



Trails

**Green Mountain National
Forest**

Plan Revision

July 2003

Meeting Agenda:

- Brief overview of Plan revision
- Current Situation
 - Forest Service standards for trails
 - Trails in the current Forest Plan
 - Public and Forest Service Trail issues
 - Trail Uses Not Provided For in Last Plan
- Small group work

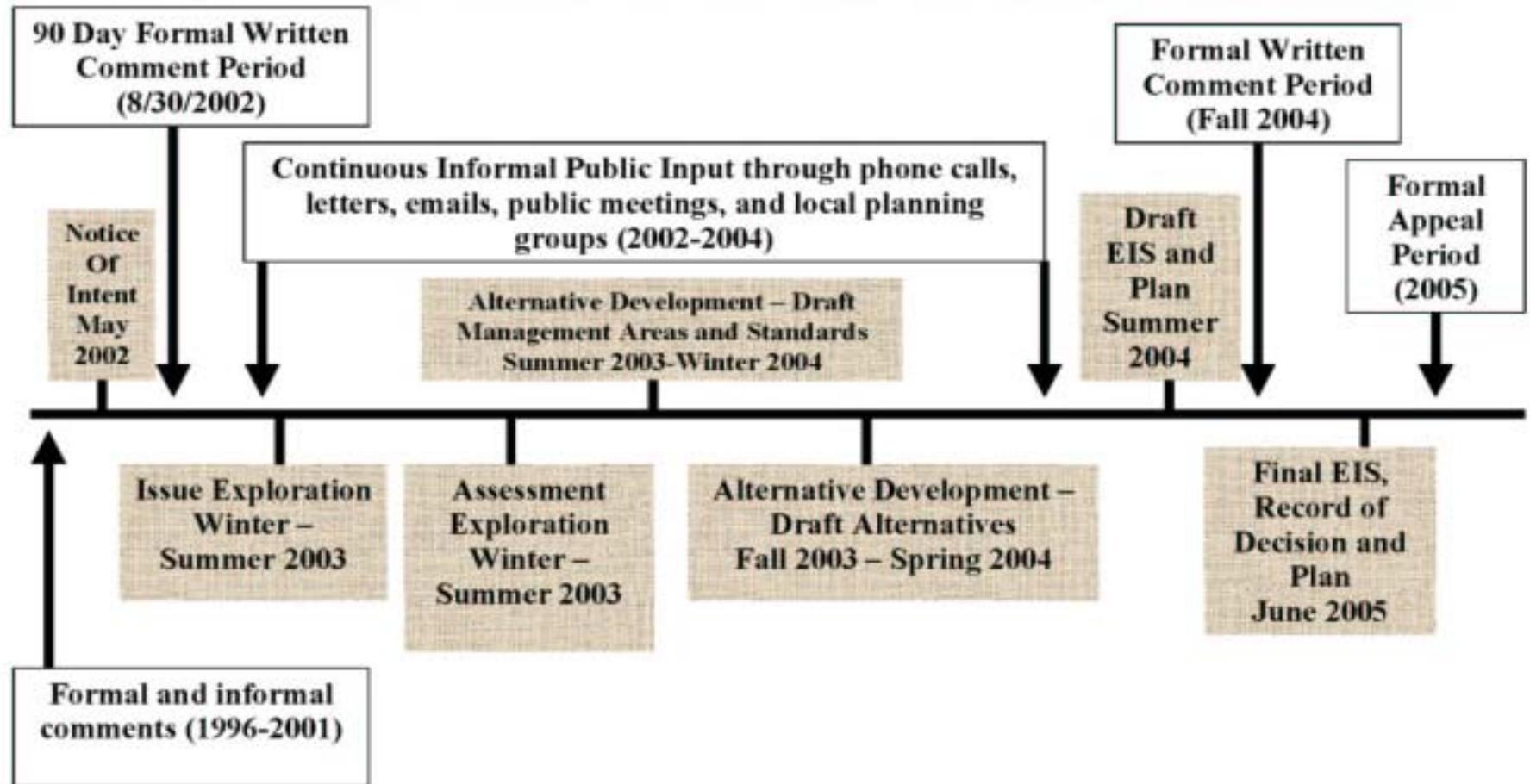
Announcements

- Meeting notes
- Past issues
- Missed previous meetings?
- Public input meetings – No Decisions

Forest Plan Revision

- Why are we revising the plan?
 - Regulations, new science, issues and trends, good planning
- How can you get involved?
 - Meetings, phone calls, emails, write letters
 - Where are we in the process?

