



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

White Mountain National Forest
Saco Ranger District

33 Kancamagus Highway
Conway, NH 03818
Comm: (603) 447-5448
TTY: (603) 447-3121

File Code: 1950-2670-2400

Date: June 28, 2006

Dear Interested Publics,

The White Mountain National Forest is beginning the environmental analysis process for the proposed Chase Hill Project on a 60 acre stand. This project is located in the town of Albany in Carroll County, New Hampshire.

Enclosed for your comment is an attachment providing the following information for this project:

- The project proposed action, and a map showing the location;
- The reasons for making the proposal at this time (Purpose and Need);
- What decisions will be made; and
- How you can help with the decision-making process.

I would like to hear your specific comments and suggestions concerning this proposal on your National Forest. You may send a letter to me at: District Ranger, Saco Ranger District, 33 Kancamagus Hwy. Conway, NH. 03818 or you may FAX your comments to me at (603) 447-8405 or you may E-mail your comments to twmiller@fs.fed.us. You may also call Keith Konen at (603) 447-5448, (extension 122). Your comments will be used to determine the existence of any extraordinary circumstances, issues and concerns and/or alternatives to the proposed action. Please have your comments in by close of the 30 day comment period.

You have received this mailing because of your past interest in this type of project on the White Mountain National Forest. You may also have received it because you own property near the Project Area. I am interested in hearing your comments about our proposal; including any information you have about the Project Area that could help us improve our plans.

Sincerely,

/S/ TERRY MILLER

TERRY MILLER
District Ranger

Enclosure: Scoping Report
Map of Proposed Action



WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST
SCOPING REPORT
Project Proposal for the Chase Hill Project

Introduction

The White Mountain National Forest is initiating an environmental analysis process for a proposed action to address overstocked conditions and species composition in a 60-acre stand of mixed pine and hardwood located on Chase Hill in the town of Albany, Carroll County, New Hampshire. This stand contains a federally threatened orchid, small whorled pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*). This orchid appears to prefer second-growth timbered stands on acidic, sandy loam soils. Long term monitoring of numerous populations indicates that the amount of light reaching the forest floor may be critical to the survival of the population.

This Report includes the Purpose and Need for the project, the Proposed Action, the Decisions to be Made, Administrative Review, and How You Can Submit Comments to the Forest Service.

The enclosed Map displays the project location on the Saco Ranger District.

You may contact us directly for more information regarding the proposed action. As you review this project proposal, you may find that you have information about this specific area that you believe is not known by, or is overlooked by the Forest Service, and which may be important to consider in arriving at a decision. If you choose to comment on this proposal, see below for specific instructions.

Purpose and Need

The White Mountain National Forest has identified a need to reduce the stand density of a mixed pine/hardwood stand located on Chase Hill in Albany, New Hampshire. The stand is currently overstocked with trees shading the forest floor and species composition suggests a conversion from pine/oak to hemlock/beechn. The small whorled pogonia requires sunlight to reach the forest floor. Monitoring of the population of small whorled pogonia in this area since 1994 indicates a decline in the number of stems. Reducing the stand density would promote future growth and health of the residual trees as well as enhance habitat for a federally listed plant.

Proposed Action

The proposed action is to harvest trees based on species, condition and location. The stand will remain stocked with large trees. The treatment would retain primarily white pine and red oak along with other northern hardwood and softwood species. This treatment would create a more open condition allowing more sunlight to reach the forest floor. The residual stand would also increase in vigor due to decreased competition for available resources. The project is consistent with direction found in the current White Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP).

This stand is an isolated parcel of federal land. Currently no road exists within the stand, and no new road construction is proposed for this project. The stand is bounded on two sides by town roads.

Decision to be Made

Based on your input, on the recommendations of an interdisciplinary team of resource specialists, and on the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, Saco District Ranger Terry Miller, as the Responsible Official, will decide:

1. The level of analysis necessary to assess and document the environmental effects of this proposed project. This includes determining whether this project meets criteria for categorical exclusion from documentation in an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment, including an assessment of any extraordinary circumstances (as defined in FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30.3). Whether there is sufficient information and analysis to make a decision to implement the proposed project.
2. What mitigation measures and monitoring requirements will help assure the proposed project meets LRMP standards and guidelines for all resources.
3. Whether a Forest Plan amendment will be required to accommodate this project.

All or part of this project may be categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment or environmental Impact Statement under FSH 1909.15, Chapter 31.2-12, Harvest of live trees not to exceed 70 acres, requiring no more than ½ mile of temporary road construction. Once the level of documentation is determined and the analysis is completed, copies of the decision will be mailed to people who submit comments during the scoping period and to people who request copies.

Administrative Review

This project is subject to a higher of administrative review or appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215. A person has standing to file an appeal only if they submit comments during the comment period.

