FOOTHILLS LANDSCAPE PROJECT

SUMMARY OF TABLE DISCUSSIONS DURING COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOP I

January 31 and February 1, 2017

Dahlonega, GA

Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests

SOME OF THE FOLKS WHO CAME?

- Southern Four-Wheel Drive Association
- Chattahoochee Riverkeeper
- Ruffed Grouse Society
- American Chestnut Society
- Lumpkin Coalition/HemlockFest
- Chattahoochee Trail Horse Association
- Chattooga Conservancy
- Georgia ForestWatch
- The Nature Conservancy
- Bryant Logging
- Trout Unlimited
- International Mountain Bike Association/Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- Hiker Hostel
- Sierra Club – Georgia Chapter
- Georgia Outdoor News
- Ellijay Community
- Southern Environmental Law Center
- TrailsOffRoad.com
- Whitewater Kayaking
- U.S. Forest Service

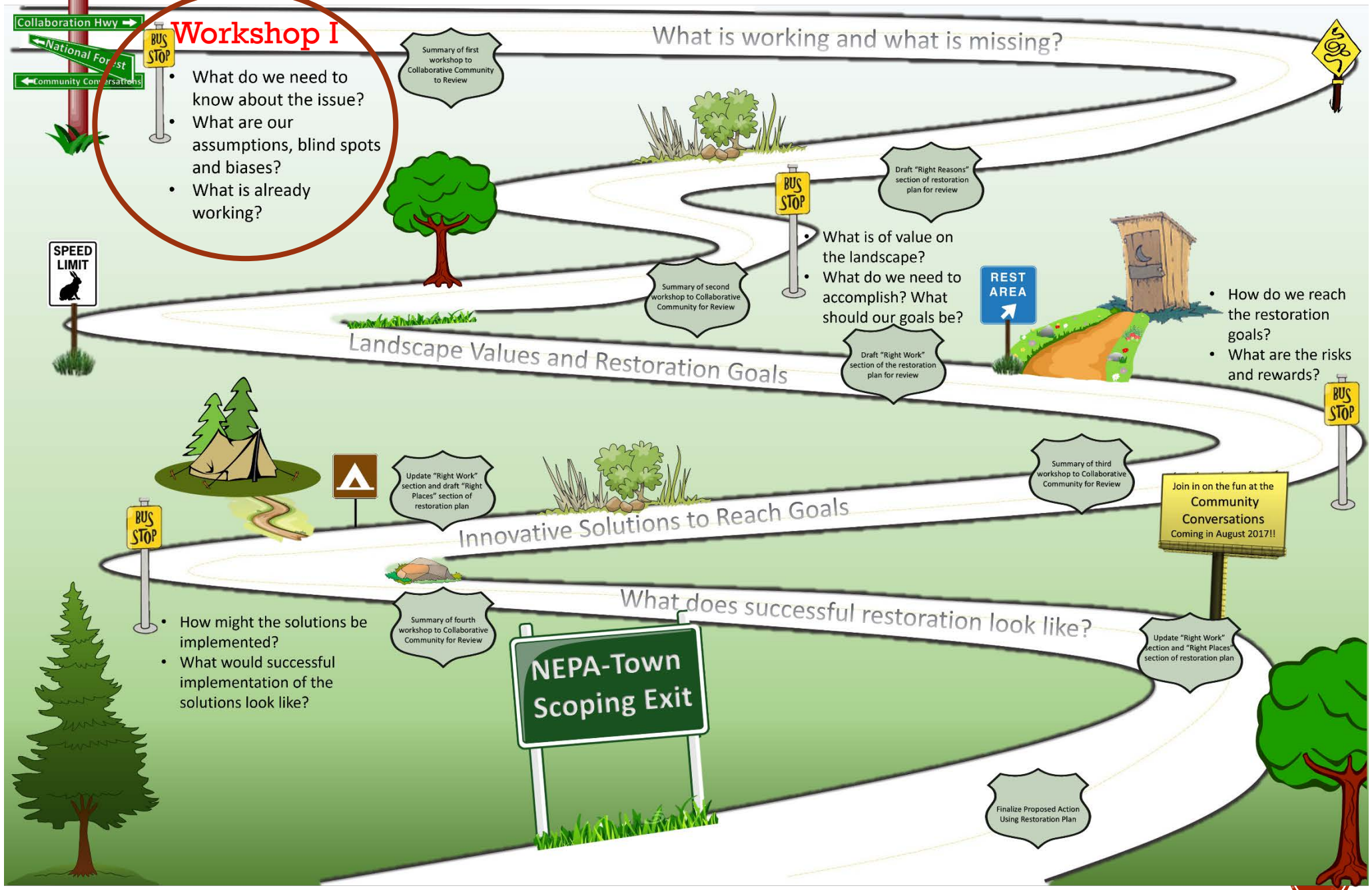
WHY DID THEY COME TO THE WORKSHOP?

