

GREEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST

WELCOME



GOALS FOR THE EVENING

- Explain the Scoping process and how you can be involved
- Review highlights of the 15 Year Retrospective
- Review the Notice of Intent proposed actions
- Provide an opportunity for you to ask questions about the Retrospective and the NOI

SCOPING PROCESS

- 90 Day comment period extended from 60 days – ends July 31st
- Comments on the revision topics or potential additional issues, and possible solutions to these issues are requested. Comments should focus on:
 - the proposal for revising the Forest Plan
 - and possible alternatives for addressing issues associated with the proposal.
 - Comments should be sent to the address listed in this notice.

SCOPING PROCESS

- How will your comments be used?
 - Identify potential issues
 - Identify significant issues
 - Explore alternatives in addition to No Action
 - Identify the potential environmental effects of the proposed action and alternatives.

Analysis of the Management Situation

- In order to prepare for the Notice of Intent to revise our Forest Plan, we are required to examine how well the Forest Plan has worked.
- Information is collected through meetings with the public, GMNF staff, from the Monitoring Reports and from the 10 Year Retrospective
- This review is the 15 Year Retropsective

15 YEAR RETROSPECTIVE



PURPOSE OF THE RETROSPECTIVE

This Retrospective:

- Reviews the issues and concerns that led to the creation of the Forest Plan.
- Examines the effectiveness of the Plan to resolve the original issues and concerns as expected.
- Summarizes and discusses the goals and accomplishments.

PURPOSE OF THE RETROSPECTIVE

- Summarizes and discusses Management Areas, Standards and Guidelines.
- Discusses public issues and concerns that have arisen over the 15 years of implementation of the Forest Plan.
- Outlines how public issues and concerns will be used in Plan revision.
- Discusses trends the PPlan did not anticipate

Issues the 1987 Forest Plan was created to address

- Resource Protection
- Future Land Adjustments and Newly Acquired Lands
- Protection of Significant Streams
- Protection of Special Areas
- Uneven-aged and Old Growth Conditions
- Increased Aspen
- Increased Upland Openings
- Deer Wintering Habitat

Issues the 1987 Forest Plan was created to address

- Higher Quality Sawtimber
- Reduce Clearcutting and Delay Overstory Removal
- Maintain Annual Amount of Wood Sold
- Amount of Wood Cut
- Type of Timber Management
- Wildlife Habitat
- Important Minerals
- Building Fewer Roads for Less Cost Per Mile

Issues the 1987 Forest Plan was created to address

- Protection of the Long Trail/Appalachian Trail (LT/AT)
- Increase Primitive Conditions
- Increase Semi-Primitive Conditions
- Maintain the Potential to Expand Ski Areas
- Provide Opportunities for Off Road Vehicles and Horses

GOALS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

What is a Goal?

- *A goal is a concise statement that describes a desired condition to be achieved in the future. It is normally expressed in broad, general terms and is timeless in that it has no specific date by which it is to be completed.*
- *A goal is not a specific directive, action, regulatory or policy statement.*

GOALS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Conclusions:

- Many goals are broad umbrella statements
- Many goals are phrased as directives, procedures or policies
- Some goals are actually required under Federal law
- Goals need to be reviewed and reorganized
 - ▣ Strategic Plan
 - ▣ Objectives & Actions

GOALS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Many outputs related to goals have been difficult to meet
- Outputs do not always measure how well a goal is being reached
- Output measurement methods need to be updated
- Focus more on evaluating effects of implementation activities rather than focusing on quantities
- Need to determine desired output – when is it too much

MANAGEMENT AREAS

 What is a Management Area?

- *A management area is a geographic area with similar management goals and the same encouraged, allowed, restricted and prohibited activities (management prescription).*

MANAGEMENT AREAS

- Current areas are primarily based on resource use – do not take landscape scale ecological dynamics into account
- Some area boundaries do not reflect the current state of knowledge on the area
- MA boundaries are difficult to determine on the ground
- 85,000 acres need designation

STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

● What is a Standard?

- *a standard is a rule to measure against (shall statement)*

● What is a Guideline?

