

# White Mountain National Forest

## Appendix A Summary Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS)

An important part of the Forest Plan Revision process is to consider the current conditions (what is happening on the Forest now) and determine how they compare with the intent of the existing Forest Plan. The Planning Team looks at:

- What areas of the Plan have not been successfully implemented, and why.
- What new factors have arisen since the Forest Plan was adopted.
- What the desired future directions are.
- What is the need (if any) for change.
- What opportunities exist to reach the future condition.

The result of this study is the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS), a document that is required by the regulations that implement the National Forest Management Act. The following describes how this document was completed, how the information was used, and briefly summarizes some of the supply and demand results from the document.

When the White Mountain National Forest first issued its Notice of Intent to revise the 1986 Forest Plan, the planning team encouraged public involvement through a combination of meetings and opportunities for comment. Three thousand comments were grouped into thirty one potential areas of concern and working papers describing: a summary of the public comments heard, a description of current plan direction, and a summary of monitoring and current information were prepared for each. These areas of concern described the public's perception of what needed to be reviewed during plan revision. At the same time, the planning team grouped the concerns by resource area and specialists were asked to "brainstorm" potential changes in management for each resource that could be made in and outside of revision. At this time, there was no attempt to integrate these concerns across resource areas. Individual specialists described the current condition of the resource, concerns with current plan direction, and the need or opportunity for changing management direction. There was also sometimes a brief assessment of the Forest's capability to expand resource management for the resource to achieve a more desired future condition. The information from this limited internal analysis was described in twenty-seven specialist reports.

The information was presented in the context of the 31 public potential concerns at public planning group meetings where the public and specialists interacted. These meetings brought the internal and external concerns together.

As a result, the topics were combined and split into the 23 Plan Revision Topics displayed in the Need for Change document that accompanied the formal Notice of Intent to revise the Forest Plan.

Subsequent reviews and screening were applied to the twenty three topics, eventually resulting in the identification of three *issues* that alternatives would be built around:

1. **Management emphasis through land allocation:** Explores whether the current balance of management emphasis provides the needed direction or if changes should be made.
2. **Timber management and wildlife habitat:** Addresses how much timber is harvested, where it is harvested, and the type of harvest treatment to be used, and how this affects the kinds of wildlife habitat, particularly the young forest habitat conditions preferred by some species.
3. **Recreation management:** Looks closely at how changing activities and increasing use can be managed to prevent unacceptable ecological impacts while still providing a range of high quality recreation opportunities.

While the alternatives dealt with items for which there are different management approaches and some level of disagreement over the approach to use, many of the specific items identified in the AMS and public concerns have been dealt with through standard and guideline changes made during the revision. A number were not carried into the Need for Change proposal due to information from further analysis, integration of resource needs, new research information, priority setting, or the timing was not right. Some were changes not appropriate to Forest planning.

The narrowing of concerns into the three issues identified and the AMS helped identify where more in depth analysis was needed. For example, the socioeconomic assessment, Forest Plan output modeling through SPECTRUM, and the species viability evaluation were outgrowths of this need. That analysis far exceeds the depth of analysis provided in the AMS.

The AMS simply set the stage for further planning actions. As an example, the AMS briefly describes the demand and supply conditions for resource commodities and services, production potentials, and use and development opportunities. In terms of the three issues, the AMS identified:

- Demand for recreation uses will increase for motor and non-motor uses.
- The amount of land available for recreation uses is limited and recreational opportunities are limited. This means that a balance is needed between the opportunities provided.
- There are opportunities to construct new developed recreation sites and demand exists for these sites; but, this again would change the balance of recreational opportunities due to a limited land base and very large number of users.
- There are opportunities to increase recreational use at existing ski areas through year round activities.
- Ski area supply dropped with the closure of the Evergreen and Mittersill areas; but, also increased with the expansion of Loon. There is some opportunity for additional expansion.

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- The terrain on the WMNF presents opportunities for additional ski areas but demand for additional areas on the Forest from the general public does not support more areas.
- Sawtimber demand will continue while the market for low value wood is in flux.
- More timber is available for harvesting but other resource and public concerns limit harvest.
- There are additional lands available for Wilderness designation. These will be determined through an updated inventory of roadless areas.
- Recreational values in Wilderness areas could erode if use is not managed.

The AMS documents are available for review on the White Mountain National Forest website at

[http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/white/3\\_WM\\_fpr\\_Web/forest\\_plan/revision/ams/analysis\\_of\\_the\\_management\\_situa.htm](http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/white/3_WM_fpr_Web/forest_plan/revision/ams/analysis_of_the_management_situa.htm)