APPENDIX A - Summary of Public Involvement

A. INTRODUCTION

This document is included to show the public involvement effort for the revision of the 1993 George Washington National Forest (GWNF) Land Management Plan, herein referred to as the Plan.

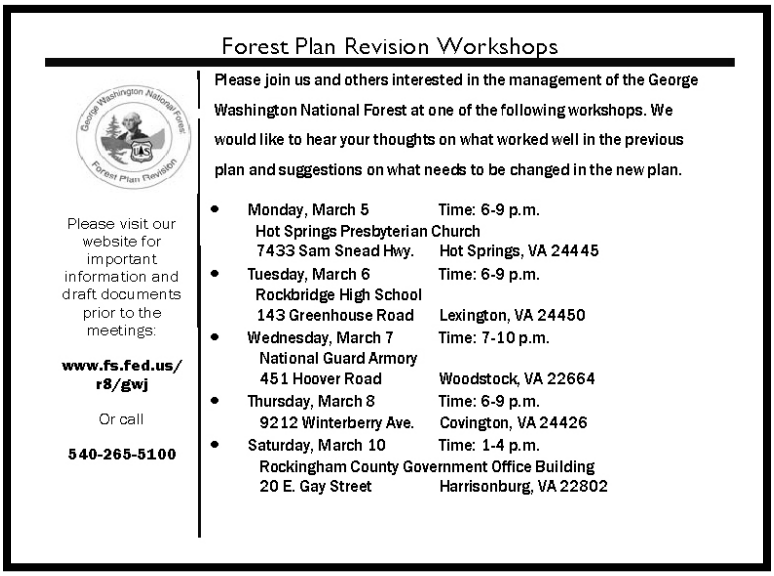
B. ENGAGING INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

1. Public Meetings

a. Public Meetings in March 2007

Public involvement was initiated when the Forest Supervisor invited the public to a series of meetings to comment on whether there was a need for change to the 1993 George Washington Resource Management Plan.

First, over 900 organizations, groups, county governments, state governments, and individuals were sent a post card the third week of February 2007 inviting them to a series of meetings to begin dialogue on what amount needed to change.


Forest Plan Revision Workshops

Please join us and others interested in the management of the George Washington National Forest at one of the following workshops. We would like to hear your thoughts on what worked well in the previous plan and suggestions on what needs to be changed in the new plan.

- Monday, March 5 Time: 6-9 p.m.
  Hot Springs Presbyterian Church
  7433 Sam Snead Hwy. Hot Springs, VA 24445
- Tuesday, March 6 Time: 6-9 p.m.
  Rockbridge High School
  143 Greenhouse Road Lexington, VA 24450
- Wednesday, March 7 Time: 7-10 p.m.
  National Guard Armory
  451 Hoover Road Woodstock, VA 22664
- Thursday, March 8 Time: 6-9 p.m.
  9212 Winterberry Ave. Covington, VA 24426
- Saturday, March 10 Time: 1-4 p.m.
  Rockingham County Government Office Building
  20 E. Gay Street Harrisonburg, VA 22802

Please visit our website for important information and draft documents prior to the meetings:

www.fs.fed.us/r8/gwj

Or call

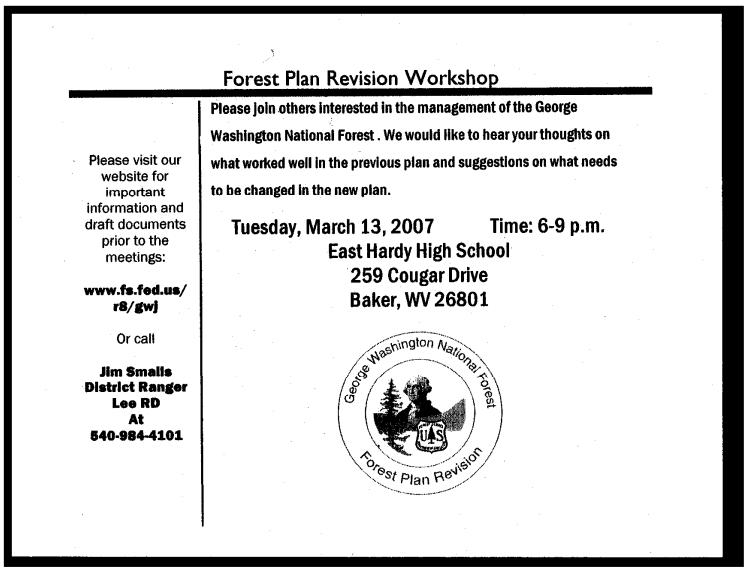
540-265-5100

On February 15, 2007 the Federal Register contained the Forest's "Notice of Intent" to revise the GW Plan. This officially started the GW Revision process. To meet a regulation requirement, a Legal Notice also appeared in the Forest's newspaper of record, namely the Roanoke Times, on March 31, 2007.

In addition, a news release was sent on February 16, 2007 to all newspapers, TV stations and radio stations that serve the counties where the GWNF is located.

Given the amount of land in West Virginia, the agency decided to hold two West Virginia meetings. A news release was sent to various media on February 22, 2007 that an informal meeting would be held in Brandywine, WV on March 9, 2007.

Likewise, a news release was sent to various media on February 28, 2007 that a meeting would be held in Baker, WV on March 13, 2007, and reminded people of the Brandywine meeting. Furthermore, all persons from West Virginia on the Forest's planning mailing list (about 72 individuals or organizations) were sent a postcard announcing the Baker WV meeting.


Forest Plan Revision Workshop

Please join others interested in the management of the George Washington National Forest . We would like to hear your thoughts on what worked well in the previous plan and suggestions on what needs to be changed in the new plan.

