

BWG/FIA 2013 Tree Planting and TPO Meeting

Atlanta, GA

May 21-22, 2013

Purpose: As part of the National FIA User Group, the BWG and FIA met to discuss options for improving tree planting data and annualizing TPO.

Agenda, Presentations and Attendees: Archived at <http://www.ncasi2.org/downloads/BWG/>

Follow-up items and strong endorsements/concerns from the meeting participants:

- 1) **Tree planting:** The estimates of acres planted each year are very useful. The group suggested that it would be even more useful if confidence intervals could be provided. Ratio estimators were proposed as one way to do this. However, ratio estimators would require collecting data on planting density in addition to number of seedlings. The group approved of efforts to collect information on species and broad owner category to enhance the tree planting data. In general, the group was pleased that FIA was helping to support this important work.
- 2) **TPO:** The recommendations at this meeting were similar to those from the National User Group Meeting. The group liked what the TPO program is doing in the South and would like to see other regions enhance their TPO survey efforts to be more in line with the South. The idea of maintaining a current national list of all wood using facilities was proposed. Such a list would facilitate implementing an annualized sampling scheme that would serve to harmonize efforts at a national scale and make the TPO program more compatible with the annual forest inventory. FIA should take advantage of similar data collection activities if they can avoid duplication of effort. For example, UGA is doing similar work that should be further investigated by FIA.
- 3) **Budget Issues:** A wide array of users with diverse interests derive value from FIA data. FIA data provide information about carbon, economic development opportunities, jobs, wildlife habitat and other environmental issues. The BWG group appreciates that FIA makes every effort to respond to user needs and requests. However, there is a limit to how much FIA can provide in the current budget environment. The group values tree planting and TPO data, but they value the FIA forest plot data even more. The group thought that the FIA plot intensity and remeasurement cycles are already too low and further reductions would seriously reduce the value of the program. In order to maintain current levels of forest plot data collection, and respond to emerging user needs, the FIA budget must be increased by 10 percent from the current level. The group proposed that a meeting be arranged with the Chief of the Forest Service to convey the critical nature of these needs and to request additional support for FIA.