



Monongahela National Forest

Concepts of Draft Alternatives

Alternative 1

This is the No Action Alternative. No action in this case does not mean “do nothing”. It means we would continue to manage the Forest as described in the 1986 Plan, and its amendments. Land allocations would basically similar to what they are now, though some adjustments would be made to address the recent Threatened and Endangered (T&E) Species Amendment.

How will it address the Need for Change Major Issues?

Remote Backcountry:

- * Semi-primitive non-motorized 6.2 allocations and prescriptions for remote backcountry would remain the same as the 1986 plan.
- * No new wilderness would be recommended.

Vegetation Management

- * Vegetation management would be updated to reflect changes from the 1986 plan amendments. As a result of the Threatened and Endangered Species Amendment, a new management prescription would emphasize vegetation management to improve Indiana Bat habitat.

Timber Supply

- * Timber supply would be updated to reflect changes from the 1986 plan amendments and a new timber suitability assessment.

Soil and Water

- * Current management and monitoring of soil and water resources would remain the same.

Alternative 2

This alternative would incorporate the Need for Change topics and issues through changes in management direction and land allocation. Opportunities for vegetation management would be expanded somewhat compared to Alternative 1.

How will it address the Need for Change Major Issues?

Remote Backcountry:

- * Management prescription 6.2 would be updated to better address ecological and recreation needs. Overall acres would decrease due to changes to other prescriptions.
- * All potential wilderness areas would fall into management prescription 6.2. Once the wilderness evaluation is completed, a decision will be made for wilderness recommendation.

Vegetation Management

- * Primary timber-producing prescriptions would be combined into one “General Forest” management prescription that would emphasize vegetation management. Management would focus on age class diversity, sustainability for different forest types, and habitat needs for species that use a variety of age classes.
- * A new management prescription would provide guidance on managing red spruce communities that are habitat for the listed West Virginia Northern Flying Squirrel.

Timber Supply

- * Shifts in prescriptions may alter timber availability.

Soil and Water

- * Riparian Conservation Areas would be created for riparian areas to provide additional direction for soil, water, and riparian resources.
- * Monitoring and management direction would be established for areas with soils that may potentially be vulnerable to nutrient-depleted soils.



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Alternative 3

This alternative would increase allocations to the 6.2 prescription to include all potential semi-primitive non-motorized areas. Because 6.2 is not in the suitable base, the increase in 6.2 acres would reduce opportunities for vegetation management and timber production.

How will it address the Need for Change Major Issues?

Remote Backcountry

- * Management prescription 6.2 allocations would increase by over 100,000 acres.
- * All potential wilderness areas would fall into management prescription 6.2. Once the wilderness evaluation is completed, a decision will be made for wilderness recommendation.

Vegetation Management

- * Primary timber-producing areas would be combined into one “General Forest” management prescription that would emphasize vegetation management. Management would focus on age class diversity, sustainability for different forest types, and habitat needs for species that need a variety of age classes. Areas in the “General Forest” prescription would decrease.

Timber Supply

- * Suitable acres would be around 100,000 acres less than Alternative 2, as “General Forest” shifts to a 6.2 prescription.

Soil and Water

- * Riparian Conservation Areas are created for riparian areas to provide additional direction to soil, water, and riparian resources.
- * Monitoring and management direction would be established for areas with soils that may potentially be vulnerable to nutrient-depleted soils.

Alternative 4

This alternative would increase allocations to management prescription 6.2 to provide a mix of acres and areas of 6.2 greater than Alternative 2 but less than Alternative 3. This increase will reduce opportunities for vegetation management and timber production, but not to the extent as Alternative 3.

How will it address the Need for Change Major Issues?

Remote Backcountry

- * Management prescription 6.2 would increase, but less than in Alternative 3.
- * All potential wilderness areas will fall into management prescription 6.2. Once the wilderness evaluation is completed, a decision will be made for wilderness recommendation for this alternative.

Vegetation Management

- * Primary timber-producing prescriptions would be combined into one “General Forest” management prescription that would emphasize vegetation management. Management would focus on age class diversity, sustainability for different forest types, and habitat needs for species that use a variety of age classes.

Timber Supply

- * Suitable acres would be less than Alternative 2, but more than Alternative 3, as “General Forest” areas shifts to a 6.2 prescription.

Soil and Water

- * Riparian Conservation Areas are created for riparian areas to provide additional direction for soil, water, and riparian resources.
- * Monitoring and management direction would be established for areas with soils that may potentially be vulnerable to nutrient-depleted soils.