Tuesday, March 13, 2007 Time: 6-9 p.m.
East Hardy High School
259 Cougar Drive
Baker, WV 26801

Please visit our website for important information and draft documents prior to the meetings:

www.fs.fed.us/r8/gwj

Or call

Jim Smalls
District Ranger
Lee RD
At
540-984-4101

George Washington National Forest
Forest Plan Revision

Due to unprecedented attendance at the workshops, a news release of March 8, 2007 announced that the Harrisonburg meeting would be held at James Madison University rather than at the Rockingham County Government Office building. Agency law enforcement personnel were stationed at the county office to direct individuals to the new location. To accommodate the extra time needed to get to the new location, the news release announced that the meeting would start 30 minutes later than originally planned.

Attendance at the public meetings is shown in the following table.

Meeting Date	Meeting Location	Approximate Attendance
March 5, 2007	Warm Springs, VA	56
March 6, 2007	Lexington, VA	112
March 7, 2007	Woodstock, VA	250+
March 8, 2007	Covington, VA	35
March 9, 2007	Brandywine, WV	22
March 10, 2007	Harrisonburg, VA	135+
March 13, 2007	Baker, WV	25

In addition, other organizations alerted their members about the meetings and the revision process. For instance, the Wilderness Society created a link on their web page for their members to submit a form letter electronically to agency officials. The agency did not count the number of electronic form letters received from this endeavor, nor did it solicit electronic comments on this proposal. A random review of the letters showed that they all had the about the same “file size” with various differences attributed to electronic “signatures”. Otherwise, the form letter provided one set of comments for the agency to analyze with respect to determining significant issues.

Meeting Presentation

For all meetings except Brandywine, the following program was given. The Brandywine meeting was an informal discussion of these same topics.

GEORGE WASHINGTON FOREST PLAN REVISION
PUBLIC WORKSHOPS
MARCH 5-13, 2007

Your Hosts:
Maureen Hyzer, Forest Supervisor
Ken Landgraf, Planning Staff Officer

Welcome.....District Ranger..... 5 minutes

Overview of Plan Revision... Ken .....15 minutes

Remarks from the
Forest Supervisor..... Maureen.....15 minutes

Intro to Group Activity.....Ken .....5 minutes

Group Activity #1.....All.....40 minutes

Break.....All.....15 minutes

Group Activity #2.....All.....40 minutes

Wrap-Up.....Maureen.....10 minutes

What's Next.....Ken.....10 minutes

The overview was a PowerPoint presentation on the 2005 planning rule.

Attendees were distributed among numerous groups and each group was asked the same following two questions about on-the-ground management of their National Forest:

#1: What do you like about the current management of the GWNF?
#2: What do you think needs to change in how the GWNF is managed?

Comments were captured on flip charts. All comments were then typed and posted to the Forest's internet site. Comment forms were also given to meeting attendees and comments written at the meeting could either be placed into a comment box or sent at a later date to the Forest Supervisor's office. Comments were also then summarized by the agency for its use in determining which issues from the CER would be carried forward as significant issues for the rest of the public involvement and revision process.

Summary

The summary of this effort was then used as an addendum to the Comprehensive Evaluation Report (CER.)

Availability of the Draft Comprehensive Evaluation Report

The public was notified of the availability of the initial February 15, 2007 version of the Comprehensive Evaluation Report (CER) by three methods. First notification was posted on February 15, 2007 to the Forest's internet "Planning" page stating that an initial draft of the CER was available for downloading or available on a CD-ROM upon request. Secondly, this report was also mentioned in the agency's 2/15/07 Federal Register Notice. Thirdly, the agency's initial 2/22/07 news release mentioned that the CER was on the world-wide-web at http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/gwj. Business cards showing the WWW address were available for the public at all of the public meetings.

Written Comments on the Draft Comprehensive Evaluation Report

The agency also accepted public comments. Public comments could either be mailed through the Post Office to the Forest Supervisor's Office or electronically mailed to the agency.

All public comments on the "Need for Change" are available for review in the project file located at the Supervisor's Office in Roanoke, Virginia.

b. Postponement and Resumption of GW Planning Process

Postponement of GW Planning Process

On March 30, 2007, a federal judge enjoined (prohibited) the Forest Service from implementation of the 2005 Planning Rule. The GWNF's planning process, including the workshops, was initiated under this 2005 Rule. On April 3, 2007, the agency posted a letter on its web site postponing the planned public meetings in scheduled in late April and early May 2007 because of the federal court decision.

As the Forest Supervisor stated in this letter "We have decided to wait until our Agency has time to assess the situation and provide us with some guidance on how to proceed with the revision. We hope that this will be a short postponement. We will keep you updated with information on this web page."

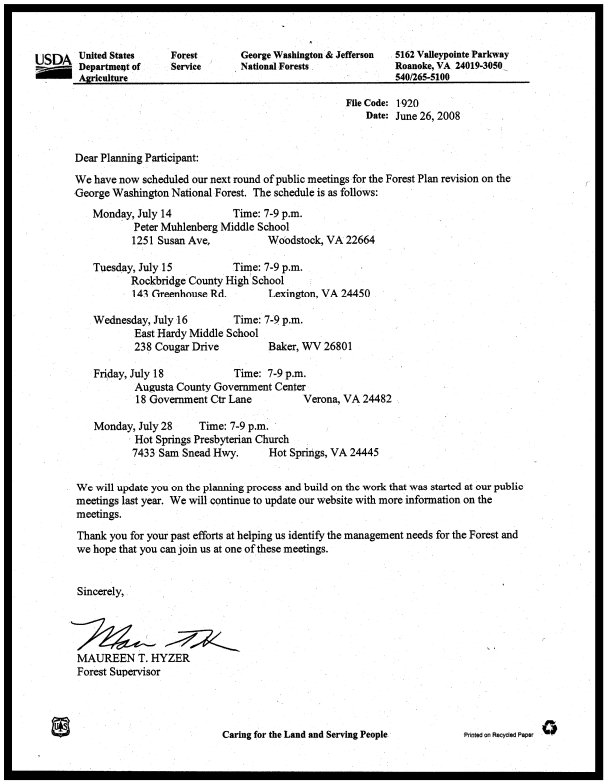
Resumption of GW Planning Process

On April 10, 2008 the Forest posted a letter to the Internet that work on a new nationwide planning rule has been completed. The letter also announced that public meetings would start in early summer 2008.

