

**Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry
Proposed Timber Harvest Summary
Name: Navin Beaver Pond Lot**

Date Posted: January 5, 2009
End of Comment Period: February 20, 2009

Region: Western
Recreation District: Central Berkshire
Forest Management District: Central Berkshire
State Forest: October Mountain State Forest
Closest Road: Navin Road
Town: Washington

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Stand Description:

This is an approximately 90 acre project area that includes two stands of the following forest types: Stand 1 is a Norway spruce plantation (40+/- acres) and Stand 2 is northern hardwoods (50+/- acres). Navin Road runs through the center of this project from east to west and the Spruce Trail (historic forest road) runs north from Navin Road to Schermerhorn Road. The project area is bounded by Forest Reserves to the south, a white pine/hemlock stand (north of Navin Road) and northern hardwoods (south of Navin Road) to the west, an unnamed stream and beaver pond complex to the north and east. The general topography consists of gentle slopes through the majority of the area with steeper slopes toward the southern edge of the harvest.

Stand 1: The Norway spruce was planted at some point prior to 1924 and was thinned in 1988 using the strip cut method. The average diameter of this even aged stand is approximately 14 inches at dbh with a range of 4 to 30 inches. There is approximately two thirds of the original plantation left in strips of varying widths. These remaining strips are of extremely high stocking and are in decline due to age and over crowding. Regeneration in both the cut and uncut strips consists mainly of northern hardwood species, Norway spruce and native red spruce.

Stand 2: The northern hardwood stand in general is a small saw log size stand with a varying stocking level from moderate to high. The main species included in this stand include sugar and red maple, black cherry, beech and white ash. Further inventory work through the prescription process will give more details on species composition. The age

of this stand is approximately 80-90 years. According to district files no previous work has taken place in this stand since the 1950's.

Aesthetic, Recreation, Environmental and Wildlife Considerations:

Aesthetic: Slash along Navin Road and the Spruce Trail will be maintained to MA Best Management Practices (BMP) standards and the Central Berkshire Forest Resource Management Plan (CBFRMP). Within the project area all stone walls and other potential historic features will be protected and equipment will be required to pass through existing bar ways. Within the Norway spruce plantations, all hardwood tree species will be retained for visual diversity.

Recreation: Both Navin Road and the Spruce Trail are currently listed on the recreation a map as snowmobile / ATV trails, however, due to erosion; the environmental quality of these trails is substandard. Access to this project area has not yet been determined (see sale layout below), but through this project, trail drainage will be improved and a replacement bridge on Navin Road may be constructed in cooperation with the Regional Trail Coordinator and the Park Supervisor. This project is planned to be a summer harvest due to limited winter access and to avoid disruption of the snowmobile season. There are no other formal trails or recreation in this project area.

Environmental: As mentioned above, a stream and a beaver pond complex surround the sale to the north and east. These features will be buffered and protected to MA Forestry BMP standards and the CBFRMP. A new unmapped beaver pond may have formed as part of this complex and will be treated as a known pond. Additional intermittent streams, vernal pools and forested wetlands, if found, will be protected to the same standards. Two large wetlands occur approximately 400 feet outside the project area to the west. There will be no impact on these resources as a result of this project. The forest reserve located along the southern boundary of the project area was selected as a small scale reserve to buffer Washington Mountain Brook and the surrounding slopes. The boundary of this reserve will be marked on the ground. The reserve will be buffered using the standards as outlined in the CBFRMP.

Wildlife: This project area does not fall within any NHESP delineation. However, the stream and beaver pond, as well as other potential water features mentioned above will be protected for both water quality and as a wildlife corridor. The gradual removal of the monoculture Norway spruce plantations will result in a mixed hardwood and softwood stand adding to both the diversity of trees and wildlife. Trees featuring wildlife qualities such as large dead limbs and holes will be retained where they pose no safety hazard to the road or trail.

Sale Layout:

Access to this project has not been determined, there are three existing options which can be used and are described below. The best option will be determined cooperatively with the Park Supervisor and Regional Trail Coordinator. Restoring Navin Road is anticipated to occur whether or not it is utilized for the sale.

Option 1: For the previous 1988 harvest, the Boulder Trail was used to transport material to a landing on Schermerhorn Road. This is a natural surface trail that would require repair and maintenance of drainage features.

Option 2: Install a temporary bridge on Navin Road where the previous crossing has been removed due to damage. The material would then be transported up Navin Road to West Branch Road Extension. This option would require extensive repairs to Navin Road, which currently has eroded several feet below its surroundings.

Option 3: Install a temporary bridge on Navin Road where the previous crossing has been removed due to damages. The material would then be transported on an existing skid/forwarder trail through a completed adjacent forestry project to a landing on West Branch Road Extension.

Within the project area, existing skid roads will be used when and where possible and any new skid road will be laid out in a manner which follows the MA Forestry BMP standards. Forwarder trails in the Norway spruce plantation will be planned in order to retain as much of the existing regeneration as possible.

As mentioned above, all streams and wetland features will be buffered and protected to MA Forestry BMP standards. The boundaries of these features will be flagged and painted during the marking phase of this project.

