MINUTES OF THE SRWC-OWG STEERING COMMITTEE

SRWC Operations Working Group
Steering Committee Meeting
August 18, 1999
Holiday Inn, Alexandria MN

Members and representatives present:
Tim Volk (for Larry Abrahamson), Mark Coleman (for John Blake), Bruce Hartsough, Tom Houghtaling, Joe Battista (for Evan Hughes), Roy Merritt, Harry Quicke, Jim Shepard, Ron Stoffel, Bryce Stokes, Lynn Wright

Guests:
Don Reimenschneider (USFS North Central Research Station, Rhinelander WI), Raffaele Spinelli (Wood Research Institute, Florence Italy)

1. Minutes
Minutes of the August 24, 1998 meeting in Vancouver WA were approved.

2. Preliminary planning for the Third Conference
The meeting will be held in Syracuse, NY. Tim Volk and Larry Abrahamson will be co-conference chairs, and will rely on Continuing Education at the University to handle the arrangement details. After a discussion of possible conflicting or dovetailing meetings (Council on Forest Engineering, September 11-14 in Kelowna BC; International Poplar Commission, September 24 - October 3 in Vancouver WA; Bioenergy 2000, October 15-19 in Buffalo NY), the Tuesday-Friday of October 10-13 was tentatively selected. Two days of this will be devoted to a field trip, the rest to presentations and other activities.

3. Administrative Sponsor activities
The committee reaffirmed the commitment of each organization to provide an annual contribution of $5000, cash or in-kind services. The USFS, NCASI and ORNL have been providing at least that much each year. Due to budget limitations and priorities, EPRI has not been able to provide support during the last couple of years. Bruce Hartsough will check with Evan Hughes to see if the future prognosis is better, and if there would be interest in taking on the newsletter or other aspects of the Working Group. (Follow-up: Evan indicated that EPRI would probably be able to contribute both cash and in-kind support for the coming year.)

4. Current membership and financial status
Jim Shepard supplied membership figures: 72 paid members and 7 Sustaining Sponsors so far this year, versus 162 paid members and 6 Sustaining Sponsors in 1998. The big difference is due to a conference being held every other year (last year and not this year); conference registrants are “forced” to become members. Our Sustaining Sponsors are:
Jim’s financial report showed that we are back in the black! Current bank balance is $4250.04, although this includes a loan of $2640.11 from NCASI to make up our temporary deficit. The committee thanked Jim for the much-needed temporary support and recommended that we return the loan amount to NCASI. After all the transactions from the 1998 conference were finalized, the summary figures were:

- Total Income (less bus refund) $12,477.15
- Total Expenses (less bus refund) $17,344.29
- Bottom Line $-4,867.14

The expenses do not include the costs of publishing and distributing the conference proceedings. American Cyanamid has offered to cover these expenses, and their associate, Dudnyk Public Relations, is currently finalizing the proceedings format. The proceedings will be distributed to all members/conference attendees, and also to all libraries of universities with recognized forestry programs in the US.

5. Future budgeting issues
Bryce Stokes has arranged for a $5,000 contribution to the Working Group from the USDA Forest Service Washington Office, to be routed via Don Reimenschneider through the North Central Research Station. It will be earmarked for planning and executing the 2000 conference. Don is working on an additional $5,000 each from the North Central and Southern Stations for the following year.

6. New activities
The committee felt that we should expand our dissemination of new information, especially via timely updates in the Newsletter. In recent issues, Burt Aronoff wrote valuable articles on irrigation systems, and Bruce Hartsough provided some harvest test results. Roy Merritt offered another useful irrigation article. Lynn Wright mentioned that multiple products are being considered for SRWC, and it would be good to have a person who would lead the information gathering in that area. (Follow-up: Pat Moore has consented to act as key contact for SRWC products.) Another area of importance is “supply logistics,” i.e. the whole string of activities from land purchase through delivery of material to the end-user.

7. Other business
New steering committee members are needed to replace Bruce Upchurch (who left Union Camp/International Paper to join University of Georgia), Jim Tillman (who left Supertrak) and Gail Simonds (who left Westvaco to join the ministry). Due to an unforseen increase in work commitments, Lynn Wright indicated that she would be unable to step in as chair of the Working Group for 2000 and 2001. Possible nominees for incoming chair were discussed, and Bruce will contact these individuals. (Follow-up: Victor Ford, Research Scientist at Westvaco’s Appalachian Forest Research Center was nominated and approved by the Steering Committee to replace Gail Simonds as industry member from the eastern US, and to become chair for 2000 and 2001.)

Submitted by:
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GUIDE LINES FOR DRIP IRRIGATION AND FERTIGATION OF PINES AND HARDWOOD
by
Ian Barr
Netafim Irrigation, Inc.