On April 21, 2008 the Forest Service adopted a new planning rule by announcement in the Federal Register. This rule (36 CFR 219 (2008)) was adopted following completion of an environmental impact statement and consultation under the Endangered Species Act. This new planning rule explicitly allowed the resumption of plan revisions started under the previous rule (36 CFR 219 (2005)) based on a finding that the revision process conforms to the new planning rule (36 CFR 219.14(b) (3) (ii)).

On June 24, 2008 the Federal Register (73 FR 35632) contained the Forest's "Notice of Adjustment for Resuming the Land Management Plan Revision Process" to revise the GW Plan. This officially restarted the GW revision process. To meet a regulation requirement, a Legal Notice also appeared in the Forest's newspaper of record, namely the Roanoke Times, on June 25, 2008. The Federal Register notice also requested additional public comments on the Draft CER of February 15, 2007. Comments were requested to be postmarked within 45 days after publication in the Federal Register. Thus, comments on the draft Comprehensive Evaluation Report were requested to be postmarked or received by August 8, 2008.

c. Public Meetings in July 2008



USDA United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | George Washington & Jefferson National Forests | 5162 Valleypointe Parkway Roanoke, VA 24019-3050 540/265-5100

File Code: 1920
Date: June 26, 2008

Dear Planning Participant:

We have now scheduled our next round of public meetings for the Forest Plan revision on the George Washington National Forest. The schedule is as follows:

Monday, July 14 Time: 7-9 p.m.
Peter Muhlenberg Middle School
1251 Susan Ave, Woodstock, VA 22664

Tuesday, July 15 Time: 7-9 p.m.
Rockbridge County High School
143 Greenhouse Rd. Lexington, VA 24450

Wednesday, July 16 Time: 7-9 p.m.
East Hardy Middle School
238 Cougar Drive Baker, WV 26801

Friday, July 18 Time: 7-9 p.m.
Augusta County Government Center
18 Government Ctr Lane Verona, VA 24482

Monday, July 28 Time: 7-9 p.m.
Hot Springs Presbyterian Church
7433 Sam Snead Hwy. Hot Springs, VA 24445

We will update you on the planning process and build on the work that was started at our public meetings last year. We will continue to update our website with more information on the meetings.

Thank you for your past efforts at helping us identify the management needs for the Forest and we hope that you can join us at one of these meetings.

Sincerely,

MAUREEN T. HYZER
Forest Supervisor

Caring for the Land and Serving People

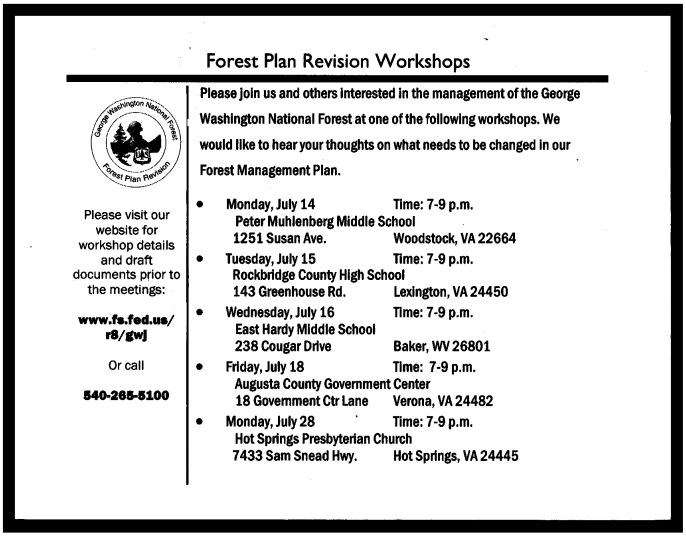
Printed on Recycled Paper

Topic – Place-Based Desired Conditions

On June 26, 2008 a letter announcing the dates and times of the meetings was posted on the Internet.

To resume the process and notify people without internet access, a post card was also sent the first week of July 2008 to over 1,200 organizations, groups, county governments, state governments, and individuals inviting them to a series of meetings to begin a place-based dialogue on where management on-the-ground needed to change.

The meetings had small groups discussing what they would like to see changed on the Forest. The meetings were place-based with attendees reviewing district maps. There was a host for each small group. Rather than being a neutral facilitator, the host was able to enter into discussions to answer basic questions and describe how the agency currently manages the National Forest in that particular area.



Forest Plan Revision Workshops

George Washington National Forest – Forest Plan Revision

Please visit our website for workshop details and draft documents prior to the meetings:

www.fs.fed.us/r8/gwj

Or call

540-265-5100

Please join us and others interested in the management of the George Washington National Forest at one of the following workshops. We would like to hear your thoughts on what needs to be changed in our Forest Management Plan.

- **Monday, July 14** **Time: 7-9 p.m.**
  Peter Muhlenberg Middle School
  1251 Susan Ave. **Woodstock, VA 22664**
- **Tuesday, July 15** **Time: 7-9 p.m.**
  Rockbridge County High School
  143 Greenhouse Rd. **Lexington, VA 24450**
- **Wednesday, July 16** **Time: 7-9 p.m.**
  East Hardy Middle School
  238 Cougar Drive **Baker, WV 26801**
- **Friday, July 18** **Time: 7-9 p.m.**
  Augusta County Government Center
  18 Government Ctr Lane **Verona, VA 24482**
- **Monday, July 28** **Time: 7-9 p.m.**
  Hot Springs Presbyterian Church
  7433 Sam Snead Hwy. **Hot Springs, VA 24445**

Attendance at the July 2008 public meetings is shown in the following table.

Meeting Date	Meeting Location	Approximate Attendance
July 14, 2008	Woodstock, VA	125
July 15, 2008	Lexington, VA	64
July 16, 2008	Baker, WV	29
July 18, 2008	Verona, VA	69
July 28, 2008	Hot Springs, VA	33

Meeting Presentation

A short PowerPoint presentation occurred that repeated what was done for the first round of planning and gave attendees a summary of the key topics from that first round of meetings. A frame work was presented from the Forest's perspective of what resources were important in the planning process. The agency discussed some topics that are outside the planning process such as user fees and law enforcement.

