

The Forest Futures Visioning Process Technical Steering Committee disseminated its Draft Recommendations to the public seeking feedback. The comment period closed on February 22, 2010. One opportunity to comment was through written mail submissions sent to the Massachusetts Office of Dispute Resolution & Public Collaboration. Contact information has been redacted due to complaints about unsolicited contact by some individuals. This document compiles letter comments, in the order received, **on February 11, 2010**.

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February 11, 2010

RE: FFVP written comments. Comment close date 2/22/10

Dear Madam/Sir:

I have attended two of your public forums (Leominster and Westborough) and now herein address my comments direct to you regarding the 10 TSC DRAFT Recommendations.

In general I agree with them but ----- a few things are not included that I feel should be included and some excluded.

Since this process is mostly directed at the various State owned lands (but not including watershed and MA Wildlife lands) then perhaps any references directed at private lands should be completely separated and put under its own set of recommendations.

**Recommendation 1** should include the word "woodlands" after "state parks and forests" because these three general categories are mentioned throughout the discussion process.

**Recommendation 2** should leave out private forests here.

Regarding the protection of the States parks, forests and woodlands no where in this entire DRAFT is forest fire protection mentioned. We do have a Bureau of Fire Protection (not sure of the proper title) but is that Bureau really necessary in these times of almost everyone having a cell phone and a 911 network?

**Recommendation 3** should not include "adopt measures to prevent further forest fragmentation and conversion to other land uses ....." because this is suggesting the State would be mandating what private land owners do with their land. And again, move all recommendations for private lands to it's own set of recommendations.

In particular I am against the wording that requires all forest harvesting plans to be reviewed and approved by a licensed forester. Now if that "licensed forester" is a licensed State Service Forester I have no problem with the requirement but if the "licensed forester" is defined as a private licensed forester then I have a problem with it because by defacto it requires a landowner to pay said forester. Any requirement for a harvest plan should allow said landowner to prepare said harvest plan him/her self provided it is approved by a licensed State Service Forester.

**Recommendation 4.** I approve of the three general zones (categories).

**Recommendation 5.** I am concerned that an extraordinary "event" may occur that has not been foreseen. Would it still be the policy to do nothing in a reserve? Would the resource be allowed to be

utilized or will it just go to waste? Will wildfires be suppressed? Would it still be the policy to do nothing should the Asian Longhorn Beetle be found in a reserve?

At the Westborough public hearing hunting was mentioned and in particular bowhunting would be [might be] allowed. I would like to suggest that "primitive arms" (meaning bow hunting as well as muzzleloader hunting ) be allowed because such hunting is a "back to nature", passive, and spiritual type of activity. After all, the only "disturbance" to the quiet in a woods by a flintlock rifle is about 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a second and if you have not hunted with a flintlock you have not really hunted.

#### **Recommendation 6 Good**

**Recommendation 7 for woodlands.** I approve of most of the guidelines but I see no need to single out uneven-aged management as a concern. The total amount of acres in the State Woodland category is little in the contest of New England never mind the world. In my opinion some even-aged forests are necessary for good bio-diversity. Will there never be a tree plantation again on State Woodlands?

I also see no need to dwell on the various levels of silviculture in this DRAFT document because it only gives ammunition to the "anti's" who are saying the DCR is more interested in cutting trees than not cutting them. In short leave such silviculture talk to later when the entire overall management plan of State lands is finished.

I believe that clearcutting as well as bio-mass extraction should be allowed on those State lands where it is good silviculture. I see nothing wrong with converting a poor quality forest to better quality forest by clearcutting if it will produce a better future forest. After all the Europeans have been doing this for 400 years why should we not do so?

Green Certification is mostly a political "thing". If a "green" log gets to a sawmill and is put into the mix of non-green logs the resulting lumber is the same. It is mostly a waste of time, money and human resources that could better be served for other things in this world.

#### **Recommendation 8 OK**

**Recommendation 9** There is no question that the entire public be allowed input into the management of State property. However, allowing a small minority the power to completely shut down well thought out management policies and adequate advance notices (such as a timber sale) should not be tolerated.

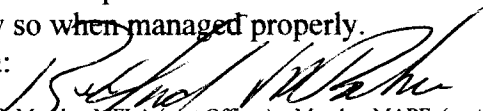
**Recommendation 10** OK but don't put much effort into "selling carbon credits" because this is another political thing and in my opinion will be long forgotten in just one tree rotation.

#### **Other**

I know there are many other issues such as ATV and snowmobile use. Who knows what other type of machine there will be in 100 or 200 years. Because of the amount of interest in these machines their needs and uses must be allowed on appropriate lands. Forests adapt to what ever is thrown at them.

This country needs to produce products from natural resources. Trees in particular are a renewable resource and especially so when managed properly.

Respectfully submitted:



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*NATURE IS AN OPPORTUNIST-IT WILL TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING IN THE LONG RUN*