

Bankhead National Forests
Liaison Panel Minutes
Lawrence County, Moulton, AL
July 13, 2010
1830 – 2030

Liaison Panel members:

Ron Eakes, District Supervising Wildlife Biologist, Alabama Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries
Randy Feltman, Logger/Forest Resident/Hunting Interests
Mary Lee Ratliff, Recreation
Jeff Still, Recreation and Back Country Horsemen's Association
Mark Kolinski, Wild South
Mike Henshaw, Alabama Cooperative Extension System
Anthony Hood, Hiking/Youth
Chuck Byrd, The Nature Conservancy
Charles Borden, Forest Resident/Recreation
Farren Weeks, Bankhead Cultural & Historical Society and Echota Tribe
Jody Buttrum, Recreation
Juliana Birkhoff, Facilitator

Forest Service Representatives:

Elrand Denson, Bankhead Ranger
Blake Addison, Forester (TMA)
Allison Cochran, Biologist Scientist
Stephanie Love, Forester (Silviculturist)
Stephanie N. Johnson, Acting Forest Supervisor
Nina Davison, Executive Assistant
Scott Glenn, Law Enforcement
Daks Kennedy, Forester (TSA)
Kerry Clark, Fire Management Officer

Public:

John Wiederecht	Stewart Horn
Athel Wilhite	D.D. Martin
Mike Bagwell	Tom Counts
Hank Byrnes	Fern Greenleaf
Brian Hall	Janice Barrett
Anthony R. Poston	Jackie Tipper Posey
Linda G. Drzycimski	Starlin Blankenship
Vince Meleski	James E. Alexander
Kenneth Suddoth	Daryl Lawson
Theodore Kuzma	

Juliana B. – Welcome, overview of Agenda, ground rules

Elrand D. - Introduction

Stephanie L. - Provided PowerPoint presentation about the active timber sale in compartment 101, stands 2 and 7, and the timeline for the project. Her presentation covered the work leading up to the sale, particularly the EIS and how the stand was characterized. She further reviewed photos from the sample plots, and showed statistical information about the restoration work and the composition of the timber sales on the District.

Elrand D. – Asked for suggestions on how Forest Service could move forward working with purchaser contract?

Charles B. – See all hardwood in the pictures and very little pine

- Possibility due to the beetle infestation; composition has changed since the stand was typed
- Likely stand was not inventoried before typed
- Want to see level of honesty from FS

Elrand D. – We have slowed down sell, working on solution with purchaser

Mark K. – Record readings

- Should have a formal stand inventory
- Wants to make sure mistakes not made again
- Where are plot sheets? Stephanie L. - We can't find them.

Chuck B. – Did anyone walk through once markers finished?

- How is stand put up for sale?

Stephanie L. – Processed the data

- EIS determined the stands
- The stands have to meet certain criteria

Farren W. - Records lost, mistakes made, need restore credibility – rehire John Creed (laughter)

Charles B. – Desired future condition for area is hardwood

- Remaining area not thinned looks like already mostly hardwood

Jeff S. - Who's taking pictures? (Stephanie L. – FS took pictures)

Vince M. - Need charts with statistics/ numbers to back them up (Stephanie L. - Based on common stand examination procedures)

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Clarification questions

Mark K. – Shared pictures of same stand; raised concerns about stand typing and plot sample locations, a lot of hardwood removed (May 18 field trip) felt that a lot of pine was left in stand

Juliana Overview –

- Where are we in assessment compartment 101

Ron E. – 1990's was pine stand was there but did not complete site evaluation

- need to move on mistake was made
- why basal area low?

Charles B. – yes mistakes were made, try to improve

- take proper action to treat area
- no sense thinning area - already thinned
- leaving Virginia Pine or loblolly not necessarily good
- Do rest of project correctly

Randy F. – Yes we need some pine trees

- it's a small area - will have other benefits (wildlife)
- move on
- just hurt feelings over trees cut
- we don't live out there-we just drive by

Jeff S. - what is the ideal basal area?

Stephanie L. – took too low – lower than in Prescription

Jody B. – who does the marking for FS? (Answer: the FS does the marking)

- Possible solution –loggers go back in and get rest of pine

Charles C. (purchaser) – letter read by proxy, who stated two costly felonies have occurred to equipment during work on forest (Letter in record)

Juliana B. – Overview – what do we want to focus on now?

- What to do with what's left?
- Restore relationship w/ FS
- Move forward

Ron E. – How many acres are left in the EIS?

Blake A. – about 90% complete

Ron E. - Need to do a real inventory find out is it accurate

Mark K. – When was the last inventory? Make sure we log for future references

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Charles B. – Ranger needs to make sure sites are inventoried properly

Juliana Overview –

- Follow best practices
- Make sure stand typed correctly
- Meets DFC - What do you do with area that's already logged?

Charles B. – Remove remainder of pine

Jeff S. – Don't do anything - basal area is already too thin

Ron E. – how can we get to desired future condition from here?

Elrand D. – Exploring options with purchaser. Can receive ideas but cannot say which way we will go with until agreement is made with purchaser. Once decision is made, we will update panel.

- Loggers have done a great job on this site.

Juliana B. – Overview – Focus on best practices to get to future desired conditions

Mark K. – area logged needs to be corrected

- How to manage area
- Get rid of pines
- Stand not marked properly
- Work does not match up to DFC

Stephanie L. – Residual amount of pine would not equal up to the amount of hdwd dollar-wise.

Juliana B. – suggests field trip for panel

Anthony H. – visited site; large number of oaks cut and small pine trees left

Public

Starling B. – Worked on food plots there. Was a mix pine/ hardwood in 1964. Was clear cut and loblolly planted. Thinned in 1970s. Yes stand was a pine plantation. Something happened in 1990's; pine beetles killed a lot of pine.

Daryl L. – Remember, legally FS cannot answer questions regarding the contract b/c the purchaser owns the trees now

Hank B. – Need to develop different criteria for managing and marking timber for restoration. This appears to be managing & marking for timber production

Elrand D. – Wrap up

Next meeting: July 29, details forthcoming