



Maryland Sustainable Growth Commion
Rural Economies Workgroup Report
May 11, 2015

To: Jon Laria, Chairman, Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission

From: Greg Bowen, Rural Economies Workgroup Chair

Subj: Status Report on Rural Economies Workgroup Activities

Date: May 11, 2015

The Rural Economies Workgroup has not met since the March Growth Commission meeting; however, the Workgroup will be meeting on May 8, so a meeting update will be given at the Commission meeting. One of the items that being discussed at this upcoming Workgroup meeting is a draft Statement of Responsibilities, Goal, and Objectives for the Rural Economies Workgroup (see attached).

The Workgroup's subcommittees (Sustainable Food and Food Production, Sustainable Forestry, Land Preservation and Protected Open Space, Rural Development and Recreation, and Sustainable Fisheries) are still in their formative stages, but the participants have shown great enthusiasm that substantive recommendations will come out of their deliberations. Several of the subcommittees have meeting scheduled later in May, so there is nothing to report. The summary notes from the Sustainable Forestry Subcommittee are attached to this report.

The next meeting of the full Workgroup is July 10.

Rural Economies Workgroup

Draft Statement of Responsibilities, Goal, & Objectives

(as of May 1, 2015)

Statement of Responsibilities:

The Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission's Rural Economies Workgroup will assess and advise on stabilizing and improving the business environment and opportunities for Maryland's agricultural, forestry, fisheries, and other rural resource-based industries, and on improving Maryland's smart growth model to better address rural land use and economic development needs. The Workgroup will prepare achievable goals and practical strategies for the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission to consider and advocate to Maryland's Governor, General Assembly members, interest groups and the public.

On an annual basis, the Workgroup will – (1) review pending legislation before the General Assembly that may impact Maryland's rural economy and make recommendations to the Growth Commission, accordingly; and (2) recommend state funding levels for agriculture land preservation, rural legacy and program open space.

Goal:

Stabilize and improve the business environment and opportunities for agricultural, forestry, fisheries, and other rural resource-based and compatible industries.

Objectives:

- A. Sustainable Land Preservation: Evaluate Maryland's land preservation goals and state and local programs to accomplish them, including but not limited to funding, focusing on their adequacy to support sustainable agricultural and forestry industries in the future. Recommend changes accordingly.
- B. Sustainable Food Supply System: Develop a vision for a diverse, sustainable local food supply for Maryland, including policy recommendations for state and local government. The food system, for our purposes, comprises production, processing, marketing, distribution, consumption, and waste management.
- C. Sustainable Forestry: Develop a vision for a sustainable local supply of wood fiber and energy for Maryland, including policy recommendations for state and local governments.
- D. Sustainable Rural Recreation: Develop a vision for a sustainable rural recreation economy for Maryland, including policy recommendations for state and local governments. (Rural recreation economy includes activities such as hunting, fishing, tourism, bird watching, hiking, and biking.)
- E. Smart Growth and Rural Development: Examine and develop recommendations for improving Maryland's Smart Growth model to better address rural land use and economic development needs.
- F. Sustainable Fisheries: Develop a vision for sustainable fisheries in Maryland, including policy recommendations for state and local governments.

As used here, "sustainable" farming, forestry, fisheries or other resource-based business means profitable, income producing operations that can be continued for the foreseeable future while maintaining productive, healthy soils and working landscapes, without excessively compromising water and natural resources in the surrounding environment.

Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission – Rural Economies Workgroup Agenda and Notes Document

Save as: MSGC.RuralEcon.SustainableForestry.4.22.15

Meeting Notes For:		Subcommittee on Sustainable Forestry
Date and time:		April 22, 2015 2-3 pm
Called by:		Facilitator's Name: Jason Dubow and Elliott Campbell
Attendance:	Greg Bowen, Bob Tjaden, Jason Dubow Brian Knox, Elliott Campbell, Vanessa Finney, Jonathan Kays, Don Outen, Steve McHenry, Todd Berman	
Notes Taken By:	Elliott Campbell	
Agenda and Notes:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take attendance. 2. Review Notes from last meet and progress on Key Actions. 3. Review the Maryland Forest Industry Assessment Synthesis (1996-2015) prepared by Bob Tjaden and Dan Rider - Items placed into general categories. 4. Don Outen - update on the effort to summarize the work of the Sustainable Forestry Council for the committee Summary in progress- no net loss policy report contains much of the recommendations of the Council. Recommend a consistent, detailed data base of forest cover change in the state. Strengthen local government approach for conservation of forest land- include forest areas in local comp plan sensitive areas. Maintain forest integrity, provide incentives to do so. Gary Allen is heading the woodland incentives work group, addressing diversion of funds from the program. 5. How best to proceed with meetings with a need for more time to review items- Brian Knox (concern)- In person, longer meeting would be more effective. Greg B.- Survey of most important issues Bob T.- Supported survey, prioritize by categories Consensus: Survey necessary next step, next meeting will be longer and in person if possible. 6. Jonathan Kays - update on the effort to develop a summary of the permitting process for different counties in MD Forest Project Permitting Process Greg- Calvert Co. many agencies involved but coordination/plan not always there. Solution- on-site planning County permitting- Pre-inspection can slow down the process Streamline process to minimize cost 7. Review and Prioritize Key Actions from meeting. Survey/Categorization of Action Items: include (1) Forest Harvesting Process (permitting/regulations); (2) Entrepreneurial needs/new business establishment/existing business incentives; (3) Marketing; (4) Legislative Initiatives; (5) Research; (6) Education/Outreach; (7) Facilities (permitting/regulations); (8) Transportation Permit/Regulation Issues; (9) Landowner based incentives/opportunities-co-operative land management; and (10) - Forest Resource/Potential Ecosystem Service Market Timeline based on SGC schedule, legislative session: Need to have legislative priorities by late July. Send out survey by May 15th. Survey committee members on what items they would want to concentrate on/contribute to. 8. Set date and time for next meeting. –Early June. 		
Key Actions (and who has agreed take on)	Describe action and indicate when action is due	
1. Formulate Survey	Jason Dubow, Elliott Campbell, Bob Tjaden, Greg Bowen. Due May 15 th .	
2. Complete Survey	Whole group, due 1 week after survey is sent out (May 22 nd)	
3. Send out survey Results	Jason Dubow/Elliott Campbell, due at least 1 week prior to June meeting.	
Resource Materials used and draft documents	-See dropbox folder for 4/22/15 meeting. -	