Public Involvement Timeline GMNF Forest Plan Revision



What is in a Forest Plan?

- Goals and Objectives
- Standards and guidelines
- Management Areas
- Land suitable for timber harvesting and upper limits on timber sales
- Monitoring and Evaluation Requirements

**Forest Plan doesn't build trails, it only provides guidance through Goals, Objectives, Standards & Guides, Management Areas*

Definitions

- *Off Road Vehicle-* in *existing* Plan they included mountain bikes in definition.
- *Off Road Vehicle-* in *current agency* definition: Any motorized vehicles designed for cross-country travel, includes snowmobiles, 3 or 4 wheeled vehicles, motorcycles.

Current Situation



- **Partnerships:** Vermont Assoc. of Snow Travelers, Green Mountain Club, Appalachian Trail Conference, Catamount Trail Club, Dartmouth Outing Club, Moosalamoo, Mountain Valley Trail Association and numerous individual volunteers.

Trails on National Forest

- Approx 785 Miles of trail opportunities (overlapping miles)
 - Hiking allowed on approx 282 miles of trails on NF
 - Snowmobiles allowed on approx 365 miles of trail
 - X-C skiing on approx 93 miles of trail on NF



Trails on National Forest

- Horse use approx 10 miles
- Mtn Bikes may use approx 40 miles trails on NF
- No ATV trails

GMNF Horse Trails

- Two trails-about 10 miles- managed for horse use. Horses may use forest roads (unless posted closed).
- 180 miles of high standard roads
(FS class 5,4,3)
- 250 miles of low standard roads
(FS class 1 & 2)

Off Road Vehicles

- Existing Forest plan would have allowed motorized ORVs only on a system of “approved travel ways, roads and trails” on a case by case analysis.
- In the early 1990s a study was initiated and involved many user groups.
- ORV study was never finished. It was intended to wait for a 1996 Forest plan revision, which was then postponed until 2002.

Mtn Bike Trails

- In the 1990s, five existing trails allowed mountain bikes through administrative studies designed to evaluate limited use. Bikes also allowed on FS roads, unless posted closed to vehicles.
- Field monitoring was conducted with fixed points along trails to measure resource impacts.
- Use still allowed on these sections.

Winter Trails

- Catamount Trail Association has identified sections of trails needed to complete the cross-country ski trail corridor through the Green Mtn NF. Current Forest Plan called for the completion of trail.
- Local VAST clubs have come forward with proposed trail changes, often as access needs changed.
- Sled dog users interested in using forest.

Winter Trails

- Local VAST clubs have come forward with proposed trail changes, often as access needs changed.
- Sled dog users interested in using forest.



Hiking Trails

- New Loop Trails could provide easier logistics for day hiking access.
- Interpretive Trails such as the Robert Frost Trail to provide education opportunities.



General FS Trail Standards

	Clearing (ft)	Tread (ft)	Height (ft)
Hiking	3 - 4	1 - 2	8
X-C Ski	6 - 13	N/A	6 - 10
Mountain Bike	2.5 - 4	1 - 2	8
Horse	6 - 8	2	8 - 10
Snowmobile	14 - 16	8 - 12	10
ATV	10 - 13	5 - 7	5 - 6

Some Public Issues and Concerns

- Forest-wide trail system planning to meet the needs of different users
- Wheeled off-road vehicles
- Mountain Bikes
- Horse Users
- User Conflicts, Law Enforcement
- Proposed New Trails
- Maintenance of existing trails, signs, and information

Some FS Issues and Concerns

- Effects on wildlife, plants, historic areas, soils, water, etc...
- Budget for maintenance and construction
- Newly acquired lands purchased with existing trails
- Staff resources for engineering and environmental review

Small Group Work

- **Mixed groups of trail users in each group**
- **Specific information very helpful**
- **Comments on Flip Charts and/or Map work**

Thanks for Participating!

Next Meetings:

- **August Meeting Topic:**
Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management
- **September Meeting Topic:**
Wilderness