



**Rural Economies Workgroup**

**November 18, 2019**

**To:** Susan Summers, Chairman, Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission

**From:** Greg Bowen, Rural Economies Workgroup Chair

**Subj:** Status Report on Rural Economies Workgroup Activities

**Date:** November 18, 2019

The Rural Economies Workgroup met on November 8<sup>th</sup> to review the progress of its subcommittees (Sustainable Food and Food Production, Sustainable Forestry, Land Preservation and Protected Open Space, Rural Development and Recreation, and Sustainable Fisheries). See below the “Workgroup Agenda and Notes Document” that summarizes the status of each subcommittees’ efforts. The next meeting of the full Workgroup is January 10.

<b>Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission – Rural Economies Workgroup Agenda and Notes Document</b>	
<b>Meeting Notes For:</b>	<b>Rural Economies Workgroup</b>
Date and time:	November 8, 2019 @ 1 pm
Called by: Chuck Boyd	Facilitator’s Name: Chuck Boyd
Attendance:	Chuck Boyd, Elliott Campbell, Deborah Carpenter, Jason Dubow, Les Knapp, Steve McHenry, Jim Mullin
Notes Taken By:	Chuck Boyd
<b>Agenda and Notes:</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attendance – 7 members attended in person or by conference call.</li> <li>2. Mr. Boyd briefed the Workgroup on the status of Growth Commission and its upcoming scheduled meeting in Crownsville, MD on November 18.</li> <li>3. Status Report on the five (5) Subcommittees by each facilitator highlighting items discussed and future actions:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Sustainable Forestry Subcommittee (Jason Dubow/Elliott Campbell facilitators)                    Jason Dubow reported MDE hosted a Future of Maryland Forestry conference in coordination with DNR Forest Service on October 8. One of the purposes of the conference was to connect and encourage discussion and problem-solving among different sets of constituents, such as industry, environmental groups, and regulators. One important policy obstacle identified is that Maryland law focuses on achievement of short-term greenhouse gas reductions through measurement by periodic inventories. This means that the burning of wood for fuel results in a short-term increase in greenhouse gases, despite the fact that over the long-term "burning wood is considered carbon-neutral because it does not increase the amount of carbon dioxide (a regularly</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	

occurring molecule but also a greenhouse gas) cycling through the atmosphere" as long as "tree biomass production is at least as fast as wood is burned" (Wood Energy eXtension CoP; <https://wood-energy.extension.org/is-burning-wood-carbon-neutral/>; accessed November 8, 2019). Changing the state's current policy approach could address this obstacle.

Elliott Campbell reported that DNR has recently received three grants, two of which relate to forestry- 1) a GIS analysis of forest trends, and 2) modeling forest management practices. Elliott said the other DNR grant was a regional update of "blue carbon" modeling. He also confirmed that DNR was awarded the U.S. EDA grant for the forest industry economic adjustment strategy efforts. Currently they are working on a woodyard in western Maryland to help counter the losses in the wood product markets.

B. Rural Development and Recreation Subcommittee (Deborah Carpenter facilitator)

Deborah Carpenter reported the Subcommittee met on October 3, but with only Les, Debbie and Chuck on the call, no new items were discussed. Chuck briefed the Subcommittee on activities of the department. Les briefed the Workgroup on some of the issues that MACo is monitoring.

C. Sustainable Food and Food Production Subcommittee (Dan Rosen facilitator)

Dan Rosen reported the Subcommittee has not met since its March 11 meeting, but he noted the Subcommittee has continued to work on:

1. Community Kitchen Directory: Dan reported the draft community kitchen directory will be presented at the MARBIDCO meeting on the 18th. Dozens of attendees will be asked to vet/edit/add to/delete the facilities on it.

MDH has advised that churches, civic organizations, etc. often cannot share their kitchens because they do not meet the full array of licensing requirements. The Montgomery County Office of Agriculture more or less confirmed this when they said that of the 130 restaurants, markets, grocery stores, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, private education institutes, and seasonal/snack bars on their list, none were willing/able to open their spaces to the community for farmers to prepare value-added products.

D. Land Preservation and Protected Open Space Subcommittee (Dan Rosen facilitator)

No activities to report.

E. Sustainable Fisheries Subcommittee (Chuck Boyd facilitator). Mr. Boyd reported that no Subcommittee efforts took place.

4. Next Workgroup meeting is January 10, 2020 at 3 pm at MDP's Olmsted Conference Room in Baltimore.

