

<p>UAF Master Planning Committee Special Meeting Agenda</p> <p>Friday, May 29, 2009; 9 – 11 a.m. Chancellor’s Conference Room; Signers’ Hall Room 330</p>	<p>1) Olson Application for Balsam Poplar Experiment in T-field</p> <p>See Special meeting agenda (PDF)</p>
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**Master Planning Committee Meeting
Special Meeting to Review Olson T-field Proposal**

May 29, 2009
Notes

Attending: Deb Horner, Rich Boone, Lydia Anderson, Jonathan Shambare, Lydia Anderson, Gary Newman, Joshua Greenberg, Scott Arko, Scott McCrea, Jennie Carroll, Dianne Milke, Luke Hopkins

Guests: Pete Fix, Marie Gilbert, Linda Zanazzo, Stan Justice, John Alden, Muffy Durst, David Durst, Tim Mowery, Amy Breen, Amanda Robertson, Nick Levsen, and several unidentified people

Proposed Research – Matt Olson

Matt gave an overview of the proposed research. He described the purpose, site prep, establishment of the fence, study design, teaching value, graduate and undergraduate training components.

Why in the T-field? There is a need for 6 contiguous acres. Area has to be fenced to prevent animal browsing and to provide security. Proximity provides teaching value. Accessibility is beneficial for maintenance and watering. Farm fields were considered, but the limit for use was 2 acres. Matt contacted Kristi Sherman and asked if any other lands might be appropriate. Other suggested areas (including Bunnell Park) were not appropriate.

Project has teaching value for UAF and the community as well as its research

value. Project will provide useful information on biofuels, with a community benefit.

Questions were entertained from MPC members.

Pete Fix asked whether winter access will be required. Winter access for research will not be required for first few years. Winter access for classes may be helpful. Existing walking trails would be used.

Gary asked how propagation of the balsam poplars will be controlled. Matt replied that mowing will control the suckering of the trees. Area around the fence will be kept clear of suckers. There will be a buffer (~4 m) between plantation and fence.

Luke Hopkins asked about connection about EPSCoR. Matt described EPSCoR, National Science Foundation program, and the Alaska EPSCoR program. One goal is to provide benefits to Alaska and the local community.

Hans asked about the long-term implications. Who will take obligations for long-term funding support, including maintenance? Matt replied that Carol Lewis has offered to maintain mowing as necessary. There is institutional support from Carol Lewis. Rotation is 12-20 yrs.

Jonathan asked if there is much need for maintenance after 5 yrs. Matt replied that not much maintenance is required.

Lydia asked when the fence might be taken down. Matt replied that it depends on the rate of tree growth, so possibly in 15 yrs.

Summary of Review Process to Date – Pete Fix, North Campus Subcommittee Chair, and Luke Hopkins, North Campus Manager

Pete gave an overview of the history of the project through the North Campus Subcommittee process. NCS learned of the project and approved a motion in a May 7 meeting that other sites be considered and that a process involve an open review involving stakeholders. Pete described the committee membership and the groups that it represents.

Matt Olson submitted a permit application on May 15, and NCS met on May 20 to

consider the application. Pete described the criteria used to evaluate applications. NCS approved the permit application at the May 20 meeting.

Luke Hopkins introduced himself as North Campus Manager and described his role in the North Campus management process and the application process. Luke described the Farm's periodic mowing activity in the T-field. Luke described the sequence of events with respect to the application process. Luke has talked with Carol Lewis about the long-term management of the area.

Scott asked if the bird boxes have been moved. Luke said they have been moved.

Joshua inquired about the long-term use of the field. Luke described the historical use of the field for tillage (oats at one time) and hay.

Lydia asked the T-field total acreage. Total acreage is 23 acres. Lydia asked about NCS vote. Vote was 3-1.

Deb asked about type of fencing. Fencing is not chain-link; it is the same fence type as the fence by the stadium trail.

Appeal of North Campus Subcommittee Approval of Olson Permit Application

Stan Justice raised objections about the process. Initially there was no public notice; there was public concern as a consequence.

Stan states that the project is not consistent with the North Campus Plan ("preservation plan").

Stan described about the natural assets of the North Campus and the value of pastoral settings. People are passionate about maintaining an open field. Contentious process may encourage vandalism. Stan mentioned \$5000 damage to bulldozer that was used to clear Midnight Express Trail in the Potato Field previously. Stan believes that other options should be considered.

Rich asked the number of Trails Club members; there are roughly 30 due-paying members. Trails Listserv has ~100 subscribers.

Public Comment

Amy Breen: UAF Graduate student in Biology & Wildlife and avid skier and runner. Doesn't believe it will have a negative impact. Suggests that a kiosk that explains the purpose of the experiment would be a positive element.

Amanda Roberston: Ph.D. Candidate in Biology & Wildlife. Amanda will work on the project. She described her planned research. Research has broad scientific implications and useful information to determine effects of climate change on tree growth. Amanda needs a campus location because of time demands of the research. She needs a secure site. Amanda has received funding from UAF Center for Global Change and INBRE to support an Alaska Native student and a local high school student. A site with easy accessibility is very beneficial.

Luke asked whether access will require motorized access; Amanda replied that it will be non-motorized.

Nick Levens: Postdoc with Matt Olson. Common garden poplar study will be very attractive and will draw researchers.

John Alden: Retired from former Institute of Northern Forestry. Matt's common experiment would not be unique to the T-field area; there are two other studies, including the Exotic Tree Plantation established in 1964. Both were established in 1973. John is interested in comparing his results with results expected from Matt Olson's study. T-field area has been used for research for many years.

David Durst: Mechanical engineering student at UAF. David expressed his concerns about the location of the study. He described the value of the site for skiing. 36% of skiing across open areas in the Fairbanks area is in the T-field. Open field skiing would be reduced. There would be a large impact on the field visually. Raised questions about an alternative site. Map in the North Campus Plan does not include the T-field or the Potato Field as part of the Arboretum.

Margaret Durst: Alumni with a graduate degree in education. She skied the trails a lot as an undergraduate. Specified the recreational value of the trails. Wonders if the experiment will introduce invasive species; Matt responded that it will not. Margaret highlighted the visual value of the T-field.

MPC Discussion and Recommendation

Scott asked the location of the trail relative to the forest edge; it is ~80”.

Gary asked Matt Olson whether the Farm fields were initially selected as the site. He had discussions with Carol Lewis, who considered the Farm fields and decided that the T-field was the best site.

Gary asked if Luke might have identified alternative 6-acre locations in the North Campus. Luke replied that other areas were considered but deemed unacceptable.

Pete Fix explained that Carol Lewis didn’t understand that the work in the T-field needed a permit.

Jonathan offered that the process was followed properly.

Joshua asked what would happen if the project doesn’t go into the T-field. Matt said that he’s not sure. Matt said that using 2 acres in the Farm fields is a possibility, but that would accommodate only 1/3 of the proposed project. Seedlings will remain in the greenhouse until planting.

Rich recommended that LARS be considered as an alternative site and if deemed unsuitable that the project be established in the T-field.

Motion submitted by Gary, seconded by Josh:

“The MPC recommends that LARS be explored as an alternative site and if not determined suitable by the PI within 7 days that the T-field location is approved for the Balsam Poplar Project.”

Motion passed unanimously (11-0).

Meeting was adjourned at 11:00A.