

**Public Comments from the
Forest Plan Revision Meeting
Lodi Fire Hall
February 11, 2002**

Ice Breaker, comments from cards:

What is special/important About FLNF?

- Horse Trails
- Love the forest
- Peace and Quiet
- Place to get away
- Our forests are treasures and should be treated as such and not exploited.
- Protected national forest in such a unique place—surrounded by potential encroachment—historical pressured environment.
- Actually, I basically like it left the way that it is.
- The tranquility and quiet, very easy and close place to get back in touch with nature.
- Public land—usable for all people—recreation and non-human values.
- Diversity of habitat--Mixed uses--Peace and quiet--Good Forage
- That it stays nice and quiet.
- Forest should be available/access to all.
- Hunting.
- Solitude.
- Value of peaceful, serenity, greenspace.
- Strong community interest to preserve it and number of people who vacation/enjoy it.
- The water that feeds the lakes originates there.
- Being able to spend time in the forest, hiking, x-country skiing, etc.
- Gentleman has lived his whole life adjacent to the Forest...has enjoyed the hiking, archaeology, and blueberries.

Desired Management Changes

- Trail user conflicts, resolve these.
- Horse compatibility with hikers. Don't cut back on the horse trails.
- Make gates easier to open.
- Keep it primitive. No flush toilets.
- Land use (cattle)
- Diversity of habitat for wildlife and for human recreation.
- Emphasize local issue—weight given to locals.
- To increase the percentage of protected forested area from commercial exploitation and to better enforce the laws against motorized vehicles, i.e. snowmobiles and ATV's.

- Downscale management—make parts of it less accessible—not unmanaged—so it increases pristine nature—too accessible now—add some adventure.
- Under the 1986 Plan 50% of the forest is managed for even-aged silviculture to produce sawtimber, 34% is managed as grazing land. This puts 84% of the forest that is managed for commercial purposes. 3% of the forest is managed as uneven-aged silviculture, emphasizing public enjoyment and wildlife benefits. I'd like to see this percentage reversed.
- Perhaps some marker and guides showing the history and natural wonders.
- Increase the amount of forethought into the resource management practices (timber cutting, roads).
- Commercial uses especially when it's not economically useful
 - No mineral extraction
 - No commercial timber extraction
- Add land to forest.
- Greater weight given to local opinion. Too much red tape—fast-track plans ect.
- No lights—low profile management—no resource extraction—it's a national treasure.
- Must have increased local input in order to have fair “rules” for play.
- No change.
- Defragmentation of the forest.
- Overly micromanaged.
- Remove drilling in forest as a land-use option.
- Change to uneven-aged timber management and provide 2000 or more acres of old growth area.
- More information about the old homesteads, who owned them.
- Something additional to be done would be increased interpretive opportunity development (i.e. historical sites).
- Question: Is land management plan comprehensive? Wanted more clarification on what was included in it.

Comments on Issues and New Issues:

- Question about the ponds on the Forest.
- Availability of FLNF for mineral, gas, oil extraction.
- Cultural resources—read somewhere there was a plan for CR. Thinks this is important.
- Low lands—too wet, tiles for drainage—is this part of a plan. Wants tiling of swampy areas without destroying the natural area. Path across it.
- Areas that are primitive and semi-primitive—would like to see this done the same as Vermont.
- Wanted to know how we stand now from the old plan. What is the baseline of what was done in 1986 to now.
- How can we be sure this plan will be addressing things that apply to the Finger Lakes National Forest—mentioned Adirondacks—wants it to be done here to the scale of the Forest. If we do timber harvesting, needs to be site specific.
- Monitoring the health of Forest and what is being done with the ecosystem approach.
- Where do we stand on the oil and gas.

