

Plan Revision IDT Meeting

May 4, 2016

Participants: Michelle, Susan, Heather L, Jason R., Bill J., Cathy D., Logan Free, Erik C, Gary K, Sheryl, Holly, Rodney, Brady, Julie, Tom C. (phone), Bryan Killian (phone), Thom Saylor (phone), 6 observers

Meeting topics

- Plan development – next steps
- Management Areas 4A and 4B – AT and Scenic Byways

Proposed Roadmap (handout)

Michelle has been prepping for the last Stakeholders Forum meeting which will be May 10th – This meeting will include working with stakeholders to refine the roadmap for moving forward on plan components and management areas. Primary topics to discuss at the meeting include:

- Web sharing of Desired Conditions, Objectives, Guidelines and Standards (DOGS), priority watersheds, WSR eval results, wilderness eval results
- MA mapping at district meetings
- Monitoring summit
- Informal FS led activity – field trip (?)
- Stakeholder Forum led informal activities
- Stakeholder Forum formal meeting

There is a need to outline a strategy for internal review of wilderness evaluations – need clarity of discreet milestones – Heather and Erik will be sharing this wilderness review timeframe with the IDT in the next week. The IDT is welcome to review and comment on draft evaluation write-ups that are currently filed on the O drive.

Bill Jackson is interested in doing an assessment of the wilderness inventory areas for base cation depletion. Erik will share the GIS path for the inventory layer and Bill will hold off on the analysis until we get to a smaller set of areas that will be analyzed in the DEIS.

MA Mapping – looking at Integration of FS MA maps with stakeholder input that we have received over the last six months. We will be overlaying the layers of interest (NAPS, WHAMAS, and other) with the 2015 FS MA maps and looking for congruency and incongruency of management. Will need to make a FS call on those areas that are incongruent (will likely be an opportunity for a range of alts).

Need to engage the State Natural Heritage Program in the discussion of proposed special interest areas.

As a way of merging the separate tracts of internal and external plan development, we will be holding open IDT mapping meetings at ranger districts this summer which will allow for opportunity for district discussion and public engagement – meetings likely to be held in late July/August.

At these mapping meetings, we will need to be sharing the context of the entire Plan and DEIS process/timeframe with the public.

Scenic Corridor MA discussion (previously MA 4s)

- Reviewing the process and discussion of how to map the AT and the Scenic byways
- There is a need for regional consistency as these corridors are managed on adjacent forests.
- Need to be sharing the MA maps for 4A and 4B back with the districts prior to our open IDT district meetings later this summer.

Appalachian Trail Corridor

- AT is managed by FS, NPS, and ATC. There is a MOU with Park Service on management of AT. AT Comprehensive Mgmt Plan – addresses using the FS Visual Mgmt System (Scenery Management System) to assess impacts to the trail. AT Local Management Plan- guidance document.
- The recently updated (2014) scenery inventory generated the seen area foreground area along corridors of national significance.
- Dec 2014 – IDT meeting – Erik discussed mapping of corridors and a FS Supervisor decision was made to map the seen area foreground by smoothing edges around the visual foreground (as generated by the SMS model)
- Seen area maps would be utilized at project level analysis to determine the specific types of management that could be done within the trail corridor.
- The mapped AT corridor was shared with the IDT and ATC for review. Team members and Morgan Sommerville (ATC) provided feedback to Erik on the mapping of the corridor.
- There is a distinct recognition of project level values at the plan level because there are specific corridor management plans that direct us to do so.
- The Plan framework needs to describe the allowance for management activities within the corridor that are in the unseen areas.
- The forestwide scenery management system is a broader discussion that we need to have as an IDT.
- There will be a Plan decision associated with suitable uses – what management uses are suitable within each MA.
- Erik will share the AT shelter and side trail data layers with Holly to incorporate into the plan maps.
- Scenery inventory will be guidance to use at project development and project level analysis.
- Areas that have been identified for potential future trail relocation have been accounted for in the AT MA mapping. There may be instances when trail relocation results in a new visual foreground and therefore a plan amendment would be needed to adjust the MA boundary.
- Need to allow the IDT and district employees additional time to review the AT MA boundary
- There is a need a consistent set of GIS layers that the team and district employees can access, review and provide feedback on.

Blue Ridge Parkway and Scenic Byways MA

- Erik used centerline data of the Parkway and point data for overlooks/vistas along Parkway and Scenic Byways
- Data was shared with David Anderson at the BRP but we haven't yet received feedback
- IDT still needs to review the scenic corridor maps.
- Erik will share the path for IDT to review the 4 byway corridor layers.
- Some Special Interest Areas overlap with the byway corridors
- MA is clipped to other MAs that have higher precedence (see MA hierarchy table)

MA 4 Table – Scenic Corridors

- This table displays what the primary intent of the MA is and what management activities may be allowed
- Table displays how the MA is mapped and what the Allowable Uses are
- Desired conditions for each MA will more fully describe the primary intent of management in the area

Cultural Scenic Corridors

- The discussion of management for the Trail of Tears is actively being consulted on with other NFS units and the Region. The Nantahala Pisgah will have the first opportunity to adjust the plan, so there is a lot of interest on our approach, and we are coordinating with others. We will have to be nimble as this discussion evolves.
- 1500' corridor along trail (750' on either side of Trail of Tears). This area is to be managed for protection, preservation, restoration and interpretation of the trail. Harvest would be allowed for the benefit of the trail but area would not be suitable for timber production.
- Within the mile wide corridor (1/2 mile on either side) formal consultation with tribes will be required. This will require a seen area analysis within the mile wide corridor. Outside the 1500', the corridor would be considered suitable for timber production.
- Overmountain Victory Trail (OVT) is currently being mapped. OVT has a corridor width designated – mile wide corridor. Timber harvest within 1500' corridor should be to benefit the trail.

Next Steps

Erik and Holly will work together to have one consistent path for GIS coverages for IDT and district employees to review. Two weeks for AT review and three weeks for review of byways corridors.

IDT Meeting next Wednesday – discuss results of the stakeholders forum and more immediate steps of the roadmap. We may also have Jeff Holmes share some info on the ESE tool because he will be here on the Forest working with Gary and Sheryl next week.

Michelle, Susan and Heather will be working with team members to move forward on edits to the objectives.