- Find partners to work with
- Concerned about horse trails
- Hunting, fishing, recreation needs
- Make a living by logging
- Want to protect the forest
- Want to see large/tall trees in the forest
- Have soil and water quality concerns
- Want to protect biodiversity
- Want to see more fire implementation
- Want to make sure access is maintained
- Want to learn about trail maintenance
- Want the forest to provide resources for current and future generations
- Protect the places we play
- Concerned about the environmental impacts of decision

WHY DID THEY COME TO THE WORKSHOP?

- Concerned about rare and unique habitats
- Want to see wildlife diversity
- Want to see more timber harvest
- Want to get involved
- Need more chestnut restoration
- Need to include hemlock restoration
- Need more instream restoration for trout
- Want more game hunting opportunities
- Want to see recreational opportunities improved
- Concerned about water quality
- Want to protect special places
- Want to see a healthy and resilient forest
- Love the forest!

TAKING A ROAD TRIP



STEPS TO SCOPING

CARING FOR UNIQUE HABITATS

CARING FOR UNIQUE HABITATS

What is needed for cane break habitat in the Foothills Landscape?

- Rare bird habitat
- Riparian in the Foothills (woodcock, grouse, Swainson and other rare warblers)
- Nacoochee Valley cane spreading naturally up the creek (Sautee Creek)
- Bulwark against invasive species
- Important cover and food for rabbits
- Increases habitat overall, adds to forest diversity
- Amphibians and reptiles
- Chattooga River corridor- restore cane break learning from the Andrew Pickens Ranger District
- Alaculsy Valley – Conasauga River Floodplain
- Tails Creek
- Streambank restoration
- Cultural significance to Cherokee Indians
- Migratory birds
- Natural forage for animals
- Etowah River Restoration Project Status (10 years ago – i.e. Alan Polk)
- Need to use tools along with fire such as herbicide, mechanical treatments to help create open habitat here.
- NNIS (Non-native invasive species) in riparian areas – privet control
- Finding existing populations to manage for commercial timber operations?

CARING FOR UNIQUE HABITATS

What are the conditions that are required for successful Table Mountain Pine habitat?

- Whissenhunt Ridges loaded with Virginia pine but perfect for Table Mountain Pine
- Dry sites with intermittent fire
- Fire regimen to remove competition
- Timber removal on dry ridges off-site white pine
- Use timber harvest to remove competing hardwoods with good hardwood market
- Fire maintenance
- Ridgetop dwelling species
- Seedlings are hard to find – must use existing stands
- Lack of NNIS (non-native invasive species)
- Need for more fire to maintain

CARING FOR UNIQUE HABITATS

What functions need to be reestablished in bog habitat in the Foothills Landscape?

