

This developing plan content is under construction and is being shared as a snapshot of thinking. Additional changes based on Forest Service and public input are expected.

Non-timber Forest Products

Background

Non-timber forest products are products derived from any naturally occurring mushrooms, fungi, flowers, seeds, roots, bark, leaves, and other vegetation that grows on National Forest System lands. They exclude sawtimber, pulpwood, cull logs, roundwood, house logs, utility poles, minerals, animals, animal parts, rocks, water, soil, but do include firewood. Non-timber forest products are collected for personal, educational, commercial, and scientific use. Within the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests they can be separated into four categories: medicinal and dietary supplements, edibles, specialty woods, and floral or decoratives.

Desired Conditions

- Commercial and personal use collection of non-timber forest products occurs within sustainable harvest limits.
- Collection for various products behind locked gates within appropriate areas is only allowed by hiking.
- Traditionally used resources availability is improved for future generations.
- Collaboration efforts and partnerships are ongoing with Tribes to ensure the availability and sustainable harvest of important cultural and traditional plants.
- Forest products collecting and gathering is recognized and allowed as a traditional Tribal use.
- American ginseng has large healthy reproducing populations typically with more than 500 individuals and occasionally with more than 1000 individuals. Older age classes within populations represent at least 40% of all the individuals. Genotype diversity within populations represent the southern Appalachian types.
- Galax bed sizes are diverse, with numbers of leaves varying from 10,000 to over 300,000, and dispersed across the eight ecozones in which it is commonly located. Young leaves, less than 1 inch in diameter, represent at least 25% of any population landscape wide.
- Ramp patches range in size from ¼ acre to 3 acres at bulb densities from 10,000-50,000/acre. Juvenile bulbs represent 20-25% of a population.
- A diversity of woodland medicinal herbs is present within appropriate habitats at historical densities.

Standards

- Only allow collection of products at sustainable harvest rates.
- Do not allow collection of moss species except for scientific purposes.
- Do not allow collection of the following showy species, azaleas, lilies, orchids, and Trilliums.
- Collection within 30 feet of a perennial or intermittent stream is limited to those species, such as yellowroot (*Xanthorhiza simplicissima*), that cannot be feasibly collected on

upland sites. For species collected within this zone, collection is limited to a maximum of 50 plants per permit for any ground disturbing activities (transplants, roots) and only one permit is issued per individual each month.

- Collection of down fuelwood without a permit is allowed for on-site camping use only.

Guideline

- Utilize associated indicator species for determining site locations for establishing new American ginseng populations.

Management Approaches

- Utilize an adaptive management approach for sustainable harvest rates tiering to a series of monitoring stations.
- Develop and update value and rate schedules for all products. Standard rates are to be updated or verified annually for those products that are not sold under competitive procedures.
- Coordinate with adjacent units to provide consistency in standard rates and permit conditions for common market areas.