

STAKEHOLDERS FORUM FOR THE NANTAHALA & PISGAH PLAN REVISION

NANTAHALA GEOGRAPHIC AREA FOCUS

SMALL GROUP GEOGRAPHIC AREA REVIEW

JUNE 13, 2017

HIGHLAND DOMES GEOGRAPHIC AREA REVIEW

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: MEGAN SUTTON, DAVID WHITMIRE, BILL HODGE, LANG HORNTAL, RICHARD MODE, KEVIN COLBURN

1. What resonates with you about the geographic area (GA) narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?
 - The need for more young forest across all ecozones and the potential conflict with achieving this
 - May provide good opportunity for increased interpretation around restoration opps because of the high visitation in this GA coupled with high need for restoration
 - Goals are good at recognizing places of recreational significance – specific places
 - Goal of Enhancing and restoring resiliency – agree that a) and b) are those that are in most need of restoration
 - Surprised to see no discussion of partnering with organizations on preserving the wilderness character of the Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area

 2. What do you think about the distribution of management areas (MA)?
 - Glad to see the east fork of the Tuckasegee is recognized as eligible WSR, but Greenland and Panthertown are not which may be an oversight (Kevin)
 - A lot of high end housing (WUI) surrounding NFS lands (Lake Toxaway) – opps for management (WUI)
 - There are some logical extensions to Ellicott Rock to the west
 - Some roads that are showing in area north of Ellicott Rock - need more information about those – whether those have been maintained to standard

 3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
- Would like to see discussion of clean and abundant water in the Tuckasegee hydropower area
 - Would like to see recognition of managing rec. use in the upper Chattooga R.
 - Like to see a move towards sustainable recreation in this area
 - N. Fork of French Broad (high recreation use)– which is currently in the Scenic Byway and would like to see it WSR eligible
 - Call out Protection of the Bartram Trail through the Fishhawks area under ‘Unique features’

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

 - Lots of partnership opps for restoration because of the high need for restoration
 - Backcountry around the Terrapin Mtn. Area – need more conversation on whether that could be expanded – look at whether there has been any past mgmt. in that area
 - Discussion about Overflow as a recommended Wilderness Area – the only WSA that wasn't included in an alternative for recommendation
 - Nothing in GA about opps for partnership around preserving wilderness character in Ellicott Rock

5. What questions do you have?

 - Unique tannic sandy bottom – don't know much about this (Megan). Kevin provided description of this.
 - What is 6th level HUC mean (not in plain language). Which watersheds have been identified as priority watersheds here. What and where are those
 - Management plan for the Chattooga R. is within the Forest Plan, need to carry language from amendment forward into this plan
 - Need explanation about management of individual SIAs

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: JILL, BILL, JIM SITTS, JIM GRAY, ZACH

1. What resonates with you about the geographic area (GA) narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

 - Timber suitability – misleading not to have the map information available.
 - Concerned about designated old growth areas as pertains to suitability. There's a lot of definitions to old growth. Concerned about the impact to the economics as to what restoration do you want to cut in. Too many times gone to look at a timber sale and walked away because economically we could not do it. We don't want to get nitpicked to death on areas where timber can be suitability managed because of a 100 acre old growth spot or access for some other use.
 - Specificity would be helpful. When you have a uniform color, part of the goal is to not refight old fights. How much will be saved at project level since we have pulled so much out to that level.
 - In agreement with most of what I see here, but I can't tell where old growth falls/where suitable wildlife habitat might be restored. Does not need to get into this detail at this point, but don't think we have enough information to make a solid decision.
 - On dotted line areas, we went through significant public meetings on wilderness. Opposed to all dotted line areas. At Blue Valley, fine with staying IRA, road in middle disqualifies as wilderness. Dispersed camping that does not fit into wilderness area. Knows people who have hunt/fishing group reunions every year in Blue Valley – adamantly opposed to becoming wilderness to keep them from doing this in the future.