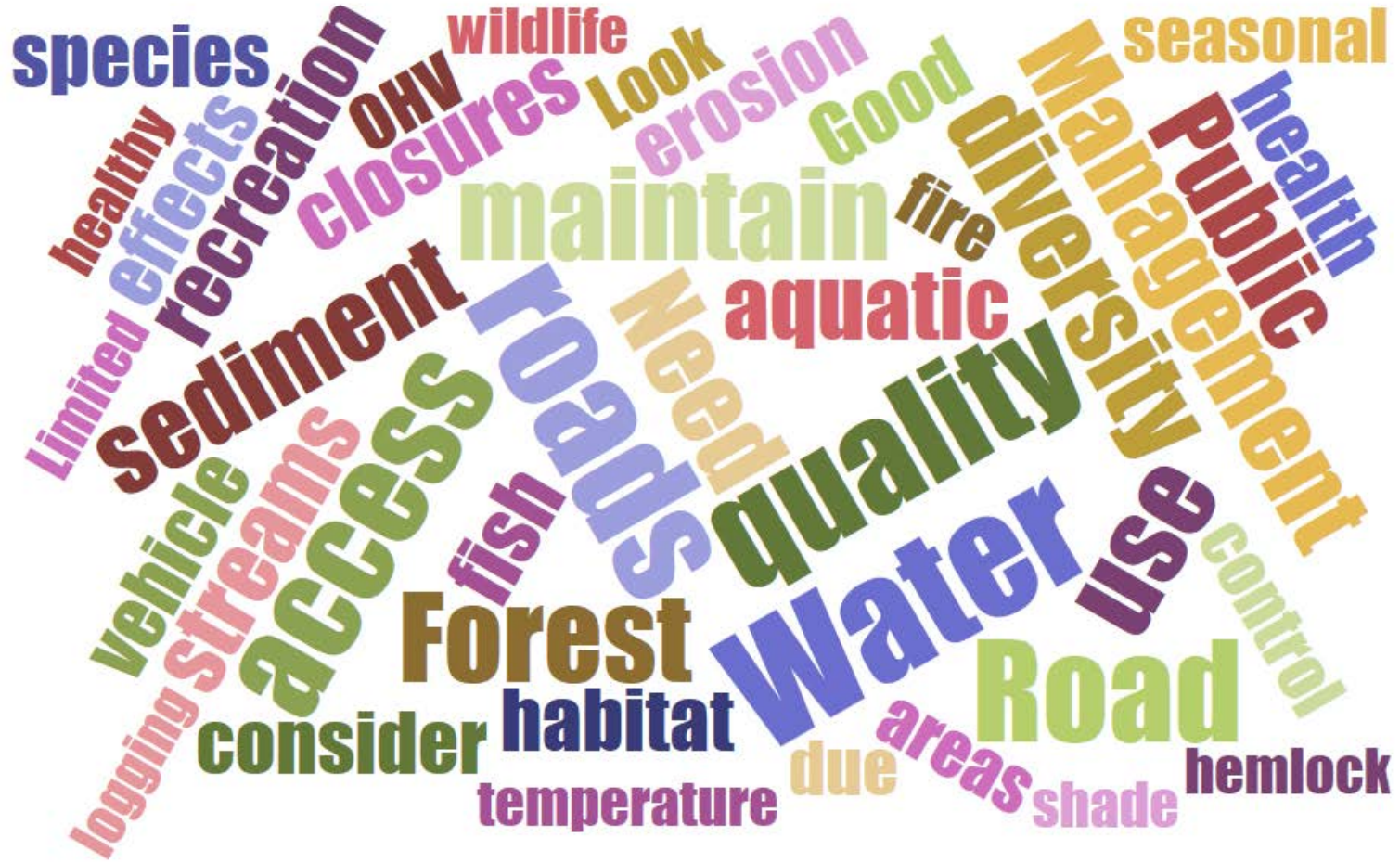
- Re-establish beaver – good for wetlands/early successional habitat; considered rare under Forest Plan.
- Hydrologic restoration – identify potential historic sites suitable for restoration
- Hale Ridge Bog
- Tow's Swamp
- Enforcement Issue – pet trade (bog turtle)
- Education component
- Public awareness of values of bogs
- NNIS (non-native invasive species) control (e.g. hogs and plants)
- Restoring adjacent uplands to allow greater water recharging

CARING FOR UNIQUE HABITATS

What are other unique habitats in the Foothills Landscape you would like to discuss?

- American chestnut restoration – suitable habitat
- Restoring native grasses in old openings that are rocky, poor soils within burn units (to be maintained)
- Coneflower sites (Habersham) – pollinator habitat
- Eastern turkey bear woodlands
- Tallulah Gorge – Trillium persistens and Tsuga caroliniana
- Hellbenders?
- Springheads
- Trillium?
- Restore woodland habitat rather than just early successional habitat with focus on forest structure and herbaceous cover
- Pollinator friendly habitats
- Grassy Mountain has boulder fields

WATERSHED HEALTH



WATERSHED HEALTH

What are the essential components of a functioning riparian corridor? What ecosystem services should a riparian corridor provide?

- Supports a healthy aquatic ecosystem
- Erosion control habitat restoration and improvement at needed locations
- Wildlife supportive species (e.g. honeysuckle) restoration/introduction
- Healthy, productive forests that are facilitated by selective management (logging, etc.)
- Vegetative diversity, large woody debris in streams for aquatic diversity
- Maintain plant life, especially in hemlock die-off [areas]. (maintain water temperature) but limit commercial logging
- Maintain habitat/stream complexity
- Maintain areas for bogs, which are very limited habitats and hydrology
- Maintain shade for trout
- Maintain overhead cover for ferns
- Maintain aquatic passage, protect water quality (especially sediment)
- Special protection for stream crossings (ex horse trail fords)

WATERSHED HEALTH

What are the components of a functioning riparian corridor? What ecosystem services should a riparian corridor provide?

