



File Code: 1950

Date: April 15, 2008

Dear Forest Neighbor:

The Nantahala Ranger District is conducting a multi-resource analysis of a proposed project, called the "Dylan" project, in the southwestern part of Macon County, North Carolina. This project focuses on vegetative management activities designed to restore and maintain a healthy forest ecosystem. The project may include tree harvesting through commercial timber sale, road reconstruction, site preparation for forest regeneration, timber stand improvements, and wildlife habitat improvement activities. The purpose of this letter is to invite you to comment on this proposed project and help identify issues, concerns, or opportunities associated with the project. Your comments could result in the development of new or modified alternatives, the identification of potential effects from a proposed action, or mitigation measures.

The Dylan Project Scoping Record, associated maps, and a list of proposed actions can be accessed at the following internet address: <http://www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc>. If you wish to receive a hard copy (paper) version of these materials or if you have any questions regarding the project, please contact Joan Brown, Interdisciplinary Team Leader, at the Nantahala Ranger District, 90 Sloan Road, Franklin, NC 28734 (telephone: 828-524-6441).

We ask that you provide comments on the proposed actions by May 30, 2008 to Joan Brown at the above address or via email (comments-southern-north-carolina-nantahala-wayah@fs.fed.us). All responses received (including names and addresses) will become part of the public file. This information will be made available to the public upon request.

Sincerely,

/s/Michael L. Wilkins
MICHAEL L. WILKINS
District Ranger



DYLAN PROJECT SCOPING RECORD
APRIL 2008

The Nantahala Ranger District is conducting an interdisciplinary analysis of a proposed project, called the “Dylan Project”, in the southwestern part of Macon County.

INTRODUCTION:

This project will include Compartments 88, 125, 126, 150, 151, and 152, comprising approximately 6,855 acres. Proposed management activities may include tree harvesting through commercial timber sale, road reconstruction, site preparation for forest regeneration, timber stand improvements, prescribed burning, and wildlife habitat improvements in Compartments 88, 125, 126, and 152.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION:

The proposal is designed to improve or maintain the health of the forest ecosystem through a variety of vegetative management activities. The project would implement direction set forth in the Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) 1986-2000 for the Nantahala/Pisgah National Forests (USDA, March 1987) as amended in 1994, in a manner which moves the existing natural resources toward desired future conditions.

EXISTING CONDITION:

Forest types in the compartments are predominantly upland and cove hardwoods, with some mixed oak-yellow pine stands, and white pine-upland hardwood stands.

Management Areas (MAs) in the compartments include MAs 2A, 3B, 4C, 4D, 5, and 14. Embedded within these is management area 18 (riparian areas around perennial water bodies).

The most recent past harvest entries into the compartments include the Jones Creek, Mulberry, Hannah Mountain Salvage, and Poplar Cove Salvage timber sales, with closing dates ranging from 1994-2000. All regenerated stands have been successfully reforested. Currently there are 38 acres of early successional habitat (stands aged 0-10 years) in the compartments. Access is provided by several state and Forest Service (FS) roads.

DESIRED FUTURE CONDITION:

Complete descriptions of desired conditions for each management area are contained in the LRMP. A brief summary of desired conditions for the management areas contained in the compartments is as follows:

MA 2A: Managed for open roads through a scenic forest.

MA 3B: A regulated forest which provides for a sustainable supply of timber and for the habitat needs of wildlife species (particularly wild turkey) which benefit from a managed forest with limited motorized access (closed roads).

MA 4C: Limited motorized access (closed roads), with an emphasis on visually pleasing scenery and habitats for wildlife requiring older forests. This land is not classified as suitable for timber management during the current LRMP planning period.

MA 4D: Limited motorized access (closed roads), with an emphasis on visually pleasing scenery and habitats for wildlife requiring older forests, particularly for black bear. This land is classified as suitable for timber management during the current planning period; early successional habitat is provided for wildlife species that require it.

MA 5: Emphasizes large backcountry areas where there is little evidence of humans or activities other than recreational use. An unroaded forest environment and natural-appearing forests with large old trees are desirable.

