

Granville Local Planning Group Meeting Notes 2-11-03

Question #1: What kind of place should the forest be and is that different than what it is now?

Access Comments

Need accessibility for all-not just physically fit people
Maintain road network to spread out diverse uses
Some roads are degrading from previous flooding-consider converting to trails
Accessible for all uses-designated areas for different users so safe and travelable
How do Forest Service temporary road standards track with Vermont AMP?

Habitat Comments

Diversity of habitat important
Provide edge habitat for biodiversity and varied habitat
Birds and wildlife habitat is important
Deer yards should be considered
Logging is necessary for habitat
This is our habitat as well-people are part of the ecosystem
Long Trail is a wildlife corridor
Variety of habitats is good
Keep old farmsteads open-some or a lot-especially for wildlife habitat-all the old farms are growing up to be brush
Need early successional balance in habitats
Maintain wildlife corridors

Ecological Environment Comments

Green Mountain National Forest provides an island of stability in a sea of change
Managing upland meadows needs to be considered ((ex. apple orchards and open land)
Connectivity and continuity should be preserved
Sustainability of life
Sustain ecosystem health, biodiversity, watershed health, etc.
Safe place for flora and fauna
A diverse place
Safe for people and wildlife independent of one another
More managed as an older forest and a continuous forest with a natural forest condition
Degrading roads cause lots of sedimentation concerns-consider restoring and giving a different function
Is there a way to clean up the ice storm mess? Use as firewood?
Consciously work on older habitat because there is no older forest (ex. 250-300 years)-could include some harvest to facilitate restoration
Be mindful of restoration activities on old roads-erosion control and water quality protection
Develop more expertise in conservation biology-and bring this information into projects
Need greater biodiversity-ex. old growth forests

Multiple Use Comments

Working forest

Happy with multiple use

Farmers need range areas made available

Forest Service needs to find a way to include multiple uses on a working forest

Alternative energy sources should be considered (ex. wind power investigation)

Sustainable for multiple uses (forest/timber management, recreation, etc.)-this issue needs to be worked on

All uses are NOT compatible

Equilibrium must be reached on the number and type of uses

Separate uses: various areas good for recreation (ex. cross country skiing), other areas good for timber harvesting

Multiple use groups must continue to work cooperatively

Diversity of uses and opportunities should be available throughout the forest, not all in one area

Important to mesh multiple uses (and Management Areas) well so clearcuts not done next to wilderness

Multiple use is necessary

Open-not closed up-need sustainable harvest for timber and recreation uses but with limits (ex. bats)

Balance areas of use with areas of less use-look at all the uses and develop a plan that reduces the potential conflicts

Education and Information Comments

Educational tool (ex. Campfire program)

Historical education tool especially for tourists

Need better education for young people

Need grants for youth organizations and summer involvement

Larger education program and more communication

More demonstration forests

Land Use Comments

Happy with current management

Wilderness Comments

Provides wilderness

Need some areas not for people

Need areas where trails are not maintained

Less wilderness

Need more wilderness

Recreation Comments

Provides a place for recreation

Provide trails for horses

"Multiple use" trails really not for use by all (ex. snowmobile trails not really ok for cross country skiing)

More balance in recreation uses

How to coincide recreation uses better (or sort them apart)? Perhaps it is the responsibility of the special interest groups (ex. ATV, snowmobile, horse, cross country ski, VAST, Sierra Club groups) to take responsibility (user groups sort out conflicts and take on trail maintenance responsibilities)...

Need to consider future recreation impacts of technology (ex. GPS allows people to go anywhere without trails)

More multiple use recreation available than there is now-especially in winter including: snowmobiling, cross country skiing, snowshoeing

Less emphasis on snowmobiling and more on cross country skiing and snowshoeing

More areas open to mountain biking

Close snowmobile trails during certain times and allow other uses on those trails in the winter-find a way to strategically combine uses so they can all be accommodated

Be mindful of recreation/people pressure on resources-see where it is having an effect and assess the effects of these pressures

Be mindful of motorized versus non-motorized uses on the forest (and road use)-need to really sort that out

Diversity of recreation opportunities-include those not currently available (ex. mountain bikes, ATVs, motorized dirt bikes)