- Size the culvers correctly to maintain stream integrity
- Maintain WQ [water quality] especially against logging
- Diversity of plants and animals
- Filtration of overland flow
- Recreation (fishing)
- Buffering capacity from upslope incidents (sediment, etc.)
- Shade over the streams
- Natural fire breaks, maintain
- Connectivity for animals, etc.
- Livestock watering and river crossings
- Sediment control
- Scenic values
- Water temperature changes – shade
- Camping along creeks, favorite spots and waterfalls
- Scenic hiking
- Visitation, highly visited areas – focus on those
- Loss of hemlocks, what can be done? Loss of species
- Dispersed campsites accumulate trash
- Water quality and supply

WATERSHED HEALTH

What are some measures of watershed health?

- Fish community healthy and native species diversity
- Productive, sustainable sports fisheries
- Limited erosion and sustained water quality
- Limited development
- Wildlife forage and habitat (e.g. grouse habitat)
- Resilient natural ecosystems and biodiversity (terrestrial, wetland, aquatic)
- Clean water for multiple use downstream
- Sustainable use (e.g. forestry, recreation, etc.)
- Vegetation diversity, understory diversity
- Degree of siltation
- Air quality and physical habitat quality (streams)
- biotic diversity and indicator organisms (aquatic and terrestrial)
- Residual mercury in streams from gold mining
- Porta-pot from creek campers is an indicator of poor conditions
- Unsanctioned user trails is indicator of poor health
- Water flow and water quality at head of watersheds
- Insect populations – biotic index
- Sediment loading and temperature
- Fish index biotic integrity (IBI) and diversity
- Downstream water quality

WATERSHED HEALTH

What are some measures of watershed health?

- Public awareness/education and support of watershed health
- Nutrient loading
- Aquatic passage barriers
- Buffering against extreme events
- Watershed effects wells, drinking water
- Erosion/silt runoff, road maintenance
- E.coli testing, broken septic tanks
- Species diversity plants and animals
- More training/education for forest users about erosion and sedimentation. Knowledge of buffers. Low level of knowledge of watershed health
- Tributaries are important
- Sustainable environments for micro and macro invertebrates while maintaining access and recreation
- Substrate diversity (cobble, gravel, sand, mud) important for fish, insects and mussels
- Vegetation type, diversity and age classes
- Varied age classes of forest
- Use of prescribed burning for management
- Old growth
- Water chemistry, remove sensing
- Land use classification measures

WATERSHED HEALTH

What is the right balance for a road system to provide access and watershed quality?

- Depends on available funds
- Unpaved roads equal 80 percent sediment. Address sediment on worst roads in highest use (prioritize)
- Restrict use on non-critical roads
- Roads on sustainable slopes. Prioritize problem roads (e.g. steep slopes)
- Work on location and design of roads to provide access while maintaining water quality
- Consider road closure/abandonment
- Consider maintenance costs versus public benefit
- Consider paving certain sections
- Look at abused roads (e.g. illegal ORV [off road vehicle] use) and manage/close (Earl's ford road)
- Examine heavy impact special uses negative effects (e.g. 200 ORV [off road vehicle] event above Helen, GA (enforcement and special use permitting)
- Higher user fees for special use permits to maintain roads (e.g. loggers gravel roads during sale)
- User more seasonal closures
- Fix problem culverts
- Assess access needs versus current inventory
- Need more data to objectively answer this question
- Look at landscape, find least roaded areas. Emphasize water quality protection
- Look at slope-protect steeper slopes

WATERSHED HEALTH

What is the right balance for a road system to provide access and watershed quality?

- Look at user access requirements
- Assess parking needs versus parking impacts
- Wants adequate access for fire fighting
- Protect/mitigate water quality while providing access or even manage roads
- Depends on resources available for road maintenance. Consider closing roads that Forest can't afford to maintain.
- Choose less access and higher water quality
- Need better runoff control if roads left open
- Four-wheel drive advocate, enjoys access but can't keep it all. Understands that there is water quality issue
- Depends on intent and area. Responsible management of roads can have a happy medium. Zoning and good management of roads
- Smarter, balanced access will create stewardship ethic
- Depends on funding. Prioritize roads, close those you can't afford to maintain
- Funding runs the program. Need access due to large public demand. No need for more roads.
- Maintenance for erosion control. Biggest enemy. Good for fish and municipal drinking water
- Fix what's broken. (ex TMDLs [total maximum daily loads] in Warwomen. Get sued if not fixing)
- There is no reason not to have both adequate road access and good water quality
- Public takes good water quality for granted
- Design and zoning. Recreation access in less sensitive watersheds

WATERSHED HEALTH

What is the right balance for a road system to provide access and watershed quality?

