

## **NC National Forest Planning Workshop Notes**

4/20/06 6-9 PM NCCU (started 6:12)

Ecol199 students present: Gabe, Liz, Kat, Carly, Dahl

Other people present: 21 to begin with (including other presenters). Mostly adults; few students (many students had exams tonight). The room was oversized for the number of people present initially.

**NCCU Students** (6:15-6:22) – 2 presenters talking about opportunities to experience the wonders of the national forest.

Their voice clips wouldn't play – if we had such clips, make sure the appropriate plugins are installed on the computer we're presenting on (Quicktime, etc.)

Other students involved introduced themselves in the back of the room.

28 people in the audience afterward.

**Terry Seyden, USFS** (6:23-7:02) (another person with him in the audience)

NC NFs: T&E species – 34

Sensitive species – 362

Miles of FS roads – 2570

Trails – 1734

Perennial streams – 5742

Developed rec sites – 190 (close to 10 mil visitors to these forests in NC)

Wayah Ranger District – Franklin NC (Macon Co) – Wilson Lick Ranger Station (1913) – first ranger station in the region.

Nantahala River – one raft every 17 seconds on a slow day, according to Terry.

Highlands Ranger District, Highlands NC – 93 inches annual precip – one of wettest areas in the lower US.

Timber harvest – not as much clearcutting.

Over half of hemlocks being lost in the mountain NFs b/c of the hemlock woolly adelgid.

NF makes up 2/3 of the Blue Ridge Parkway scenery.

Bill Lees – nature photographer. Lots of beautiful mountain photos.

Planning: First plan signed 1986 (Uwh first forest to use this new plan)

Many of the slides in the planning section were clicked through so fast we couldn't read any of them.

He got 400-500 emails a day against the land sale – someone had given people his email address for comment. People in the audience were amazed. He individually forwarded all the emails to Washington.

October 2006 – publish proposed plan for 90 day comment period.

14 years to produce a 10-year plan in the past. This time, collaborative planning process to make things faster.

**Ben Prater, SABP** (7:03-7:31) – very clear and dynamic speaker. [www.sabp.net](http://www.sabp.net); [ben@sabp.net](mailto:ben@sabp.net)

SABP – regional non-profit for empowering citizens to appreciate, defend, and restore the native SE biodiversity. Do this through science, law, and public education. Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition – did map of SA region, urban areas (red), NFs (green), and national parks (purple).

Cherokee NF in TN – NW of Pisgah NF and W of Nantahala NF.

4 NFs: 1,248,330 acres. Home to 841 rare, sensitive, or T&E species.

NC as a whole: 3000 sp of plants, ~150 tree species (more than all of Europe combined).

From Appalachian side of the state: Population increased by 28% (1.2 million people) from 1970-1990.

The pop in this area is projected to increase another 12.3% in the next 5 years.

IR photograph showing the amount of development in the eastern US shown.

Aerial photo of logging project – many trees left over have died due to the stress of sediment and nutrient runoff from the site.

Roads – arson, illegal use, spur trails, habitat fragmentation, long-term effects are side effects of these.

Endangered Species Act passed in 1973, but 34 known species have become extinct over the past 10 years. This means the US alone loses more than 3 species a year. Extinctions due to small populations or limited habitat.

Thousands of species that are rare and only found in the state. Hundreds of species are in decline and in need of protection.

Mountain mammals – flying squirrel that only lives in higher-elevation spruce-fir forests, black bears, bats.

Uwh – more hunters per acre there than anywhere else – most hunted area for deer.

Red wolf – being bred out by coyotes.

Birds – overwinter in S Am and other equatorial areas – neotropical migrants pass through the area (the mountains). Cerulean warbler one of them – indigo bunting and rough grouse too. Rough grouse dependent on openings/grassy forb areas – naturally created when trees get older and die to create gaps, but logging also instantly creates such habitat.

Bog turtle – found only in upper elevation mountain bogs – quite rare habitats that are isolated.

### **Break – 7:31-7:50**

16 people after break – 2 were previous presenters and another was the coordinator.

### **Hugh Irwin (7:50-8:17)**

'The Appalachians are a forest upon a high rolling floor, and in all the continent, in all the world I believe, there is no such hardwood and deciduous forest as this...nothing bleak, nothing eroded, nothing arid...everywhere the murmur of leaves, the trickling or rushing of water.' – Andre Michaux, French explorer and botanist 1746-1802.

Our mountains are within a day's drive of 110 million people.

Continuously vegetated over 65 million years (since last mass extinction) – many areas were glaciated or covered with oceans and seas since then.

Western NC: 260,000 areas NP, 66,845 areas NF wilderness, 150,066 areas inventoried roadless (that could qualify for wilderness designation), 301,365 acres Mountain Treasure areas.

Old Growth forests (200-300 years old) – at least 80,000 acres. Some in Boone area (Grandfather Mtn-Linville Gorge area)

SBR and CSRV biological sites – in NC, TN, surrounding states – places with high biodiversity. Great Smokies were classified as SBR.

Black Mountain public lands – NE Asheville, W of Marion, E of Mars Hill. Conservation easements helped more of this area get added to the public lands functionally.

Uwharrie – has more cultural sites than any other NF in the NF system.

SAFC conservation areas – a large Appalachian-area conservation network in several states.

Unicoi Mtns – a mile or two from the Smokies; one of the least fragmented conservation areas in NC (the Smokies are also).

Mackie Mtn area (Black Mountain area) – 5,000 acres of old growth forest near Asheville.

Bald Mtns landsc conservation area – allows black bears to migrate up and down the Appalachian chain.

Lots of roadless areas – largest inventoried roadless region in a big area.

Most of the Nantahala tracts for sale are in the Little Tennessee watershed – NW, N, NE, and E of Franklin, NC. However, many groups are trying to protect more lands here and add them to conservation areas.

Pisgah NF – contains the largest tract for sale in NC. 6 old-growth sites included in the parcels for sale.

Also, the oldest sugar maple found in western NC is in one of these tracts for sale.

Burke and Caldwell Counties (headwaters of the Catawba river) – want to increase the water quality there, but the tract proposed for sale is in the headwaters region. Another tract is adjacent to Johns river, a tributary to the Catawba.

### **UNC Ecology – 8:18 to 8:41 (exactly 23 minutes again!)**

22 people present to hear our talk (maybe 7 students). I took lots of photos during the talk.