

**Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry
Proposed Timber Harvest Summary
Name: School House Reservoir Lot**

Date Posted: July 1, 2008

End of Comment Period: August 15, 2008

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

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Stand Description:

This is an approximate 150+/- acre stand located west of the School House Reservoir in the October Mountain State Forest. This project area consists of mature large diameter sawlog northern hardwoods with high stocking. Within the area there are signs of ash decline, although ash is not the dominant species. Species other than ash are of good quality, including black cherry, sugar maple, red maple and beech. Also present in the project area are scattered hemlock, white pine and red oak. There is no written record of this area being harvested by DCR, however there is evidence of past management activities on the ground; several woods/skid trails pass through the area.

This project will be bound by Washington Mountain Road to the north, School House Reservoir (37 acres) to the east, and drainages to the west and south. Two small hemlock dominated stands, totaling 25+/- acres, located to the west of the project area will not be treated. A small wetland area (1.5+/- acre) is located just outside of the southeast corner of the project area. There are moderate slopes to the north and eastern portions of the project area while the middle, southern and western portions are generally level. Further ground work will identify any intermittent streams and localized steep slopes.

Aesthetic, Recreation, Environmental and Wildlife Considerations:

Aesthetic: As mentioned above the northern portion of this project area borders Washington Mountain Road. This is an un-passable washed out town road that runs from East Street in Lee to

County Road in Washington. The current dominant use of this road is ATV and ORV traffic. The road will be treated according to the standards listed in the Central Berkshire Forest Resource Management Plan (CBFRMP) for aesthetic slash management.

Surrounding the School House Reservoir will be a 100 foot wide no cut strip to provide an aesthetic buffer, however the level of management proposed (see Silviculture below) will not alter the forest canopy to a detectable level from any vantage point surrounding the lake.

Recreation: Other than the ATV/ORV/snowmobile use of Washington Mountain Road there is no formal recreation in this area of the forest, although all legal passive forms of recreation are permitted. Through this project sections of Washington Mountain Road will be rehabilitated and improved to control erosion and improve safety. Discussion will take place with the Park Supervisor to determine the level of improvements and access desired for this road. It is anticipated that legal road use will not be impacted during the project.

Environmental: The 100 foot no cut buffer planned for aesthetic reasons will also provide an added filter for the School House Reservoir. The operation will not occur within 100 feet of the small wetland located southeast of the project area. Further ground work will identify any additional water features or isolated steep slopes. These areas will be treated according to standards listed in the Central Berkshire Forest Resource Management Plan (CBFRMP).

The two hemlock dominated stands to the east of project area will be left undisturbed during this project to retain the native conifers. These stands should be monitored for signs of hemlock wooly adelgid into the future.

Wildlife: This project area does not fall within any NHESP delineation. However, as mentioned above, two hemlock stands, a small wetland and the reservoir will remain undisturbed. Throughout the project area at least two current and potential wildlife trees per acre will be retained with emphasis on super canopy trees suitable for nesting or perching closer to the reservoir.

Sale Layout:

This harvest will take place during non-winter months due to the project location in the forest and the recreational use of the roads by snowmobiles. Additionally, roads in the area are not maintained for winter access. Access to the sale will utilize County Road to Washington Mountain Road. Currently Washington Mountain Road has erosion problems from use and lack of maintenance. Prior to beginning this project the road will be rehabilitated and two bridges may be resurfaced in coordination with the park supervisor. There are several areas suitable for landing along the road and exact location will be determined based on ground conditions and connectivity to the existing woods / skid roads. The School House Dam and associated areas will not be disturbed by this project.

Currently there are no anticipated stream crossings within the project area and there will be no harvesting in wetlands. This area is on high dry ground with no anticipated erosion or sedimentation problems. As mentioned above further ground work will identify any additional water features or isolated steep slopes. The 100 foot no cut buffers as well as any other areas of concern will be marked in the field with paint.

Silviculture:

The goal of this sale is to begin to regenerate areas dominated by ash as well as thin areas of healthy species for continued growth. This will be done by applying a commercial thinning and removing approximately 25-33 percent of the basal area throughout the majority of the project area with small regeneration patches, not exceeding $\frac{3}{4}$ acre in size, where appropriate (less than 5% of project area). This practice will retain the large tree appearance while beginning to replace some of the mature trees with a new generation of seedlings. It is anticipated that another operation will occur in this stand in approximately 20 years.

Park Supervisor: _____

Date: _____

Regional Director: _____

Date: _____

District Forester: _____

Date: _____

Attached: Topographic map showing location of Forest Products Sale Area