- Timber harvests can help because they bring in money for road maintenance
- Access is very important. Allows Georgians to enjoy, value and advocate for the USFS [U.S. Forest Service] lands. Balance the road maintenance budget. Forest Service inherited "sins of the past" = old roads. Remember the social side need to have support of the public
- Also need access for forest management – timber (for wildlife), fire management, forest health (next generation of trees).
- Rotational road system. Have access when the public wants it. Seasonal closures to meet public demands while staying on budget
- Agree on rotational closures. Need law enforcement and maintenance to protect the forest
- But consider a balance of resource conservation in public demand
- If roads are closed mitigate with trail access (foot access)
- Water is more important than roads
- It is not "either/or" situation
- Some roads need to be relocated
- Travel Analysis Process report focuses on road maintenance and closures
- Seasonal closures
- Close roads or repair roads causing sedimentation
- Adequate road systems for all forest uses balanced with water quality protection

WATERSHED HEALTH

What is the right balance for a road system to provide access and watershed quality?

- Open more roads year around to increase observation of road quality
- Lack of road condition information (e.g. road crossings)
- On the ground conditions need protected
- More seasonal closures
- Reduce number of impaired watersheds due to road sediment/erosion
- Identify and fix problems
- Need more money!
- Re-examine where roads are for better or more efficient options
- Alternative funding through donations for road maintenance
- Downgrading unused or un-needed roads to trails, but could still be used for fire, etc.

WATERSHED HEALTH

What are the primary concerns for aquatic ecosystems on the Foothills Landscape?

- Water Quality and sewage treatment capacity at upstream communities
- Sediment from roads (Forest Service, private)
- Georgia BMP [Best Management Practices]. Are they protective regarding major events?
- Lack of woody debris in the streams
- Poorly preforming culverts, bridges and fords (crossings)
- Lack of active management (especially for aquatics)
- Private land run off (farming and poultry) and industrial pollutants – water quality effects
- Private landowner information and education on adjacent federal watershed health (stakeholders feeling of community and ownership)
- Sediment run off due to poorly maintained roads (said repeatedly)
- Illegal OHV [off highway vehicle] use and steam abuse
- Livestock in streams (e.g. Stekoa Creek)
- Best Management Practices inadequate to protect water quality
- Poorly designed roads and adverse effects to water quality (sediment)
- Outreach and education to local communities, business and forest users on Forest water quality (e.g. don't dump in storm drains)
- better understanding of what current fish conditions are (fish passage)
- Hemlock die off
- Warming temperatures due to loss of hemlocks and climate change
- Angler access
- Hazard trees from hemlock die off
- How to co-exist with OHV [off highway vehicle] use and water quality/fish habitat

WATERSHED HEALTH

What are the primary concerns for aquatic ecosystems on the Foothills Landscape?

- Effective water crossings for OHV [off highway vehicles]
- Cold water fisheries enhancement
- Fishable populations
- Good understanding of how to prevent erosion with recreation activities and access
- Sedimentation impacts on biodiversity
- Public education
- Road system maintained
- Appropriate use of aquatic ecosystems (e.g. not mudding in wetlands)
- Minimize OHV [off highway vehicle] effects on fish
- Management activities compatibility
- Invasive species
- Prioritizing impaired streams for restoration
- Climate change impacts, resiliency of ecosystems
- Water quality/quantity
- Rare communities (mussels)
- Balancing conservation with recreation
- Hazards to user

WATERSHED HEALTH

- Parking Lot
  - Law enforcement
  - Fees/budget/funding
  - Buffers
  - Educational opportunities (sustainability issue, leave no trace)

SUSTAINABLE RECREATION

SUSTAINABLE RECREATION

What are the components of a sustainable recreation program? What is sustainable recreation?