The agency displayed the sideboards within which the decisions will be made on approving the revised plan. These sideboards are that the GW will continue to be a multiple use forest with managing for an emphasis on high quality water, wildlife habitat, diversity of recreation settings, timber for vegetation management and to produce wood, minerals resources, TES species, and fire for vegetation management

Participants were divided into small groups and gathered around tables that were covered with maps of the forest (by ranger district) showing the management areas under the current 1993 Forest Plan. The groups were asked the following questions: "**What areas of the x District would you like to see managed in a different way and how would you like them to be managed? Why?"** Participants were asked to record their ideas directly on the maps, highlighting specific areas of interest. Comment sheets were also provided to capture responses. The maps and comment sheets were later scanned for the record.

Summary

The July 2008 round of meetings were summarized into a document that is available in the planning records. Generally, the following activities were noted for the following places on the Forest.

PLACE	WILDERNESS	ROADLESS AREA CHARACTERISTICS	MOUNTAIN BIKING	HORSEBACK RIDING	4WD ACCESS	ATV ACCESS	VEGETATION MGMT	WIND
DISTRICT: Pedlar								
Kelly Mtn Roadless Area		X - high protection or nat'l scenic area	X	X	X			
Adams Peak Roadless Area	X		X					
Three Sisters Roadless Area	X							
St Mary's Wilderness Addition	X							
DISTRICT: North River								
Crawford Roadless Area	x		x					

PLACE	WILDERNESS	ROADLESS AREA CHARACTERISTICS	MOUNTAIN BIKING	HORSEBACK RIDING	4WD ACCESS	ATV ACCESS	VEGETATION MGMT	WIND
Elliott Knob Roadless Area	X		X					
Little River Roadless Area	X		keep existing use					
Ramseys Draft Roadless Area	X							
Jerkemtight Roadless Area	X		keep existing use - conflicts with horse use	keep existing use - conflicts with bike use				
Skidmore Fork Roadless Area	X	X	keep existing use		X		x	
Snake Ridge		X						
Beech Lick/Marshall Run	X							
Dry River Roadless Area	X							
Gum Run Roadless Area			keep existing use					
Oak Knob Roadless Area			keep existing use					
DISTRICT: Lee								
Northern Massanutten Roadless Area - Stephens Trail and Kennedy Peak			keep existing use					
Big Schloss Roadless Area	X		keep existing use	several major events			x	
Southern Massanutten Roadless Area		X - national scenic area					x	
Three High Heads	X							
Stony Creek	X							
DISTRICT: Warm Springs								
MA 14 between Rough Mt and Rich Hole Wildernesses		X - large block					X	
Mill Mtn Roadless Area	X							
MA 14 area along Route 125 (west of Douthat State Park)							for grouse	
Rough Mtn Wilderness Addition	X							
Beards Mtn Roadless Area	X - or national scenic area		X					
Little Alleghany Roadless Area	X							
DISTRICT: James River								
Dolly Ann Roadless Area	X		X					

PLACE	WILDERNESS	ROADLESS AREA CHARACTERISTICS	MOUNTAIN BIKING	HORSEBACK RIDING	4WD ACCESS	ATV ACCESS	VEGETATION MGMT	WIND
Oliver Mtn Roadless Area	X		X					
MA 15 northeast of Hoop Hole Roadless Area			X					
MA 17 southwest of Hematite/Jinglin g Rock	X							

c. Public Meetings in September 2008

Topic – Potential Wilderness Areas and Roadless Areas

Given that the intent of these meetings were to start focusing more on individual issues, only two locations were selected for discussing the topic of the potential wilderness inventory and inventoried roadless areas. The July workshops were held in five locations but there were a large number of people that came to more than one, even though the agenda was the same at each location. This time, there were no postcards mailed out since the public had been told at the July workshops that we would post the September workshop information on our website and we thought we would be able to save postage. However, this resulted in some people not receiving proper notification of the meetings. It was discussed how we could improve notification in the future without a costly mailing each time, including the possibility of sending a postcard with the option of sending an e-mail to the electronic Revision Comments inbox so an electronic mailing list could be initiated or with the option of receiving a postcard in the future.

The purpose of the September workshops was to discuss the 37 Potential Wilderness Areas (370,000 acres) and the two Inventoried Roadless Areas (14,000 acres) not part of the current inventory. Each participant was given the following handout that had a list of the areas, their acreages and the table where the area would be discussed.

POTENTIAL WILDERNESS INVENTORY
George Washington National Forest
Sept 2008

Potential Wilderness Area	Also Known As...	Total Acres	District - Table
Adams Peak		8,226	Pedlar
Archer Knob		7,110	North River - 2
Beards Mountain		10,152	Warm Springs - 2
Beech Lick Knob		14,087	North River - 1
Big Schloss		28,347	Lee
Crawford Knob		14,851	North River - 2
Dolly Ann		9,524	James River
Duncan Knob	Catback Mtn, Waterfall	5,973	Lee
Elliott Knob		11,070	North River - 2

Galford Gap	Scaffold Run	6,689	Warm Springs - 1
Gum Run		14,547	North River - 1
High Knob	Skidmore, Dry River	18,447	North River - 1
Jerkemtight		27,314	North River - 2
Kelley Mountain	Big Levels	12,892	Pedlar
Laurel Fork		10,236	Warm Springs - 1
Little Alleghany		15,395	Warm Springs - 1
Little Mare Mountain		11,918	Warm Springs - 2
Little River		30,227	North River - 1
North Massanutten		16,530	Lee
Oak Knob - Hone Quarry Ridge		16,343	North River - 1
Oliver Mountain		13,049	James River
Paddy Knob	Paddy Lick	5,987	Warm Springs - 1
Potts Mountain	Toms Knob	7,019	James River
Ramseys Draft Addition	Bald Ridge, Lynn	19,072	North River - 2
Rich Hole Addition	Mill Mtn	12,165	Warm Springs - 2
Rich Patch		871	James River
Rough Mountain Addition		2,063	Warm Springs - 2
St Mary's North		3,006	Pedlar
St Mary's South		1,651	Pedlar
St Mary's West		278	Pedlar
Shaws Ridge		7,268	North River - 2
Shawvers Run Addition		84	James River
Three Ridges Addition North		83	Pedlar
Three Ridges Addition South		187	Pedlar
Three Ridges Addition Southwest		9	Pedlar
Three Ridges Addition West		90	Pedlar
Three Sisters		9,871	Pedlar
TOTAL ACRES		372,631	