- Terrapin Mountain area – there is a significant number of people who have had meetings, talked to commissioners, would like to see Terrapin Mountain area analyzed for wilderness. Fairly inaccessible. No trails, except user-created ones. For botanical, opportunity for solitude. Spectacular view to south of Chatuge drainage – unmatched across forest. Significant number of groups have interest in this area. Would like to know why interface and matrix in there. This entire complex, drainage going to Elephant Rock, the extension – all of that as a complex makes me more concerned about this entire area. Here to speak for large community of groups who would like to see as wilderness.
- Overflow Wilderness Study Area – Road 79. Road and dispersed camping should stay as it is. Seven or eight years ago, proposal brought forward where this road was cut out with allowance for historical use.
- Along Route 106, there is the Blue Valley Overlook. Road buffer that was in wilderness proposal that would allow clearing of the viewshed. Access to Bartram Trail area. It is really important to be able to maintain overlook. It's not like we are just going to go in and put a fence around it.
- Got description pretty good. I'm for rock climbing and you incorporated that very well. Tallest unbroken cliff faces east of Mississippi – Panthertown and Whitesides, Big Green, and access to a privately owned cliff called Laurelmont. Might build out more recreational stuff in description. Might add kayakers and whitewater paddlers in upper Chatuge and Cullsaja. Equestrian use in Panthertown is significant. Mountain biking in Panthertown.
- Parking lot for horse trailers on Flat Rock side.
- Backcountry is not a primary use for timber sales. Assuming matrix areas would have designated areas for timber management. Not backcountry but matrix – backcountry as buffer.
- In Connecting People to Land, protect peregrin falcon while rock climbing. Thinks it should be in Resiliency – Move to Enhance and Restore Resiliency “Maintain peregrine falcon protection by cooperating with rock climbing community and science-based seasonal closings.” Should be more about rock climbing in Connecting – Steward and manage significant rock and ice climbing areas.
- No objection to being backcountry.
- Northside of powerline at Panthertown – curious about what differentiated northside and southside. At Dismal Falls, SIA around it. There's a wider area, needs to be bigger. Wilder area, not very accessible, would like to see greater emphasis on special interest use. Matrix area (like a donut).

2. What do you think about the distribution of management areas (MA)?

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

5. What questions do you have?

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: GORDON; SUSAN FLETCHER; JD; RUTH HARTZLER; SAM; BEN

1. What resonates with you about the geographic area (GA) narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Goals are all good for restoration. Pine-oak heath is more departed and there is more opportunity to use prescribed fire.
- Water goals are good. Especially, organic passage.
- Recreation goals are good – especially like the interpretive idea but maybe add more than just waterfalls to this list.
- Goal for day use hiking and wildlife viewing.

2. What do you think about the distribution of management areas (MA)?

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- SIA direction (SNHAs) – FS approach on management. Would like more details and using an **integrated approach** of collaboration may be an option.

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Dismal Falls (including Big Pisgah); Silver Run preserve; Fishhawk Mountain; and Cedar Cliff/McDowell Mountain in matrix is concerning – more of a backcountry MA.

5. What questions do you have?

- Connecting people/Recreation – maybe the “dotted lines” can be the places to focus on road maintenance and development. This is true in all the GAs.

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: DEIRDRE, GARY, HUGH, JOSH, DON, RYAN, ROB

1. What resonates with you about the geographic area (GA) narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Dominated by mature late successional forest. Need to provide balance
- Lot of rare habitat in this area and natural heritage area.
- Opportunities for chestnut restoration. Also, manage closed canopy forests

- Opportunities for oak restoration in this area
- Horsepature and Chattooga WS rivers should be in the narrative
- Green salamander should be cited in the narrative and goals
- Lack of information on angler opportunities and aquatic conditions (eg brook trout)

2. What do you think about the distribution of management areas (MA)?

- Dominated by mature late successional forest.
- More abundance of special interest areas compared to other GAs
- Cedar cliffs is new special interest, half of the area was identified as WRC frontcountry

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Collaborate with NC Forest Service, Duke energy and other adjacent landowners.(eg Gorges State Park
- Collaborate on Panthertown, perhaps larger special interest area. High interest in recreation.
- South side of Terrapin Mtn, there are concerns. Eg, timber production would be a non-starter with those constituents

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Having matrix and interface along the Bartram trail would have problem with timber production (west side of GA)
- Could have collaborative meeting on Bartram Trail, that may be similar practices to the Appalachian Trail.
- Connecting equestrian needs in panthertown

5. What questions do you have?

- Discussion between ecological restoration and rotational forestry. (will have webinar). Language is important with this issue. Eg timber harvest vs timber production.
- Shifting mosaic of habitat –is that the same as rotational forestry. It depends on the landowner objective. Problems with a shifting mosaic of habitats in specific areas?? Need to be clear about the difference between the shifting mosaic and timber production –but should not run away from timber production.