- Maintain without great effort
- Trails designed and located in appropriate areas
- Many trails don't get used but some get used a lot (demand/inventory)
- Public outreach for opportunities
- Low environmental impact/designated hardened sites
- Low impact, with use over time
- Close to home
- Safe
- Sedimentation, improve banks
- Accessible
- Clean outhouses
- Provide both developed and dispersed opportunities for camping
- Shooting ranges
- Active education to locals and visitors
- Hardened banks along horse trails
- Work with local city's visitors centers to dispense information
- Inventory of trails before we construct more
- Close low use trails
- Increase dispersed camping
- Increase user fees for more presence
- Peer patrol – cross groups, no mud bogging, protect our streams
- Sustainable sources of funding
- Develop new partnerships with state for law enforcement coverage
- Components are vegetation, structures/infrastructure in places for heavy use, designated roads and trails, partner/user group education
- On-site education, explain why

SUSTAINABLE RECREATION

What are the components of a sustainable recreation program? What is sustainable recreation?

- Fee structure to improve infrastructure and increase value
- Disconnect without facilities and use
- Downsize due to funding
- Fees
- Scenic destination
- Quotas/permits – reservation system
- Strategic marketing
- Balance
- Noise pollution
- Presence at recreation sites
- Increase fees
- Meet needs of different users
- Supply and demand/economics
- Lower amenities
- Need to maintain what we have first
- Tourism for local communities
- Must include sufficient financial backing to support maintenance and management
- Improve and expand horse trails – roads with motorized traffic is no longer safe
- Need more/better parking for horse trailers (e.g. Jake and Bull) with more defined spaces
- Access points to waterways and waterfalls
- Survey visitors/users to help prioritize management
- More potable water sources (even hand pumps) (e.g. Jake and Bull campground)
- Impacts from hunting camps advertised by state WMA [wildlife management area] maps

SUSTAINABLE RECREATION

What is a sustainable trail?

- Does not erode at fast rate
- Contour based
- Limited usage – number of users/traffic
- Has appeal (destination trail) and is interpretive
- Natural trail with shade and vegetation
- Support maintenance for long term
- Needs trail group support – outreach to trail groups and partners
- Connectivity
- Desirable trail
- Respected access and trail etiquette
- Safety
- Accessible
- Appropriate facilities/trailhead/parking
- Managed user conflicts – directional
- Alternative usage (Tsali-Nanahala)
- Evaluate current tail system (fault line, road beds)
- Know when to close or relocate
- Volunteers
- Integrated trail system plan – budget. Maintain infrastructure
- Access fees

SUSTAINABLE RECREATION

What is a sustainable trail?

- Recognize different user groups, including consideration for skill/experience
- Minimize impact and maintenance (professional designed)
- Overuse causes problems both social and natural resource
- Develop a trail system toward users/understanding (master plan)
- Assess demands for trail needs
- Some trails in wilderness as a component
- Duncan Ridge
- Community support
- Economic/user fee
- Lack of NNIS [non-native invasive species]
- Commercial use
- Fees – increase balance
- Manage large events
- Don't like multiple use trails
- Roads
  - Jones Creek closed
  - Jeeps
  - Seasonal road closures
  - Timber harvest
  - Daylighting

SUSTAINABLE RECREATION

What is a sustainable trail?

- Environmentally – not going to erode, only build or keep ones that we can maintain. Protect the water. Design properly
- Educational aspect – provide biodiversity within the trail
- Re-route and renew current trails before building new ones
- Do sacrifice user experience for solid Treadway
- Keep a variety of hiking challenges
- If a group wants to build a new trail, they need to sing a contract, place a bond and make sure they have training and maintain it
- Allow the next generation to be able to enjoy trails as can the current generation

SUSTAINABLE RECREATION

What does a sustainable developed recreation site (campground, trailhead, picnic area) entail?

- Site and environmentally appropriate
- Educational opportunities (e.g. invasive species, prescribed fire, wildfire…)
- Designed for durability
- Safety issues
- Use natural barriers (e.g. boulders) to mark established boundaries
- Enforceable regulations; boundaries and law enforcement
- Match user needs to the site
- User driven (people) designed site use and access – let the people delineate access points and paths
- Monitor use – numbers, times, etc. and adjust regulations of sites as needed (could use quotas or reservation system)
- Reservation system-could partner with other agency to use system (e.g. state parks and historical sites division of DNR)

SUSTAINABLE RECREATION

What does a sustainable developed recreation site (campground, trailhead, picnic area) entail?

- Low impact
- Protecting resources
- Campground/trail combination
- Increase fees
- Range of development
- Clean
- Look consistent
- High development
- Green space/native (no grass)

SUSTAINABLE RECREATION

What does an ideal recreation experience include in the Foothills Landscape?

