

## Bristol Local Planning Group Meeting Notes 3-18-03

### Goals Public Comments Received at the Meeting

1. Maintain productivity of soils.

2. Restore Atlantic salmon to the Connecticut River watershed.

Sounds like an objective, not a goal.

Goals should be more general than they are now.

Agree that this is an objective-change to "restore native species that used to exist in the waters."

Why are Atlantic salmon and wetlands pulled out to be addressed specifically while other things (ex. uplands) are not?

3. Enhance and maintain riparian and aquatic habitats.

The land grab should stop until such time as you adequately manage the land you already have. Focus on offering a better mix within what you have with the money used to grab land.

Could be in opposition to Goals #11-#13-fear that they will be used to prevent Goals 11-13 from happening.

4. Maintain and protect wetland areas.

The land grab should stop until such time as you adequately manage the land you already have. Focus on offering a better mix within what you have with the money used to grab land.

Why is this here if it is part of federal requirements? Do you mean every wetland? Which types? Could add "requirement" to it like Goal #9-then make sure the statement represents the requirement.

Why are Atlantic salmon and wetlands pulled out to be addressed specifically while other things (ex. uplands) are not?

5. Maintain adequate quality, amount, and distribution of habitats to produce viable and sustainable populations of plants and animals.

Which plants and animals? Native species...

Could be in opposition to Goals #11-#13-fear that they will be used to prevent Goals 11-13 from happening.

6. Maintain a full range of ecological processes and systems that naturally occur on the Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF).

Could be in opposition to Goals #11-#13-fear that they will be used to prevent Goals 11-13 from happening.

Need to add "structure of ecological systems"-components, structure, and function.

7. Increase use of prescribed fire to maintain openings on the GMNF for wildlife and human uses.

Is the increase in fire based on any ecological process information? Peterson's report indicates very small and very few natural fires.

8. Enhance and maintain wildlife corridors and linkages.

As the forest is >90% forested, what sorts of corridors and linkages are envisioned? For which wildlife species?  
Could be in opposition to Goals #11-#13-fear that they will be used to prevent Goals 11-13 from happening.

9. Coordinate habitat management with other federal, state and local agencies. (Requirement?)

Could be in opposition to Goals #11-#13-fear that they will be used to prevent Goals 11-13 from happening.

Could be used to support Goals #11-#13

10. Protect all rare and uncommon or outstanding biological, ecological, or geological areas on the GMNF, including old growth and native flora.

*Remove "including old growth and native flora" that is an objective, not a goal.*

11. Provide for and manage a sustainable vegetation and timber management program on the GMNF.

What is a "sustainable vegetation management program"? Can this be measured and monitored as timber sustainability can be?

Revise to include "reduce the surplus of wood" ...more wood is growing than we're using and we're not efficiently using the resource.

12. Provide benefits to other resource areas through coordinated timber harvesting.

13. Increase biodiversity by providing a range of vegetative age classes and types from early successional to old growth through sustainable timber harvesting and vegetation management.

This should not be a goal of the forest. It is a landscape-level goal-larger than just the GMNF lands. Diversity for sake of increased species richness is not necessarily a good thing.

Add at the end "over the extent of the Green Mountain National Forest" so it can't be interpreted as applying to everyone.

14. Maintain quality settings for motorized recreational opportunities.

When buying new properties, with snowmobile trails already there, keep those trails open to sleds only.

Ditto to above suggestion except ATVs should be allowed on trails independent of snowmobiles.

Replace "maintain" with "create"...current GMNF management plan offers little in the way of a motorized recreation for ATV and OHM. Offering simple thru access where it is now gated would be a good jumping on point.

"Maintain" quality settings on motorized recreation? I want to be able to ride my ATV on National Forest land and as far as I know there are no "opportunities" for ATVs in the National Forest. Maintain seems a little pre-mature. How about "create"?

Provide camping in conjunction with ATV trail system.

Create quality trail system for ATVs.

Provide large land areas for motorized recreation vehicles.

