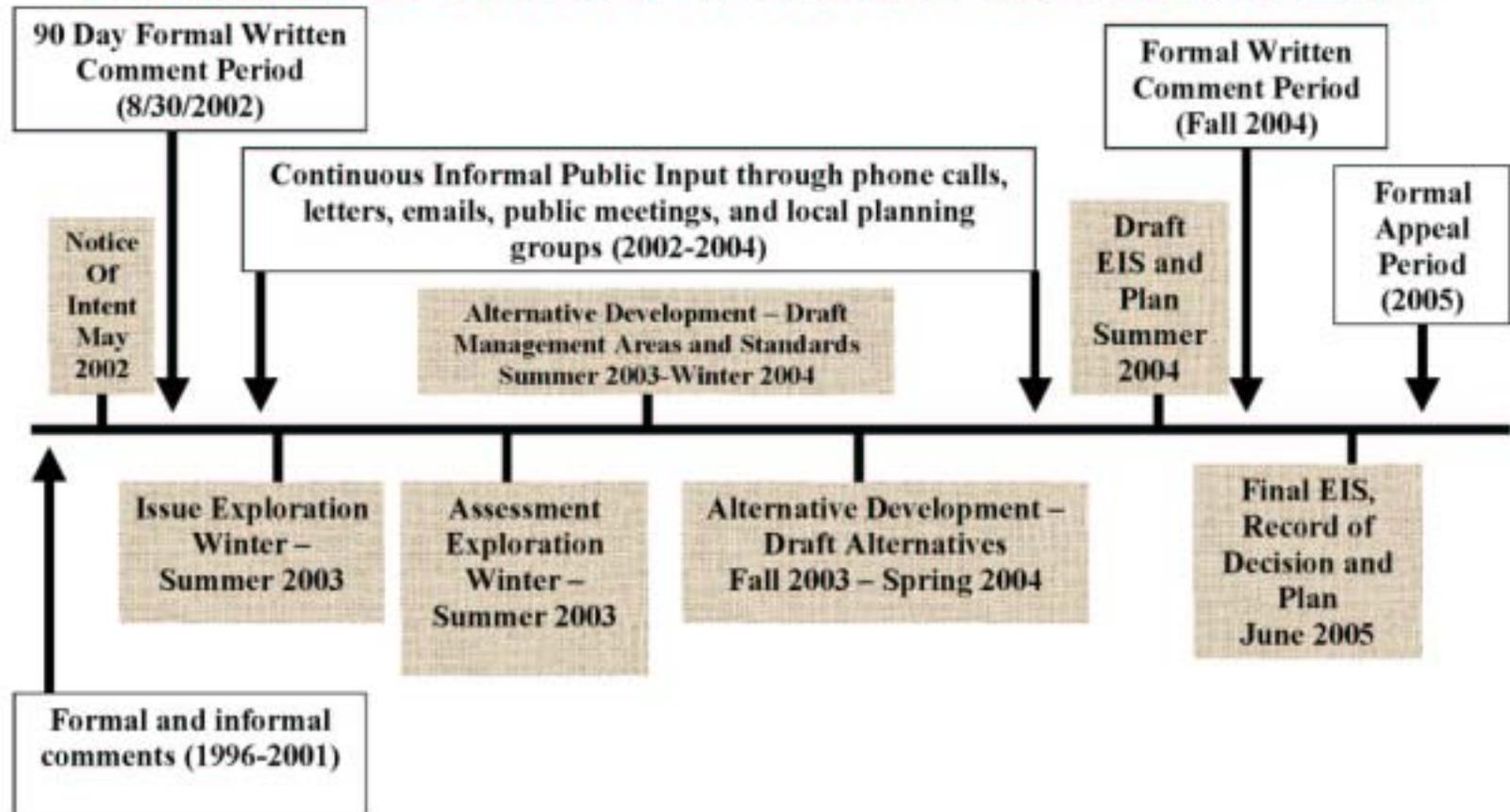


Public Involvement Timeline GMNF Forest Plan Revision





**LAND ADJUSTMENT
PROGRAM**

FOR THE

**GREEN MOUNTAIN
NATIONAL FOREST**

LAND ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM

LAND ACQUISITION : purchase of fee interest in real property (the purchase of land)

RIGHTS-OF-WAYS: purchase of land or interest in land (across private land) for the purpose of providing access to NF lands.

