

The Forest Futures Visioning Process Technical Steering Committee disseminated Draft Recommendations to the public seeking feedback. The comment period closed on February 22, 2010. One opportunity to comment was through an large group opening meeting format where participants were offered the opportunity to make statements to the full audience. This document compiles the facilitator's notes reflecting statements of those individuals at the meeting held in **Amherst on February 9, 2010.**

Notes from Forum Amherst February 9, 2010 (Large Group Meeting Format)

1 Chris Stone [speaker notes submitted by email]

The visioning process has been undertaken as an attempt to quiet controversy rather than to seriously discuss the role of active forest management on public lands. The TSC's draft recommendations are written as a response to specific complaints by a very vocal minority of stakeholders regarding relatively few unsightly timber harvests while ignoring the vast amount of excellent work done not only in timber management, but also in wildlife habitat improvements, scenic enhancements, state forest accessibility, and public safety. References in the document to "shifting the forest management paradigm" and the false claim timber production dominates DCR management decisions are clear examples of this. Aside from the clear bias of the document, the TSC has approached perceived shortcomings in the DCR management process by recommending more layers of bureaucracy and oversight, while ignoring the fact that the DCR has already addressed many of the issues at the heart of these recommendations, both through the management planning and green certification processes. There are too many specific problems with the recommendations to address here, but the one that cannot go unmentioned is Recommendation #7 regarding silviculture. This recommendation far exceeds the mandate of the visioning process as well as the experience and expertise of the TSC. The scale and detail of the recommendation is more appropriate to site-specific management planning, and is completely inappropriate in its application to all of Massachusetts forests regardless of the many variables that affect management decisions. The tiered forest typing proposal, levels of silviculture, acreage limitations, and undue focus on uneven-aged management are completely lacking scientific rational. Terms, comparisons, and prohibitions are freely tossed around, seemingly without regard to correct terminology, scientific merit, or even basic practicality. This recommendation would effectively eliminate active management of public lands. It is contrary to the TSC's stated goals of retaining all the tools of management and practicing state-of-the-art forestry. Finally, this kind of intensely rigid framework stifles research and application of scientific forestry, without which we will have no hope of building a local, environmentally responsible, and sustainable supply of forest products for our region. I strongly urge the TSC to eliminate Recommendation #7.

2 Derek Beard

The large forest reserves could create a public safety issue. The TSC recommendations do not address the economic factors with large reserves – loss of local jobs, taxes; there is a struggle to provide already. Rural communities that are next to state forest lands will be hit the hardest economically. These communities were not represented well enough.

3 Tom Anderson [speaker notes submitted in person]

I am a forester with an environmental science degree – these can go hand in hand. Managed forests already provide multiple uses:

Water quality - Chapter 132

Wood Production

New more vibrant growth

Employment

Reserves are good but too much land would be allowed to be stagnant. In terms of reserves, some are good as a control, for the study of control plots for comparison. Would our taxes be used in these reserve areas? And the parks where no commercial harvest is allowed means the state (our taxes) are needed to do work. Taxes should not go into this area.

Clear cuts are a good tool, we don't have enough openings now.

Massachusetts has very strict regulations under Chapter 132, if we lose Chapter 132 or don't let private landowners manage and take too much land out of production, we will need to import wood from overseas where the management is not as good. It would be bad for the state – we have great regulations now and we should keep them.

4 Andrew Wells

Re clear cuts – there are aesthetic concerns about clear cuts and also valid scientific concerns. Large clear cut areas are disturbing and a failure to the mission of preserving wilderness.

5 Sarah Lacour [speaker notes submitted in person]

The Cows company has been practicing sustainable forestry for 250 years.

Intent/mission of initiative was to address forestry practices on DCR public lands only. Private forest land was never supposed to be included and shouldn't have been! Please delete Recommendation #3 from the document and all references to private forest land.

The Technical Steering Committee was not representative. Too few stakeholders were included in the process and at the table, particularly the forest products industry, private landowners.

No economics were considered in the creation of this document. There are serious economic consequences to small towns, private landowners, and wood products with these recommendations.

Exclude “no net loss” of forest canopy. There is no way that this can be accomplished without a loss to the landowner. This is not a requirement when farmland is converted to another use.

6 Chris Matera [speaker notes submitted by email]

Whereas...State public forests, watersheds and parks comprise only 11% of Massachusetts land area and 17% of its forests and represent our best chance to preserve and protect wilderness areas, fish and wildlife habitat, clean water, clean air, tourism income, carbon sequestration, scenic beauty and recreational opportunities in this 3rd most densely populated state of 6,000,000 residents.