GREAT BALSAM GEOGRAPHIC AREA REVIEW

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: MEGAN SUTTON, DAVID WHITMIRE, BILL HODGE, LANG HORNTAL, RICHARD MODE, KEVIN COLBURN

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?
 - Under enhancing and restoring resiliency – surprised that mesic oak restoration is not called out. Change language to focus on mesic oak – tie back to DCs
 - Interesting that goals talk more about structural conditions and composition and don't link to ecozones in the same way as they are in other GAs
 - Narrative uses 'northern hardwoods' which is not indicative of the ecozones
 - Would like to see discussion of clean and abundant water in the Tuckasegee hydropower area

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?
 - No green on the map – but not necessarily an issue in this GA
 - Areas around Pinnacle park (around the Silva watershed) could potentially be backcountry
 - Area Adjacent to the Parkway Byway (Richland Balsam Area) – as potential backcountry from WRCC perspective (David W.)
 - Heartburn on Tannasee Creek not being identified as eligible WSR (Kevin)

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

 - Area Adjacent to the Parkway Byway (Richland Balsam Area) – as potential backcountry from WRCC perspective (David W.).
 - However, not necessarily a point of disagreement with current MA there
 - Zone of agreement – everything south and west of Tuckasegee River
 - General zone of agreement on MA distribution over entire GA

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

 - Heartburn on Tannasee Creek not being identified as eligible WSR
 - Good GA for further discussion on the economic viability of restoration opps – i.e. potentially low quality timber sales

5. What questions do you have?

- Editorial – FS uses the term lakes in the GA and they should be reservoirs.

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: JILL, BILL, JIM SITTS, JIM GRAY, ZACH

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Alarka Laurel SIA – Established to protect red spruce grove. Spruce not included in SIA. North of 86F, is where all the spruce are. See no reason – been timbered before – object to that leg of the Alarka Laurel SIA.
- What would be allowed in interface areas?
- In agreement with whole thing except for Alarka Laurel – no problem with creek and falls. Riparian area should take care of it. Good grouse area if managed correctly.
- Assume that with Balsam Lake Lodge would be managed for scenery enhancement. Would love to see SIA bigger for Alarka Laurel. Would be management for special qualities. Doesn't pre-empt management. Ecological qualities should be managed.
- Not sure where Pinnacle Park is. Park outside of downtown Sylva, very accessible to town and heavily used. Not FS land. Not familiar with Interface and Matrix block – thinking about view and experience of Pinnacle Park. If it is adjacent to FS land, maintain experience at Pinnacle.
- Are you okay with Cowee Mountain?
- Alarka Laurel pops out in biodiversity index. Should be recognized in bigger way, but ecological restoration by all means.
- Someone cut out tops of spruces. Cut trees all over the place (Alarka Laurel).
- Alarka Laurel has high quality water.

On Goals:

- Do mention Roy Taylor, balds, Sugarcreek Fields, that do need attention.
- Not much climbing and paddling. Hiking and OHV is accounted for.
- Area being so closer and more accessible to Western Carolina University. Huge outdoor rec program – creating own trails to Sylva. Intense forestry program. Something to think about as to who else is in community.
- Universities should be on opportunities to partner with others. Also Southwestern Community College.

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?
3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
5. What questions do you have?
 - Going up Cowee Mountain to towers, observed chestnuts. Don't know if plantings or sprouts from old stumps. Good area for chestnut restoration.
 - Hard when you don't see suitability analysis pop out.

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: GORDON; SUSAN FLETCHER; JD; RUTH HARTZLER: SAM; BEN

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?
 - Restoration goals are good especially the golden wing warbler and grouse.
 - No backcountry MA.
 - No day hiking mentioned. More forest-wide direction.
2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?
 - Like the flexibility in the mix of MAs.
 - Typo on opportunities: should "h" be two different letters?
3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*- Alarka Laurel should be more SIA – more like a backcountry MA.
- Maps do not show the other "layers" that will help "explain" the management options.
- The GA is ripe for acquisition.
- 4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*- Opportunity to relocate the Mountains-to-Sea trail.
- 5. What questions do you have?

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: DEIRDRE, GARY, HUGH, JOSH, DON, RYAN, ROB

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Narrative is weak, eg the Cowee is different than the Balsams. Cowee has more in common with Highland Domes
- Mafic Rock and special plant communities should be identified in the narrative (and goals)
- Need to balance structural classes across the GA
- Brown mountain is special place in the GA
- Cowee mtns is fragmented, and should have a goal to increase connectivity.
- Be more explicit about collaborating with the conservancy organizations. Eg North American Land Trust.

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?

- Very little backcountry but could be dealt with in the Goals for ecological restoration

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Perhaps Brown Mountain, since WRC does not see limited restoration that they have identified and there are many rare species.
- Alarka Laurel –could have larger SIA.
- Pinnacle area could be discussed. WRC sees restoration potentials.

