Arlington Plan Revision Meeting October 14, 2003: Timber Management

Break-Out Session: 4 Question Stations

1. What is your view or "desired future condition" for the vegetation on the Green Mountain National Forest?
2. How would you like to see timber management change from the current Forest Plan?
3. What methods would you like to see used for timber management? (Even-aged, un-even aged, other?)
4. For what purposes would you like to see timber management used (wildlife habitat, timber production, other

Public Comments

Question 1: What is your view or "desired future condition" for the vegetation on the Green Mountain National Forest?

Should be a healthy mix of vegetation
DFC should be healthy, thriving forest accomplished through a variety of prescriptions that are adaptive
DFC should be a working forest-this is a National Forest, not a National Park!
A mosaic of habitat communities including early successional to mature habitats
Provide range of grasses, shrubs, tree species-representative of the Green Mountain NF
Vegetation management should continue to allow a working forest for both commodity and non-commodity (hunting is dependant on forest management)
Coordination across landscape level-across ownership, not just forest so habitat continuity and diversity are
FS is not driven by same economics as private, so have opportunity to go for long rotations and large tree size
Would like to see evidence of working landscape-don't hide behind visual corridors…just like in agriculture , the landscape of Vermont should reflect its working tradition and not be unbroken forest
Multiple use forest-available to everyone-loggers, campers, general visitors
Maintain existing apple orchards
Leave old snags for den trees, leave mature trees for Indiana Bats
Multiple use isn't on every acre
Management for non-game species as well as game-so need some unbroken forests for warbler nesting and other non-game species
DFC is diverse forest types, age class, etc
Percent of early successional growth would be more responsible-stewardship issue, we are responsible for
1987 Wilderness went against what prevailing conservation science (but was done anyway)-science now is saying we need diversity-not just old growth but there are wildlife species dependant on old growth
FS needs to address early successional habitat which has 90% of wildlife dependant on it
5-15% of GMNF should be early successional
Find the correct percent of early successional and manage to that

Question 2: How would you like to see timber management change from the current Forest Plan?

Consequences of not meting goals in plan
Publicity about not meeting 1987 plan goals-reasons, impacts, etc
Meet economic and environmental targets and promises
Timber sales should be scaled such that local people (small operators) can compete
More silviculture driven, less politically driven
Make more demonstration projects a component of projects
Implement present plan
Resurgence of vegetation management program
Terminology should reflect reality of resource management-vegetation management
Stronger commitment to vegetation management by FS staff than in last decade
Let's have a timber management program

Provide habitat for wildlife
High quality sugar maples=sawtimber
More small scale vegetative treatments and projects
More selection cuts
Less 2 stage shelterwood cuts
Larger areas of unbroken forest for game and non-game species
More ecological considerations-planning by watersheds like Hubbard Brook and White River Partnership
2% of Vermont should be Wilderness

Question 3: What methods would you like to see used for timber management? (Even-aged, un-even aged, other?)

Both even and un-even aged management-not enough even aged in recent years
Variety of management for timber-produce what we said we would in the 1987 plan
Use demonstration, small-scale sales to show good stuff we do
Just do something!
Both types-use clearcutting where appropriate and science supports it
Methods should be based on science and prescriptions to meet desired outcome
Don't limit management tools to meet biological objectives
Use new technology to implement "light on the land"
Minimal standard roads-limit skidder and other tool sizes
Concerned that economic won't show true trade-offs if certain harvest methods are abandoned (clearcutting)
Uneven-aged, if use clearcutting-keep it small (<10 acres) and very infrequent
No checkerboard clearcuts
Deer exclusion experiments-need more data
Leave large corridors of unmanaged forest for wildlife

Question 4: For what purposes would you like to see timber management used (wildlife habitat, timber production, other purposes)?

Need to exclude high steep slopes and protect watersheds (Hubbard Brook watershed studies)
Use timber management as a tool to reach sustainable multi-use goals
Diversity of uses and cover types
#1 Wildlife habitat #2 Sustainable forestry timber production
No core areas (reserves)
Support local economy (25% fund, jobs, forest industry)
Every project is demonstration forestry
Use small timber sale areas for demonstration sites
Healthy forest=healthy local economy
Use small sales for local labor…use other factors other than high bid to award a timber sale-advertise more small sales, use more outsourcing to local contractors (foresters, wildlife bios, engineers)
Maintain biological diversity as provided by NFMA
Provide high quality recreational hunting due to posting on private
GMNF has sustained forestry for 70 years-why are we saying that is has not been sustainable?

Summary Remarks

Credibility problem with FS-did not reach objectives and meet promises. GMNF has been making decisions inconsistent with current Plan
Hope all future planning will be ecologically based-would like integrated projects based on watersheds and research results from Hubbard Brook
Opportunity to provide habitat and forest products demonstrations to help landowners-GMNF needs to set

FS needs to admit and deal with reasons for current plan failure-why did we want those goals and why would we
Plan had built I contradictions-needs to be integrated and tested for implementation
Reasons plan has failed is beyond corrective scope of planning process
Forest is paid for by everyone in the US-should be available to everyone-environmental groups have funding to
Need to look at alternative: if we don't manage NFs as wood products, we would be getting wood from areas that have les environmental controls
Most wood in Vermont comes off private land-a lot of high grading and unsustainable forestry is occurring
It should not always have to get down to money but the incomes from harvest comes to towns
All agree we want a healthy forest and a healthy forest is a working forest
Some impediments (appeals, litigation) will still affect revised forest plan
Problem is process
Too many special interest groups-need to fix problem with organization
Question about 1927 flood-acquired NF land for flood protection
Objective: high quality recreation hunting
A healthy forest is a working forest