Dripperline Selection

The idea behind drip irrigation is to create a uniform and continuous strip of moisture along the
dripperline. Once this continuous wetted strip is achieved, the spacing of the plants along the dripperline does not matter.

The factors that affect the spacing are the soil type and the dripper's flow. Once the continuous wetted strip is achieved, economical considerations influence the selection of the most agro-economical alternative.

Generally, there are three possible spacings that are commonly used for conditions like ours:
- 36 inches - 0.92 GPH
- 40 inches - 0.92 GPH
- 36 inches - 0.61 GPH

**Fertigation Program**

It is very important to have a soil and water analysis before establishing any fertigation program. It can save money, decrease groundwater pollution, and increase the efficiency of fertigation. Some elements like calcium and magnesium can be more economically and conveniently provided through the application of dolomite rather than in a liquid form. Later, these elements may be reduced, or completely eliminated from the program, based on possible significant concentrations in the irrigation water.

Until soil and water analysis become available, here are some guidelines to consider: Dr. Klaus Steinbeck from the University of Georgia has calculated the total amount of fertilizers and the ratio between the various elements for coppiced trees of Sweetgum and Sycamore. His basic formula is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>Ca</th>
<th>Mg</th>
<th>Mn</th>
<th>Zn</th>
<th>Cu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lbs/acre/yr</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since there is very little background in this field, we intend to base our recommendations on our considerable experience with intensively grown woody plants, i.e., fruit trees, ornamental and shade trees, citrus groves. Normally, the removal of potassium from the soil by stone fruits is twice that of nitrogen. Based on date taken from the U.S. Forest Service Research Paper SE-17 (March 1965) entitled *Weight and Nutritional Content of the Above Ground parts of Some Loblolly Pines*, by Louis J. Metz and Carol G. Wells, we have assessed the ratio between the different elements as follows:

\[
\text{N : P : K : Ca : Mg} = 7 : 1 : 7 : 7 : 2
\]

The above formula generally fits a wide range of woody crops. That is the reason we would like to recommend this formula to your particular study. Another practical reason is that the translation of this formula to a commercial liquid fertilizer that can be chemically blended and stay clear and stable will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P_2O_5</th>
<th>K_2O</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (w/w)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The liquid fertilizer 8:2:8 is very popular and readily available from any fertilizer dealer.

Using common practices in the industry to data as a basis, we would like to propose 150 lbs/ac of N as a starting point. Once further data are acquired, based on fertilization trials, biomass accumulation, etc., this figure can be adjusted accordingly.

**Notes**

1. To ensure proper fertigation, please pay attention that the fertilizer contains only three elements - N, P, and K. Since calcium and Magnesium are incompatible with Phosphorous, they can be applied separately as pre-plant, as described previously. Later, the Phosphorous might be eliminated for a certain period and either Ca or Mg (or both) can be injected, all based on soil and water analysis.

2. Micro elements can be applied in a dry fertilizer, together with pre-plant application of P and K. These elements move very little through the soil profile. If they were to be applied via the drip system, they might be unavailable in the first year. If the soil and water analysis are not available, our recommendation
is as follows:

- 1.0-1.5 ton/ac of Dolomite
- 100 lbs/ac of P (preferred as superphosphate)
- 150 lbs/ac of K (as muriate of potash or potassium sulphate if superphosphate is not used)
- 1.5 lbs/ac of Zn (Dr. Klaus Steinbeck)
- 0.5 lbs/ac of Mn (Dr. Klaus Steinbeck)
- 0.3 lbs/ac of Cu (Dr. Klaus Steinbeck)

If we choose to have the minor elements injected together with the liquid fertilizer, our recommended rates will be Mn - 0.0125%, Zn - 0.0125%, Cu - 0.0009%, Mo - 0.0006%, B - 0.002%, Fe - 0.03%. An application of 25 - 50 lbs/ac of N should be considered as a pre-plant application.

3. The liquid fertilizer can be derived from:
   - Ammonium nitrate
   - Phosphoric acid (drip grade)
   - Potassium chloride
   - E.D.T.A. Chelated, Mn, Zn, Fe, Cu, Mo, and B (if desired)

4. The fertilizer will be injected evenly throughout the season and in every irrigation. It will begin after the system is completely pressurized and will end, for the duration*, before the system shuts off.

*The same “non-fertigation” injection period before and after the fertigated period.

5. The proposed fertilizer 8:2:8 will weigh approximately 10 lbs/gal. Every 1.25 gal will contain 1 lb of N.

6. The fertilizer injections should not be postponed more than a week due to continuous rains. If it rains and there is no need to irrigate, then by the end of the week, the weekly amount of fertilizer should be injected. First the pressure has to build up, then the fertilizer should be injected, followed by a flush of not more than 15 minutes. This process should not take more than 45-60 minutes.