5. What questions do you have?

- Discussions about treatments are temporal.
- Could backcountry be less than 2500 ac if it is used to connect adjacent lands ?
- Would small areas be interface? Small tracts tend to be in the timber base since they are accessible in many cases. Ie, adjacent landowners adjacent to small tracts.

NANTHALA MOUNTAINS GEOGRAPHIC AREA REVIEW

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: MEGAN SUTTON, DAVID WHITMIRE, BILL HODGE, LANG HORNTAL, RICHARD MODE, KEVIN COLBURN

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Like the goal about serpentine woodlands – think this is very important
- Add hydrologic improvements to goal for bogs
- Love that hellbenders are called out
- Surprised that there's no goal under connecting people to the land for opps for partnering in So. Nant Wilderness specifically for preserving wilderness character
 - Also missing in the Fires Creek Area
- No mention of bald management in goals
- Under connecting people to the land – respond to 'demand' for hunting in narrative (public interest/desires)

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?

- Well distributed balance of 3 primary MAs
- Fires Creek area that is currently in Matrix but could be in backcountry to follow WRC dotted line

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Prescribed fire opps in Tusquitee Bald area
- Fires Creek area – wilderness recommendation
- Is backcountry the right MA for open area management (for example, balds). Tellico bald area. Will we be able to maintain bald if they are in backcountry?

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Fires Creek area in general
 - Fires Creek area that is currently in Matrix but could be in backcountry to follow WRC dotted line on northern portion
- Expanding So. Nant wilderness – adding IRA extensions
- Need to discuss the interest in Tellico Bald as a recommended area (which groups are advocating for this?)
- What does sustainable recreation mean in this GA?– area provides a diversity of opps (hunting, long distance hiking, wilderness exp)

5. What questions do you have?

- What would restoration look like in acidic cove and rich cove? (Specific to goal a))
- Is backcountry the right MA for open area management (for example, balds)

- Which group is advocating for Tellico Bald as recommended wilderness? Need them at the table for discussion of this area

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: JILL, BILL, JIM SITTS, JIM GRAY, ZACH

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Big thing that jumps out AT corridor – Everyone is in agreement that we need to protect it.
- Connecting People to the Land – 3rd paragraph down talks about quality habitat for grouse, turkey, white tail deer, etc. Need some help to understand how this is quality habitat. Don't see deer, grouse,. See more bear than anything. Habitat is not edge area for animals. Heard for years that, for hunters, "There's nothing in there anymore."
- Turkey and bear is most prevalent. Habitat is really seriously in need of improvement for wildlife.
- Needs more young forest.
- "I hunt this road a good bit." One cut that is 30 years old. Nothing else on that road. A lot is poplar, a lot is thick rhododendron. Lot of opportunity for restoration. Is some timber restoration on Jarret Creek, Willis Cove.
- Albert Mountain Tower = even-aged, not very old. Old Highway 64 back into Deep Gap, same issue.
- Agree with goals about bats and other T&E species.

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?

- Have reviewed area extensively with grouse hunters. Big issue for group is green dotted lines along Silers Bald and Tellico Bald. Don't have a problem with Wesser going into backcountry. Can live with it being backcountry and love interface and matrix. Opposed to wilderness.
- If put Silers Bald in wilderness, you'd lose it fast. There was general agreement amongst people present that you would lose the bald.
- My understanding is to have a core in center of area and do restoration around that core.
- No problem with AT corridor. Area that goes up onto Silers Bald that is mowed to keep it an artificial bald. There's a cascade bog on Jarret Creek – no problem with small SIA around that bog. One of the things that came up way back in forum, connectivity to be able to connect through – for horseback riding and trails.
- Seems very balanced.

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Wesser Bald, Tellico Bald, and Siler Bald.

- Fires Creek
- Wants to get Clay County on map for tourists. Wants to promote run on Rim Trail to publicize county. If becomes wilderness area, you can't do event like that.
- Have to look at area to see if there is infrastructure to get hundreds of people up there. Areas of trail I have been on is not suitable for a high volume trail. Other opportunities in Clay County. Just wanted to get people there with a big event race, but if you do ground proofing to see if this is the best use. Trout fishermen don't want to see sediment runoff.

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Wesser Bald
- Tellico Bald
- Siler Bald
- Fires Creek
- Road issue in there. And issue with opposing dotted green lines against both areas.
- Thinking about Fires Creek Rim Trail – long distance trail opportunities with AT, Chunky Gal, Fires Creek Rim, Batram Trail, connecting to other Geographic Areas. Those are experiences that you can't get on other parts of the forests.
- If concern about restoration for private property because of acidic rocks, then what about restoration suitability for same reason. Can't do restoration without building roads. Why in matrix if acid bearing rock is such a big concern.

