

## **Bristol Plan Revision Meeting October 21, 2003: Public Comments**

### **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 purposes)?

### **Public Comments**

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

More continuous cutting-smaller size with a greater frequency

Based on sound science to benefit wildlife in GMNF and all other northeast forests

Multi-aged forest

More soft wood stands

Balanced age-classes, species mix

All available age classes in working forest

Aspen and hemlock

Not managed by litigation, rather peer-reviewed sound science

Tree age 0-9 years

More oak regeneration

More forest openings

Maintain former farmlands in lower elevations as early successional forests through biomass cuts

Middle 1/3 elevations managed through timber management practices to include patch cuts, shelterwood and thinning

Upper 1/3 elevations (>2500') maintained as mature forest (especially protect coniferous forest)

Mixed age management-more shelterwood cuts

Broad range of ages and species-while helping to produce commercially viable products

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

Implement plan objectives

Keep the integrity of timber managed lands with large continuous areas

Put harvest back into the equation

Modify Standards and Guidelines to support, rather than hinder, forest management (such as aesthetic guidelines, road grades (too low of a percent), and vegetation standards

Keep regeneration cuts (Overstory Removal) as 3-7 year rotations, not 10-15 years  
Integrate timber management practices with wildlife management based on scientific evidence  
Timber management practices move towards early successional and conifers  
Put timber money back into wildlife management  
Put timber money back into local economy  
Timber management plan should have a continuous vegetative management program

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

No more wilderness-style management  
Depends on the attributes of the forest and whether we are doing management or mitigation  
No "big tree" management for park-like settings  
Use all methods  
Clearcut for disease  
More clearcuts and patch cuts 1-50 acres in size (best for wildlife and plant species)  
Want 20% early successional forest in GMNF...use "Early Successional Habitat and Open Lands Assessment Report" and New England Wildlife as references  
Use Yamasaki as a consultant  
Leave the healthy, mature trees  
Clearcuts are good for deer and moose browse  
Have more even-aged management, specifically early successional management  
Manage clearcuts after they are 9 years old with thinning to favor mast trees  
Use biomass cuts (example chipping) to produce better vegetation (save certain types of vegetation such as hard and soft mast trees)  
More continuous cuts over time  
Reduce number of maples  
Have controlled burns to provide openings and early successional habitat  
Have more shelterwood cuts

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

Generate revenue for U.S. Treasury  
Generate more site specific, stand improvement revenues  
Timber, habitat and demonstration  
Promotion of solid science in opposition to fear and emotion  
Wildlife habitat, timber production, education, important to be a working forest

Improve forest vegetation and wildlife diversity  
Ways to improve fisheries  
Improve/increase forest density-more younger trees per acre  
More softwood stands, especially hemlock-including plantings  
Demonstration forestry and wildlife management  
Provide better wildlife habitat for a variety of species  
Maintain Vermont traditional uses such as hunting, fishing, recreation uses such as ATV, snowmobiles, horse, and mountain bikes  
Manage timber with an eye to developing recreational opportunities that do not currently exist on GMNF land and are consistent with federal land use  
Trail system development that is adjunct to timber harvest is desirable (ATV, snowmobile, off-road motorcycles)  
For even aged regeneration  
Provide habitat through even-aged and uneven-aged timber management  
Should be used to demonstrate a variety of timber management strategies  
Multiple use management  
Supporting traditional uses and the local economy  
Clearcuts can be good for opening areas for deer and moose browse, and new growth for other critters  
Provide winter food in uplands for deer and moose  
Improve prey base such as hares and small animals

## **Wrap-Up**

Due to population pressures, important to protect water  
Important to have an adhoc committee (timber industry rep, foresters and other varied backgrounds represented) provide input before decisions are made-not FS alone  
Don't have number games make decisions-rely on scientific data  
Support active vegetation management (read quote on p. 15 from [New England Wildlife](#))  
GMNF forests are different than western U.S. forests and others around the world...due to climate and rain we can manage more actively-  
example, Mt. Abraham clearcuts-recovered 25 years later  
No high elevation soil erosion from 1800s clearcuts  
Eschew comments heard-use science!  
Include expert witnesses in litigation (we do.)  
Need better education tools-start with schools-public needs to hear truth about vegetation management  
Need to get working forest/historical perspective across to public via education  
Public meeting attendance all seem pre vegetation management, are non-timber folks educated or involved prior to court battles? Response:  
not all meetings are as like-minded as Bristol-do get representation from both sides of vegetation management  
All GMNF activities subject to appeal except acquisition-it should be too!

Develop litigation rule: appellars put up a bond that is forfeited if they lose or if the suit is frivolous (this is not within the authority of the GMNF)

Develop alternatives: provide perspective, 1 alternative should show more harvesting than 1987 plan with considerations that there is enough wilderness already

Everyone needs to improve awareness and understanding of multi-use (harvesting provides early successional habitat, recreation opportunities, roads, ATV areas, support of rural culture...)