

Nash Stream Forest Citizen's Advisory Committee

Review of Public Feedback on Draft Management Plan

May 2, 2017

Planning Process

- What we heard
 - Broader stakeholder input
 - Restart process with a “representative” public committee, like the original plan
 - Suggest a second draft for public input
 - Concern with lack of Town’s involvement
 - Concern of land managers writing the management plan
- Additional Information
 - Current tech team almost mirrors original tech team
 - Today’s NSF Citizen’s Committee was meant to codify in statute the original advisory committee.
 - Each town is represented on NSFCC, appointed by Selectboard
 - Final slide discusses next steps; can discuss 2nd draft.

Vision Statement and Management Principles

- What we heard
 - Don't change the Vision
 - Remove ATV's from draft Vision; no other recreational activity has it's own bullet
 - Small word changes can have a profound effect on Management Principles; make sure intent hasn't changed
- Additional Information
 - The original vision statement was changed in the 2002 amendment; that is the current vision
 - Changes to Mgmt. Principles were meant to clarify the language, not impact management

Management Guidelines

- What we heard
 - Management Guidelines had been removed from all chapters in the draft plan.
- Additional Information
 - Management guidelines were in the Forestry chapter of the draft plan, but it was an oversight that the remainder of the guidelines were left out of the other chapters.

Control Areas

- What we heard
 - Control areas were never established and measured
 - Control areas were removed from the draft plan
 - Controls need to be representative of and established in managed areas
- Additional Information
 - An early GIS map was located with preliminary control areas
 - Need an NHB inventory of natural community systems at Nash Stream prior to designating final control areas

Timber Management

- What we heard
 - Timber resource data is outdated and the inventory needs to be updated
- Additional Information
 - Entire compartments are inventoried before any timber sales occur in that area.
 - DFL requested increased funding in the next budget cycle to hire seasonal staff to continue re-inventorying the **area suitable for timber management** (ASTM).

Timber Management

- What we heard
 - Harvest levels have been increased to generate revenue
 - Emphasis on shorter rotations and younger forests
- Additional Information
 - Both plans determine allowable harvest levels using **area regulation**.
 - Although never calculated in the 1995 plan, the annual, sustainable “regeneration acres” are: 20,492 ASTM acres/140 year rotation age = **137 acres/year**, typically in groups ½-2 acres in size.
 - The draft plan uses multiple rotation ages (80-120 years) for different forest types and a slightly higher ASTM (21,613 acres) due to increased property acreage and better GIS mapping: **161 acres/year**, typically in groups ½-2 acres in size.
 - Currently regenerating approximately **40 acres every other year**, would like to have a harvest every year, difficult with limited staff.
 - If DFL staff were ever able to achieve the maximum sustainable harvest levels, both the 1995 plan and the draft plan would result in approximately the same structural diversity and would take a full rotation (over 100 years) to implement completely.

Timber Management

- What we heard
 - Shift from uneven-aged management to even-aged management
- Additional Information
 - Uneven-aged management is still the primary silviculture at NSF.
 - Both plans identify 92% of the ASTM as having a natural tendency for uneven-aged management (pg. 104 in 1995 plan and pg. 103 in draft plan).
 - Both plans identify the remaining 8% of the acreage in the ASTM as suitable for both uneven-aged and even-aged management.
 - Only one clear cut has been implemented on NSF since state ownership.

Riparian Buffers

- What we heard
 - Greater no cut buffer along all perennial streams
- Additional Information
 - Conservation easement restricts cutting within 150' of Nash Stream and 150' of the ponds.
 - We currently meet or exceed the recommendations in Good Forestry in the Granite State.
 - Many of our harvests exceed these recommendations based up topography, soils, wetlands, etc.
 - Fish and Game reviews each timber harvest individually and make specific recommendations if necessary.
 - F&G continually monitors fish populations at NSF

Invasives

- What we heard
 - Move this section to Forest Protection Chapter as part of a comprehensive approach that includes forest pests and pathogens
 - ATVs may bring in more invasive species
 - Add guidance for control measures
- Additional Information
 - We have staff that are certified to apply herbicide.
 - National Invasive Species Information Center
 - NH specific resources www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov
 - Specific treatment plan for some species (e.g. Japanese knotweed) NH Dept. of Agriculture Division of Plant Industry website

Climate Change

- What we heard
 - Did not adequately address climate change.
 - Plan should be started over again and worked on through the lens of climate change
- Additional Information
 - Working with regional experts and how to incorporate this into the plan