5. What questions do you have?

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: GORDON; SUSAN FLETCHER; JD; RUTH HARTZLER: SAM; BEN

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Goals for restoration really "nail it on the head".
- Scenery goals are not here. Also would like to see scenery that represents the multi-uses of the FS.
- Demand seems to strong; maybe change to "requests".

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Wilderness boundaries on western edge especially dashed lines from the public are open for collaboration. Some are IRAs.
- Siler Bald wilderness but not in isolation – is an area of previous agreement. Areas have overlapping values. Support is contingent on other areas. Chunky Gal; extensions to the Southern Nantahala Wilderness.
- Appalachian Trail view shed. Again there are management layers that are not showing on this maps.

5. What questions do you have?

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: DEIRDRE, GARY, HUGH, JOSH, DON, RYAN, ROB

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Fires Creek should be identified as Outstanding Resource water
- More discussion of the landscape connectivity, including the Appalachian Trail
- Late succession habitat is prevalent and needs more balance
- A lot of existing old growth should be identified in this GA
- Acidic and rich cove should not be in Enhancing Resiliency (sentence (a)). Disturbance is not needed in acidic and rich cove. Using silviculture should not be a priority. This also gets to the issue about reaching NRV (specifically for old growth). Eg rich cove and acidic should be the least disturbed rather the most disturbed
- More clarification about the mix of old growth and young forests concerning acidic and rich coves.
- The term “age class” is not needed –just use structural diversity
- More clarification in the narrative for enhancing resiliency –where narrative is specific but the goals are very broad.
- Largest ecozone for Matrix and Interface shifting mosaic is northern hardwoods ecozone for restoration activities in Narrative description. Goal 1 and 2, not so much the rich/acidic coves.
- NCWRC to enhance wildlife opportunities around lands adjacent to state owned lands

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?

- Nantahala river should be on the list for WS rivers ORWs would include fishing, some geological aspects,
- No agreement on the distribution of MAs

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

 - Not big concern over new backcountry area in Wesser bald area but suggest decreasing size on east side near areas of FSR 7052 and 7051
 - Question size of backcountry area extension of south side of fires creek—there is limited matrix between interface and backcountry
 - Concerns about managed areas in the following: Tusquittee Bald, Siler Bald, S. Nantahala (Chunky Gal), Tellico Bald, Part of Wesser Bald, north part of Boteler

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

 - Trimont area for a shifting mosaic. This is one area of about 400k of lands that could be targeted.
 - Areas can be identified for core forest and special areas
 - There is more than 1 answer to the question about core forests.
 - Bird matrix is a distribution of habitat—should we shoot for that?

5. What questions do you have?

 - Compositional and structural diversity – in old growth? Or in the shifting mosaic
 - Where are we going to do the structural mosaic

NANTAHALA GORGE GEOGRAPHIC AREA REVIEW

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: MEGAN SUTTON, DAVID WHITMIRE, BILL HODGE, LANG HORNTAL, RICHARD MODE, KEVIN COLBURN

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?
 - Under providing clean and abundant water – recognize the value of the hydropower management and impact on recreational experience
 - Under connecting people to the land – there ought to be permitting space for groups working with underrepresented and minority communities (National Issue of commercial outfitters using all the permits)
 - Make sure that goals acknowledge the importance of trout fishing in this area
 - Consider adding noncommercial recreation on the Nantahala R.
2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?

- Area around AT that is IRA – works as backcountry but remains a question as to whether this should be recommended for wilderness (who’s advocating for this area?)
3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
- Nantahala Gorge SIA – need to clean up the lines on this boundary – should be no interface MA here. Potentially expand the SIA
4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
- Cheoah Bald as backcountry but not necessarily recommended wilderness
 - General agreement on backcountry designations as indicated on maps
5. What questions do you have?
- Will AT corridor have its own MA? - yes
 - What takes precedence when AT crosses through a potentially recommended area?
 - How would management of balds differ in a recommended wilderness vs backcountry
 - Suggestion that the GA boundary be changed at the watershed boundary

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: JILL, BILL, JIM SITTS, JIM GRAY, ZACH

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?
 - Does a good job hitting on rare species, human use, river and trail corridors being important for people and species.
 - Don’t know why southwestern portion is in the gorge.
2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?
3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
5. What questions do you have?