Whereas...The \$14 billion tourist industry depends heavily upon fully protected public forests.

Whereas...Proposed biomass fuel demands are enormous and seriously threaten public forests and we need a failsafe mechanism to ensure our public forests don't go up in smoke to provide tiny amounts of dirty power we do not even need.

Whereas...According to the FSC peer review, the public "overwhelmingly" prefers no commercial logging on public lands.

Whereas...Most of the wood cut on state forests is sent out of state and to Quebec and 90% of Massachusetts logging occurs on private lands.

Whereas...The timber program loses money, taxpayers are paying to chop down their own forests.

Whereas...The state agencies in charge of protecting state forests, watersheds and parks have demonstrated an inability to protect these lands and the public trust.

Whereas...Massachusetts has the opportunity be a leader in forest protection to help reduce global warming and to avoid valid claims of hypocrisy when we admonish third world countries to protect 30-50% of their forests from logging.

Therefore...there is no reasonable justification for commercial logging on Massachusetts state public forests, watersheds or parks.

7 Janet Sinclair

Numbers – 100,000 acres represents 3 percent of the forest land in the state. If 17 percent of forestland in the state is publicly owned, public should be ecologically only managed. Biggest restrictions should be on all public lands.

How does this process only deal with 300,000 of the total 500,000 of public lands? Why can't the public comment on the other 200,000?

8 Glen Ayers [speaker notes submitted by email]

The quotes below indicate that the controversies surrounding the current aggressive and destructive logging program being pursued by the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation has its roots in an age old conflict between those who are constantly working to destroy our forests for a quick buck and those who need to be eternally vigilant and arise in opposition to the plans of a few to lay waste to the natural world and wreak creation. Unless DCR drastically changes its primary mission, the word "conservation" it will have to be forcibly removed from the Agency's title.

"The rapidity at which this country is being stripped of its forests must alarm every thinking man. How disastrously the destruction of the forests of a country affects the regularity of the water supply in its rivers necessary for navigation, increases the frequency of freshets and inundation, dries up springs, and transforms fertile agricultural district into barren wastes, is a matter of universal experience the world over. It is the highest time that we should turn our attention to this subject which so seriously concerns our national prosperity." -U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Carl Schurz, 1877

"The battle we have fought, and are still fighting for the forests is a part of the eternal conflict between right and wrong, and we cannot expect to see the end of it ... So we must

count on watching and striving for these trees, and should always be glad to find anything so surely good and noble to strive for." -John Muir, November 23, 1895

"What we are doing to the forests of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another." -Mahatma Gandhi

"It was strangely like war. They attacked the forest as if it were an enemy to be pushed back from the beachheads, driven into the hills, broken into patches, and wiped out. Many operators thought they were not only making lumber but liberating the land from the trees." -Murray Morgan, The Last Wilderness, 1955

Massachusetts publicly owned parks and forests should be "managed" to provide the public with intact natural forests, native wildlife habitat, and opportunities compatible with recreation and solitude. All

activities which conflict with these values shall be prohibited on Massachusetts public parks and forests. Massachusetts publicly owned parks and forests should be managed for wilderness, wildlife, and compatible recreation; to the exclusion of all conflicting activities. Massachusetts publicly owned land should be managed to provide what private lands cannot; intact, undisturbed, un-fragmented, large blocks of contiguous deep interior habitat, mostly or entirely “unmanaged” and un-commercialized.

I object to the Technical Steering Committee’s (TSC) Draft Recommendations, almost in its entirety. The document was written mostly by vested interested and is more of a plan for the continued destruction of our natural areas by the heavy hand of man, than a document that provides any “vision”, unless that vision is truly a nightmare.

The real vision should include:

Eliminating all clear-cutting and commercial logging from our Public Lands;

Maintaining early-successional habitat by mowing existing fields not by destroying intact forests to mimic “natural disturbance regimes”;

Firing almost all of the existing timber-focused DCR “Foresters” and replace them with Conservation Biologists who are actually trained in ecology and conservation. As a less severe option, those foresters willing and able to be trained and educated as conservation biologists can be retained, provided there is no “grandfathering” of the existing dead wood;

Drastically change both the direction and the mission of DCR to instead focus on restoration ecology and non-commercial resource management;

Prohibit commercial developments on Reservations, State Parks, State Forests, and reserves.

