

**Public Meeting regarding Forest Management Proposals at Savoy State Forest, October Mountain State Forest, Sandisfield State Forest, and H.O. Cook State Forest
March 29, 2016 DCR Western Region Headquarters, Pittsfield, MA**

Attendees:

DCR: William Hill, Management Forestry Program Supervisor, Kevin Podkowka, Management Forester; Kris Massini, Management Forester; Jeff Martin, Assistant Management Forester; Nicholas Anzuoni, Management Forester

Public: Cosmo Catalano, Appalachian Trail Club; Randy Toth, Snowmobile Association of MA

Kevin Podkowka presented information on the Tannery Road Proposal at Savoy Mountain State Forest; Kris Massini presented information on the Heaphy Richardson Lot Proposal at October Mountain State Forest; Jeff Martin presented information on the Clam River Dam Proposal; and Nick Anzuoni presented information on the Sheep Ranch Rendezvous Proposal. The following comments and questions were received and answered by William Hill and Kris Massini:

Cosmo Catalano - Heaphy Richardson Lot

- Where will the irregular shelterwood be concentrated?
 - o On the higher ground, mostly where the beech is concentrated.
- Will the skid trail avoid the Appalachian Trail (AT) buffer zones?
 - o Yes and no. A skid trail will cross the through the primary and secondary zones in one location perpendicular to the AT.

Randy Toth - Heaphy Richardson Lot

- Will there be parking lots developed with the timber sale?
 - o No.

Cosmo Catalano – Sheep Ranch Rendezvous

- Appreciates the intent to diversify the forest structure in the area.

Transcribed by William Hill

**Public Meeting regarding Forest Management Proposals at Townsend State Forest
March 30, 2016 Trustees of the Reservations, Leominster, MA**

Attendees:

DCR: Peter Church, Director of Forest Stewardship; Joelle Vautour, Management Forester; Mike Waterman, Management Forester; William Hill, Management Forestry Program Supervisor

Public: Dean Zuppio, Coldbrook Snowmobile Club; Dick O'Brien, MA RTAB & MA RTC

Mike Waterman presented information on the Brookline Road Proposal and the Townsend Home Fuelwood Proposal at Townsend State Forest and Joelle Vautour presented information on the stonewall Lot proposal at Oakham State Forest. The following comments and questions were posed by the public and answered by Mike Waterman, Joelle Vautour, William Hill and Peter Church.

Dick O'Brien – Townsend projects

- Are there any recreational trails in the Townsend State Forest Projects and how will you treat them?
 - o Yes - The forestry activity will be "off season"
 - o Slash will be minimized in the trail corridor
- How are the fuelwood lots sold? Is it worth it?
 - o The lots are sold through a competitive bid process.
 - o Yes, the fuelwood thinning provides thinning maintenance to portions of the forest and additionally is a "good will" effort for our local neighbors who use local wood to heat their homes.
- Are the fuelwood projects done safely?
 - o Yes, safe practices are spelled out and required by the permit.

Dick O'Brien – Stonewall Lot

- Will there be breaks in the stonewalls?
 - o No, the walls will be bridged.
- The Mission Statement states that carbon stock management is part of the mission for Woodlands - how does this project contribute to that?
 - o Permanent forest products that result from the wood harvested will sequester / store carbon as long as those products remain in existence.
 - o Young, vigorous, regenerating forests sequester carbon dioxide rapidly – faster than mature trees.

Dean Zuppio – Stonewall Lot

- Will you make loop trails for snowmobiles?
 - o No.

Transcribed by William Hill

**Public Meeting regarding Forest Management Proposal at Wendell State Forest
March 31, 2016 Amherst Field Office, Amherst MA**

Attendees:

DCR: Peter Church, Director of Forest Stewardship; Joelle Vautour, Management Forester; Keith DiNardo, Assistant Management Forester; Nicholas Anzuoni, Management Forester; Jennifer Fish; Director, Service Forestry Program

Department of Fish and Game – Division of Fish and Wildlife: John Scanlon, Habitat Program Manager

Public: Glen Ayers, Steve Ward, Dan Leahy, Dan Ogden

Keith DiNardo presented information on the Brook Road Proposal at Wendell State Forest. The following comments and questions were posed by the public and answered by Peter Church, John Scanlon, Keith DiNardo and Nicholas Anzuoni.