Upon completion of this project, access roads, forwarder roads and landings will be graded as needed and erosion control such as water bars will be put in place. The landing will be cleaned of all debris and slash along the roads and trails will be treated according to the CBFMP. All access points to the project area (not legal roads and trails) will be blocked upon completion of this project.

Silviculture:

In Stand 1, using the shelterwood harvest regeneration system, the project will continue to convert the Norway spruce plantations to native forest types through natural regeneration. The remaining strips of Norway spruce will be reduced by two thirds to allow ample light for regeneration of native hardwood species. The desired condition will be low stocked stands of large dominant Norway spruce and sporadic native hardwood species in the overstory which will provide regeneration of native tree species. It is anticipated that the remaining Norway spruce will be harvested in ten to fifteen years.

The northern hardwood area (Stand 2) will receive a commercial thinning to remove unacceptable growing stock and provide more space to acceptable growing stock. Less than one third of the growing stock from these stands will be removed in this process. The purpose of this treatment is to foster a stronger healthier stand by giving desired trees, regardless of species type, the room and resources to grow. Future work in this area is not anticipated for twenty years.

Park Supervisor: _____

Date: _____

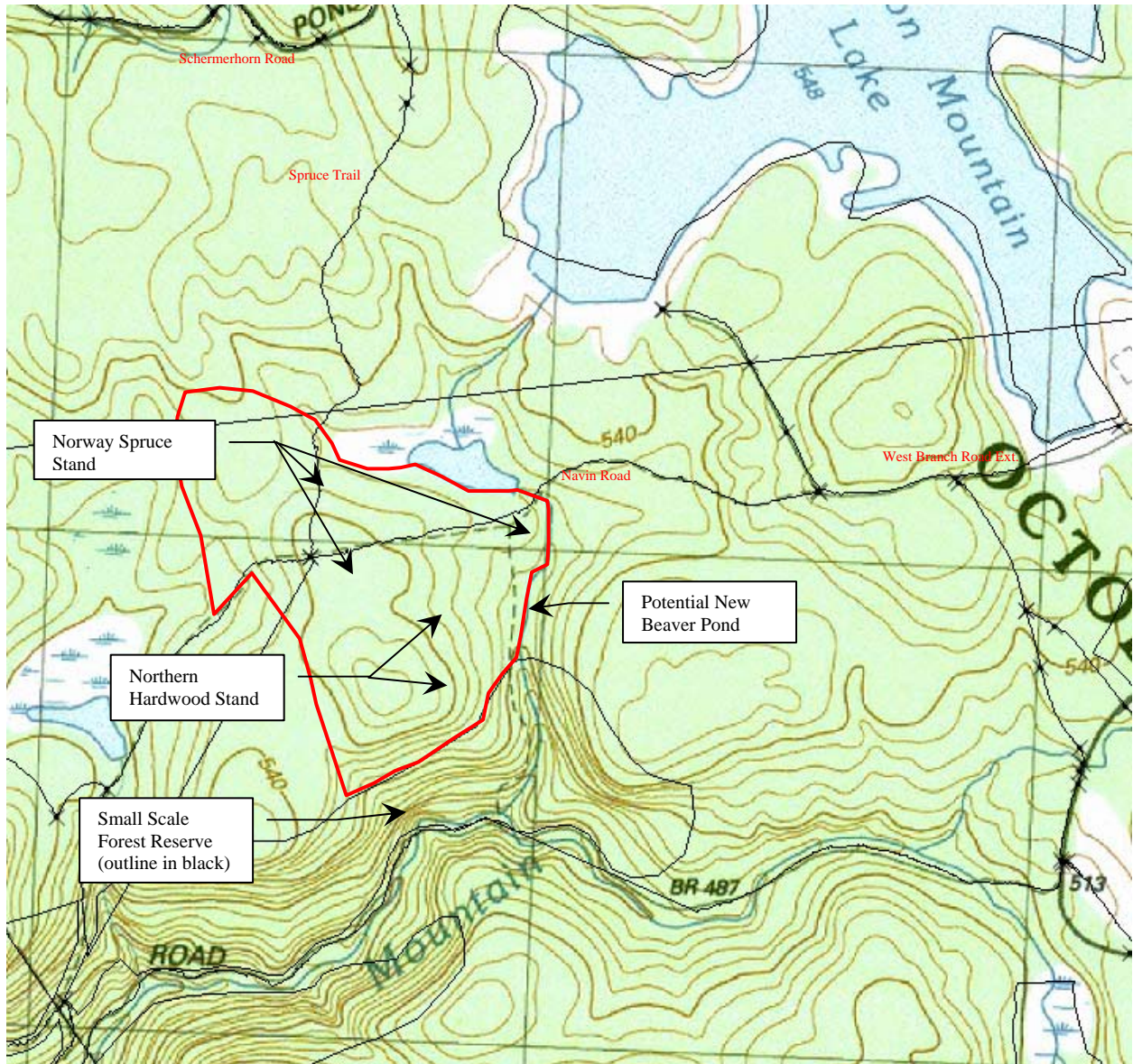
Regional Director: _____

Date: _____

District Forester: _____

Date: _____

Attached: Topographic map showing location of Forest Products Sale Area



Red line denotes approximate project area.