Please define motorized recreational use...is this snowmobile, ATV and motor bikes?

Could be combined with Goal #15

Motorized recreational vehicles (ORVs) should be strictly prohibited from most of the GMNF, and enforcement of violations should be pursued.

Signage should encourage and include a telephone number to call and report violations (refer to Goal #35)

15. Maintain quality settings for non-motorized recreational opportunities.

Could be combined with Goal #14

16. Maintain and protect Wilderness and primitive areas to provide opportunities for quiet recreation and solitude.

Wilderness designated areas should be more restrictive in terms of access. Footpaths within designated wilderness areas should be abandoned to protect biodiversity and endangered plant species, and provide a true wilderness experience.

By providing trails (walk paths and motor vehicle trails) that confines the area of damage or intrusion to/on wilderness areas.

Stress maintain but not increase.

Maintain is a confusing word.

This is a duplicate of #15, just rephrased in a different manner.

Take out "to provide"

17. Provide a high quality and diverse trail system.

Replace "provide" with "create and manage" diversity of user interests is not met by current offerings. Emerging uses in current and 1996 list unforeseen recreation uses that still have no plan other than "no."

18. Decrease recreational user conflicts.

Yes, any decrease in conflicts would be great. Motorized users have just as much right to use as non-motorized but not the same level of access.

Agree! Need to add to the goal "...by providing a multi user, managed trail system to include all uses." This means emerging and unforeseen uses.

An objective for this would be separate trail system for conflicting uses (ex. dog sledding).

Don't need-too specific, delete.

19. Emphasize dispersed recreation opportunities.

Dispersed recreation should be monitored for impact on ecological structure, composition and function.

Yes! Yes! Yes! More motorized recreational uses.

Change "emphasize" to "create." Trailhead/access lacks in many areas with regard to number and types of uses.

Increase hunting opportunities by meeting vegetation management goals.

Agree very much, not an emphasis on facilities, user fees are annoying.

Don't need to emphasize backcountry to draw people in, remove Goal #19.

20. Provide recreation and relaxation opportunities for the wearied urban masses.

"Wearied" urban masses? What about the country or rural "wearied" masses? Your wording could use some adjustment.

As a Vermonter I am not interested in giving the GMNF to the urban masses!

Weary urban masses...Please! Add "trod upon rural few" to the sentence.

It would be scary to think a goal is to actively draw millions of people to the forest. A catch 22 balancing act.

This is a good goal, it is the public's woods, too many people reserving and trying to restrict use to the few.  
Kick this goal out.

21. Maintain, not increase, GMNF lands designated as alpine ski areas.

No! Increase access. Ski areas have proven to be good stewards of environ and offer the recreation opportunities that the forest does not.  
Allow ski areas to create a "wilderness" experience within existing ski area boundaries...will reduce costs associated with rescue efforts of the weary urban masses!

This is not appropriate, it is too specific, can't expand at ALL the way this is stated.

Don't agree, way too specific. Should expand (like ski areas).

22. Continue to provide four season recreational opportunities at alpine ski areas.

How about motorized recreation at alpine ski areas during 3 seasons other than winter?

Put a period after "opportunities" and drop the rest.

23. Provide an adequate level of road access to the forest.

The word "adequate" is too ambiguous for a goal statement.

What is adequate? If user demand is an indication, we have a long way to go.

What is "adequate"?? This needs to be clear so you know if you meet goal.

How do you know when you meet "adequate?"

24. Provide adequate access opportunities for a more diverse array of uses.

The use of "more" is reasonable to keep, because in the 2003 and 1996 Retrospectives, there are a wide number of recreational opportunities that are not included in current plan. More is a term to identify this inadequacy in current plan by including more opportunity.

The word "adequate" is too ambiguous for a goal statement.

What is "adequate"?? This needs to be clear so you know if you meet goal.

Drop word adequate.

Add the word " balance"

Drop word "more"

Keep word "more"

How do you know when you meet "adequate?"