- Wanted clarification—what if oil and gas was a national policy change—is there room to preclude the national policy changes?
 - Does gravel fall under that national policy. Could gravel come up again?
 - Reducing pollution into the forest, horses instead of skidders, using more local timber for signage instead of pressure treated.
 - Gravel across the wetlands—wants biodiversity in these areas—opposed to paths across them—doesn't want heavy maintenance.
 - Local roads—FLNF is in grid and thinks Forest needs to get together with the counties—everything is intertwined.
 - Threatened and endangered species—is this addressed?
 - Mineral rights—one more point. Contingency contract—selling back at a non-profit level since it is from land that belongs to the people.
 - Wanted to know if will be able to input other issues in the future.
 - Trails—Interloken—mountain biking—impact—is there any consideration of illegal ATV use on that section of trail—wet section of trail. Every time I hike there, new sets of tracks. Law enforcement issue.
 - Extraction of sellable stuff—what is process for making it a National Park is that an act of Congress?
 - How is the public use monitored? Do you have national police?
 - 6400 acres of timber—monitoring ecosystem—wanted to know justification.
 - Timber – look at the scale of FLNF; this is not the same scale of larger national forests; needs to be scaled correctly, site specific
 - Timber/grazing – more attention to water quality, consider looking at it separately
 - Monitoring – look at monitoring from an ecological basis, Ecosystem Management
 - Wildlife Management – Threatened and Endangered Species
 - Minerals – Stipulation that anyone purchasing rights can't sell it back to public at high profit, but at non-profit
 - Trails – North section of Interloken trail – open to mountain bikes is being evaluated. Also a lot of illegal ATV use – how can you adequately assess effects of mountain bikes with ATV use. Emphasize Law Enforcement.
 - Tile swampy areas so there are dry pathways across them.
 - Management areas as primitive and semi-primitive.
 - For wet crossing don't use gravel that needs maintenance with heavy equipment – this messes up biodiversity.
 - Coordinate with state and local government on transportation system for example the road system and how it is treated with things like calcium chloride and which roads are plowed.
 - Availability of FLNF for oil and gas leasing
 - Cultural resource management plan – pre and post European settlement.
 - Monitoring forest plans on an ecological basis.
 - Reduce pollutants into the forest: use draft horses and no motorized equipment.
 - Use local wood like locust instead of bringing in treated lumber for signs etc...
 - Whether FLNF should be designated as a National Park vs. National Forest.
- Question about clearcutting.

- Question: what do planning groups mean—who is included?
- Question about publishing in Federal Register—does it start things, set a timeline.
- Question about whether we would end up with two different plans—one for north and one for south.
- Lot of issues forest-wide—master plan for entire forest—are meetings in north open to people in the south?
- Don't understand what level of authority is available to the public? Seem like National Forests have a higher authority...
- Do local planning groups work with FLNF staff to come up with solutions?

Educational Forums Topics and comments

- Teachers—how can you have educational forums without teachers. We need to get the schools involved.
- Thinks Education Forums are a good idea would like to get more education, hear different points of views.
- Public Groups—how will ideas be taken into account, compromising. How much will it shape the final document? Further question on whether everyone will be able to contribute—special interest groups will they set direction? Wondering if work that groups work on—represent (lost it).
- Topic – Look at how other National Forests have been managed – outcomes and do's and don'ts
- Agreed on EF—wanted to take a look at other NF's to have a historical reference on dos and don'ts.
- Work on cultural resources—GIS map, education on what's been done, etc.
- State of the Forest and what is considered in logging, etc.
- Forest can be used for proactive resource use demonstrations to show other forests what works here.
- Forum on new management ideas.
- History of timber management on FLNF and techniques used; also other/new techniques that are being used elsewhere.
- Could the FLNF be an example of a pro-active/demonstration forest?
- Exploration of other types of timber management—what is done on private lands, new management ideas other than what the Forest Service is doing.

Comments on Planning Process

- Process that planning groups will be incorporated into planning.
- Phase 1: Will there be public involvement in—especially timber—in this phase.
- *Ithaca Journal*—quote from Martha—questioned it. Planning process is too long. Even two years seems too long. Realistic plan within the constraints of budget, etc. Who is going to reconcile what we can really do and what is pie in the sky.
- Planning process is too long. Even 2 years seems too long to develop a plan; also concerns over developing a plan that we can realistically implement.
- In public groups—people will have questions but without the expertise. What are the resources that are available and how will they be used. Continued discussion about partnering opportunities.
- Filling in Technical Gaps. What are the resources available? How will they be filled? Explore partnering opportunities.
- Question about when local planning groups will begin—some idea of when this will start.
- Long process!
- Retrospective—length of existing plan. Should we be waiting for this plan to be put into place. Can we go ahead and address problems? Examples of where you are already moving forward on existing problems.
- Process has potential—good vision—looking forward to working with us. Wanted feedback about GMNF.
- Hope that meetings in North and South are open to both sections – some issues span the entire forest regardless of section.