Access for Disabilities

- What we heard
 - Provide access to state lands for people with disabilities
- Additional Information
 - DRED's Other Power Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMD) policy is consistent with federal regulations
 - DRED's goal is to provide equal access to all facilities within the agency and to treat everyone with dignity and respect
 - Use of an OPDMD shall not create a substantial risk of serious harm to the immediate environment or natural or cultural resources
 - All OPDMDs are to move at the speed of the pedestrians on similar terrain

ATV/UTV Trails

- What we heard in support
 - Strong desire from ATV community for an East/West connector trail (EWCT) across the southern end of NSF.
- Additional Information
 - A proposal for an EWCT was vetted through CORD in 2016
 - CORD determined that the proposed EWCT was not consistent with RSA 162-C:6.
 - Issues: 1. Prime beech ridge forest for black bear feeding; 2. Un-fragmented lowland spruce/fir forest ideal for martin, bobcat and lynx; 3. Rocky denning areas; 4. Overall habitat fragmentation; 5. Shared use of a section of COHOS trail; 6. Rough terrain would require extensive trail construction in the Christine Lake watershed.
 - The Tech Team and Larry Gomes met to discuss possible reroutes or mitigation of the EWCT.
 - No acceptable solutions or alternatives have been found to date.
 - No new EWCT proposals have been brought forward to be included in the plan for the review process.

ATV/UTV Trails

- What we heard in support
 - Strong desire from ATV community for a Southern Connector Trail (SCT).
- Additional Information
 - The SCT was proposed by Larry Gomes at the December 2016 NSF Citizens Advisory Committee meeting.
 - One mile connector upgrading an existing snowmachine trail from the West Side Trail to fuel pumps just south of NSF.
 - The NSF Citizens Advisory committee voted to allow the review of the proposed SCT to be included in the draft plan.
 - For the SCT to be adopted it would require: 1. Review by the Tech Team; 2. Passage of the coarse and fine filter criteria; 3. Support and an updated MOU from F&G; 4. A vote by the NSF Citizens Committee and approval by CORD; 5. Approval by the Commissioner of DRED.

ATV/UTV Trails

- What we heard in opposition
 - Strong opposition to any ATV/UTV trails in NSF.
 - Strong opposition to any additional trails beyond West Side and Kelsey Notch.
- Additional Information
 - Legality of West Side Trail and Kelsey Notch Trail were challenged by SPNHF, TNC, and AMC.
 - CORD determined the West Side trail was consistent with RSA 162-C:6 and that the Kelsey Notch Trail needed further information to make a determination whether it was consistent.
 - Kelsey Notch Trail is on a three-year provisional basis.
 - DRED must monitor the trail and provide CORD with annual reports.
 - CORD will reassess Kelsey Notch Trail at the end of the provisional period.
 - CORD also issued some General Findings that must be followed for any new ATV/UTV trail proposals at NSF.

CORD General Findings

The Council finds that in order to perform its statutory duty to manage LCIP lands, members must review and find that any use of ATV/UTVs, as currently defined by statute, within Nash Stream Forest is consistent with the principles set forth in RSA 162-C:6 prior to implementation.

1. The trail must be designed, sited, and used so that it preserves and does not adversely impact natural resources and conservation attributes of the property and does not interfere with or detract from the other uses of Nash Stream Forest.
2. The trail must be authorized in a current management plan, which has been reviewed by CORD for consistency with RSA 162-C:6 and has had appropriate public and state agency input.
3. The trail must comply with the requirements of RSA 215-A and all other applicable ATV/UTV and environmental regulations and standards, and the state's most recently adopted best management practices for trail construction and erosion control.

CORD General Findings Cont.

4. After construction, the trail must be continually managed to protect natural resources and conservation attributes and to limit interference with other uses of Nash Stream Forest.
5. CORD must be adequately informed on an ongoing basis of the status of management, maintenance, and enforcement efforts related to ATV/UTV use, as well as impacts of ATV/UTV trails on the Nash Stream Forest.
6. CORD reserves the right to periodically reassess whether ATV/UTV use in the Nash Stream Forest, or on any of the trails therein, remains consistent with RSA 162-C:6 and reserves the right to temporarily or permanently close trails if necessary as circumstances change over time.

Plan Process Going Forward

- Receive feedback from NSFCC for suggested changes
- Finalize a 2nd draft this summer
- Release 2nd draft to NSFCC and public for another shorter review period
- Release a response document explaining changes
- After comment period, make any last modifications and bring back to NSFCC for a final vote
- DRED Commissioner and Director of F&L finalize and sign plan for adoption