

Pisgah State Park Steering Committee
 June 8, 2009
 Meeting Minutes
 Location: Antioch University

*Next Meeting:
 July 20th, 4-6 pm
 Antioch University
 40 Avon Street, Keene, NH*

Attendees		
Name	Title/Affiliation	Representing
Dan Carr - Sitting in for Tim Butterworth	State Representative	Chesterfield, Winchester and Hinsdale
Meade Cadot	Harris Center for Environmental Conservation	Wildlife Management
Rick Carrier	Hinsdale Board of Selectmen	Town of Hinsdale
Ken Desmarais	Forest Management Bureau	State Agency
Bob Fee	New Hampshire Snowmobilers Association	Motorized Recreation
Tom Duston - Sitting in for Emily Hague	Monadnock Conservancy	Monadnock Conservancy
Tim Hill	Forester - Cheshire County	Forestry/Timber Harvesting
Don Kent	Natural Heritage Bureau	State Agency
Catherine Owen Koning	Franklin Pierce University	Pisgah State Park Technical Team
Tim Murphy	Southwest Regional Planning Commission	Regional Planning
Robert Smith	Friends of Pisgah	Friends of Pisgah
Kathy Thatcher	Friends of Pisgah	Non-motorized Recreation
Ted Whippie	Town of Winchester	Town of Winchester

Meeting Chair:

-Ken Desmarais - Administrator, Forest Management Bureau,
 Division of Forest and Lands

-Minutes recorded by Cynthia Nichols - Pisgah State Park Technical Team Coordinator

Orders of Business

Next Steering Committee Meeting Dates

July 20, 2009
August 10, 2009
September 14, 2009
Time: 4-6 pm
Location: Antioch University, 40 Avon Street, Keene NH

Past Minutes

May 11, 2009 Minutes
The minutes were reviewed and accepted as is.

Announcement:

From Bill Roberts
June 23rd - Peterborough Town Hall
Parks and Recreation will be talking about the
Capitol Improvement Planning
Public Comment accepted until July 11th.

Topics for Future Discussion:

- Park Manager role
- Recreational Forum point: is the nature centered experience separate from other experiences in the park?
- Where do education and research fit in?

Following please find:

Discussion:

Management Plan Production Process Pg. 3

Presentations

- Technical Team Presentations:
 1. Surrounding Land Use - Brian Hall, Harvard Forest Pg. 3
 2. Geology - Fred Rogers, Franklin Pierce University Pg. 4
 3. Timber Management - Will Guinn, DRED Division of Forest and Lands Pg. 4

Public Comment Pg. 6

Management Plan Production Process

Discussion:

Ken noted that the Technical Team is at a point where they are putting together all of the information and recommendations to present to the Steering Committee. The July meeting will include the last of the Tech Team presentations and a start on the Recommendations discussion.

A detailed Management Plan production schedule is attached.

Summary:

Summer 2009: Draft writing continued meetings
Fall 2009: Final Draft and Public meetings
Dec/Jan 08/09: Management Plan completion

Recommendations

Ken asked the Steering Committee for any recommendations that they have right now that they'd like to make sure are considered.

(Please note that Members are also welcome to contact Ken and Cynthia with any recommendations they'd like to add to these ideas).

Member Suggestions

Future management of wildlife:

Currently we have a summary of what's there - it would be good to include a plan for future management.

Vision Statement -

As the recommendations are put together, it would be good to go through the Vision Statement and refer to the points that were put together.

Education

Education hasn't been directly discussed very much; it would be good to work on that.

Information Sharing

Chapters will be sent out to members for comment as they are written. Some are done already. Presentations are also available. Documents and presentations will be put into pdf format. If possible, a website posting area will be used as well.

Technical Team Presentations

1. Surrounding Land Use - Brian Hall, Harvard Forest

Brian presented information showing land use in the areas surrounding Pisgah State Park from Hinsdale to Keene and discussed the purpose of considering surrounding lands within the context of writing a management plan.

2. Geology - Fred Rogers, Franklin Pierce University

Fred presented information on the geological formation of the area from about 400 million years ago to present day.

Discussion

Meade and Fred noted that the large phenocrysts started crystallizing first - and might be evidence that there was higher water content in that magma

Catherine noted that considering the bedrock - it's interesting that there are enriched soil areas and asked about what their origin would be

It was noted although most of Pisgah is underlain by the Kinsman formation that there are silt loam soils on the western side in particular; discussion about the Rangeley formation followed. The Rangeley formation is more enriched and could underlie soils on the western edges. Also surficial rock may contain some Rangeley rock from drift.

Note - monzonite was the original name for granodiorite in previous studies

3. Timber Management - Will Guinn, DRED Division of Forest and Lands

Will presented a detailed timber management proposal outlining three Management Criteria areas that will be treated with three different management approaches.

Discussion

Regarding Broad Brook and stream buffers -

Meade asked what the best management practices would be for Broad Brook.

Will noted that all their work will be guided by the best management practices in "Good Forestry in the Granite State".

Ted Whippee asked about how the need for roads enters into the calculation for harvesting?