- *a guideline is a policy (may statement)*

STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

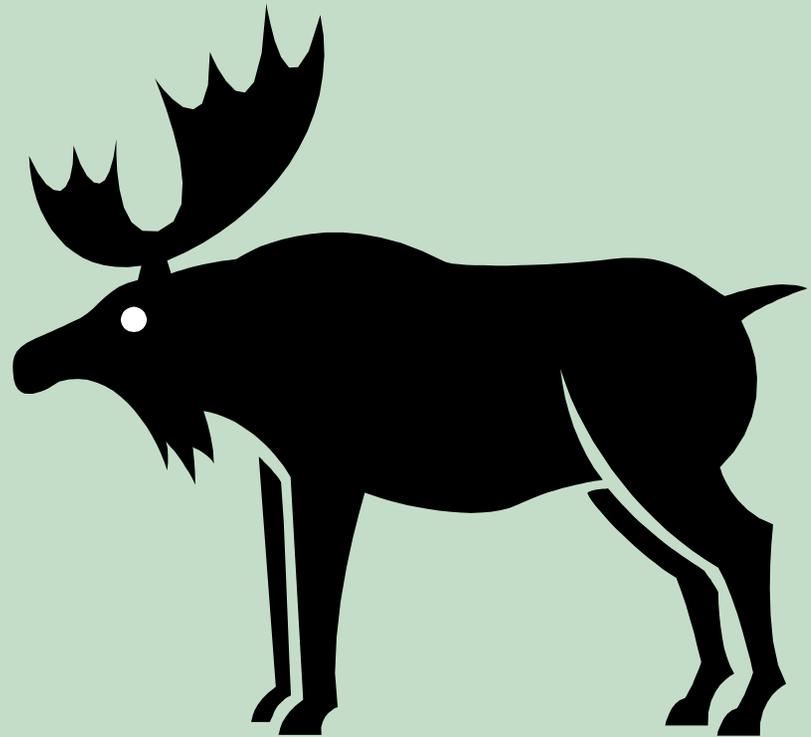
- Most Standards & Guidelines have been effectively achieving resource protection
- Difference between a standard and guideline is not clear
- Need to be updated based on new information
- Some are too prescriptive
- There are conflicting S&Gs for different resource areas
- Need coordination with State requirements

PUBLIC ISSUES

- As described in previous meetings
- Updated Issue Papers

TRENDS NOT ANTICIPATED IN THE 1987 PLAN

- Increases and changes in recreational use
- Changes in fish & wildlife conservation
- Black bears & migratory songbirds
- Biodiversity
- Increased desire for old growth areas



TRENDS NOT ANTICIPATED IN THE 1987 PLAN



- Conservation vs. preservation
- Increased concerns related to evenaged management
- Emerging Heritage Resources program
- Invasive exotics

TRENDS NOT ANTICIPATED IN THE 1987 PLAN

- Special uses
- Changes in ski area management
- Changing public values
- Funding for plan implementation



QUESTIONS ON THE RETROSPECTIVE?

NOTICE OF INTENT



SIX DECISIONS MADE IN A FOREST PLAN:

- Forest-wide multiple-use goals and objectives
- Forest-wide management requirements
- Management area direction
- Lands suited and not suited for timber management
- Monitoring and evaluation requirements
- Recommendations to Congress (such as wilderness)

Proposed Actions

- Explore management issues in order to draft a wide range of alternative ways to manage the National Forest
- Review the Management Areas in the current Forest Plan and look at alternative ways to organize the management of the National Forest, for example management areas based on watersheds or ecological groupings

PROPOSED ACTIONS

- Review all Forest Plan goals, objectives, standards and guidelines for desired direction, relevance, consistency and accuracy.
- Fix minor inconsistencies in the current Forest Plan

ISSUES THAT MAY VARY ALTERNATIVE

Special Areas

We propose to:

- Determine the most appropriate mix of specially designated areas to promote ecological, social, and economic sustainability.
- Make recommendations to Congress on special area designations such as Wilderness
- Make designations that are within the authority of the Forest Service such as Research Natural Areas.

ISSUES THAT MAY VARY ALTERNATIVE

Biodiversity & Ecosystem Management

We propose to build on the 1987 Forest Plan to:

- Provide for mixes of desired and viable plant and animal species populations, natural communities, and landscape patterns
- Revise the GMNF's management indicators including Management Indicator Species

ISSUES THAT MAY VARY ALTERNATIVE

Socio-economic concerns

We propose to:

- Provide for a mix of quantitative and qualitative socio-economic benefits provided by the Forest to the public and neighboring communities.

ISSUES THAT MAY VARY ALTERNATIVE

Recreation Management

We propose to:

- Provide for the appropriate mix of primitive, dispersed-use opportunities and more developed, higher density opportunities
- Provide guidance for the use of mountain bikes and the use of motorized vehicles such as snowmobiles and off-highway vehicles
- Identify the areas with opportunities for future trail development.

ISSUES THAT MAY VARY ALTERNATIVE

Timber Management

We propose to:

- Determine the appropriate level for timber harvesting.
- Establish methods and uses for vegetation management.
- More clearly define the desired mix and location of various vegetative age and composition.

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED BUT NOT EXPECTED TO VARY BY ALTERNATIVE

- Special Use Management
- Heritage resources
- Road Management & Transportation Planning
- Monitoring & Evaluation

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED BUT NOT EXPECTED TO VARY BY ALTERNATIVE

- Information & Education
- Visual Quality & Scenery
Management
- Coordination & Partnerships
- Water Resources
- Land Acquisition

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED BUT NOT EXPECTED TO VARY BY ALTERNATIVE

 These issues will be explored during the Forest Plan revision and may be addressed through

- Goals
- Objectives
- standards and guidelines
- There may also be management areas devoted to the various issues

RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES

- We will consider a wide range of alternatives when revising the Forest Plan.
- The alternatives will address different options to resolve issues over the revision topics listed above and to fulfill the purpose and need.
- A “no-action alternative”, meaning that management would continue under the existing Forest Plan, will be considered.
- No other alternative has been developed at this time, but other alternatives are likely to be based on the issues listed above

QUESTIONS ON THE NOTICE OF INTENT ?

CONTACT INFORMATION

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● Or visit our website:

www.fs.fed.us/r9/gmfl/nepa_planning/plan_revision.htm

THANK YOU!

