

Illinois Forestry Development Council

Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Report

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From the Director

There are nearly 80,000 private forest landowners in Illinois that own and manage the overwhelming majority of forested acres in this state. These forest, however, provide tremendous environmental benefits for all Illinois citizens. Owning forest land can be challenging and oftentimes it is difficult for landowners to gather information so that they can make the best decisions for their property.



The Illinois Forestry Development Council seeks to promote policies that will further landowner education and improve forest management in the State. One of the ways this is done is by supporting efforts by the Division of Forestry to maintain/expand staffing levels, particularly for District Foresters. Meeting with a District Forester is often the first step in landowner education for many property owners. We also attempted to improve forest management in Illinois by providing financial support to multiple partners through our Small Projects Program this past year (page 2).

Additionally, the Council supports legislation that assists landowners in reducing the financial burden that oftentimes accompanies forest management activities. We were pleased to see the passage of HB1855 – Illinois Forestry Fix – which should allow the DNR to reinstate the Forestry Development Act cost-share program. This program provides financial assistance to forest landowners with approved forest management plans and is supported by the 4% fee on all harvested timber in Illinois.

Sincerely,

Eric Holzmueller, Director
Illinois Forestry Development Council



July 2024

IFDC Website
ifdc.nres.illinois.edu

IFDC Accomplishments

SMALL PROJECTS PROGRAM

The IFDC provided funding to six partners this past year. These projects helped address forestry issues defined by the Council and included actions to mitigate these issues as outlined in the updated Illinois Forest Action Plan.

- [Natural Land Institute](#) developed a policy a tool for Land Trusts and landowners to promote and protect conservation values and ecological integrity through stewardship of their forested landholdings.
- [Illinois Forestry Association](#) used funding to promote the Illinois Forestry Development Act program with private forest landowners and also produced a quarterly newsletter that was distributed to all IFA members.
- [Village of Godfrey Parks](#) used IFDC funding to educate community members on the importance of invasive plant species control by improving native plant diversity along a Village trail.
- [Illinois Walnut Council](#) partnered with Illinois Tree Farm and Illinois Forestry Association to host a family forestry field day in Douglas County on a parcel of privately owned ground near the Embarras River.
- [Shawnee RC&D](#) coordinated with the Forest Restoration Support Team to promote control of invasive species on privately owned forest lands with volunteer support.
- The [Association of Illinois Soil and Water Districts](#) and [Illinois 4-H](#) continued their tree planting efforts in 43 Soil and Water Conservation Districts across Illinois.



IFDC Accomplishments Continued

TIMBER BUYERS LICENSING ACT - (225 ILCS 735/) UPDATE

After three years, the Timber Buyers Licensing Act has finally been updated and the administrative rules have approved. The new act has some significant changes including increased fees, new reporting rules, and insurance requirements. The administrative rules help clarify when and who pays the 4% harvest fee and this should reduce confusion among timber buyers and landowners, which has been an issue in previous versions of this Act.



IFDC MEETINGS

More information about the Illinois Forestry Development Council is available on our website: <http://ifdc.nres.illinois.edu/>. The website includes publication of IFDC sponsored reports as well as minutes from previous meetings.

The Council meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the odd months. Meetings are typically held remotely. If you would like to participate or have any items you would like the Council to consider, please contact Eric Holzmuelle, IFDC Director, at eholzmue@siu.edu.



Illinois Forestry Development Council

The Illinois Forestry Development Council was created in 1983 upon passage of the Illinois Forestry Development Act (525 ILCS 15). The Council's charge is to identify and evaluate the social, economic, scientific, and educational value of Illinois' forest lands and forest products industries. The 29 members of the Council represent the following interests or groups:

MEMBER	REPRESENTING	MEMBER	REPRESENTING
Vacant	Landowner Engaged in Farming	Mr. Zach Wirtz	Environmental Issues
Vacant	Landowner Engaged in Farming	Dr. Robert Schooley Mr. Chris Evans**	University of Illinois/Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences
Mr. Steve Graves	Private Timber Grower	Dr. John Groninger	Southern Illinois University, Forestry Program
Mr. Brad Petersburg	Private Timber Grower	Mr. Jerry Costello II Mr. Scott Schirmer**	Illinois Department of Agriculture
Mr. Joel Pisoni	Wood Products/Primary Forest Industry	Ms. Natalie Phelps Finnie Mr. John Teefey** Mr. Kenneth Jolly	Illinois Department of Natural Resources IDNR State Forester
Mr. Scott Swisher	Wood Products/Primary Forest Industry	Ms. Sylvia Garcia Ms. Kim Watson**	Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
Mr. Matt Pustejovsky	Illinois Tree Farm Committee	Mr. Chris B. Meister Ms. Lorrie Karcher**	Illinois Finance Authority
Mr. Paul Deizman Ms. Trcia Bethke**	Illinois Forestry Association	Dr. Christopher Merrett	Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
Mr. Casey Calvert	Illinois Walnut Council	Vacant	IL Speaker of the House
Ms. Jenny Lesko	Illinois Chapter of the Society of American Foresters	Mr. Patrick Windhorst (R)	IL House Minority Leader
Dr. Kirk Stodola Dr. T.J. Benson**	Illinois Chapter of the Wildlife Society	Mr. Patrick Joyce	IL Senate President
Vacant	Urban Forestry Representative	Vacant	IL Senate Minority Leader
Mr. Joe Hansen	Illinois Arborist Association	Ms. Tammy Willis*	USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service Illinois
Mr. Steve Stierwalt Mr. Dale Shumaker**	Association of Illinois Soil & Water Conservation Districts	Mr. Mike Chaveas*	U.S. Forest Service Shawnee National Forest

**Ex-officio Members*

***Designee or Alternate*

For more information on the Illinois Forestry Development Council go to:

ifdc.nres.illinois.edu