The Planning Staff Officer gave a 20 minute presentation on the history of roadless area inventory and wilderness designation at the national level and on the forest level, the definition of various terms related to wilderness and roadless, and described the process used to go from an inventoried potential wilderness area to a Congressionally-designated Wilderness. The participants were then asked to visit tables that had detailed maps of the areas and discuss the following three questions:

1) What are the characteristics that make this area a good wilderness?
2) What are the resource uses that might be foregone if this area became wilderness?

3) If not wilderness, how would you like to see this area managed?

Each table was hosted either by a District Ranger or someone who was familiar with the areas on the maps. Each table also had a poster showing a table highlighting other resource information for each area, such as the amount of timber currently suitable, presence of structural improvements, presence of acidified streams, etc. Participants were asked to record their ideas directly on the maps, highlighting specific areas of interest. Boundary adjustments were also encouraged to show where needs of other resources could be met. Comment sheets were also provided to capture responses. The September 2008 round of meetings were summarized into a document that is available in the planning records.

Attendance at the September 2008 public meetings is shown in the following table.

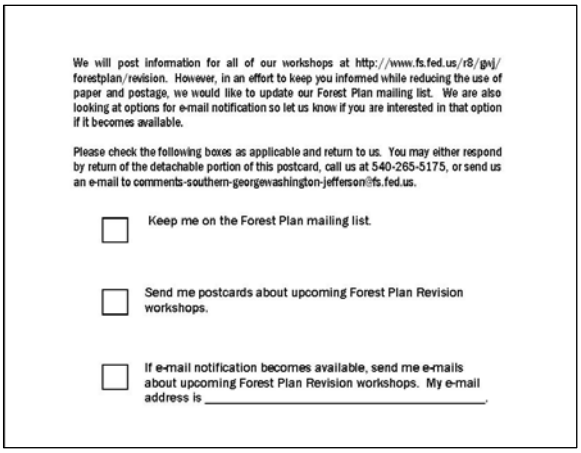
Meeting Date	Meeting Location	Approximate Attendance
Sept. 11, 2008	Bridgewater, VA	94
Sept. 13, 2008	Lexington, VA	39

The second meeting was held on a Saturday and there was a general consensus that Saturdays were not an ideal day for a public meeting. When we are at the point of discussing the Draft Plan with a probable larger number of participants, Saturday meetings might be more worthwhile.

d. Public Meetings in October 2008

Topic – Access (Roads and Trails)

Postcards were mailed out to announce the two workshops for access and to update the Revision mailing list.

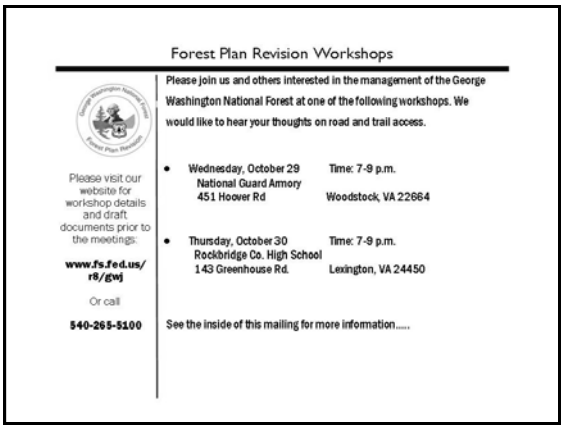

We will post information for all of our workshops at http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/gwj/forestplan/revision. However, in an effort to keep you informed while reducing the use of paper and postage, we would like to update our Forest Plan mailing list. We are also looking at options for e-mail notification so let us know if you are interested in that option if it becomes available.

Please check the following boxes as applicable and return to us. You may either respond by return of the detachable portion of this postcard, call us at 540-265-5175, or send us an e-mail to comments-southern-georgewashington-jefferson@fs.fed.us.

☐ Keep me on the Forest Plan mailing list.

☐ Send me postcards about upcoming Forest Plan Revision workshops.

☐ If e-mail notification becomes available, send me e-mails about upcoming Forest Plan Revision workshops. My e-mail address is _____.



Forest Plan Revision Workshops

Please join us and others interested in the management of the George Washington National Forest at one of the following workshops. We would like to hear your thoughts on road and trail access.

- Wednesday, October 29 — Time: 7-9 p.m.
  National Guard Armory
  451 Hoover Rd — Woodstock, VA 22664
- Thursday, October 30 — Time: 7-9 p.m.
  Rockbridge Co. High School
  143 Greenhouse Rd. — Lexington, VA 24450

See the inside of this mailing for more information.....

Please visit our website for workshop details and draft documents prior to the meetings:

www.fs.fed.us/r8/gwj

Or call

540-265-5100

Purpose

- Discuss management of the road and trail systems on the Forest
- Discuss options for any needed changes in desired conditions, suitability, objectives, and guidelines regarding roads and trails

The Planning Staff Officer gave a 15 minute presentation on road and trail access issues. The participants were then asked to visit tables to discuss the road and trail access concerns on the Ranger District. They were asked to discuss the following questions:

Road Group Questions Asked:

1) What areas of the Forest should be suitable for road construction?
2) Are there areas of the Forest that should be high priority for decommissioning existing roads? What should the objective be for decommissioning roads?
3) Are there key areas where roads should not be decommissioned in order to maintain OHV opportunities?
4) Are there guidelines that need to be added to the plan to address road access issues?