7. Monitoring the fertility in the root zone can be done by using soil water samplers that will be placed in exactly the same way as tensiometers. They can be read once per week using a field kit. The main factors that normally can be checked are the E.C. and the nitrate levels.

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### Irrigation Program

The peak demand of water consumptive use of these trees is estimated as 1.25 inches/week for a full, mature forest.

Based on a comprehensive study and our experience, we assume that in our case the peak demand in the first year will be about 0.5 inches, which means about 3.5 gal/tree/day.

The total water holding capacity in a typical sandy loam soil is about 1.3 inches/foot. Assuming a root zone diameter of 5 feet in the first year and 12 inches depth of the main feeder root system - the total water holding capacity of this volume will be about 16 gallons.

We believe that we can deplete 50% of the available water without causing any water stress. This means about 8 gal/day. Matching the figures of the peak water consumptive use (3.5 gal/day) and the allowed water depletion (8 gal/day) will give us the interval between irrigations, which in this case will be on a daily basis.

Since we have a flow of about 1.84 GPH/tree during peak demand, we should irrigate for 2 hours on a daily basis. Based on these calculations the following irrigation schedule is proposed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Gal/tree/day</th>
<th>Interval (days)</th>
<th>Hours of run</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes

1. This Table does not take into account actual rainfall. Thus, rain should be taken into account and be subtracted from the water application. Each tree has an available surface of about 20 ft². Thus, 1 inch
of rain is equal to about 12 gal/tree. It is common to estimate an average rain efficiency of 75%, which means only 9 gals/tree available. This means that during peak demand the 1 inch rain will provide 3 days of consumptive use, thus results in skipping 3 days of irrigation. The same 1 inch rain in the beginning of the season will postpone the irrigation 4-5 days. A 0.5 inch rain will result in skipping 2-3 days in April or 1-2 days in June or July. Anything below 0.2 inches should not be taken into consideration at all.

2. Another tool that can help tune-up the irrigation schedule are tensiometers. We strongly recommend using tensiometers in the following manner: two stations per block with each station having three tensiometers at a depth of 6, 12, and 18 inches. The tensiometers should be placed next to a healthy, good looking tree about 12 inches from the trunk and 8 - 10 inches from the dripper on the dripperline.

3. A new irrigation schedule will be figured for the second year, based on adjustments and experience of the first year and the growth of the trees.

For further information, contact:
Netafim Irrigation Inc.
4548 N. Douglas Ave.
Altamonte Springs, FL 32714
(407) 788 - 6352
Fax (407) 862-0259

CONTACTS FOR TOPICAL INFORMATION

The Working Group would like to disseminate as much current information as possible to our members. If you have any tests, data, events, etc. that you would like to share through the Newsletter or webpage, please contact the following individuals who have volunteered to be primary contacts in each of the following areas.

C Irrigation -
Burt Aronoff <driptape@aol.com>
Roy Merritt (813) 961-3621

C Fertilization/nutrition -
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Jon Johnson <poplar@wsu.edu>
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STUMP TREATMENT AND HARVESTING TRIALS
by
Pat Moore
Potlatch Corporation

At present, Potlatch plans to cut trees so that the stumps are about an inch tall, kill them chemically when cut, then plant between the old rows. Stump extraction has some potential benefits but it is a challenge, it is costly, and there is still the question of what to do with the stumps once they are on the surface. Potlatch has considered using a Meri-Crusher attached behind a stump lifter to rip the stumps into tillable piece sizes or recover the fiber if markets allow. Potlatch built and tested a prototype stump lifter, based on two 5-foot-diameter flat steel discs. The discs were opposed, could be tilted at 30 to 45 degrees from the vertical and angled outward at up to 8 degrees from the travel direction. The initial trial was unsuccessful. Potlatch consulted with a sugar beet digger manufacturer and an ag-engineering design firm and now have a redesign for the unit, but have not done any work on it yet. With the poor regional wood chip market at present, it is not economical to recover the stump for fiber, but that may change over time. Potlatch also tested a Savannah bedding plow for tilling stumps in place. It was successful -- leaving the stumps in place and allowing them to rot is considered effective and less costly.