- Low environmental impacts/protecting resources trumps using resources
- Allows sustainable, long-term use
- Diversity of opportunities (fishing, biking, camping, solicitude, sustainable ORV [off road vehicles], hunting, hiking…..)
- Loop trails or ability to create long loops in trail systems
- Right balance of large recreational events that require special use permits
- Free
- Safe but with a range of risk opportunities
- Developed usually a fee but not always
- Camping fees – relative to other national forest sites in southeast. Range depends on amenities
- Regular maintenance, clean, signage consistent, safe, site is taken care of, map kiosk are up-to-date and maintained
- Appropriate bear storage and adequate trash pick up
- Appropriate educational signage on bears and other safety precautions
- Affordable for user and forest service
- Fees – need more compliance (how do we do this?)
- Create fee structure particularly for day use areas. Leans toward annual passes (perks with annual passes, peer pressure, make it easy to pay with a card swipe)

SUSTAINABLE RECREATION

What does an ideal recreation experience include in the Foothills Landscape?

- Day use
- Hunting/fishing on the Chattooga River
- Hiking access
- Remote (dispersed camping)
- Prevent trashed sites
- WMA's [wildlife management areas] and Cohutta access
- Bird watching/botanizing
- Mountain biking – Jake and Bull Mountain (heavy use more facilities needed)
- Motorized use
- Have good information
- People follow rules
- Most suitable for OHV [off highway vehicles] need systems. Areas needs timbered to daylight
- History of disturbance
- Local
- Does use warrant more development?
- All day recreational experience
- Dedicated usage dates
- Designated trails – loops
- Water accessibility for water based activities
- Orienteering events
- No trash
- Campbell Mountain recreational opportunities – partnership TNC/neighbors (Joe)
- Boating – white water opportunities

SUSTAINABLE RECREATION

- Parking Lot
  - Enforcement issue regarding sustainable recreation but also need education
  - Fees at trailheads to fund improvements
  - Available for next generation

HEALTHY FOREST AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

HEALTHY FOREST AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

What are the desirable characteristics of an old growth forest?

- Wilderness – provides opportunity for old growth
- Very little human disturbance – undisturbed
- Not logged
- Canopy level, mid-level, species below (structure)
- Foster/allow opportunities for old growth to occur
- Complexity (snags, nurse logs, new growth, etc.)
- Old for the forest type/large trees for the site
- Adjacent areas to old growth are also similarly managed (conserved) for old-growth
- Connectivity
- Not temporarily conserved
- Follow region 8 old-growth guidance – follow what is already written

HEALTHY FOREST AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

What are the desirable characteristics of an old growth forest?

- ±140 years old
- Diversity of trees, species and communities
- Undisturbed- historically? Or into the future?
- Functional natural disturbance
- How big individual tracts need to be? Ecologically (diverse). Adjacency (buffering and feathering)
- Increased public access in select locations
- Not monolithic – different terrain, differed/variable forest types
- Naturally occurring dynamic gaps
- Doe not require extensive management
- What defines healthy forest conditions?
- Functioning characteristics of old growth – provides a baseline for particular forest types
- Unique characteristics – undisturbed soils, soil dwelling organisms will/may be different than in disturbed sites

HEALTH FOREST AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

What are the desirable characteristics of an old growth forest?

- Old growth definition (US Forest Service)
  - Minimum age classes, dependent upon site productivity and tree species
  - Lack of human disturbance
  - Presence of dead/dying trees, coarse woody debris
  - Absence of non-native invasive species
- Structural diversity
- Grassy Mountain

HEALTHY FOREST AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

What are the essential components for early successional habitat/

- Edges
- Herbaceous material
- Wildlife habitat for species
- Plant diversity
- Lack of tree canopy
- Desired tree re-generation
- Natural range of variability
- Scale/disturbance
- Legacy/vertical structure
- Fire
- Connectivity of habitats
- At all elevations, all aspects, all forest communities
- Distributed on a variety of landscape positions (slopes, aspects, elevations)
- Succession by natives not non-native invasive species
- Fire as on of the tools to maintain/create
- Proximity to older/mature forest habitats
- Diversity of size of openings
- Locate near known populations that benefit from it

HEALTH FOREST AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

What are the essential components for early successional habitat/

- Disturbance (natural or human caused)
- Natural occurrence such as wildfire or tornadoes
- Target the right areas
- Monitoring (habitat requirements/wildlife species)
- Graminoid/forbs (native grasses)
- access/ (more or less?)
- Low basal area
- Invasive species control (disturbance driven)
- Young, shrubby vegetation
- Sun nesting
- Fire, logging, weather
- Dense cover necessary
- Resilient forest (0-10 years old)
- Deer complication around perimeter of Foothills [project area]
- 4-10 percent (well distributed) early successional habitat is the goal
- Think – carrying capacity
- Flowering plants for pollinators
- Low vegetation favors birds

HEALTH FOREST AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

What forest types should be present on the Foothills Landscape? What should be the proportion allocated to each type?

