



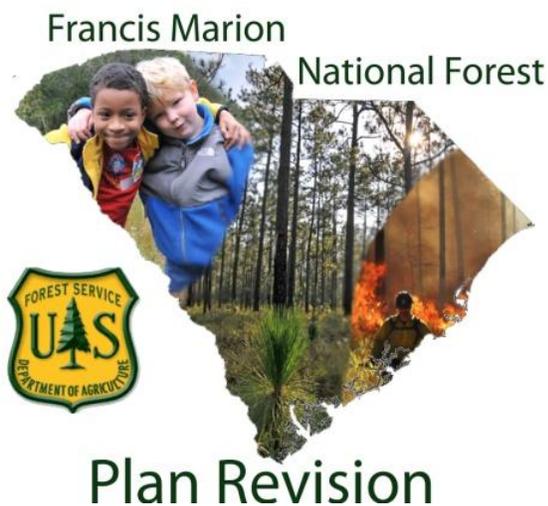
Francis Marion National Forest Plan Revision

PUBLIC WORKSHOP SUMMARY

Tuesday, February 26, 2013
Holiday Inn, International Blvd
North Charleston, South Carolina

On Tuesday, February 26, 2013 thirty-seven interested parties attended a 3-hour Public Workshop at the Holiday Inn Charleston Airport & Convention Center in North Charleston, South Carolina. Attendees included local residents, members of organized recreation groups, county and city planners, government officials, business owners, outfitter guides, recreation managers at local, state and federal levels and environmental advocates who are interested in the future of the Francis Marion National Forest.

This public meeting was the third in the series of community conversations on the Francis Marion Forest Plan Revision. Plan revision efforts began last fall with two public meetings that asked the public for input on how they wanted to be involved in the plan revision efforts, key contacts critical to planning efforts, sources of existing and needed information relevant to the Francis Marion, how they used the Francis Marion, and what was important to them about the Francis Marion NF. To follow-up on the previous community conversations, Forest Service staff wanted to learn more about how people use the Forest and what is important to them about the Forest. In order to reach a wider audience, the staff is using an on-line collaboration tool featured online at



<http://www.fs.usda.gov/scnfs/>. This web-based collaboration tool is available for public from February 11 to April 11. Four canvases are featured online. These 4 canvases seek to gain input regarding the following:



1. What benefits do you receive from the forest? Have these benefits changed over time?
2. What is unique and special about the forest? If you could take only one picture of the forest, what would it be?
3. What are your favorite places to recreate on and near the forest?
4. What would make your visit to the forest better? What would make your use of the forest greater?

The Public Workshop was viewed as a way to bring people together so they could understand how to use the on-line collaborative tool, spread the word about the opportunity to provide input conveniently online, have opportunities for networking with people who share a love for the Francis Marion NF, hear what is important to other people and to understand the decision space for the revised plan.

After signing in, attendees were asked to indicate where they lived on a regional map and start work on one of the canvases. The map showed that the majority of the attendees live and work near the forest, with a majority of people from the communities of Mount Pleasant, Moncks Corner, Charleston, North Charleston, Goose Creek, Ladson, Awendaw, Germantown and Bethera. The map also showed that a few attendees resided in more distant locations such as St. Matthews, SC. People wrote out the unique and special attributes of the Francis Marion and these comments were gathered up to use later in the workshop.



Forest Service District Ranger, Orlando Sutton, opened the evening and thanked attendees for their interest in future management of the Francis Marion National Forest. Next, attendees were given the opportunity to introduce themselves and state their interest in participating in the workshop. Following this, two presentations were made by Forest Service personnel: Mary

Morrison, Forest Planner, and Alison Koopman, Regional Recreation Manager. Mary presented an overall introduction to the Francis Marion plan revision process; including what is a forest plan, how public input influences the revised plan, what is the next step in the plan revision process, and future opportunities for additional public input. Alison presented an overall introduction to recreation on the Francis Marion, including a summary of existing opportunities, highlights of how recreation is addressed in the 1996 Forest Plan, and brief explanation of the Forest’s goal for sustainable recreation, or in other words, recreation opportunities which are economically, socially and ecologically sustainable. A question and answer period followed each presentation.



After a short break, Darin Dinsmore, president of Crowdbrite, gave a short introduction to the online collaboration tool. In addition, a brief report out was made regarding the input received from canvas 2 which focused on what is special about the Francis Marion National Forest. Then, attendees were asked to sit according to number and participate in discussion focused around canvases 1 and 3 in 6 groups. The canvases served as a means to begin dialogue and capture public

input regarding their desires, needs and values for sustainable recreation and benefits provided by the Forest. Discussions were facilitated by Forest Service “table leaders” and by Darin. Forty-five minutes were spent discussing each canvas. The groups started first with canvas 1 and then canvas 3 with reports of highlights and common themes after each 45 minute session.