The following proposal should replace the entire 157 pages of the TSC’s Draft Recommendations:

A Proposal to protect the Values and Characteristics of Public Forestland in Massachusetts:

The citizens of Massachusetts value their state parks and forests for many reasons — for remote recreation and solitude, for scenic beauty and wildlife habitat, for hunting and fishing, hiking, and swimming, clean air and clean water.

Because our public forests contain relatively undisturbed soil, water, and air; sources of public drinking water; a diversity of plant and animal communities; habitat for species dependent on large blocks of remote habitat free from human disturbance, natural landscapes with high scenic and recreational quality; provide sanctuaries for the human spirit; and other locally identified unique characteristics, and

Because, the responsible agencies have demonstrated an inability to protect these public lands and these values for the citizens of Massachusetts, now and for future generations,

We therefore call upon Governor Deval Patrick to prohibit the cutting, sale, or removal of timber from Massachusetts State Forests, Parks, and Wildlife Management Areas as follows:

Timber may not be cut, sold, or removed in Massachusetts state parks, forests, or wildlife management areas, with the following limited and infrequent exceptions:

- Uneven age management, selective cutting, where found biologically necessary by independent scientific review, to improve habitat only for species state listed as endangered, threatened, or of special concern;
- Management activities are found to be needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event that, without intervention, would cause the loss of life or property;
- Allowances for the cordwood program (where individual citizens are allowed to cut individually marked trees for firewood);
- Hazard tree removal, and campground and recreation area maintenance.

9 Mike Mauri

I am a forester with private land work. It is great to see this interest level in forests. A lot of big numbers are being presented, and it is hard to visualize. But there is the vision of 100 years from now losing acres of private land to development. We should all be concerned about this. We act as if there is plenty of land for woods, but this may not be the case. We should look at the land we have now and how to manage it for products. There is a disconnect of parks helping people understand forests and nature. Why are we not looking at forest products?

10 Susan Heitker [speaker notes submitted in person]

I am speaking tonight to advocate for no commercial logging on any state owned land. Although there are many reasons, I will note only a few:

- There is a lack of old-growth forests and interior forest habitat in Massachusetts. There is no shortage of edge and early successional forest habitat across the state.
- The best opportunity to create interior forest habitat is on publicly owned land; it is where one can find large, contiguous tracks of forests and it is owned by one entity thereby making management easier as opposed to trying to coordinate numerous private land owners.
- No individual or company should make a profit off of land owned by the citizens of Massachusetts.

I think the DCR should be managing only for reserves and parklands.

11 Bart Boricius

Regulating old-growth forests in Massachusetts (in Massachusetts this means about 150 years old) – these are truly inspiring lands. I hope we might allow more to develop by non management and in 100 years we may have some of the largest majestic trees. We cannot afford to subsidize the cutting of public lands.

12 Beth Adams [speaker notes submitted in person]

Massachusetts subsidizes commercial logging, and thus endangers water, soil and air. Clear cutting destroys the soil, water, forest habitats and most importantly, our air, for trees are “the lungs of a planet” already gasping for air.

All species on earth share one air. The USA and its industrial investments in other countries jointly have contributed massive amounts of CO2 and other toxic greenhouse gases to global warming, thereby already causing species extinction and human migration through our own deforestation practices. Let us not look to halt deforestation in other countries without facing the increasingly devastating part our State and Federal Governments and their corporate partners have played.

Massachusetts, it turns out, upon examination by forest advocates, such as Chris Matera, founder of MA Forest Watch, has already played a major role in contributing to global warming with its 2004 DOER policy of increasing logging on public lands 400 percent.

Yes, climate disturbance is rapidly accelerating. By some scientific estimates, the speed at which trees have been logged in Massachusetts public parks, watersheds and forests (and in national forests and states’ publicly-held lands) together will assure the loss of millions of lives and the majority of species on earth. Is this the legacy that we want to leave to our grandchildren and coming generations?!

Every tree logged increases Massachusetts’ tax payers’ contributions to local, regional climate disturbances and global warming – and the theft of a secure future for our descendents.

Add to that the fumes from operating heavy machinery, including more CO₂, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter, and other poisonous chemicals, all emitted into the air, soil and ground water by the bulldozers, chain saws and logging trucks used to clear-cut trees in Massachusetts public forests, parks and watersheds.

Forests play a critical role in regulating climate, Massachusetts must reserve its "clear-cutting policy cover-up", green washing rhetoric, and in some cases, fraudulent lies and illegal caving in to commercial interests and their lobbyists, such as biomass and construction and demolition debris incinerator developers and Northeast timber industries, among others.

