

Section 7: Social and Economics

CULTURAL, TRIBAL, AND TOURISM	
PC 435	The Forest should provide discussion of cultural resources in the EIS, including archaeological sites, historic sites, and the federal laws protect these sites.
Response:	Although management direction was updated for Heritage Resources in the Revised Forest Plan, we did not analyze effects to these resources in the EIS because they were not identified as an issue or concern, and potential effects to or from the resources would not vary measurably by alternative (DEIS, page 1-22). The archaeological and historic sites on the Forest are managed according to the various laws, regulations, executive orders, and Forest Service policies that provide protection for these resources, and this protection would not vary by alternative considered or management prescription allocation.
PC 818	The Forest should conduct thematic research on Heritage Resources.
Response:	We currently do thematic categorization of historic and prehistoric sites on the Forest, and evaluate site significance within a regional context. The Heritage Resource Goals in Chapter II of the Revised Forest Plan reflect the Forest's commitment to continue these types of activities. The amount of thematic documentation and research we accomplish in the future will be largely dependent on funding and staffing levels.
PC 374	The Forest should give consideration to the folk culture of the Forest area to better manage and interpret the Forest through surveys and documenting aspects such as music, vernacular, and traditional activities.
Response:	Although we recognize that the Forest can play a role in preserving "the mountain ecology and culture important to the Appalachian region" (DEIS, p. 3-363), we feel that role is limited to providing scenery and forest products related to that culture, and periodically hosting interpretive displays of local crafts or music. We do not have any Forest program resources devoted specifically to ethnography or ethnomusicology at this time, but we are encouraged that scholars such as yourself are helping to fill that void.
PC 643	The Forest should consider how Forest management activities will affect the treaties and reserved rights of Native American tribes.
Response:	There are no tribal trust or ceded lands within the Forest proclamation boundary or West Virginia. Therefore our management activities would not affect any treaties or reserved rights of Native American Indian tribes.
PC 53	The Forest should notify the appropriate tribal representatives if any Native American cultural resources or sacred sites are found during any construction activities in the Forest and should halt construction immediately if such items are found.
Response:	There are no tribal trust or ceded lands within the Forest proclamation boundary or West Virginia. Therefore we have no legal obligation to contact tribal representatives related to general cultural resources or sacred sites. However, we would contact appropriate tribal representatives in the event we discovered any American Indian human remains or funerary rights, as required by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990.
PC 202	The Forest should acknowledge that it is a certainty, not a likelihood, that the Forest region will become more racially diverse in the future.
Response:	We agree that the region is not very racially diverse at present, which makes the likelihood of diversity increasing that much higher as the state and nation continue to become more diverse.
PC 74	The Forest should recognize how valuable the Forest is to West Virginia as a source of tourism.
Response:	We do recognize that tourism is valuable to West Virginia (DEIS, page 3-367), and that the Forest is a major recreation attraction in the State (DEIS, page 3-369). However, many of the comments related to this concern seemed to assume that tourism is driven solely or primarily by backcountry recreation opportunities, or that tourism will disappear if we allow timber harvest on the Forest. We do not believe that either of these assumptions is accurate given what we have seen in the past or are predicting for the future. First, people are drawn to this Forest for many other reasons than to hike or camp in the remote backcountry. In fact, not one of the top ten Forest recreation activities in Table RE-5 (DEIS, page 3-370) requires remote backcountry. Second, timber harvest and log hauling have occurred on the Forest

	for many decades and people still come here to recreate. Third, we have management direction in place to help protect scenic and recreation resources from harvest impacts under all alternatives. Fourth, we have management prescription areas in all alternatives where programmed commercial timber harvest would not be scheduled. Finally, no alternative in the DEIS would harvest a maximum of more than one half of one percent of the Forest in any given year, and the preferred alternative would actually increase the amount of backcountry recreation opportunities on the Forest compared to the 1986 Plan.
PC 220	The Forest should use the most up-to-date information on tourism and recreational industries, because West Virginia relies heavily upon tourism, and because of the recent growth in recreational industries.
Response:	We have updated the FEIS to include recreation and tourism information from the Economic Impact of Travel on West Virginia 2000-2004 Detailed State and County Estimates (Dean Runyan and Associates, June 2005). See Final EIS, Chapter 3, Recreation and Wilderness section.
PC 25	The Forest should consider the negative impact that the Proposed Forest Plan would have on tourism and the local economy.
Response:	See response to PC 74.
PC 994	The Forest should revise Tables S-42, S-43, S-44, and S-45 to show the more recent and optimistic economic data on tourism that are now available.
Response:	See responses to PC 993

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS	
PC 827	The Forest should consider the social and economic benefits of keeping the Forest wild and natural, including clean air and water, and tourism for outdoor recreational opportunities.
Response:	We recognize that the Forest has social and economic values related to clear air, clean water, and tourism. However, it is difficult if not impossible to display these values in any meaningful way at the Forest scale by alternative. For instance, we have no information that would validate whether more people would visit an unmanaged "wild" forest than a forest with multiple motorized and non-motorized opportunities. We have accounted for recreation visits in general, though, in our economic analysis in Chapter 3 of the EIS. The EIS also has analyses on the potential effects to air and water, but we have not placed ecological service values on these amenities.
PC 284	The Forest should explain the differences in the money created from the Forest Plan revision.
Response:	Forest Plan revision does not create any money. However, the DEIS that accompanied the Proposed Revised Plan analyzed different types of money sources provided by the Forest and how they would contribute to local economies. This analysis is found in the Social and Economic Environment section of Chapter 3. The sources include Forest-linked employment and income (page 3-450), 25% Fund/Stabilized Payments (page 3-454), and Payments in Lieu of Taxes (page 3-455).