

MEETING RECORD
Stakeholders Forum for the
Nantahala & Pisgah Plan Revision

Wednesday, September 23, 2015
12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Asheville, North Carolina

Members

Kyle Brown, *Quality Deer Management Association*

Kevin Colburn, *American Whitewater*

John Culclasure, *Ruffed Grouse Society*

JD Diefenbach, *Sierra Club, Wenoca Chapter*

Rob Elliot, *Evergreen Paper*

Sam Evans, *Southern Environmental Law Center*

Susan Fletcher, *Pisgah Hardwoods*

Ruth Hartzler, *Carolina Mountain Club*

Steve Henson, *retired, Southern Multiple Use Council*

Bill Hodge, *Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards*

Lang Hornthal, *Appalachian Designs*

Hugh Irwin, *The Wilderness Society*

Josh Kelly, *MountainTrue*

Zachary Lesch-Huie, *Access Fund*

Andrea Leslie, *NC Wildlife Resources Commission (shared seat)*

Deirdre Lightsey, *Back Country Horsemen of NC*

Richard Mode, *NC Wildlife Federation*

Gary Peters, *National Wild Turkey Federation*

Ben Prater, *Defenders of Wildlife*

Curtis Smalling, *National Audubon of NC*

Morgan Sommerville, *Appalachian Trail Conservancy*

Gordon Warburton, *NC Wildlife Resources Commission (shared seat)*

David Whitmire, *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Council*

National Forest Foundation

Karen DiBari, *National Forest Foundation*

Mark Shelley, *National Forest Foundation*

U.S. Forest Service

Michelle Aldridge, *National Forests of NC*

James Melonas, *National Forests of NC*

Notetaker

Caleb Owolabi

Welcome & Introduction

Karen DiBari welcomed all participants to the kick-off meeting for the Stakeholders Forum for the Nantahala & Pisgah Plan Revision. Twenty-three Stakeholder Forum members, two Forest Service representatives, and two National Forest Foundation staff were present.

Karen introduced the National Forest Foundation, including Mark Shelley, the new Eastern Field Program Director. She also recognized other members of the NFF's collaborative team who were not present but are integral to the process, Mary Mitsos and Emily Olsen.

She provided a summary of the collaborative assessment, which the NFF conducted in July 2015 (see separate summary of the collaborative assessment and the Powerpoint presentation).

Karen also reviewed the meeting objectives:

- Kick off the Stakeholders Forum for the Nantahala and Pisgah Plan Revision process
- Gain a shared understanding of the Forest Service's management planning process and timeline
- Finalize the Stakeholders Forum for the Nantahala and Pisgah Plan Revision Purpose and Goals, Code of Conduct and meeting schedule.

Forest Service Management Planning Timeline, Update and Next Steps

James Melonas and Michelle Aldridge reviewed the status and timeline of the forest plan revision process. The work that the Forest Service is focused on this fall and winter includes:

- Refining the content of the draft forest plan
- Holding interdisciplinary discussions on forest-wide content
- Discussing management areas
- Beginning to prepare the Draft Environmental Impact Statement analysis
- Evaluating lands that may be suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System
- Evaluating the eligibility of rivers for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River Systems
- Identifying lands suitable for timber production

Opportunities for public input to the Forest Service before the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is released:

- Late October: provide input for the next stage of the required Wilderness and Wild and Scenic River evaluation processes
- Mid-fall through winter: help refine forest plan content during development of the proposed plan
- Late fall: help create a plan monitoring program
- Early 2016: provide input during alternative development. The Forest Service will revisit the range of alternative with the public to ensure nothing has been missed as the agency begins NEPA analysis.
- Spring 2016: release Draft Environmental Impact Statement for formal 90-day NEPA comment period.

Because of the very tight timeline associated with the Forest Plan and the Stakeholders Forum process, members of the Forum encouraged the Forest Service to provide regular check-ins at future meetings so that members will be engaged and able to educate their constituents and the public about the planning process.

Purpose and Goals

Members reviewed, discussed, and considered changes to the document, making wording and grammatical changes and ultimately approving it.

Consensus Decision: The Stakeholders Forum Purpose and Goals, attached, were approved by consensus. The approved version will be shared with the Stakeholders Forum and posted to the website.