Glen Ayers:

- How do the management foresters choose an area to be harvested, what is the process?
 - o There are a variety of reasons why an area is selected, from past harvesting to achieving a different desired future condition.
- Is there a board foot target per year?
 - o No.
- Do the management foresters get “graded” on the amount of wood that is harvested?
 - o No
- Commented that the salvage of the tornado area was a greater disturbance to the State Forest than the tornado itself.
- Commented that the bioaccumulation of mercury causes the decline of early successional bird species, not habitat loss. Management foresters are proposing work which will potentially poison birds.
 - o John Scanlon from DFW commented that he was not aware of science on this topic and would be interested in seeing scientific papers on this topic.
- Commented that he cannot see why we would harvest the oak stand – it is juvenile and just beginning to sequester carbon. We would be setting the clock back and emitting carbon through the harvest for several decades. The forest does not need to be managed. We need old trees to sequester carbon.
 - o This stand appears to be overstocked and is even-aged. Our goal is to diversify age classes and stand species structure. In the uneven age management approach, only 1/5 of the stand would be cut leaving a continuous forest cover of mostly oak that is growing older and sequestering carbon. The cut areas that have regenerating forest will be sequestering carbon at a more rapid rate than the overstory trees. Forest products created from the harvested trees will sequester their carbon permanently or as long as they remain in service.
- Commented if there is a decision making process, or appeal review process with public commenting incorporated before the job is put out to bid?
 - o DCR welcomes and reviews all comments and will modify proposals where necessary.
- Where is the administrative review in the decision making process before jobs are put out to bid?

- Review is in the form of our harvest proposal process. There is internal review then external public review with a public meeting and comment period and a follow up public tour of the proposed area.

Steve Ward

- Wanted to know what the white pine plantation is being managed for – what type of regeneration is desired?
 - If we move forward with DFW’s recommendation we will have early successional habitat with early successional species dominating. If a group selection approach is used, black birch may be the predominant regenerating species but not particularly desired.

Dan Leahy

- Thought that the management proposed in the red pine stand sounded “great” – Great to release the white pine regeneration and utilize the wood products.
- Concerned about a uncertified vernal pool within harvest area
 - We treat all Potential Vernal Pools as certified thereby giving them the protections of a certified VP.
- Commented that he would like to see a lot of coarse woody debris left behind after the harvest for wildlife benefit
 - As part of our harvesting we do leave coarse woody debris in the forest; two cords per acre is the minimum goal. Using a cut to length harvesting system which leaves virtually all tree limbs and tops in the woods will enable that goal to be met easily.
- Suggested the donation of firewood to the Wendell wood bank would be beneficial to the town in lieu of taxes
 - We have been working with other communities on Wood Banks through a federal grant. We will look at the possibility of doing it in Wendell.
- Commented that he can support 5 acre clearcuts to build on past natural disturbances at Wendell State Forest
- What is the timing of the harvest?
 - It could start as early as next fall or winter.
- What is the equipment mix planned to be used? Concerns over damage to the residual trees.
 - We assess ground and forest conditions and identify equipment within the timber contract that are compatible with the site and will have as minimal impact as possible.

Don Ogden

- Concerned that we are not working to sequester as much carbon as possible in our forestry projects, why isn’t that goal being discussed in the proposal?
 - Each harvesting proposal focuses on particular objectives. Carbon sequestration is an important ecosystem service on all state lands.
- Do we take into consideration bird nesting periods with harvest timing?
 - Yes, we work with Natural heritage on timing of harvests.

Transcribed by Joelle Vautour