EXCHANGES : Exchange of federal land for non-federal land. Common reasons for exchanges are to consolidate public ownership, provide public benefit or to resolve a trespass.

TRESPASS & ENCHROACHMENTS: Illegal use of NF lands.

- Cutting trees

- Structures

- Cultivation, mowing, etc.

LAND/FACILITY SALES: The selling of facilities and associated site which have been determined no longer be needed for National Forest purposes. – e.g. excessing low cost ranger facility

CONSERVATION EASEMENT ACQUISITION : The purchase of interests in land which would provide a public benefit – e.g., public access along the shores of the White River.

DONATIONS: Landowners wish to donate their property to United States for National Forest purposes

WHAT IS OUR DIRECTION FOR THE LANDS PROGRAM?

❖ Forest Service Manual (FSM 5400) Washington Office Policy Objectives:

- Achieve the optimum landownership pattern to provide for resource uses to meet the needs of the people now and in the future.
- Settle land title claims equitably and promptly.
- Provide resource administrators readily accessible and understandable title information affecting the status and use of lands and resources they administer.

CURRENT LAND ACQUISITION GOALS ACCORDING TO FOREST PLAN

- ❖ **Aggressively acquire rights-of-way, which provide public access to the National Forest.**
- ❖ **Adjust landownership within the National Forest boundary in accord with plans of other owners, the towns and State.**
- ❖ **Highest priority will be given to tracts which:**
 - **Are adjacent or within the Appalachian and Long Trails corridor**
 - **Are within or adjoining Wilderness and Management Area 6.1, where Primitive recreation is emphasized**
 - **Have uncommon or outstanding qualities which make them special; adjoin significant steams**
 - **Have important wildlife habitats; or consolidate public ownership.**

WHAT HAVE WE ACCOMPLISHED?

Over the past 10 years, we've acquired 145 tracts of land for a total of approximately 34,000 acres.

EXAMPLES OF ACQUISITIONS AND CRITERIA THEY MEET

- ❖ **Thirty five acre parcel, that provided public access to a 1,000 acre portion of the Forest.**
- ❖ **Chittenden Reservoir – parcel of uncommon features, outstanding quality, includes 700 acre reservoir and 200 acres of wetlands, and adjacent land for cross-country skiing and hiking**
- ❖ **Martin Farms – Acquired easements along the White River to protect from development, provide for public access and fish habitat restoration projects while continuing to allow agriculture use of the land.**
- ❖ **A 1,200 land purchase in the Taconics to conserve the south side of Dorset Mountain, and protect the Otter Creek and Mettawee Watersheds.**

WHAT HAS OCCURRED SINCE THE APPROVAL OF THE PLAN IN 1985?

- ❖ **The designation of the Taconic Boundary Expansion in 1991: The idea of a boundary expansion started when the Forest Service received several land offers west of Route 7. Through efforts of a grass roots committees, the support of towns and the Bennington Regional Planning Commission the expansion of the boundary was completed**
- ❖ **Line Item funding to protect the Battenkill River (at the request of another grass roots organization).**

HOW IS THE PROGRAM FUNDED?

Funding for the purchase of land comes to the Green Mountain National Forest through congressional line item appropriations – Under federal law, these monies cannot be spent for other National Forest purposes.

❖ The GMNF was established under the Weeks Act of 1911- The primary purpose of this law was conserve watersheds and forests. The vast majority of our Forest acquisition is under this act.

❖ Funding is allocated from the 1965 Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, which authorizes the Forest Service to provide to citizens and visitors a quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources.