The Patrick Administration, the Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs (DOEEA), the Department of Energy Resources (DOER), and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) need to awaken from their "dried up dream" of profiting from Massachusetts forests, (especially since it has not proven to work, since the State loses more than \$2 for every \$ it earns from tree sales)

To guard against further deforestation and water, air, soil and climate endangerment, it must place an immediate moratorium on all future (post Feb 9, 2010) commercial logging, until it can place the remaining forests into reserves for judicious recreational use and stewardship by local and regional Friends groups by way of creating a truly joint public and State forest stewardship plan of which this public forum at 7-8:30 PM in Amherst is only the beginning.

13 Richard Stafursky [speaker notes submitted in person]

You have failed to mention the natural landscape, define the natural landscape and use a natural landscape baseline guide for any forest action. Therefore,

First: You must include the natural landscape in all future forest related rules, regulations and all government forest language.

Second: You must define the modern concept of natural landscape. Natural landscapes are landscapes beyond cultural influence. A natural landscape is one that is unaffected by human activity. A natural landscape is intact when all living and nonliving elements are free to move and change.

Third: You must use the results of a zero (0) based, forest rating scape to reveal the level of harm our cultural has done to the natural landscape of state land parcels.

Fourth: This scale must be calculated by the public and cannot be calculated by state personnel, contractors or forest/wood certifying organizations, regardless of whether they are private companies or nonprofit organizations.

Fifth: The information on acres/parcels/forests so rated must be immediately available online in a user-friendly format.

Six: Acres/parcels/forests shall not ever be allowed to degrade to a poorer rating by government neglect and/or intent.

Seven: Any alterations or uses of an acres/parcel/forest shall necessarily result in a rating that stays the same or one that drifts relentlessly toward the natural landscape (zero). This is the destiny of our public lands.

Eight: Like the weather report, this forest report shall always be available online.

Nine: Forests (which are part of our Great Eastern Forest of the USA) will not be held hostage by the very same individuals that have built their careers around extraction from them. Technologies may change, but the people must be intimately be involved.

Ten: Regardless of the any historical rating, there are some forest practices that must be abandoned. These include silviculture, the clear cut, harvesting for biomass, introduction of alien accent species (whether or not they are invasive) and the alteration of natural features (landforms and hydrology).

We are submitting supportive documentation for these guidelines.

14 Alexandra Dawson [speaker notes submitted in person]

Eighty percent of DCR forestlands should be placed in reserves where no commercial harvesting is permitted. DCR's 308 thousand acres are less than ten percent forested lands in Massachusetts and scarcely half of all state-owned forestland. These lands were acquired by MA tax payers for Massachusetts purposes, including recreation, watershed protection and wildlife habitat.

Current DCR plans in the Berkshires greatly increase the present harvest and plan to employ clear cuts. Clear cuts also show on current maps of Savoy & October mountain state forests.

UMass plans favor taking over fifty percent of biomass fuels from public forestlands. A fifty MW biomass plant burns one ton of wood a minute! Our forests must not be used to feed these commercial ventures.

15 Sean Libbey

Recommendation #3 – Required to have licensed forester sign harvesting plan. I am here to stand up for landowner rights. Chapter 132 provides right to set-up cutting plan by private landowners – this is important and should be protected.

This recommendation increases cost to landowners without added protection. Protections already exist as is.

Substandard harvesting is a false premise by TSC members who have violated in the past themselves.

16 Dave Gaffney

I am a believer in preservation; put the 308 thousand acres in reserves. It would be nice to see a cost-benefit analysis for forest management. With FSC certification, we'll be losing money, not making money for tax payers. There is no need for clear cuts; other systems are available.

Wild land preservation provides spiritual renewal. We live in very populated areas; people need places to renew.

17 Helen Johnson

I am an environmentalist and a forester.

In a global context – Massachusetts imports 95 percent of its wood products. They are coming from Russia, China, where logging is done illegally, without regulations, and it endangers the habitats and species, whereas we do not have that kind of logging here. Shipping products here adds to global warming and it is imperialism. It is important to increase our own production to live sustainably on our own resources.

18 Elliot Tarry

Our ancestors were from northern Europe – we came from the forest. Unchecked, we will destroy it. Biomass plants – we must invest in efficiency; keep the money here in Massachusetts. There is a lack of vision in Boston from Governor Patrick. There is no protection for the commonwealth. I am a Pagan – I worship the earth. Clear cuts deplete the soul.

19 Dicken Crane

Read from Harvard Publication *The Illusion of Preservation*.

