

State of Vermont
Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation

1229 Portland Street, Suite 201 [phone] 802-751-0110
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819-2099 [fax] 802-748-6687
www.vtfpr.org [tdd] 802-253-0191

Agency of Natural Resources

[direct line] 802-535-8410
louis.bushey@state.vt.us

To: Mike Fraysier, ANR Lands Director
From: Louis Bushey, Stewardship Forester
Date : January 6, 2015
Subject: Long Range Management Plan Amendment for Willoughby State Forest

The current Long Range Management Plan for Willoughby State Forest was developed in 2004 by the St. Johnsbury District Stewardship Team. It has recently become known that one of management strategies in the plan has created some unintended consequences. The section of the plan in question begins on page 170. This section of the plan attempts to mitigate the visual impacts of certain management activities for “sensitivity zones” throughout the forest.

The current plan reads as follows:

Sensitivity Zone H-1: This zone includes a four hundred (400) foot corridor along all public highways and Class A and Class B Forest Roads.

Timber Sales

- Follow timber management strategies as outlined in Section IV of this plan “Management Strategies and Actions”. **Exception:** Single-tree selection will be employed in this zone with a residual basal area goal of 80 square feet per acre. Openings in the forest canopy will not exceed **1/50 acre**.¹
- No tops of felled trees will be left within 100 feet of public highways or Class A and Class B Forest Roads.
- Tops of felled trees will be **topped**² to within two feet of the ground within 200 feet of public highways and Class A and Class B Forest Roads.

Landings

- **Landings will be excluded from this zone.**³

Forest Roads

- Entry/exit points will be visually screened and kept to a minimal width.
- The number of entry/exit points will be kept to a minimum.
- Road layout and design will minimize site distance.
- Entry/exit points may be barricaded using natural materials on site after the management activity has been completed.
- All areas of exposed soil within 100 feet of entry/exit points will be seeded and mulched upon completion of the management activity.

Within this section of the plan there are three items that we are proposing be changed. These changes are highlighted and identified with superscripts that correspond to the list below.

1. 1/50 of an acre is in many instances less than a single tree (33 ft diameter circle). We are proposing that be changed to 1/10 of an acre to allow for openings that are roughly one tree length (75 ft) in diameter. This would allow for harvesting in all diameter classes while still maintaining a relatively intact canopy along the access roads. We are not proposing to reduce the 80 square feet of basal area goal with this change.
2. This is an error and should be “lopped”.
3. This restriction will require that new road be constructed into areas for the sole purpose of moving log landings away from the road. The topography in some locations makes this restriction extremely difficult to accommodate or impossible. I am suggesting that this be changed to read:

Log landings will be located in a manner that reduces the aesthetic impact of the opening. All landings will be ¼ acre in size or smaller and to the greatest extent possible native vegetation or natural features will be utilized to screen openings from the road. All bare soil will be seeded and mulch following harvesting operations.

Along roads with low traffic volumes or where alternative routes are available the existing road may be used to land wood.