

**Public Comments from the  
Forest Plan Revision Meeting  
Watkins Glen High School  
February 13, 2002**

**Ice Breaker, comments from cards:**

Haikus for reflection

People sitting  
Like birds on the fence  
Listening, still.

Policy  
Planning Forest rules  
Revision revise.

Overhead  
Pipes run like sunshine  
Throughout room.

**What is special/important About FLNF?**

- Take children to learn about nature about diversity.
- Rural open space natural areas.
- Large area kept in a relatively undisturbed state.
- Like to walk and to cross-country skiing. Beauty of the area.
- Diversity—Forest—beautiful. Field, Ravines, Cross-country skiing.
- It is the only place (National Forest) around.
- It's undisturbed—low developed.
- It is small—easily accessible.
- Wilderness preservation for back country camping.
- Horseback riding.
- Horseback riding. Camping.
- Outdoor recreation.
- Hiking and skiing trails.
- Tremendous green space.
- Hunting birds.
- Large tract of wild land would like to see it stay that way.
- Availability for public access for recreation.
- Natural state of the forest.
- Quiet place to hike. Beauty of the natural.
- Drilling for gas not be allowed.
- Hiking trails.
- Horseback riding.

- Multiple use access—horseback riding is restricted in many areas.
- Large track of wilderness land. Undeveloped land.
- Purity of the Forest.
- Trees!!
- Likes to camp and hike likes remote.

### **Desired Management Changes**

- Public interest at the beginning of decision making process. Not waiting until there is public outcry over an issue.
- Permanently ban oil and gas leases.
- Expand historic overview and do more archeology.
- Forest tries to balance resource extraction and public recreation. Because the small size of the forest limits resource extraction. I feel it would be great to use the forest to promote environmental education. Present activities in the forest seem “traditional” (fishing derby). These could be supplanted with activities, brochures, signs that speak to environmental systems, processes, and variety.
- There are several groups concerned with the forest but the FS seems to operate by “divide and conquer” on “divide and weaken all” rather than encouraging the discussion of all perspectives by all before the Forest Service makes decisions.
- Keep camping area.
- More loop trails.
- No drilling for natural gas on Forest lands.
- Management appears OK.
- Rules for change.
- Clearcutting—stop it!
- Wildlife ecosystem preservation for minimal impact.
- More loop trails.
- Trail improvement—looped trails.
- Camping.
- Connect outlying segments of forest.
- A strong statement against any future gas drilling in FLNF.
- Change standards for horse trails so that they don’t look like highways—i.e. surfacing.
- Add to bird habitat.
- Reduce the impact the Federal bureaucracy has had on slowing down the process for planning anything for the FL
- No gas or mineral extraction.
- Add more trails. Add “no drilling.”
- Forest is well managed—no suggested changes.
- No gas drilling.
- No even-aged management.
- Ban on gas and oil exploration.
- Streamline the process.
- Camping low impact.
- No gas drilling.

- The supposed “selective cutting” isn’t selective enough.
- Questions about the percentage and amount of acreage.
- Question about renewable resource.
- Question about cubic/board. Is there a mandate for how much timber is produced per year. On a per site basis.
- Question about how percentage of cut compares with other National Forests. Is there a need for a smaller percentage because of size of the Forest.
- List of goals—how can all those be obtained. Does one objective render other useless.
- Is the current list of goals prioritized in any way?
- Question about old wells in historic sites. Would this be better not filled in and how it might be education. Is there any other way to handle the safety.
- Is the even-aged cutting staggered over several years.
- When you go into an even-aged stand, what is the average age of the stand. How old do you let it get?

### **Comments on Issues and New Issues:**

- Sustainable energy—in place of oil and gas energy—i.e. wind energy, minimum impact.
- Historic resources. Wells/historic sites – couldn’t the wells be educational? Is there another way of dealing with them besides filling them in. Cemeteries.
- Should preserving historic sites be a stand alone issue? Is it significant enough?
- Preserving some of the old sites should be an issue.
- Educational aspects of the Forest—what has been done, signage, etc. Old homesteads are all though Forest. Tie Heritage resource issue to education – signs etc...
- Water in the horse camp—water for people and horses.
- Dayride parking area so don’t have to take up a parking spot.
- Cemeteries—what is being done with them are they being maintained.
- Wooded area to be preserved for old-growth so future generations can walk through a deep, dark, forest. Old-growth. Preserve some portion of the forest for that
- Timber available—whether it should be cut at all.
- Timber – need better explanation of timber management especially even-aged management
- Oil and gas—how would public opinion reach you, what would you be responding to that would indicate an energy crisis? If that comes down to you, what happens, how would plan be written—or would public outcry dictate what is done? Is it embedded in the ROD that Federal is not going to be the dictator.
- Oil and gas availability
- Look to the forest for sustainable energy like wind turbines instead of oil and gas
- Plan—that 12 groups got together about trails. Wanted to know who.
- NY State are going to set up a standard about what a horse trail should look like. What do we have as a standard? Do we have to meet them?
- Someone wanted maps.

- How can the forest meet all the goals on such a small area? Do they conflict in places – are they prioritized?
- Water for people and horses in the horse camp. Add day ride (horse) parking area.
- Question on geographic planning groups how they would be set up.
- How are you going to share information that comes in from existing groups.
- How does the % of even-aged management on FL compare with other National Forests?
- Should the forest have a smaller % of even-aged management than other forests due to its smaller size?
- Are the groups already formed. What is the process for participation? Who shows up?
- Structure of the group? Would there be a facilitator? Or would be member of the community.
- How many teachers are here? Same question as at Lodi. Problem with only one teacher present and thinks they need to be involved. Field trips for children.
- Another person has a strong feeling about education. School children know more about the rain forest in Brazil than what is in their own backyard. Volunteered to be on education group.
- How will two groups be integrated—how will that happen.
- Question about whether or not plans expire.

### **Educational Forums**

- Timber, timber management techniques and relation to wildlife.
- Timber management what is it and how is it done.
- Recreation
- Ecosystem management forum
- History—from Native Americans – present.
- Cultural and Historical aspects. agricultural/historical context (not history of FLNF per se) pre-Forest Service, the cultural side.
- Building, maintaining and trail usage.
- Can forum topics be introduced at a later date? Is the local planning group going to look at every topic or break up into sub-groups?
- If the west side had forum discussion groups—set up something like a listserv or active website so all groups can exchange ideas.
- water resources and protection.
- Forum on Land Acquisition and forest consolidation.
- Forums—wants them simplified no acronyms.
- Keep forums simple – easy to understand so normal people can understand; don't presume a high level of technical knowledge.
- Field trips for kids and students.

### **Comments on Planning Process**

- With the the Local Planning groups it is important to ensure communication between the groups. There is concern about finding out what the other group is discussing at their meetings
- There is concern about involvement of school systems in process – get students and teachers involved, make it educational, use field trips
- Forum on building trails, maintaining trails, and trail usage.
- Web site – set up discussion groups. Structure them so discussions can happen on line as well.
- Need to get teachers involved.
- Education is very important