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS FOR LAND ACQUISITION?

- ❖ **Open forums**
- ❖ **Town support from select board**
- ❖ **Meeting with Governor's Board on the Forest Service**
- ❖ **Providing input to District Rangers**

Brief Questions?

Issue to Address:

What is the Appropriate Mix of
Developed and Undeveloped
Recreation Opportunities to
Provide on the Green Mountain
National Forest?

What is Developed Recreation?

Recreation that occurs on areas with structures:

- alpine ski areas
- campgrounds
- picnic areas
- trail shelters
- parking areas

Current Facilities:

- 9 Campgrounds with 155 campsites
- 5 Picnic Areas
- 3 Alpine Ski Areas, partially located on National Forest
- 34 Trail shelters/Cabins
- 1 Developed Fishing Area
- 4 Interpretative Sites

Current Facilities:

- 4 Observation areas such as Texas Falls, Voter Brook
- 55 Developed Trailheads
- 1 Swimming Area at Hapgood Pond
- 1 Wildlife Viewing Area

Development Level of Sites

Generally rustic

No hookups

Outhouses, few flush toilets

No showers

Hand pumps for water

Wooded settings, usually un-paved camping spurs

Limited availability for large RVs

Fees Charged at Limited Sites

- Hapgood Pond day use area
- 5 Campgrounds:
 - Moosalamoo
 - Chittenden Brook
 - Greendale
 - Red Mill Brook
 - Hapgood Pond Campground

ALPINE SKI AREAS

	Established	Acres in permit
Bromley	1936	186 ac
Mount Snow	1956	894 ac
Sugarbush	1958	1,655 ac
Total under permit		2,735 Acres

0 .71% of 384,000 National Forest
acreage

ALPINE SKI AREAS

(Winter 2001/2002)

Ski visits 2002 Fees 2002

Bromley 116,000 \$13,000

Mount Snow 449,000 \$226,000

Sugarbush 306,000 \$87,300

Total fees = \$326,300 - which is 57%
of total receipts to the Forest for
FY2002...a poor snow season

Green Mtn Use Figures

Includes Finger Lakes

National forest visit – A single visit is one person spending time continuously on the forest, measured from the time a person arrives until they leave, and includes overnight stays.

Total number of GMFL National Forest Visits: 3.4 million visits in 2000. Includes both entire forests.

There were 338 different zip codes reported, most visits from Vermont.

Green Mtn Use Figures

Includes Finger Lakes

Site visit- Measures how many individual sites are visited during one National Forest Visit.

Total Site Visits on GMFL:

3.5 million- shows that most people (96%) who come to the GMFL only visit a single site, before leaving forest.

Green Mtn Use Figures

Includes Finger Lakes

Average length of National Forest visit was 6.5 hours.

Eight percent of visitors stayed overnight on the forest.

Green Mtn Use Figures

Includes Finger Lakes

Top five recreation activities of the visitors were (2000 study):

- viewing natural features,
- viewing wildlife,
- hiking and walking,
- downhill skiing or snowboarding,
- and general relaxation.

Undeveloped Recreation

Recreation that occurs in the general forest areas, not related to facilities.

Examples include camping, berry picking, hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, photography, and boating.

Undeveloped Recreation

Areas of Discussion:

- Last Forest Plan used local definitions for Primitive and Semi-Primitive Recreation for areas outside Wilderness.
- Caused management difficulties in some areas- such as Grout Pond. “Semi-Primitive” on same lakeshore as Developed Rec Area.

Undeveloped Recreation

More Areas of Discussion:

- Emphasizing backcountry recreation vs. facilities.
Should we consider new developed sites?
- “Concentrated Use Areas”
Impacts on resources, sanitation, and visitor’s camping experience.

Brief Questions?

Short Break and Small
Group Discussion

What is the Appropriate Mix of
Developed, Higher Density Recreation
and Un-Developed Recreation?

What are the Priorities for the Land
Adjustment Program?