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: GORDON; SUSAN FLETCHER; JD; RUTH HARTZLER: SAM; BEN

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?
 - Goals seem good for recreation. Especially C.
2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?
3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

 - Scenery – especially the forestwide Scenery Management System.
 - Cheoah Bald – keep IRA, not wilderness.

5. What questions do you have?

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: DEIRDRE, GARY, HUGH, JOSH, DON, RYAN, ROB

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?
 - List the Bartram Trail –should this have a management area, since it is a national scenic trail
 - SIA should also specify the biological and geological significance, as well as the recreational characteristics
 - Non-native species should be expanded beyond rich coves, but specifically in the gorge area and streamside areas.
2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?
 - (check on Pearcy creek below)
3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

 - Area adjacent to gorge in backcountry—it is less than 2500 ac, so how did it qualify?

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Percy Mountain should focus on eco restoration rather than shifting mosaic

5. What questions do you have?

HIWASSEE GEOGRAPHIC AREA REVIEW

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: MEGAN SUTTON, DAVID WHITMIRE, BILL HODGE, LANG HORNTAL, RICHARD MODE, KEVIN COLBURN

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Enhancing and restoring resiliency goals are excellent – like that that goal identifies specific ecozones b/c of link to the DCs (Megan)
- Shortleaf pine and the need for pine restoration is called out
- Would like to add a goal to restore more natural flows from Appalachia Dam on the Hiwassee R (Kevin)
- Under 'Unique Places', should mention the Benton MacKaye Trail and connection to the Upper Bald – Heart of Darkness
- Recognize the connectivity to the recommended wilderness area on the Cherokee

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?

- General agreement on the distribution of MAs but still have a question over recommended wilderness at Cantrell Top and Unicoi Mtn. (Bill)

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Cantrell Top and Unicoi Mtns as recommended wilderness or backcountry as connected to the Cherokee NF – Broad agreement on MA distribution here

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Cantrell Top and Unicoi Mtns as recommended wilderness or backcountry as connected to the Cherokee NF (Bill)
- GA has prime opportunities for shortleaf management

5. What questions do you have?

- Sensitivity around the word 'demand' for sport shooting, outdoor recreation

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: JILL, BILL, JIM SITTS, JIM GRAY, ZACH

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- With needs for shortleaf, goals are pretty clear.
- Shooting range – In Connecting People Goals, provide opportunities for rifle and pistol shooting. (Steverson said it acknowledges range).
- Goals:
- Should that proposed addition to WSA be included in collaboration.
- Concerns that Cantrell Top is not included in the backcountry. Portion of Cantrell Top is not included.
- Maybe public wilderness proposed area should be included in the collaboration.
- With all of these lakes, identifying cooperation with TVA is important. TVA has been a great conservation partner.
- Need partnerships with county and state for boating access.
- One of concerns on wildlife side – for fishermen – is access.

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?

- Access for boating/fishing.

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

5. What questions do you have?

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: GORDON; SUSAN FLETCHER; JD; RUTH HARTZLER; SAM; BEN

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Goals for pine restoration are appropriate here.

- Hunting goal is also appropriate. Also wildlife viewing in addition to hunting.
 - Old Growth piece/layer is needed.
 - Partnerships with local communities in addition to the tribes.
2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?
 - Mix looks good for this GA.
 3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
 - Elk restoration via importation in the northern tip. Cantrell Top and south to the Trail of Tears and river.
 4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
 5. What questions do you have?

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: DEIRDRE, GARY, HUGH, JOSH, DON, RYAN, ROB

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?
 - Focus on shortleaf works well.
 - Does not specify the outstanding watersheds (priority watersheds)
 - Enhancing resiliency should include shortleaf in the list (letter e)
 - Currently structural diversity is about 50/50—largely due to the predominant forest type of shortleaf pine and its allies. Emphasis should be on an aggressive structural shifting mosaic to its natural extent. The objective here would be healthy resilient forests, a variety of habitats and providing abundant recreational opportunities that take advantage of wildlife associates with fire maintained, more open woodland habitat.
2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?
 - Okay with distribution, except need more backcountry Unicoi or upper bald wilderness proposal
 - Generally okay—but some special places scattered and need to find out how they would be handled in the plan direction.
3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Upper bald area for potential backcountry

5. What questions do you have?

- Finer distinction of ecological restoration as opposed to shifting mosaic. Where are the overlaps??