The U.S. relies heavily on imported materials. Reducing domestic production will change needs on others.

Natural resources preservation is but an illusion if it only serves to shift location to a less environmentally secure location.

We consume a lot of forest products – to not manage it is to push our needs on other parts of the world which is irresponsible and unsustainable.

20 Christina Petersons

I'm a cross-county skier. I have skied all over Massachusetts. I've skied next to harvested areas. I don't see the big deal. Timber harvest now or ten years ago; I've never seen erosion. The forests come back. Timber harvesting can be compatible with recreation.

21 Dave Richard [speaker notes submitted in person]

The entire Visioning Process has been stacked from day one. Many groups have been excluded from discussion process or had minimal screened representation. Can you imagine your grandparents and great grandparent drafting a document in 1910 that dictated how you should conduct your affairs in 2010?

The report is critical and condescending to the forestry profession. The report returns findings that contradict current research or makes recommendations that have no scientific basis. The report makes numerous recommendations that extend beyond the expertise of the majority of the committee.

The report makes management decisions that limit management methods and reduce the harvesting systems needed to accomplish forest management objectives. All harvesting systems including clear cutting have their purpose in achieving management goals.

The report proposes far reaching changes for ownership of private forest land greatly impacting "land owner rights" and ownership options available to the private land owner. If as a private landowner you aren't concerned, I suggest you carefully read the entire report before it is too late.

The report recommends extensive cost shares, tax credits and calls for funding to purchase development rights from forest land owners. These recommendations may sound positive but at whose expense will they occur? Should we further increase property tax, cut teachers in our classrooms or demand more layoffs among police and fire personnel? I won't even mention the impacts to DCR in the agency's ability to maintain its properties and infrastructure in the absence of timber sales as well as increased budget reductions.

If implemented the TSC report will sound the death toll for the MA Forest products industry as well as many affiliated supporting private businesses. Some thought should be given to how MA plans to respond and recover from the next 1938 Hurricane in the absence of a functional forests industry? We still haven't completely recovered for the December 2008 ice storm which might have ated a one on a scale of one-to-ten by comparison.

How will the rural communities be compensated for their losses in tax revenue? "At least 90,000 to as much as 130,000 more acres" for the reserve system?? Private landowners who own in holdings or how about forest reserves should be very concerned! It is no secret the commonwealth has yearly difficulty with "in lieu of tax" payments for communities with large amounts of state forest lands.

I could continue discussing impacts to the MA State Forest System but as a state employee I have been told I can't. There are in my estimation many more negatives than positives to the TSC report. I would suggest that any MA forester, forest land owner, homeowner or member of the MA wood producers carefully read this report and respond in a forceful manner before it is too late.

22 Joe Graveline

The Nolumbeka is a Native American group. Historical and archeological landscapes are not mentioned in the recommendations – they are not protected by DCR.

Areas have withstood clear cutting in past times; now less so. The impact is bigger these days. An educational forum must take place to protect sacred places that are important to so many indigenous peoples. I'm a pilot and I saw a clear cut area from the air – it was very disheartening. Management is very important.

Biomass is an absolute waste. We can do better than that with energy technology.

23 Jim Kelly [speaker notes submitted in person]

Our forests are no longer unimpacted by humans and as our world continues to be interconnected our forest cannot be left alone. The state forests should be the BEST forests. Be that a regeneration but to a forest reserve.

DCR needs to educate the children in the Commonwealth. If Agriculture has "Ag in the Classroom" DCR should have "Class in the Woods."

DCR needs solid funding from the legislature.

Rigid zones and management approaches as in recommendations 4-7 do not lead to adaptive management as sought in recommendation 8.

These recommendations do not address multiple ecosystem services provided by a forest over time.

DCR needs to be a partner in supplying local wood products, controlling invasives, demonstrating forest management, and providing an open and forested landscape.

24 Stuart Warner

We love our forest. [then he read a quote from 1874 about clear cutting in Wendell and the sad consequences] We can only regret the past.

I have seen clear cutting across the street – it was done carefully and done well.

Biomass plant harvesting done willy-nilly is very disturbing.

I urge support for protecting harvesting

25 Lee Ann Warner

Forest landowner under Chapter 61. Cowls is a neighbor – they are sustainable foresters. How many people in this room are involved in the forest industry? A good percentage of the people here today. All those people have a deep reverence for the woods, but they are not representative of the public which generally has little interest in logging on public lands. We have one of the most significant carbon sequestration sinks. Logging on our land has a global impact. Forest protection begets forest protection. The nation of Chile says the most helpful thing we can do is to stop logging in our own forests.