Membership and Meetings

The Stakeholders Forum made several consensus decisions related to membership and meeting attendance:

- The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission will hold a shared seat on the Stakeholders Forum (held by two members, with one vote). The two people holding the shared seat will sit next to each other at the collaborative table.
- As per the Code of Conduct, members are expected to participate in all meetings, but the Stakeholders Forum recognizes that occasionally an absence cannot be avoided. The Stakeholders Forum decided that alternates may attend meetings in place of designated members of the Stakeholders Forum if:
 - The member informs the NFF in advance of the name and contact information of the alternate;
 - The alternate agrees to the Code of Conduct and Purpose & Goals of the Stakeholders Forum;
 - The member fully prepares the alternate with background information on the Stakeholders Forum so that time will not be required in the meeting to bring the alternate “up to speed” and the process can continue to move forward as efficiently as possible.
- Some groups may opt to bring a designated alternate to every meeting, and they will communicate with the NFF in advance of each meeting to alert them to the alternate’s attendance.
- Alternates who attend with the member will not sit at the collaborative table and will be treated as observers
- Alternates who attend a meeting in place of the member may sit at the collaborative table and participate in the discussion as a member. The Stakeholders Forum did not decide whether alternates participating as a member would have voting privileges.
- Proxy voting will not be allowed.
- New members will not be added to the Stakeholders Forum.
- Meetings will not be video recorded or streamed virtually.

Action: NFF will draft language regarding alternates for circulation by email to the Stakeholders Forum before the next meeting.

Code of Conduct

The group reviewed and discussed the Code of Conduct document, and made the following consensus decisions:

- Stakeholders Forum meetings will be open to interested observers

- Observers will be asked to remain quiet during the meeting so that the Stakeholders Forum can operate as efficiently as possible
- Meeting dates will be posted on the NFF website about the Stakeholders Forum.
- Meeting records and other documents will be posted onto the website once they are final
- The NFF will handle media inquiries unless and until the Stakeholders Forum decides otherwise
- The Code of Conduct is approved, and will be shared by email with the Stakeholders Forum and posted on the website

Actions: The Stakeholders Forum requested that the NFF draft language for the group's review regarding:

- Traditional and social media communications for review by the group
- Violations of the Code of Conduct

Timeline and Meetings

The Stakeholders Forum discussed the draft timeline of meetings and how they relate to the plan revision schedule. The Stakeholders Forum will plan to meet monthly through February, then will meet bi-monthly through the spring/early summer of 2016 or as needed. See the attached timeline document.

It was requested that the Stakeholders Forum strive to hold some of their meetings outside of Asheville (in other parts of the Forest) and at varying times to accommodate members' work and family schedules.

The next Stakeholders Forum meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 22nd, from 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. in Asheville. Specific location information will follow.

The November meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 10th from 2:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. in Waynesville. Specific location information to follow.

Action Items

- NFF staff will share the Stakeholders Forum Purpose & Goals, Code of Conduct, collaborative assessment summary, and PowerPoint presentation via email with members and then post on the website. (DONE)
- NFF staff will further refine the language regarding traditional and social media, alternates, observers, and consequences of violations of the Code of Conduct, then will share with the Stakeholders Forum for review and approval.
- NFF staff will share via email the directives related to the evaluation process for Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers
- NFF staff will communicate locations for the October and November meetings as soon as possible
- NFF staff will arrange alternate plans for scheduled meetings if bad weather will make travel hazardous

- Stakeholders Forum members need to advise NFF staff if they will not be able to attend upcoming meetings

Record of Decisions	Consensus
The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission will hold a shared seat on the Stakeholders Forum (held by two members, with one vote). The two people holding the shared seat will sit next to each other at the collaborative table.	Yes
<p>Alternates may attend meetings in place of designated members of the Stakeholders Forum if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The member informs the NFF in advance of the name and contact information of the alternate; • The alternate agrees to the Code of Conduct and Purpose & Goals of the Stakeholders Forum; • The member fully prepares the alternate with background information on the Stakeholders Forum so that time will not be required in the meeting to bring the alternate “up to speed” and the process can continue to move forward as efficiently as possible. 	Yes
Some groups may opt to bring a designated alternate to every meeting, and they will communicate with the NFF in advance of each meeting to alert them to the alternate’s attendance.	Yes
Alternates who attend with the member will not sit at the collaborative table and will be treated as observers	Yes
Alternates who attend a meeting in place of the member may sit at the collaborative table and participate in the discussion as a member.	Yes
Alternates will not sit at the collaborative table.	Yes
Proxy voting will not be allowed.	Yes
New members will not be added to the Stakeholders Forum.	Yes
Meetings will not be video recorded or streamed virtually.	Yes
Stakeholders Forum meetings will be open to interested observers.	Yes
Observers will be asked to remain quiet during the meeting so that the Stakeholders Forum can operate as efficiently as possible.	Yes
Meeting dates will be posted on the NFF website about the Stakeholders Forum.	Yes
Meeting records and other documents will be posted onto the website once they are final.	Yes
The NFF will handle media inquiries unless and until the Stakeholders Forum decides otherwise.	Yes
The Code of Conduct is approved, and will be shared by email with the Stakeholders Forum and posted on the website.	Yes
The Purpose & Goals is approved, and will be shared by email with the Stakeholders Forum and posted on the website.	Yes