FONTANA LAKE GEOGRAPHIC AREA REVIEW

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: MEGAN SUTTON, DAVID WHITMIRE, BILL HODGE, LANG HORNTAL, RICHARD MODE, KEVIN COLBURN

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Under resiliency – great goal but there are 2 goals that are not ecozone specific and would suggest adding dry-mesic oak hickory and mesic oak. Under Goal b) and d)
- Appreciate reference to Cheoah R. under connecting people to the land
- Between SPB and degraded tracts – there will be a lot of economically challenged restoration

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?

- Like the idea of expanding JK Slickrock with extensions
- General agreement on MAs here

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Yellowhammer branch – Benton MacKaye trail and access from Tapoca Lodge
- Something may be forthcoming from future meetings with Graham Cty.

5. What questions do you have?

- Where are the areas for restoration of golden-winged warbler habitat?
- 6th level watershed (use plain language and ID what watersheds these are)

- Suggestion that Yellowhammer branch be in the Unicoi GA

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: JILL, BILL, JIM SITTS, JIM GRAY, ZACH

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Great to pull this all out as lakes.
- Why are little pieces of IRAs and SIAs on this GA and not the Unicoi? Better to have a finer point.
- Under Clean and Abundant Water – goal mentions only salmonid native to the (?) U.S. with brook trout. Is it Southern Appalachian brook trout? Would like to make that goal consistent in GAs if that is a fact.
- Add grouse under d} in Enhancing and Restoring.
- No need to enhance bears.
- On goals in Connecting to People – outreach and engagement in developed rec areas about litter/trash.
- Community is working with counties to enhance trail opportunities. Robbinsville with Buffalo Creek area – opportunities connecting tourists and locals. Bike trails, walking trails, out to the lake and schools. Possible opportunity for collaboration.
- Why no biking icon on Tsali Recreation Area? Big horse area too.
- Should say more about working on house boat issue on Fontana.
- Increase signage and interpretation because of so much trash in the area; need more info on stewardship; improve information and outreach – wherever there is interface; particularly needed in this area up to the waters edge

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?

- Little piece should be adjusted out; the wilderness inventory area extensions for JK that are IRAs should be moved into the Unicoi to make
- Also make it from splitting Robbinsville
- all agree - Distribution makes sense from the landscape.

Goals:

- Opportunities to talk with NPS? Re access, cultural access on the north shore; Appalachian Trail community Fontana Village

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
5. What questions do you have?

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: GORDON; SUSAN FLETCHER; JD; RUTH HARTZLER; SAM; BEN

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?
 - Goal on signage on multiple use trail that still recognize that hiking is also allowed.
 - Possible goal stating “numbers” related to the restoration around the lake. That is showing that this GA has more need.
 - Goal around wildlife viewing especially birding.
 2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?
 - Possible to redraw (or tweak) the GA boundary on Joyce Kilmer side.
 - SIA for botanicals in the area of large inholding/SNHA around Meeting House Mountain.
 3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
 4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
- Elk restoration. Moving down from the Park.
 - Recreation collaboration around Fontana Village and Benton M. trail.

What questions do you have?

- Can the maps reflect the other lands surrounding the MA and GAs. For example, GSMNP.

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: DEIRDRE, GARY, HUGH, JOSH, DON, RYAN, ROB

What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Tsali should recognize 50/50 bike and equestrian (equally –not equestrian as secondary)
- Prescribed fire looks like only in Shortleaf and should be expanded

- Golden winged warbler should not be a priority in this area. Golden wing is adjacent to this GA
- Add “improve access” on (letter d) in Goals for Connecting People with Land
- Should have similar descriptions to the lower elevations of the Eastern Escarpment—the emphasis should be on maximizing diversity of sustainable populations of a maximum number fo wildlife species

1. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?

- Looks fine, except maybe a small area adjacent to Joyce Kilmer

2. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

3. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- High recreation interface here, and partnering with other entities.
- Opportunities for interpretation,

4. What questions do you have?

- Interface from shorelines (1/4 mile)? There is a lot of matrix adjacent to the shoreline

*[Note takers: please record both where there is agreement and where there is opportunity for collaboration.]

UNICOI MOUNTAINS GEOGRAPHIC AREA REVIEW

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: MEGAN SUTTON, DAVID WHITMIRE, BILL HODGE, LANG HORNTAL, RICHARD MODE, KEVIN COLBURN

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Need better clarification on size of openings in rich cove
- Take out N. hardwoods from goal
- Add dry-mesic oak hickory to be consistent with the DC
- Benton MacKaye trail should also be mentioned under unique features
- Would like to add opportunities for partnering to preserve wilderness characteristics in JK Slickrock
- On ‘Connecting people to the land’ – regarding ‘abundant pop’n of deer’ – this is not characteristic of the area – lowest pop’n of white tail in the state.

