This journey is really starting to get interesting! You have worked together to make great progress on a draft plan for the Foothills Landscape that includes current and achievable future conditions and restoration goals. That's a pretty impressive accomplishment! Now the road turns toward figuring out the where and the how...and this is where it gets exciting. We hope you'll engage in some of these planned activities that will enlighten and inform all of us as we enter this challenging phase and continue the long, strange trip together. So get out your calendars!

Science Symposium

Make your way to one of our favorite Foothills towns on May 4th for our first Science Symposium where experts will share and discuss some of the science that will be used to guide the Foothills Landscape project.

Thursday, May 4, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Sautee Nacoochee Center - 283 Highway 255 North, Sautee Nacoochee, Georgia 30571. PLEASE REGISTER so we know how many to plan lunch for.

Check out some of the great presenters and offerings!

9:00 - Welcome / Consortium of Appalachian Fire Managers and Scientists Overview
9:30 - The Need for Fire History Research in the Southern Appalachian Mountains: Lessons from Gatlinburg - Henri Grissino-Mayer, University of Tennessee
10:00 - Nathan Klaus, GA DNR
10:45 - Malcolm Hodges, The Nature Conservancy
11:15 - River Cane: Cultural Workhorse and Ecological Powerhouse - David Cozzo, Project Director, Revitalization of Traditional Cherokee Artisan Resources (RTCAR) initiative
12:15 - PIZZA LUNCH courtesy of the Consortium of Appalachian Fire Managers and Scientists
12:45 - Panel Discussion: Changing Demographics Near Urban Proximate Forests Yet Little Change in Demographics of Visitors to these Forests - Susan Parker, University of Georgia, Michela Williams, Greening Youth Foundation, and Betty Jewett, Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests
1:45 - North Georgia's Old Growth Forests - Jess Riddle, Georgia ForestWatch
2:30 - Fire and Fuel Reduction Effects on Vegetation and Fuels: Lessons from the Green River Fire and Fire Surrogates Study - Don Hagan, Clemson University
3:00 - Game Species Response to Management Activities
3:30 - American Chestnut Research in the Southern Region of the National Forest System - Stacey

...
Field Trip!

Don't forget to join us on May 12 for a firsthand look at the results of previous forest management activities that were part of the Watergauge Forest Health & Wildlife Habitat Improvement Project implemented in 2013-2014 on the Chattooga River Ranger District.

Ask questions, share your knowledge, discuss ideas -- all to gain a better understanding of some of the types of strategies and tools that our collaborative community may consider for the Foothills Landscape Project. Find more details here. Please register by contacting Angie Bell at FoothillsLandscape@fs.fed.us or (770) 297-3095. (Can't make it? There will be more field trips to come...or contact us about hosting one yourself!)

Learning, Sharing, Preparing: Webinar Conversations

In this webinar, you will learn about all the opportunities to get on the Foothills bus depending on your preference, concerns and availability. We will also review what happened at the first two workshop, discuss what to expect at Workshop III, and ask questions about the process. The one-hour webinar will be held using Microsoft® Office Live Meeting service. If you don't have access to an internet connection you can still join us by using the conference line alone.

Join in on Tuesday, May 16, 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Click to join the meeting and call in on the Conference Line for the audio at 1-888-844-9904 Access Code 1839850#.

Workshop III - We are Pulling out the Maps!

Join us for the third of four collaborative workshops focused on developing a plan that will be used to create a proposed action for the Foothills Landscape. So far we have outlined the existing and achievable future conditions of the Foothills and worked to define goals that we would like to achieve. We will be discussing where we are going to take action to improve the resilience of the landscape. We will be drawing on maps, creating diagrams and pouring over photos.
Foothills Landscape Workshop III

May 23: 9:00 am to 3:00 pm and/or May 24: 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Kingswood Resort
401 Country Club Drive
Clayton, GA 30525

***PLEASE REGISTER HERE***

Because we value and respect your time, we have structured the workshops so that the two days build upon one another but are independent. So if you attend one and not the other, your contribution will be meaningful and add value to the project. This also gives the option of attending the workshop during the day or evening (or both), depending on your work/life schedules.

What can you do to be ready?
Review the draft Restoration Plan Section I: Existing and Achievable Future Conditions and Section II: Restoration Goals. Section I is currently on the website. We are polishing up Section II and it will be on the website by May 15, 2017. You can also check out the harvests from Workshop I and Workshop II to get a sense of the conversations so far. You can also find Foothills maps, including layers you can view on Google Earth, on our website under "Background Information" at the bottom of the page.

When to get on the bus
It is a great time to get on bus if you are interested in helping to develop the proposed action from the start. Prefer something more complete to so you can just provide feedback? Then plan to join us during our next round of Community Conversations this fall. Be sure to say informed by signing up for our project emails and taking a moment every once in a while to peruse the Foothills website.

Learning and Sharing
Visit www.tinyurl.com/FoothillsLandscape to keep up the conversations online. This online forum is the place to continue discussions, start new ones, post ideas and add comments on the restoration goals, treatment locations, and methods of treatment. The forum has been refreshed to build upon our recent conversations during Workshop I. You can still find last fall's Community Conversations here.

Thank you for helping make sure we are working together to do the right work in the right places for the right reasons.

The Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests provide the finest outdoor recreation opportunities and natural resources in Georgia. Featuring nearly 867,000 acres across 26 counties, thousands of miles of clear-running streams and rivers, approximately 850 miles of recreation trails, and dozens of campgrounds, picnic areas, and other recreation activity opportunities, these lands are rich in natural scenery, history and culture. The
The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Connect with the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests!
Get the latest forest news and alerts -- visit our website, like us on Facebook, follow us on twitter @ChattOconeeNF, text 'follow chattoconeenf' to 40404, and download our free mobile app for your smartphone or tablet.