September 3, 2014

General Comments from Wildlife Habitat Participant Working Session

AYB: Priorities: southern Appalachian endemic species, dispersal limited species, old growth habitat and species, all-lands approach to ecozones/age classes
This exercise limits public interaction and public participation, and the range of potentialoutcomes for the plan. I'm left wondering why I'm here. You want public input, but now too much public input?
LAL: protect existing old growth stands - age class currently underrepresented on forest. Important for species diversity
LAL: Protect riparian areas and headwaters especially for rare aquatic species such as mussels and salamanders
LAL: Protect seeps/wetlands, new groundwater directives will call for inventory of all areas where groundwater daylights, other forests are currently doing this inventory. These areas should be protected to the highest degree.
LAL: winter and summer bat habitat (long-ear, little brown, tri colored, virginia), with White nore syndrome effecting winter caves, summer bat habitat is critical, especially when female bats emerge in spring. Protection of forest around caves, allow for snags, older trees and seep bog protection for insect breeding and water source. Summer habitat will be critical to bat survival.
LAL: Protect species of conservaiton cincern habitat, soecies that have been petitioned for listing, and species that are less mobile in habitat such as mussels and salamanders.
EMS: protect old growth stands. The national forests contain a disproportionately high percentage of old growth and this is invaluable to protecting biodiversity
EMS: protect riparian areas and headwaters especially for rare aquatic species such as salamanders/mussels
EMS: although a "quilt approach" to management is ueful for ensuring that multiple uses are provided for, planning should focus on ensuring that wildlife corridors are protected and that ecosystems are valued from a broad-watershed and ecologically driven perspective
EMS: protect species of conservation concern
EMS" focus ESH restoration in areas where infrastructure and anthropogenic disturbance is already most prevalent
Pleaes do not allow policy to be influenced by emotion.
JL: the town of Mills River and Mills River Fire and Rescue are concerned about any plan to convert from forest mgmt to wilderness in the Pisgah Forest. They are concerned about the impact to wildilfe, economy, recreation, and the increae of forest fires due to lack of planned management.
JWB: All ESH is not created equal. A tree fall gap is vastly different for wildlife that a 30-50 ac cut or blowdown. Lumping all the needed ESH together may meet goals for "needed areas" but will likely work against diversity across the entire landscape.
MSI: Bly Gap maintain open areas
BEI1: protect old growth habitats
BEI2: protect wetland habitats
BEI3: protect bat habitats
BEI4: protect MORE old growth
GSW5: golden-winged warbler and grouse : Nantahala, Tusquitee, and Cheoah
SEE: arows on maps ignore some fo the more important aspects of ecological integrity as it relates to biodiversity and wildlife habitat. For example, habitat connectivity is a major usse at small scales (for dispersal limited species) and landscape scales (for forest interior species).

SEE: The Forest Service has data about rare species habitats and occurrences. It also has old growth data (another critically important and exceedingly rare habitat type). These should be protected (and excluded from ESH management).
SEE: on the other hand, connectivity has already been compromised and rare habitats are less commonly present in areas with high road density, which are also the areas of greatest restoration need. ESH management should be focused there.
SEE: Finally, with respect to Esh levels, and ESH over the NRV is a "multiple use" objective, which cannot be done on amounts or places to undermine biodiversity or integrity.
Early succession should be 1-10 years. Potential @ 10% is 49,423 acres?
CMS: there are some heath balds which would benefit from periodic mgt (e.g. Firescald Risge on App RD)
CMS: maximize old growth along AT
Please maintain trails, maintain elk habitat, maintain managed areas to preserve recreation and economic areas for sustainability and use
Please improve wildlife habitat at a 10%-12% lwevel in all high and mid elevation in Pisgah NF and Nantahala NF
EU: Specific concerns include the protection of old growth forest stands that provide important genetic integrity for the forest as a whole as well as providing pertinent habitat for species within the forest
EU: Habitat fragmentation is a major issue as well and prevents the migration and movement of certain species. The connectivity of healthy, intact forest stands to one another is key in theprotection of both animals and forest
EU: Consideration of gap size near these areas (and potentially no gaps in these old gtrowth and interior foerst stands) is high in priority for preventing the establishment of nonnative invasive plants. Invasive species removal and control programs are extremely expensive and take many years to get rid of and restore forest health.
KAP1: Protect inner forests and old growth forests. Important for species diversity/habitat and restoring the forest to its more natural/original state
KAP2: Protect caves/mines/other potential hibernacula for endangered/proposed/candidate bats (northern long-eared, tricolor, Indiana). Also protect forests/growth next to hibernacula - very important for summer/maternal roosting habitat. Northen long-eared prefer older/taller trees for maternity colonies.
KAP3: Protect riparin corridors water habitat for less mobile species that require protected water sources/seeps (bats/salamanders)
KAP4: Limit ESH to areas of the forest that already have existing infrastructure and recent timber harvests. That would preserve ESH areas for hunters whiule protecting old growth/inner forests for protected species.
SEC: in addition to NHP data and public input on important places, please utilize NCWRC databases. These will include additional data and include more up-to-date data thanh NHP database.
GJG: Remember that some of the southern appalachian bogs may need active management due to woody encroachment whiule others may not (e.g. Pink Beds). Pleae use Gary Kauffman's bog database.
BWD1: winter and summer bat habitat (long ear, little brown, tri colored, Virginia) with white nose subdrome affecting winter caves, summer bat habitat is critical, especially when female bats emerge in spring. Protection of caves, allow for snags, older trees, and seep bog protection for insect breeding and water soruces.
BWD2: Avoid prescribed burns in Panthertown Valley as are does not naturally take to burns

BWD3: Protect species of conservation concern, species that have been petitioned for listing, and species that are less mobile in habitat such as mussels and salamanders
BWD4: Avoid early forest restoratin in interior forests - forests that have been more heavily managed and are close to infrastructure (e.g. roads) should be the focuse of restoration to protect old growth
BP: protect and restore habitats for rare, threatened, and endangered species; expand habitat when needed
BP: promote and maintain landscape connectivity of habitats at multiple scales
BP: recognize habitat distributions for species on private and state lands (i.e. all lands approach)
BP: limit ESH management to areas that are outside NRV to promote restoration (prioritize!)
BP: mamagement prescription needed to protect cerulean warbler (Cheoah RD circled on map)
BP: management precscription needed to protect green salamander (Pisgah/Nantahala RD circled on map)
BP: management precscription needed to protect peregrin falcon (Grandfather RD/Linville circled on map)