26 Court Dorsey

I support decreasing defragmentation. Public forest should be a small percentage of every forest. We can set an example to reduce harvesting on state land.

Clear cutting is not justifiable at all. Land harvested could not feed Home Depot for a week even if all land were harvested in one swoop.

27 Leigh Youngblood

Mount Grace's mission is to protect land and increase stewardship. Mt. Grace owns 1,400 acres of forested land. We promote stewardship across a range of conservation efforts. Mt. Grace urges people to keep in mind the short and long term impact of policies. Too strict or too lenient can have harmful impacts. We support small scale – high efficiency uses of biomass.

28 John Songy [speaker notes were submitted by email]

I am a member of the New England Association of 4-wheel drive clubs. Areas for recreation are dwindling fast. The Land Access Committees were formed to address issues within their respective states regarding OHRV (off-highway recreational vehicle) access. A major goal for the committees is to demonstrate to the public and to the private landowners that there is a responsible approach to OHRV use, which will not have the negative impact that they may have experienced in the past or seen in the media. We want to work with landowners and local governments to eliminate vandalism and misuse of property and to educate present and future OHRV users about the benefits of legal and responsible wheeling. We have already assisted landowners by posting signs, installing gates, and monitoring the land to ensure proper use. Many of our member clubs also perform clean-ups to remove junk cars and unwanted debris, waste often left not by the people recreating, but by local town residents. We have also assisted landowners by doing maintenance projects such as building bridges and water bars. We believe that working on the problem from both ends will help to bring the landowners and OHRV users together to form a harmonious relationship. Off-Highway Vehicle enthusiasts have great respect for the beauty of the Earth around them and they preserve the trails they use by doing clean-ups on the land and educating other OHRV owners about responsible land use.

State land where 4X4 use in MA is extremely limited, yet the NEA and its 27 associated clubs have the ability, through volunteers, to work with DCR to manage land, maintain trails and perform cleanups. At a time where budgets are shrinking and employment numbers are being reduced, groups and associations that volunteer time (hikers, cyclists, equestrian riders, ATV riders and 4X4 drivers), can be of great assistance to the DCR - if allowed access.

While there will always be those that choose to illegally trespass on state land, through conversation, public promotion and education, the NEA has great success with drawing these people to organized clubs and encouraging them to enjoy legally accessible properties.

29 Roland Leclerc

I object to Stewardship Commissioner – it is a waste of taxpayer money. I am against more control of private lands – the state doesn't realize the landowners' goals. Progress is not addressed in visioning. U.S. Forestry comment that without a viable forest industry we can't restore damage from invasive species (e.g. Asian Longhorn Beetle) and catastrophic climate events (e.g. ice storm, hurricane). Without the industry we are in trouble.

30 Mark Shea

I am also a member of the New England Association of 4-wheel driving. Don't punish responsible users. There is a misconception – we are not renegades. We are interested in protecting land so we can keep enjoying them; keep trails from overuse. We are often mistaken for other wheelers who litter. We clean up after ourselves. We want to be able to continue 4-wheeling. We maintain trails. We ask that we be able to continue using the land. We are respectful. There are responsible and non-responsible wheelers.

31 Elizabeth St. Lawrence

I understand the issue and feel strongly about biomass industry. It is emerging and a lot of money is tied to it. It seems like the support for this is based on lies – it doesn't seem sustainable and doesn't reduce

carbon emissions. I see it as leading to a disaster. Where are the trees going to come from? Private owners are not willing to sell at a low enough price. We should specifically limit biomass harvesting.

32 Chris Guidera

I love the outdoors. My dad was a horse breeder. I know the trails inside out. I have hiked hundreds of miles, mountain biked; I hunt, fish and drive snow mobiles. There is responsible use of forestlands. Don't ban recreation. Keep the forest available to all. We are allowed to use it. Whatever you bring in, you take out. I echo the part about responsible and non-responsible people. Don't shut down 4-wheel driving. Then it'll just be conservation; no recreation.

33 Lincoln Fish

Consulting forester for 30 years. I've seen lots of changes in harvesting after 30 years. A lot of innovations are owed to the work done on public lands. If they were not pioneered there, we wouldn't benefit from crews and standards we have today. I don't want to see the end of harvesting on public land. We need to look at the consumption of forest products. We produce less than 3 percent of products we consume. They say we're going to reduce production for consumption, that's elitism.