRAS will include the following two primary components and associated subcomponents:

The "Forest Resource Assessment" will provide a comprehensive assessment of:

1. **Conditions and Trends** of Missouri's forest resources.
2. A vision for **Desired Future Conditions** for Missouri's forests and the services they provide.
3. **Threats and Opportunities** which need to be considered and addressed in order to meet our Desired Future Conditions.
4. **Priority Forest Landscapes and Areas** which provide the greatest opportunity for achieving our Desired Future Conditions with the limited resources (time and money) we have available.

The "Forest Resource Strategy" will build upon the Assessment to determine:

1. A **Long Term Strategy (~5 year)** for addressing priority threats and opportunities, especially in priority forest landscapes and areas.
2. A description of **Available Resources** and **Missouri Forest Stakeholders** willing to help establish and implement strategies.
3. An **Annual Action Plan**.
4. An **Annual Report of Accomplishments**
5. A process for **Monitoring Success**, and revising the Strategy accordingly.

## **Why are we doing FRAS?**

Three good reasons for undertaking FRAS include:

1. The 2008 Farm Bill requires states to prepare a Statewide Forest Resource Assessment and Strategy in order to continue to receive federal Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act funds. Each year, Missouri receives about \$2.1 million of these funds to help promote healthy trees and forests in Missouri, and the benefits they provide. We can't afford to lose this!
2. FRAS makes good business sense. FRAS will allow us to take a big picture view of our forests and pressing issues, and determine the best use of our limited resources in order to best achieve our desired future conditions.
3. FRAS provides a terrific means for collaboration with partners and stakeholders interested in the future of Missouri's trees and forests. By collaborating and coordinating our collective efforts, we will all be able to increase our accomplishments and effectiveness.

## **What is the scope of FRAS?**

FRAS will address **all public and private ownerships** within Missouri, spans **the urban to rural continuum**, and is **guided by the following Seven Criterion of Forest Sustainability** established through the Montreal Process:

- Criterion 1: Conservation of **biological diversity**
- Criterion 2: Maintenance of **productive capacity** of forest ecosystems
- Criterion 3: Maintenance of forest ecosystem **health and vitality**
- Criterion 4: Conservation and maintenance of **soil and water** resources
- Criterion 5: Maintenance of forest contribution to **global carbon cycles**
- Criterion 6: Maintenance and enhancement of long-term multiple **socioeconomic benefits** to meet the needs of societies
- Criterion 7: **Legal, institutional, and economic framework** for forest conservation and sustainable management

## **Who is involved in establishing and implementing FRAS?**

Although MDC is officially responsible for developing FRAS, the success of this effort is highly dependent upon the participation and collaboration of a wide variety of partner agencies, organizations and individuals who care about the future sustainability of Missouri's trees and forests.

## **How can I participate?**

Whether you represent a government agency, non-profit organization, business, or are an individual interested in Missouri's forests, there will be several opportunities for you to participate in the development and implementation of FRAS. The first opportunity will be to help review our Draft Assessment and provide feedback on how it can be improved, and to help brainstorm strategies for achieving desired future forest conditions. In May and June of 2009, we will be holding 5 meetings across the state to help facilitate this process. We encourage you to try to attend one of these meetings (see flyer). If you cannot attend one of these meetings, you would still like to hear from you. Draft FRAS documents are being posted on this website as they are developed. We will also post a survey/comment form, and encourage you to review these documents and provide any feedback you might have.

## **Who do I contact for more information?**

If you have any questions about FRAS, please contact:

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**Thanks for your interest! We look forward to working with you in the future!**