Potlatch conducted delimbing/merchandising trials this spring. Merchandising, for solid wood markets, consisted of bucking out 16-foot logs. A Danzco pull thru delimber, Denharco slide boom processor and a Valmet single-grip harvester was tested. These trials
were not definitive, with only about 100 trees per system, but they gave indications of which type of equipment was most effective for the 5-yr-old trees that were trialed. The slide boom was the slowest, at 1.8 trees/min, merchandising was not efficient and deliming quality was poor with slabbng. The pull thru delimber was surprisingly effective and probably the most cost-efficient, at 2 trees/min, and produced limited slabbng but no merchandising. (Potlatch is considering this type of delimber or the delimming module from a double grip harvester for the delimming line, if they choose to go with a fixed processing installation.) The most efficient was the small single-grip harvester attachment. The feed wheels on the harvester did a nice job of loosening the bark also, but whether debarking of poplar with a single-grip harvester is cost-effective is yet to be determined.

Potlatch is also investigating the use of an articulated felling head (with intermittent disc saw) that would allow cut trees to be loaded directly into wood wagons by the felling machine. They have talked to a manufacturer about designing a purpose built wood wagon -- a prime mover with front bunks that would pull a single-bunk trailer. The wood wagons would transport trees to a landing, or on off-highway roads to a fixed processing installation.

For further information, contact:
Pat Moore
Potlatch Corporation
Boardman, OR

Ed. -- Pat Moore has offered to coordinate the Working Group’s awareness effort on wood products/utilization. If you have any experience with solid wood or other higher-valued products from SRWC and would like to share it with the group, contact Pat at <pwmoore@potlatchcorp.com>.

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**WHOLE TREE ENERGY PROJECT APPROVED**

The state of Minnesota's Public Utility Commission gave approval on December 20, 1999 for building a biomass power project that would rely heavily on farm grown hybrid poplars. The project, using Whole Tree Energy™ technology, has been approved within the range of 25 to 75 MW. The location of the facility is expected to be in or near St. Peter, MN and the Minnesota River. A 50 MW facility, the size preferred by the project developers (EPS/Beck Power), could require establishment of about 55,000 acres of hybrid poplars if the Minnesota mandate for 75% reliance on closed-loop biomass is met with woody crops. Closed-loop wood facilities are allowed to use other wood sources in early years if plantings to supply the facility are being established. The highly integrated technology is depending on newly designed planting and harvesting technology, high yielding poplar trees, no chipping costs, reduced handling costs, efficient drying techniques, and innovative combustion designs to keep the power production costs within acceptable limits. Technologies and varieties of hybrid poplar trees developed jointly by the DOE Bioenergy Feedstock Development Program and the USDA Forest Service will be relied upon heavily to achieve the desired yields and costs. It is likely that project support and evaluation technical assistance will be sought by the project developers from ORNL.

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**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**21ST SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL POPLAR COMMISSION OF FAO**
Portland, Oregon
September 24 - 30, 2000

*Poplar and Willow Culture: Meeting the Needs of Society and the Environment*
Hosted jointly by the USA and Canada

For additional information contact:
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Tel: (715) 362-116; Fax: (715) 362-1166
email: jisebran@newnorth.net

Jim Richardson
Poplar Council of Canada
The deregulation of the electric industry, the tightening of environmental regulations, the emergence of new technologies, and the recognition of the importance of agriculture in meeting our energy needs provide an exciting backdrop for the first bioenergy conference of the twenty-first century. Bioenergy 2000 is the ninth biennial conference hosted by the U.S. Department of Energy's Regional Biomass Energy Program.

America's worsening dependence upon foreign oil and our increasing awareness of the threat posed by global warming have stimulated a significant redirection of our national R&D efforts to investigate the potential for alternative transportation fuels. Dedicated short-rotation woody and herbaceous crops, invigorated by genetic engineering, continue to show promise as economically viable feedstocks for power plants and for conversion to ethanol in our automobiles, and light and heavy vehicles. Gasification, pyrolysis and fuel cell technologies demonstrate new promise for commercial utilization in the early decades of the twenty-first century.

Information about Bioenergy 2000 can be found at http://www.nrbp.org/bio2000.htm

SUSTAINING SPONSORS

The following companies listed below are sustaining sponsors of the SRWC-OWG. Their contribution to the Working Group is most appreciated.

SRWC - OWG Web Page:
http://www.woodycrops.org/

For membership services:
Bob Perlack; Oak Ridge National Laboratory
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For all other inquiries:
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brhartsough@ucdavis.edu
MEMBERSHIP REQUEST FORM

Name ________________________________

Position ________________________________

Company/Organization ________________________________

Address ________________________________

Phone ________________________________

Fax ________________________________
e-mail ________________________________

Areas of Responsibility ________________________________

SRWC Interests ________________________________

G Will G Will not allow this information to be published/placed on homepage.

Please complete and return to:
   Jim Shepard
   NCASI
   P.O. Box 141020
   Gainesville, FL 32614-1020

Please make your check payable to NCASI (memo: SRWC Working Group).