Need short loop trails

Comments on the Planning Process

Vermonters need to be included

Don't forget other "local" forests (ex. White Mt.) and how our "niche" fits in with theirs-we don't have to provide all uses on the Green Mountain National Forest

Forest Service management should be flexible

Forest Service employees are custodians, not managers, of the forest

Increase the Forest Service staff-they are understaffed to be able to manage all the lands that we have

Have a plan that can be implemented

Social/Economic Comments

Perhaps the Green Mountain National Forest should be a National Monument

Stability for rural economy

Size of forest in an attraction (ex. tourism) but also a complication (ex. timber management)

Loss of access to logging=loss of sawmills and economic falls for local economy

Provides opportunities not afforded on private land

Green Mountain National Forest should serve as a model for other forests

As human population increases, it becomes harder to find quiet and peace-example of why the Long Trail is an important resource (also for tourism dollars)

Consider adding more volunteer crews with a Green Mountain National Forest volunteer coordinator

Need ecologically sustainable management: living within our budget

Economic impact on towns where Green Mountain National Forest is a substantial portion is important

Human scale is important due to proximity to millions

Land Acquisition Comments

Land acquisition is good

Should buy all the land that we can

Stop buying land-it takes away from the timber industry and the Green Mountain National Forest has very little logging as is

Continue land acquisition, would like the forest to be bigger

Wildlife Comments

White tail deer populations not as active or large as they used to be

Need to be careful with nuisance species: avoid getting them started

Be mindful of the integrity of the forest-over all else: recreation and timber-forest is healthy and there is wildlife habitat-greater emphasis on wildlife here because 90% of land in Vermont is private where people are in control

Timber Comments

Some logging ok at appropriate scale

Funding and resources need to be available for timber stand improvement

No high elevation logging

Increase biodiversity through sustainable logging

Size of the Green Mountain National Forest makes it economical for logging

Logging industry is losing as much money as farmers post-Northeast Dairy Compact

Topography of forest not appropriate for logging

Experimental logging should be used to determine best logging practices

Need more active timber harvesting to benefit wildlife habitat-forest not healthy at this time following ice storm damage of 1998-1999 storm

Should harvest timber on the forest-need an active timber program

Where is the line between thinning out the forest (for protection and health) and just harvesting timber? Who draws that line?

What type of an assessment is done prior to harvesting an area? How do you decide where-why here or there? Is there room for more study with this?

Active forest management (timber harvesting) on areas that are suitable for that purpose

Question #2: What is unique, special, or important about the Green Mountain National Forest?

Multiple Use Importance

Multiple uses generally can co-exist and should continue as is

Multiple use that allows for recreation and timber harvesting is important

Want diverse uses however, the placement of the varied uses on the landscape is important (continue multiple use carefully)

Ecological Importance

Diversity of the forest-lands, water, wildlife

Is a resource for clean water

Repository for a lot of threatened and endangered species

Economic and Social Importance

Large public land chunk

Tourism

Proximity of forest and wilderness areas to large populations of people

Adapt with demands of increasing human populations for things such as multiple use opportunities

It is a forest-it is not developed-it is big

Can imagine it more in demand with future population pressures

People here are more open to an open forum and recognizing the value of the work of partners and volunteers-need to preserve this

Demographics-there are parts that are continuous versus other parts in private lands-not like other forests

Number of people within a day's drive

Is the forest we have in Vermont-it is ours

Quiet and solitude

Recreation Importance

Snowmobiling

Trail accessibility is important

Place to experience solitude

Long distance trails provided by large tract of 1 landowner-easier to deal with maintenance and management of the trails

Only place in Vermont where you can really experience backcountry recreation

Need to consider recreation limits-may not need limits now but consider the trends

Long Trail on Mt. Abe still has too many hikers

Wilderness Importance

Large contiguous areas of forest land (wilderness)

Wilderness experience, peace and solitude provided by Long Trail

Multiple use is good but would like more wilderness (no roads, allow for wildlife habitat and human recreation)

Importance of Management Decisions

No new rules necessary beyond existing rules

No scientific basis has been given for the "need" for more wilderness-if Green Mountain National Forest proposes more wilderness, why not less?

Timber Importance

Advocate intensive management (timber management for wildlife) by reducing red tape