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?

- Would like to see the JK Memorial forest be recommended to be taken out of the wilderness area. Rationale – because it's a highly visited developed area with a class 4 paved trail
- Agreement in our group on the MAs in the Cheoah Bald area
- Agreement on Unicoi Mtns areas as backcountry
- Think the Santeetlah Headwaters (matrix area) should be backcountry

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Old Tellico OHV area – what is the right MA direction for this area?

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Joyce Kilmer extension areas
- Question of whether the Cheoah Bald area should be recommended for wilderness (which group advocating for this)
- Agreement in our group on the MAs in the Cheoah Bald area
- Would like to see the Santeetlah Headwaters (matrix area) in backcountry
- Would like to see the lower Snowbird Creek area in backcountry

5. What questions do you have?

- 6th level watersheds? What are they
- Is the SIA for Joyce Kilmer around the entire wilderness or just Memorial Forest

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: JILL, BILL, JIM SITTS, JIM GRAY, ZACH

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Lots of feral hogs – although that may be forestwide – some activity on Cheoah Bald – check the forestwide
- Snowbird is an eligible Wild and Scenic River for creek. If you are a trout fisherman, this is a unique area.
- To have some assurance that it is really going to be managed for ecological characteristics and some recreation – lot of camping on Santeetlah Creek. Santeetlah Bluffs stands out as globally significant ecology.

- Talked to tons of local people about Snowbird. People do not want to see wilderness for lower Snowbird Creek, but it should be managed for ecological restoration. Folks want Snowbird itself to stay the way it is. WSA.
- Grouse hunting and access into Snowbird. FS 75 road. Would like that section not included in Wilderness. Is an IRA area.
- Area – northern part of Cheoah Bald – is also a grouse hunting area. 418 section is heavily hunted by bear hunters, deer hunters, and grouse hunters.
- Goals do not mention cerulean warbler area. Especially in Joyce Kilmer, Stecoah area. Also outside those areas. Not just golden-winged.
- Cherohala Skyway – view is spectacular. Scenery is amazing. Paying particular attention to scenery management. There is a steep, inaccessible drainage Wright Creek. Doesn't know if it falls in matrix MA. Wright Creek Falls is spectacular. Flag this area.
- Downslope of Cherohala Skyway – serious drainage/erosion issues and mitigating Carolina flying squirrel crossings.

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?

3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Corridor K expansion – Four lane highway into Robbinsville. With Appalachian Regional Commission being dissolved. Goes under AT.

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

- Snowbird watershed
- Upper Cheoah Bald Area
- South side of Joyce Kilmer

5. What questions do you have?

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: GORDON; SUSAN FLETCHER; JD; RUTH HARTZLER: SAM; BEN

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?

- Restoration and water goals are good.
- Like using the GAs to call out geology issues.
- Add wildlife viewing.
- Partnerships for restoring road access and special need users.
- Possibility mention the “gateways” into the county/forest for economics.

2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?
3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

 - Elk restoration. Moving down from the Park.
 - Upper Santeetlah that “works for everyone and many areas”. Special for many people for many reasons.
 - Ash Cove – water based items. Not an IRA.

5. What questions do you have?

STAKEHOLDERS IN GROUP: DEIRDRE, GARY, HUGH, JOSH, DON, RYAN, ROB

1. What resonates with you about the GA narrative? Are the GA goals the right ones? What do you think about the goals of the GA?
 - Should mention the adjacent areas on the Cherokee NF. Eg, when considered together, areas are twice the size of just the NP
 - Goals should prioritize in a certain order of importance
 - Mtn Bike and Equestrian have some concern about hiking only trails (letter d under connecting people)
 - Strengthen goals for restoration of oaks
2. What do you think about the distribution of MAs?
 - Should show the eligible WS rivers, as that could influence the MA distribution
 - A good mix of MAs in this GA—balance, mixture.. not sure if captured in the narrative
 - Gipp Creek is an outstanding resource waters
 - No roads in Gipp Creek that could qualify the area as backcountry (rather than matrix) and the area around Huckleberry Knob may also qualify for backcountry
3. Are there management area issues within this GA that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*

 - Some ecological restoration could occur in area adjacent to J.Kilmer, and in N. Flying Squirrel habitat. Also, many balds in this area.
 - Map of Cheoah Bald area is confusing, with many small areas mapped.

4. What are places that are ripe for collaborative discussion?*
 - Yellow Creek mountain area—mostly in App Trail, but know to be a high valued recreation site.
5. What questions do you have?