

West Virginia Legislature

Forest Management Review Commission

Senate Members

Senator David Sypolt, Co-Chair
Senator Robert Karnes
Senator Ron Miller
Senator Bob Williams

House Members

Delegate John Overington, Co-Chair
Delegate Allen Evans
Delegate Bill Hartman
Delegate Dana Lynch
Delegate William R. Romine

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Robert Alexander
Richard Bowlby
Betty D. Crookshanks
Thomas Hawse, III
Lannes C. Williamson

The West Virginia Legislature's Forest Management Review Commission, having been appointed pursuant to Article 24, Chapter 5 of the Code of West Virginia, met on several occasions during the 2016-2017 Legislative Interim period to receive testimony and information to accomplish the duties and responsibilities as established by code.

The Forest Management Review Commission invited the following individuals to appear before the commission to offer their expertise and testimony:

Mr. Frank Stewart, WV Forestry Association

Mr. Stewart appeared before the commission multiple times. Mr. Stewart discussed the need of the Division of Forestry and the issues with funding the division with the severance tax. He also presented a comparison of the tax policies of the surrounding states.

Mr. Randy Dye, State Forester, West Virginia Division of Forestry

Mr. Dye came before the commission to provide updates on the Division of Forestry, and discussed Division of Forestry layoffs and the effect of the layoffs on the division and the forest industry.

Ms. Kathryn Gazal, WVU, Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resource and Design; Mr. Steve Harouff, Division of Forestry, GIS Specialist; and Mr. Jeremy McGill, Assistant State Forester, Water quality

Ms. Gazal, Mr. Harouff and Mr. McGill appeared jointly to discuss the proposed Managed Timberland Taxation rule and to give examples. Mr. Harouff discussed GIS data to be used to evaluate the parcels by Professor Gazal. Next, Ms. Gazal gave a power point presentation of her formula using actual real property examples. She used the GIS data provided by the division for the example. Last, Mr. McGill concluded the presentation with a summary of the challenges that remain with using GIS data in the proposed formula.

Mr. William G. Hubbard, Southern Regional Extension Forester, Association of Southern Regional Extension Directors (ASRED); Mr. Robert Izlar, Director of the University of Georgia, Harley Langdale, Jr. Center for Forest Business; and Yanshu Li, University of Georgia

Mr. Hubbard, Mr. Izlar and Ms. Li appeared via video conference to discuss timber tax policies in southern states.

Mr. Steve Yeager – Weyerhaeuser Company; Mr. Greg Bailey – State Engineer, Division of Highways; and Mr. Bob Blankenship – Director, Transportation Division, Public Service Commission

The speakers discussed logging truck weight issues on certain roads and bridges.

The Forest Management Review Commission considered and recommended this report be presented to the Joint Committee on Government and Finance.

Respectfully submitted,

Senator David Sypolt, Co-Chairman

Delegate John Overington, Co-Chairman