The Workshop concluded with an appeal to participants to complete two tasks: 1) invite others to provide online input by visiting <http://www.fs.usda.gov/scnfs/> , and 2) provide input to the fourth canvas which focuses on how their visit to the forest could be better.

Next Steps

The public is encouraged to provide further input through the online Crowdbrite platform. Input is being collected from now until April 11, 2013. Members of the public can either add new ideas or comment on other ideas which



have already been posted. Forest Service staff will continue to monitor input as it is being collected. After April 11, 2013, public input will be reviewed, classified and catalogued. A final summary report will be posted on the Francis Marion website. Workshop attendees will be added to a list serve for future e-mail updates about the Francis Marion plan revision process and will be notified when the final summary report is available for viewing.

Emerging Themes from the Public Workshop

The following themes emerged from the Public Workshop.

Canvas 1 What benefits do you receive from the forest?

People benefit from the Francis Marion because it provides:

- *A diversity of outdoor recreation opportunities, such as hunting, hiking, off-road bicycling, paddling, off-highway vehicle riding and target shooting.*
- *Quiet and serene setting good for physical and mental well-being.*
- *An educational ground to teach children about the importance of forest protection.*
- *A means for livelihood through logging and commercial sale of pine straw.*
- *Natural habitat for a diversity of native and migratory birds and wildlife.*
- *A permanent green space to offset development from surrounding, growing populations.*
- *Beautiful scenery.*
- *Protection for historic sites and places of cultural significance.*

- *Clean air and water.*

Canvas 2 What is unique and special about the forest?

The Francis Marion is special because it provides:

- *A place for solitude and quiet where people can escape their daily life and “get away from it all.”*
- *Unique recreational experiences that are not provided elsewhere, such as hiking, off-road bicycling, paddling/access to waterways, off-highway vehicle riding and target shooting.*
- *Natural habitat for a diversity of birds and wildlife, such as the red cockaded woodpecker and bald eagle.*
- *Protection for rare, natural ecosystems that can be enjoyed, such as longleaf pine stands and cypress bay communities.*
- *A place for children to learn about their heritage, connect with nature and come to appreciate the value of forests.*

Canvas 3 What are your favorite places?

ON THE FRANCIS MARION

- *Buckhall Recreation Area*
- *Awendaw Passage of the Palmetto Trail*
- *Wambaw Creek Canoe Trail*
- *Sewee Shell Ring*
- *Wambaw Cycle Trail System*
- *Twin Ponds Rifle Range*
- *Tuxbury Horse Trails*
-

OFF THE FRANCIS MARION

- *Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge*
- *Bulls Island*
- *Santee Coastal Reserve*
- *St. James Santee Chapel*
- *Hampton Plantation State Park*
- *Bonneau Ferry WMA*

APPENDIX

Canvas 1

TELL US HOW YOU BENEFIT FROM THE FOREST

I **benefit** from the Francis Marion National Forest because...

Have the benefits you receive from the forest been changing over time?

YES, here's why...	NO, here's why...	Not sure??...

I benefit from the Francis Marion National Forest because...

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Canvas 2

TELL US WHAT'S SPECIAL

The Francis Marion National Forest is the **only place** I can go to...

TELL US WHAT YOU LIKE TO SEE

If I could take **one picture** of the Forest it would be of...

The Francis Marion National Forest is the only place I can go to...

If I could take one picture of the Forest it would be of...

U.S. Forest Service  Francis Marion National Forest

Canvas 3

TELL US YOUR FAVORITE PLACES

My favorite places **ON** and **NEAR** the Francis Marion National Forest are...

Legend	Recreation	Transportation
County Boundary	Boating Site	County Road
Francis Marion National Forest	Campground	Interstate Highway
Wilderness Area	Canoe Landing	National Forest System Road
Special Interest Management	Fishing Site	State Highway
Federal Land (Non-USFS)	Group Campground	US Highway or Route
State Land	Motor Camp	Trail
County Land	Interpretive Site (Belt)	Trail
Urban Area	Phone Site	Constructed Features
Hydrography	Natural Range	Classified Office
Lake/Reservoir	Tideland	Lighthouse
River	Wildlife Viewing Site	Lookout Tower
		Other
		Work Center

U.S. Forest Service, Francis Marion National Forest

Canvas 4

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

My **visit** to the Forest would be **better** if...

My **use** of the Forest would be **greater** if...

My visit to the Forest would be better if...

My use of the Forest would be greater if...

U.S. Forest Service Francis Marion National Forest