Trail Groups Questions Asked:

1) Are there areas of the forest where additional trails are needed (hiking, biking, horseback riding) or should be emphasized? Are there trails that could be decommissioned so that maintenance funding can be used to higher priority trails?
2) Are there guidelines that need to be added to the plan to address trail access issues?

Small Group Sessions:

Lee - Roads
Lee & North River - Trails
North River - Roads
Warm Springs - Roads
Warm Springs & James River - Trails

James River - Roads
Pedlar - Roads
Pedlar - Trails
Guidelines and Monitoring
General Access Concerns

Attendance at the October 2008 public meetings is shown in the following table.

Meeting Date	Meeting Location	Approximate Attendance
Oct. 29, 2008	Woodstock, VA	55
Oct. 30, 2008	Lexington, VA	50

e. Public Meetings in November and December 2008

Topic – Vegetation Management (Timber harvest, Prescribed fire, Non-native Invasive Species)

Postcards were mailed out to announce the two workshops

Forest Plan Revision Workshops

Please visit our website for any date/time changes, workshop details and draft documents prior to the meetings:

www.fs.fed.us/r8/gwj

Or call

540-265-5100

Please join us and others interested in the management of the George Washington National Forest at one of the following workshops.

TOPIC: VEGETATION MANAGEMENT (Wildlife habitat improvement, timber harvest, prescribed fire)

- Thursday, November 13 — Time: 6:30 9:00 p.m.
  Augusta County Government Center
  18 Government Lane
  Verona, VA 24482
- Wednesday, December 3 — Time: 6:30 9:00 p.m.
  Rockbridge Co. High School
  143 Greenhouse Rd.
  Lexington, VA 24450

TOPIC: FOREST PLAN COMPONENTS (Fitting the workshops and other information together toward a Draft Plan)

- Thursday, January 29 — Time: 6:30 9:00 p.m.
  Rockbridge Co. High School
  143 Greenhouse Rd.
  Lexington, VA 24450

Purpose:

Discuss management of vegetation on the forest including timber harvest, prescribed fire, wildlife habitat, non-native invasive plants, and special biologic areas.

Items to discuss:

Spatial concerns about prescribed fire and timber harvest (Where are we managing?)
Level of activity or objectives for prescribed fire and timber harvest (How much are we managing?)
Concerns with the effects of prescribed fire and timber harvest
Rationale for vegetation management (What are we managing for?)

The Planning Staff Officer gave a 30 minute presentation on the purpose of vegetation management and current vegetation management activities. The participants were then

asked to visit tables to discuss the vegetation management concerns on the Ranger District. They were asked to discuss the following question:

Question for the small groups:
What is important to you about managing vegetation on the Forest?

Small Group Setups:

Table
Wildlife discussion – Lee and North River Maps
Wildlife discussion – James River, Warm Spr, Pedlar Maps
Timber discussion – Lee and North River Maps
Timber discussion – James River, Warm Spr, Pedlar Maps
Fire discussion – Lee and North River Maps
Fire discussion – James River, Warm Spr, Pedlar Maps

Meeting Date	Meeting Location	Approximate Attendance
Nov. 13, 2008	Verona, Va	
Dec. 3, 2008	Lexington, VA	

f. Public Meetings in January and February 2009

Topic – Forest Plan Components

Purpose

- Inform people of how the Forest Service has evaluated the discussions to date and putting the information into the Forest Plan components
- Provide a forum to discuss options that should be considered differently than above
- Identify monitoring or guidelines to improve the Plan

Meeting Format

The first meeting in Lexington was done with a 30-40 minute presentation on the Plan Components, followed by small group discussions that focused on topics identified by the public. A handout was provided that summarized the highlights of where we are headed with the revised plan, such as the areas we are seriously considering for wilderness recommendation and the objectives for timber harvest. The group discussions at the first meeting were good but many people wanted to talk about more than two topics. Therefore the second meeting, in Woodstock, used a different format where the presentation was followed by opening up the discussion to questions, answers, comments to the entire group. This format suited the discussions much more and was more appropriate for the place we were at in the revision process.

Meeting Date	Meeting Location	Approximate Attendance
Jan. 29, 2009	Lexington, VA	54
Feb. 5, 2009	Woodstock, VA	79

g. Postponement and Resumption of GW Planning Process

Postponement of GW Planning Process

On June 30, 2009, the 2008 planning rule was enjoined by the United States District Court for the Northern District of California (*Citizens for Better Forestry* v. *United States Department of Agriculture*, No. C 08–1927 CW (N.D. Cal. June 30, 2009)) and the revision of the GWNF Forest Plan was again suspended. The Forest Supervisor posted a letter on its website on July 8, 2009 informing the public of the postponement.

Resumption of GW Planning Process

The Department determined that the 2000 planning rule is now back in effect. The 2000 Rule's transition provisions (36 CFR 219.35), amended in 2002 and 2003 and clarified by interpretative rules issued in 2001 and 2004, and reissued on December 18, 2009 [74 FR 67059–67075] allow use of the provisions of the National Forest System land and resource management planning rule in effect prior to the effective date of the 2000 Rule (November 9, 2000), commonly called the 1982 planning rule, to amend or revise plans. The GWNF elected to use the provisions of the 1982 planning rule, including the requirement to prepare an EIS, to complete its plan revision.

On March 7, 2010 the Forest posted a letter to the Internet that the Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and Forest Plan had just been published in the Federal Register. The letter also announced public meetings in the following locations:

Monday, April 12, 2010
Valley Elementary School
98 Panther Drive
Hot Springs, VA

Wednesday, April 14, 2010
East Hardy High School
Baker, WV

Monday, April 19, 2010
Rockbridge Co. High School
143 Greenhouse Rd.
Lexington, VA 24450

Wednesday, April 28, 2010
Woodstock National Guard Armory
541 Hoover Road
Woodstock, VA 22664

Thursday, April 29, 2010
Augusta County Government Center
18 Government Lane
Verona, VA

The letter also reiterated the public comment period and identified a number of documents available for review on the GWNF website.

