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## habitat projects Joint ENTS project

Posted by dbhg...@comcast.net - 2010/02/18 07:18

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ENTS, Last year a project was launched by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) here in Massachusetts called Forest Futures. It was to be a visionary undertaking involving forest experts and stakeholders who would come together and develop a common vision for the future of our forests, recommend improvements to existing systems, regulations, and practices, and present the results to the Commissioner of DCR. The period from now until February 22nd has been established for public input. I am getting ready to review the draft report released by The Steering Committee (TSC). Many important issues are on the table, some highly contentious. I would appreciate help from my fellow and lady Ents. Your forest experience runs wide and deep. Most of the issues we would be discussing have regional or national relevance. While ENTS is not a political or lobbying organization, it is a brain trust and discussions about issues, as opposed to personalities, affecting our forests are always appropriate. For example, one of the recommendations in the TSC draft report is to create more early successional habitat (loosely defined) for certain animal species such as the New England cottontail. Locally, early successional habitat is a loaded issue since the silvicultural method being used to create the habitat is clear-cutting. This has devolved into two issues: early successional habitat - more needed or not needed, and the use of clear-cutting to create the habitat. So far clear-cutting is occurring on a sufficiently large scale as to cause concern and opposition from part of the public. Another issue addressed in the draft report is the potential use of public forests for biomass projects. A third issue is renewal of FSC for state forests. My objective is to provide the Commissioner of DCR with an independent assessment of the report and its recommendations. He will be receptive to the analysis and comments. However, for me, the review is a major undertaking. That is why I am asking for help. Beginning tomorrow, I will present a topic from the draft report, and ask for input from any Ent who is willing to share his/her thoughts. Bob

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Posted by Edward Frank - 2010/02/18 07:18

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ENTS, For those of you who want to look over the actual document, here is where it can be found and some other links about the document

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Posted by Gaines McMartin - 2010/02/18 07:18

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ENTS: I have done a very quick scan/read through this document. My first impression is very positive. I appreciate the effort that went into developing this, and this is the kind of effort I would like to see more of around the country. I will look forward to discussions of specific issues, some of which may turn up issues that need some thorough analysis. But on first read, and keeping in mind many of the concerns I have long had about the stewardship of our forests, my impression is very positive. And, one of the positive things about this draft report is the opportunity for public input. I look forward to our discussions and hope that we can have some positive impact.

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Posted by gbeluzo - 2010/02/18 07:18

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