Will -primarily the decisions to work in an area will be based on existing roads. Spur roads may be built as needed.

Catherine Owen Koning asked if any new roads be required except for the short term.

Will - responded that it's not likely. There's already an extensive network of roads that will be used. If an area is too far from an existing road, it's not likely an area for management. He noted that once we a road is upgraded, it's available to recreation users as well.

Kathy Thatcher asked about what the typical trail buffers would be?

Will and Ken noted that they're happy to work with FoP and Trails to see what they'd like in the area. While the buffer zones will be guided by the Good Forestry in the Granite State BMP's, it's often dependent on the trail use and the trail user's expectations as well.

For example, expectations will differ between hiking trails and off-road vehicle trails.

-A 500 foot buffer is used for the Appalachian Trail.

- Whereas on a class VI road, a 150 foot buffer is used with a 50% basal area limit.

Often DFL exceeds the recommendations. The decisions will be made after a careful inventory and planning process for each particular job.

Tom Duston - asked about crossing streams and whether bridges or culverts would be used and if they'd be removed after.

Will noted that most of the work depends on the existing roads. If it is an existing road, and the bridge or culvert is an improvement, then it will be left in. Stream crossings are kept to a minimum.

If it's a class 6 road for example - they typically work with the road agent and the improvement is often helpful.

Meade - noted that it would be good to consult with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) during the process. TNC is really interested in culverts within the Ashuelot River Watershed and they'd likely be happy to give input.

Will - Would welcome the info and noted that they're working on something similar at Nash Stream.

Tim Murphy noted that TNC might actually be looking for a demo project and perhaps Doug Bechtel would be a good contact.

Catherine Koning - Noted that most of the management is going to occur in the areas that also had the highest history of habitation and agriculture. So it's likely that the soils there would produce a more varied forest. Will this mean that the forest types in the unmanaged areas will be less diverse because they are in the poor soil areas?

Will - responded that because of the size of the unmanaged area, it's likely to include examples of all the forest types and elements across the park. It does include 2/3 of the exemplary natural hemlock community identified by Natural Heritage. DFL will also be working carefully with Natural Heritage to protect the other exemplary community and plant species within any management areas.

Bob Fee -

Asked about whether there's a potential to plant alternative native species like cedar in the Criteria 3 area for wildlife habitat?

Will - noted that something similar was tried near seacoast. It was found to be labor intensive. They often go by the advice of NHF&G and something like that would be done primarily in NHF&G wildlife management areas or under NHF&G's recommendation.

Dan Carr - Asked about whether and how the cut types are good for wildlife -

Will - responded that cuts in the Criteria 3 are would have a high value for wildlife. The goal would be to promote early successional and young forest habitats, which are not present in Pisgah at all right now. It would benefit moose, deer, bear and more, raptor species included.

NHF&G recommends openings be 5 acres or greater. The smaller openings are good too.

Public Comment

Dan Carr - noted that he'd like to see a high priority of consideration given to quiet and wilderness areas

Beth Phippard - asked if there is any idea of using Old Spofford Road for an entrance and noted that it has a great access potential. She also noted that the equestrians would like to be involved, have more input, and are willing to adopt a trail.

Jeff Scott - Regarding the forest management, is this something that will be taking place in the next 10 - 20 years, and if I'm in there - am I going to hear chainsaws? What's the season?

Will's response:

Typically the work is done in the winter - and we won't likely work there every year - there are a lot of properties that we work on. Expect at least 1 sale in a 5 year period.

Please Note - Will checked on details to be sure of the timber harvest timing and sent this amendment to his comments:

While this is technically correct, after reviewing the most recent 10 year regional work plan (which is subject to change) we are in fact anticipating a sale at Pisgah on an annual basis. As I stated in my presentation, harvests would still alternate between Criteria. This would make the harvest areas roughly 100-140 acres in size, not to exceed the annual allowable harvest when averaged over a period of time such as 10 years.

Jeff - what's the drive behind this, is it truly management?

Will - yes, there's a 46 step process that goes into the planning and we consult with several other State agencies including Fish and Game, Historic Resources, Natural Heritage

Bob Fee -

Wanted to comment that loggers need to go in and out pretty quick to turn a profit
The operation will typically be done quickly

Laura Sussman

Asked about where the money from the harvest will go. Will and Ken responded that some goes into the General Fund and the rest goes into several accounts that are used for management on all State Reservations. Approximately \$100,000 was spent on a Natural Heritage inventory and \$50,000 for wildlife management at Pisgah. Maintenance work includes boundary line management and resource inventory.

Bill Roberts noted that there will be a Parks meeting on June 23rd in Peterborough and asked about the parks/reservations designation in Pisgah.

Will noted that it shouldn't effect the management planning that we're doing here.

In New Hampshire, the "Park" or "Forest" terminology won't change the management of this Reservation.

Matt Edson - asked whether there would be a manager at Pisgah and Bill Roberts asked if the manager is working out of Monadnock, what does it mean for Pisgah? Are they going to shut the gates? Are they going to close the house? The Friends of Pisgah has put a lot of work into it - a lot of folks in the area are concerned.

DRAFT