An additional meeting was added on Tuesday, April 27 at the Fairfax County Government Center in Fairfax, Virginia.

The Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register on March 10, 2010. The Notice requested comments on the Forest Plan by May 7, 2010.

h. Public Meetings in April, 2010

Topic – Scoping for the Notice of Intent

Postcards were mailed out to announce the two workshops for the five meetings. The Fairfax meeting was posted on the website.

Purpose

The Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register on March 10, with a 60 day comment period ending May 7, 2010. The purpose of these meetings was to scope issues and potential alternatives for preparation of the EIS.

Meeting Format

The meeting began with a 30-minute powerpoint presentation that described how we are starting the revision again for the third time, this time under the 1982 planning regulations. However, it was stressed that we are not discarding any public input from the past three years. Information regarding preliminary issues and three potential alternatives was presented. These alternatives included the current 1993 Forest Plan, the Need for Change (that was presented at Jan/Fed 2009 meetings), and a Remote Habitats and Access alternative. The presentation was followed by small group discussions that answered two questions: 1) What issues would you like to see addressed in the Forest Plan; and 2) How would you like to see that issue addressed in the Forest Plan?

Meeting Date	Meeting Location	Approximate Attendance
April 12, 2010	Hot Springs, VA	25
April 14, 2010	Baker, WV	20
April 19, 2010	Lexington, VA	51
April 27, 2010	Fairfax, VA	44
April 28, 2010	Woodstock, VA	51
April 29, 2010	Verona, VA	53

i. Public Workshop with Interdisciplinary Team in July, 2010

Topic – Alternative Refinement

A notice was posted on the GWNF website on June 18, 2010 announcing a workshop to be held on July 14 in the Supervisor's Office.

Purpose

The purpose of the workshop was to give interested parties the opportunity to review the current list of alternatives and suggest modifications or additions to the alternatives.

Meeting Format

The meeting was conducted as an interactive meeting with the public and the IDT actively engaged in discussion. Twenty-one members of the public attended the meeting and engaged in discussion with the IDT on the alternatives and ways to improve them.

j. Public Workshop on October 5, 2010

Topic – Alternatives

Postcards were mailed out to announce the workshop to be held on October 5, 2010 at the Augusta County Government Center in Verona, Virginia. The workshop was held from 6:30 until 8:30.

Purpose

The purpose of the workshop was to describe the six alternatives developed for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and to discuss the alternatives and effects analysis with GWNF staff.

Meeting Format

The meeting began with a 30 minute presentation by the Planning Staff Officer about the alternatives. Then there was an hour for attendees to discuss the alternatives and review the alternative maps with GWNF staff. The attendees then broke into groups to discuss the following questions:

> You have heard and participated in a number of discussions about how the Forest Plan should address a variety of issues. If you were going to pick an alternative that appropriately balances the varied interests,
>
> a. What are the key criteria you would use to make your decision?
> b. What are the important benefits or consequences in the six alternatives that are under consideration and how would these affect your decision?

About 77 people attended the workshop.

C. STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS & FEDERAL AGENCY COORDINATION AND ASSISTANCE

Federal Agency Coordination and Assistance

Correspondence

Date	From	To	Subject
11/16/06	Forest	VA USFWS	Request for Accuracy of Forest T&E species
11/16/06	Forest	WV USFWS	Request for Accuracy of Forest T&E species
1/4/07	VA USFWS	Forest	List of Forest T&E species accurate
3/14/07	VA USFWS	Forest	At this point, Revised Plan may be to general to conduct Section 7 Consultation
5/9/2010	Forest	BLM	Request to be a cooperating agency
5/12/2010	Forest	VA USFWS	Restarting revision and request for review of species to consider
5/12/2010	Forest	WV USFWS	Restarting revision and request for review of species to consider
5/12/2010	USGS	Forest	USGS will assist in providing information for the Reasonably Foreseeable Development Scenario

Meetings

Date	With	Subject
4/10/06	Shenandoah & Cedar Cr. / Belle Grove NP	Revising the GW Plan
5/25/06	Various State and Federal Agencies (USFWS, WV & VA Heritage, WVDNR, VDGIF)	Introduce the 2005 Planning Regulations
12/6/2006	Virginia Partners (USFWS, Shenandoah NP, VDGIF, VDOF, VDCR, VT)	Update on Plan Revision
3/26/2007	VA Department of Forestry	Update on Plan Revision
10/07/2007	West Virginia Cooperative Stamp Meeting (WVDNR, Monongahela NF)	Update on Plan Revision
10/18/2007	Virginia Partners (USFWS, Shenandoah NP, VDGIF, VDOF, VDCR, VT)	Update on Plan Revision
10/01/2008	West Virginia Cooperative Stamp Meeting (WVDNR, Monongahela NF)	Update on Plan Revision
10/29/2008	Virginia Partners (USFWS, Shenandoah NP, VDGIF, VDOF, VDCR, VT)	Update on Plan Revision
5/13/2009	US F&WS	Update on Plan Revision
9/9/2009	Virginia Partners (USFWS, Shenandoah NP, VDGIF, VDOF, VDCR, VT)	Update on Plan Revision
10/27/2009	West Virginia Cooperative Stamp Meeting (WVDNR,	Update on Plan Revision

	Monongahela NF)	
9/28/2010	Virginia Partners (USFWS, Shenandoah NP, VDGIF, VDOF, VDCR, NRCS, VT	Update on Plan Revision

NPS representatives participated in the Woodstock workshop of March 7, 2007.