- Hard to determine unless some value is assigned to certain forest types/habitats
- Dry site species
- What's there now? Current breakdown
- Forest Plan
- Ecozone modeling informs this
- Tough
- Ecological/vegetation modeling
- Consider soil type, aspect, slope position
- More shortleaf pine, less Virginia pine
- Fire maintained/adapted species such as oaks
- Driven by science – support declining and rare species and associated habitats
- Diversity of forest types should be maintained /improved
- Mixed oak-yellow pine or vice versa pine/oak

HEALTH FOREST AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

What forest types should be present on the Foothills Landscape? What should be the proportion allocated to each type?

- Diversity of forest types needed (also understory)
- Soil and topography influence proportions (including aspect)
- Covert off-site forest types to native forest types (especially pine and oak communities that are fire dependent)
- Includes chestnut restoration
- Use science "as a baseline" and look at what different sites should support based on communities
- Look at soils, aspect, slopes, to help determine what needs to be there
- Need to look at what the "land" is telling use to have versus what may be there now
- Shortleaf? Needs bare mineral soil to reseed (may increase NNIS [non-native invasive species] on bare soil)

HEALTH FOREST AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

What are the components for a successful woodland restoration?

- Fire/frequency
- Grassy understory
- Plan/prescription
- Time
- What are the site parameters for woodlands?
  - Dry, infertile sites
  - Indicator species or other artifacts

HEALTH FOREST AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

What essential components of healthy wildlife habitat are missing from the Foothills Landscape?

- Increase hardwood and soft mast
- Increase oaks and chestnuts
- Shortleaf pine woodland (grasses, forbs, etc.)
- Food plots in some locations
- Canebreaks
- Nothing growing in the streams
- Coarse woody debris in streams
- Forest structure (diversity), e.g. old growth structure
- Additional early successional habitat and old growth needed
- Biodiversity corridors in key areas (e.g. Chattooga River)
- Overhanging vegetation above streams (cool streams)
- Disturbance processes (e.g. fire, beavers, recurrent timber harvest)
- Diversity of early successional habitat (in different forest types)

HEALTH FOREST AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

What essential components of healthy wildlife habitat are missing from the Foothills Landscape?

- Early successional habitat
- Beaver ponds
- Natural mix of composition/structure/function
- Connectivity/large blocks (deal with perched culverts, more aquatic restoration, cross ownership patterns/agency/co-management)
- Natural disturbance regimes/fire dependency
- Vernal pools/wetlands
- Shortleaf pine/canebreaks/etc.
- Sunlight
- Openings in canopies?
- Cold, unpolluted trout streams
- Riparian buffers, functioning
- Old growth forest
- Browse and grasses
- Healthy population of top predators
- More edge/disturbance

HEALTHY FOREST AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

- Parking Lot
  - Biodiversity corridors in a changing climate to facilitate migration of species (i.e. Chattooga River)
  - What percentage of the Forest should be old-growth?
  - What percentage of the Forest really has to be ESH [early successional habitat]?
  - Is wilderness old growth?

WHAT IS NEXT

- Workshop II
  - March 28 and 29 at the North Hall Community Center, Gainesville, GA
  - Finding zones of agreement
  - Defining restoration goals for landscape
- Continue the conversations
  - Online discussion forum is open
  - http:/tinyurl.com/foothillslandscape
- Host a field trip
  - Offer a chance for the Collaborative Community to see areas that are meaningful to you
  - Contact Angie Bell (foothillslandscape@fs.fed.us)

USEFUL LINKS

- Online comment forum: http:/tinyurl.com/foothillslandscape
- Project website: https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/conf/home/?cid=fseprd514937
- Frequently Asked Questions: https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd530400.pdf
- Citizens Guide to NEPA: https://energy.gov/nepa/downloads/citizens-guide-nepa-having-your-voice-heard-ceq-2007