25. Improve accessibility opportunities for people with disabilities.

Add..."By creating and managing a diversified trail system to accommodate emerging (ATV) user needs. Trail head openings are key.

More motorized access would allow more people with disabilities to access the land.

26. Improve control of illegal uses through law enforcement and access controls.

No illegal use would mean no enforcement.

Create a legal way for multiple users to have access in a managed way. No is not a management plan.  
Should decouple law enforcement and access controls in this goal...should probably be two separate goals.  
Tough to obtain, very expensive.

27. Maintain and enhance visual resources such as viewsheds, vistas, overlooks, and special features.

May be in conflict with Goal #29 (ex. towers and visuals)

28. Protect all uncommon or outstanding recreational and heritage areas on the GMNF.

Motorized trail access is a Vermont heritage. For plain 'ole "point A to point B" or recreational purposes, off road (TAR) access is a part of Vermont life.

How do you define "uncommon" or "outstanding?"

29. Provide opportunities for renewable energy use and development as long as it does not negatively impact other resources.

"Renewable energy use and development"-this is an awkward phrase and needs to be more specific: ex. generation of electricity from wind and sun.

"...as long as it does not negatively impact other resources"...either drop this or add it to all the other goals. It should apply to all goals.

30. Support regional and local economies through resource production and resource protection.

Objective: increase outreach to public on projects that meet this goal.

31. Maintain and enhance partnerships with community organizations.

Objective: use partnerships to increase enforcement of rules and regulations.

32. Protect qualities of the GMNF that contribute to Vermont's uniqueness and culture.

Objective: use partnerships to increase enforcement of rules and regulations.

33. Provide for a wide range of uses and activities in an ecologically, socially and economically sustainable way.

Isn't this really a Forest Service mandate?

Objective: use partnerships to increase enforcement of rules and regulations.

34. Minimize negative impacts of human activities to forest resources.

Delete this goal.

35. Improve GMNF sign system.

This is an objective.

Sign system is ok now.

Is a good goal-make allowed uses of trails/areas clearer

36. Provide educational opportunities on silvicultural techniques and sound forest management practices.

Pretty close-but should apply to all resources

Combine with Goal #37...no need to be specific about forest management.

37. Increase educational opportunities provided by and on the GMNF.

Pretty close-but should apply to all resources

38. Maintain and enhance relationships with local communities.

39. Coordinate with federal and state agencies.

40. Keep the Forest Plan current through an ongoing planning program and amendments.

41. Monitor activities and resources to determine effects, benefits, and conditions on an ongoing basis.

Monitoring and enforcement are really important.

42. Evaluate potential land acquisition parcels for resource conditions before or immediately after purchase.

The land grab should stop until such time as you adequately manage the land you already have. Focus on offering a better mix within what you have with the money used to grab land.

Allow the use of ATV and snowmobiles on all new land purchases.

Should be before the purchase.

Remove word "immediately"-doesn't fit with other goal wording.

43. Place newly acquired lands in a management area immediately after purchase.

Management Area designation should be based on certain criteria-landscape level/ecosystem management.

Allow time to access the potential use of new land-if new land is put into a management area "immediately" than potentially it can be "stuck" there.

Is a good idea-would protect existing trails.

Eliminate newly acquired (9.2) Management area designation.

Remove word "immediately"-doesn't fit with other goal wording.

44. Identify and mark GMNF boundaries within budgetary constraints.

Why mark boundaries?

Remove "within budgetary constraints"-applies to everything!

## New Goals Suggested at Meeting

Increase early successional forest to around 20% of Forest land-near the 1966 level-for wildlife and plant species that require that habitat.

Consider whether to purchase at all.

Need to do more education with schools and children.

Would like to see a goal statement related to using new silvicultural techniques focused on longer rotations and legacies.

Allow permit to use ATV for dog sled training on roads. For safety of dogs and public speed limits of 25 mph.

Allow the use of ATV's to access camping areas for family camping.

Enhance acreage of mature (ecological definition not silvicultural definition) forest conditions.