State Government Coordination and Assistance

Correspondence

Date	From	To	Subject
1/3/07	USFS	VA & WV State Game Agencies	Informal Review of Draft Working Copy of GW Comprehensive Evaluation Report

Meetings

Date	With	Subject
4/17/06	WVDNR & VDGIF	Revising the GW Plan
5/25/06	Various State and Federal Agencies (USFWS, WV & VA Heritage, WVDNR, VDGIF)	Introduce the 2005 Planning Regulations
12/6/2006	Virginia Partners (USFWS, Shenandoah NP, VDGIF, VDOF, VDCR, VT)	Update on Plan Revision
12/14/06	WVDNR	Introduce Agency to Draft CER
1/22/07	VDGIF	Introduce Agency to Draft CER
10/07/2007	West Virginia Cooperative Stamp Meeting (WVDNR, Monongahela NF)	Update on Plan Revision
10/18/2007	Virginia Partners (USFWS, Shenandoah NP, VDGIF, VDOF, VDCR, VT)	Update on Plan Revision
8/27/2008	VA Dept of Game and Inland Fisheries	Update on Plan Revision
9/10/08	VDGIF and VDNH	Update on the Plan Revision process
10/01/2008	West Virginia Cooperative Stamp Meeting (WVDNR, Monongahela NF)	Update on Plan Revision
10/29/2008	Virginia Partners (USFWS, Shenandoah NP, VDGIF, VDOF, VDCR, VT)	Update on Plan Revision
11/07/2008	VA Natural Heritage Program	Special Biological Areas
9/9/2009	Virginia Partners (USFWS, Shenandoah NP, VDGIF, VDOF, VDCR, VT)	Update on Plan Revision
10/27/2009	West Virginia Cooperative Stamp Meeting (WVDNR,	Update on Plan Revision

Date	With	Subject
	Monongahela NF)	
6/23/2010	VDGIF	Review of ecological sustainability analysis
6/24/2010	WVDNR	Review of ecological sustainability analysis
9/28/2010	Virginia Partners (USFWS, Shenandoah NP, VDGIF, VDOF, VDCR, NRCS, VT	Update on Plan Revision

VDGIF and WV DNR representatives participated in many of the public workshops, as did VA DOF personnel.

Local Government Coordination and Assistance

Correspondence

Date	From	To	Subject
6/22/05	USFS	Var. Cty Planning Districts	Request for County Master Plans, Land Use Maps
8/2/05	USFS	Var. County Planning Dept	Request for County Master Plans, Land Use Maps
8/4/05	Page County	USFS	Response to Request for County Master Plan
8/15/05	Shenandoah Cty	USFS	Response to Request for County Master Plan

Meetings

Date	With	Subject
9/22/08	Augusta County Board of Supervisors	Update on the Planning Process
10/08/2008	Amherst County Planning Director	Update on the Planning Process
10/08/2008	Nelson County Administrator and Planning Director	Update on the Planning Process
10/09/2008	Alleghany County Administrator	Update on the Planning Process
11/3/2008	Page County Planner	Update on the Planning Process
11/6/2008	Shenandoah County Property and Public Works Committee	Update on the Planning Process
10/8/2008	Rockingham County Board of Supervisors	Update on the Planning Process
12/2/2008	Hardy County planner and a member of the County Commission	Update on the Planning Process
1/26/2009	Bath County Planning Commission	Update on the Planning Process
2/10/2009	Bath County Board of Supervisors	Update on the Planning Process

Date	With	Subject
1/29/2009	Rockbridge County Planner and Administrator	Update on the Planning Process
4/13/2009	Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors	Update on the Planning Process
6/22/2009	Bath County Planning Commission	Update on potential wilderness
6/22/2009	Augusta County Administrator	Update on potential wilderness
5/22/2009	Rockbridge County Administrator	Answer questions about wilderness
7/27/2009	Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors	Answer questions about wilderness

Representatives of various counties, including planners and members of the Board of Supervisors, participated in the public workshops either held in their counties or near their counties. For example, representatives from Augusta and Botetourt Counties participated in the Lexington meeting of March 6, 2007.

D. TRIBAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

The Eastern Band of Cherokee and the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma were contacted through mailings of post cards about the March 2007 meetings.

Furthermore, the Forest was contacted by the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of the Eastern Band of Cherokee in February 2007 that the George Washington National Forest was not in the Cherokee's aboriginal territory and that the tribe no longer needed to be consulted for projects or activities on the GWNF.

The following eight Virginia recognized tribes were contacted through mailings of post cards about the March 2007 meetings. Nothing was heard further from these state-recognized tribes. The United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians and the Virginia Council on Indians were also contacted.

Virginia-Recognized Tribes

Chickahominy Tribe
Eastern Chickahominy Tribe
Mattaponi Tribe
Monacan Indian Nation
Nansemond Tribe
Pamunkey Tribe
Rappahannock Tribe
Upper Mattaponi Tribe

Letters were sent on October 20, 2010 to the Virginia Council on Indians, the Eastern Shawnee, the Shawnee Tribe and the Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians in Oklahoma inviting them to participate in the forest plan revision.

E. OFFICIAL PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Federal Register and Newspaper of Record Notifications

Required Notices	Federal Register Publication Date
Initiation of Plan Revision	2/15/2007
Notice of Readjustment and Resumption	2/24/2008
Notice of Intent	3/10/2010

F. PRESENTATIONS TO ORGANIZATIONS

February 7, 2007: An overview of the Revision process and timelines was presented to representatives of various environmental groups, including, Wildlaw, Southern Environmental Law Center, Virginia Wilderness Committee, Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition, Virginia Forest Watch, Wild Virginia, and the Sierra Club.

Date	From	To	Subject
2/7/07	Planning Staff Officer	Various Environ. Groups	Revision Process and Timeline
2/16/2007	Planning Staff Officer	Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society	Plan Revision Update
2/24/2007	Planning Staff Officer	Virginia Council Trout Unlimited	
3/31/2007	Planning Staff Officer	Virginia Loggers Association	
9/10/08	Planning Staff Officer, Forest Planner	Various wilderness-interest groups	Question and answer regarding Potential Wilderness Areas at their request
12/10/2008	Planning Staff Officer	Regional Water Resources Policy Committee	Drinking water protection
3/12/2009	Planning Staff Officer	Various Groups in northern Virginia – held in Arlington, VA	Plan Revision, summary of recent meetings

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