How You Can Submit Comments

You may submit your comments to the Forest Service via any one of the following means:

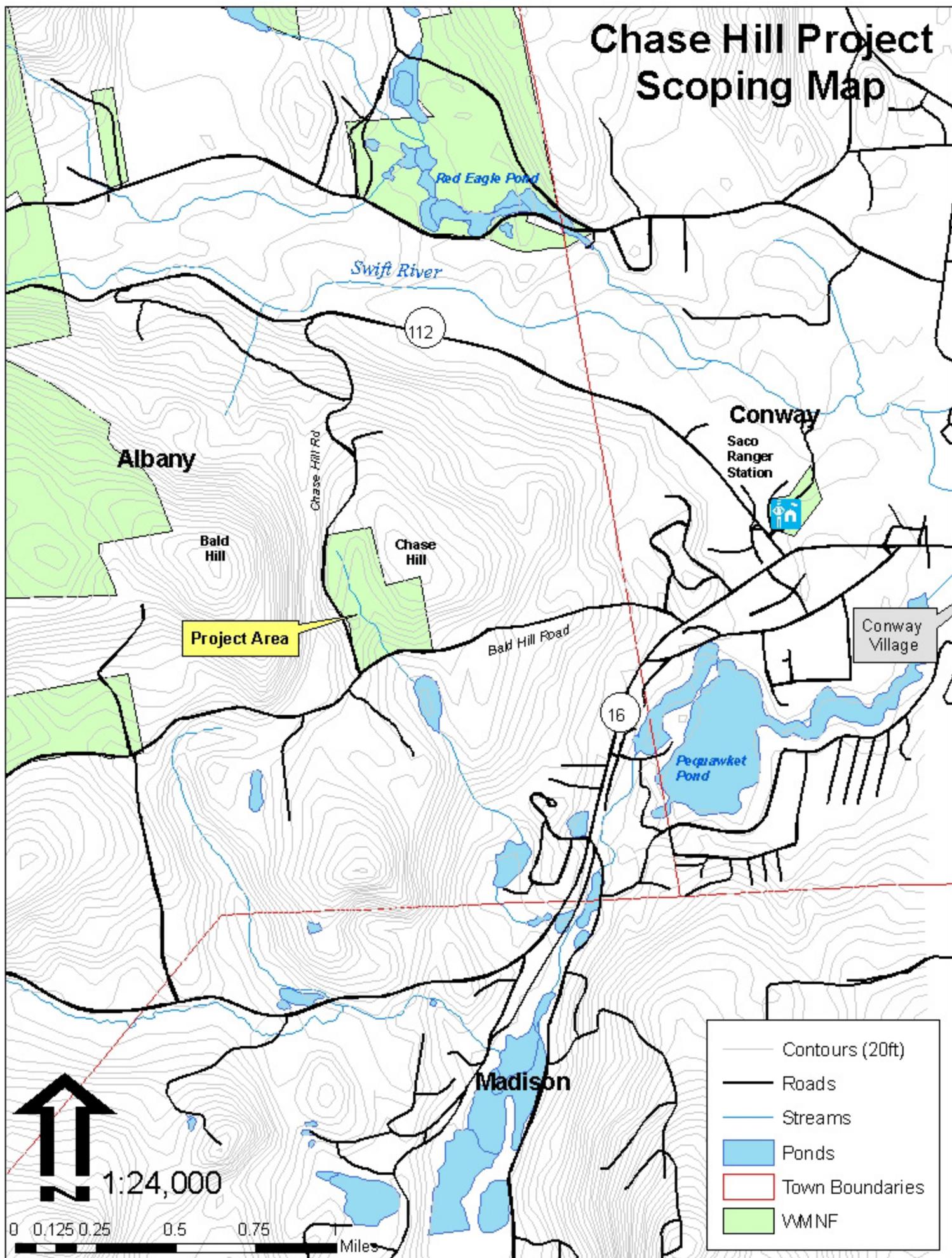
1. **Mail** – send to Keith Konen, Project Team Leader, Saco Ranger Station, 33 Kancamagus Highway, Conway, NH 03818
2. **FAX** – send attn: Keith Konen @ 603-447-8405
3. **Phone** – contact Keith Konen @ 603-447-5448 or use TTY @ 603-447-3121
4. **E-mail** – kkonen@fs.fed.us

Comments must be submitted by close of business 30 days following the publication of the public notice in the Manchester Union Leader, and should include the following information:

1. Your name, address, and, if possible, your phone number and e-mail address
2. The title of the project you are commenting on
3. Your specific concerns and reasons the concern may lead to environmental effects.

The purpose of soliciting your comments during this scoping period is to collect additional information and to identify any unresolved issues regarding the proposal. To make your comments responsive they should be specific to the proposed action. Be sure to provide supporting rationale for your comments, including concerns about environmental effects of the proposed project. Please be aware that your name, address and comments will become part of the public record and may be available for public inspection.

Chase Hill Project Scoping Map



Albany

Project Area

Bald Hill

Chase Hill

112

Chase Hill Rd

Bald Hill Road

16

Conway

Saco Ranger Station

Conway Village

Peqrawket Pond

Madison

- Contours (20ft)
- Roads
- Streams
- Ponds
- Town Boundaries
- VMNF

1:24,000

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 Miles