MA 14: Appalachian National Scenic Trail and its foreground zone, as mapped through the Visual Management System, characterized by a predominantly natural-appearing environment. This land is not classified as suitable for timber management during the current LRMP planning period.

MA 18: Predominantly undisturbed riparian areas (adjacent to streams) with conditions strongly influenced by the accumulation of woody materials from mature trees, but with a diverse assemblage of species and stand structures.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

The project will be designed to accomplish the following objectives:

- 1) Provide for a range of early successional habitat through timber regeneration harvesting and wildlife brushy openings, while producing a minimum of 1 million board feet (MMBF) of sawtimber for the local economy;
- 2) Maintain and/or enhance biological diversity by protecting population viability of rare species which occur in the compartments, by reproducing existing forest species, especially oaks for hard mast production, and yellow pines to perpetuate mixed pine-hardwood or hardwood-pine communities;
- 3) Create new grass/forb openings and create/enhance additional wildlife habitat where practical;
- 4) Improve habitat for the golden winged warbler where possible;
- 5) Conduct forest management activities in order to provide for improvement and/or restoration of existing forest stands within the area.

The project activities would occur in MAs 2A, 3B, and 4D. Road reconstruction, if necessary, may need to cross through other management areas, such as at stream crossings (MA 18).

PROPOSED ACTION:

This scoping record includes maps and a spreadsheet of the proposed actions for this project. This “Proposed Action” and alternatives analyses will be documented in the project Environmental Assessment (EA), to be developed later in 2008.

ISSUES:

The proposed action and alternatives will be analyzed for effects on the following issues and/or resources:

- 1) Soil and water quality
- 2) Air quality
- 3) Aquatic resources
- 4) Botanical resources
- 5) Wildlife resources
- 6) Silvicultural systems and vegetation management
- 7) Heritage resources
- 8) Recreation resources
- 9) Scenery
- 10) Road management
- 11) Social and economic considerations

PLANNING TEAM DESIGNATION:

District Ranger Michael Wilkins is the responsible official who will decide on a course of action based on the alternatives and analyses presented by the interdisciplinary planning team. The team will consist of:

Joan Brown, Nantahala RD Silviculturist (Team leader)
Doreen Miller, Nantahala NF Wildlife Biologist
Tim Southard, Nantahala RD Timber Management Assistant
Jason Farmer, Nantahala NF Fisheries Biologist
Duke Rankin, Nantahala NF Botanist
Mike Bell, Nantahala RD Forestry Technician

Specialist input will be obtained from Erik Crews - NFsNC Landscape Architect, and others as needed.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION:

The scoping record is posted on the NFsNC web page, and a notice of this scoping record will be sent to interested parties, planning team members/consultants, and Forest Supervisor’s Office staff. Their comments will be used to identify other issues and further shape the

environmental analyses to be conducted. Planning information on this project will be reported in NFsNC Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA, distributed by the Forest Supervisor's Office, Asheville, NC).

The scoping record with accompanying maps and spreadsheet is posted at <http://www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc>. If you would like hard copies, please notify Joan Brown at the Nantahala Ranger District office, 828-524-6441. Please provide your comments by the close of business on May 30, 2008.

Dylan Project**List of Proposed Actions****Alternative C (Proposed)**

<u>Comp-Stand</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Treatment</u>
88-15	17	Thinning
88-5	24	2 Age
125-15	19	Thinning
125-22	64	Thinning
125-46	18	2 Age
125-48	10	2 Age
125-49	18	Thinning
125-50	3	Thinning
125-51	18	Thinning
126-7	25	2 Age
126-8	9	Slash, Burn, Plant
126-20	51	Thinning
126-45	7	2 Age
126-46	5	2 Age
126-47	25	2 Age
152-17	19	Slash, Burn, Plant
152-22	22	Thinning
152-32	6	Thinning
152-33	11	2 Age
152-38	14	2 Age
152-39	4	2 Age
Total	389	
2 Age:	151	
Thinning:	218	
Slash, B, Pl.:	28	

Wildlife Treatments

Rehab existing wildlife openings

Slash 100-feet around existing wildlife openings

Construct 15 ponds on existing landings

Roadside spraying for exotic invasives
Herbicide treatment on skid trails 3-5 years postharvest

Roads

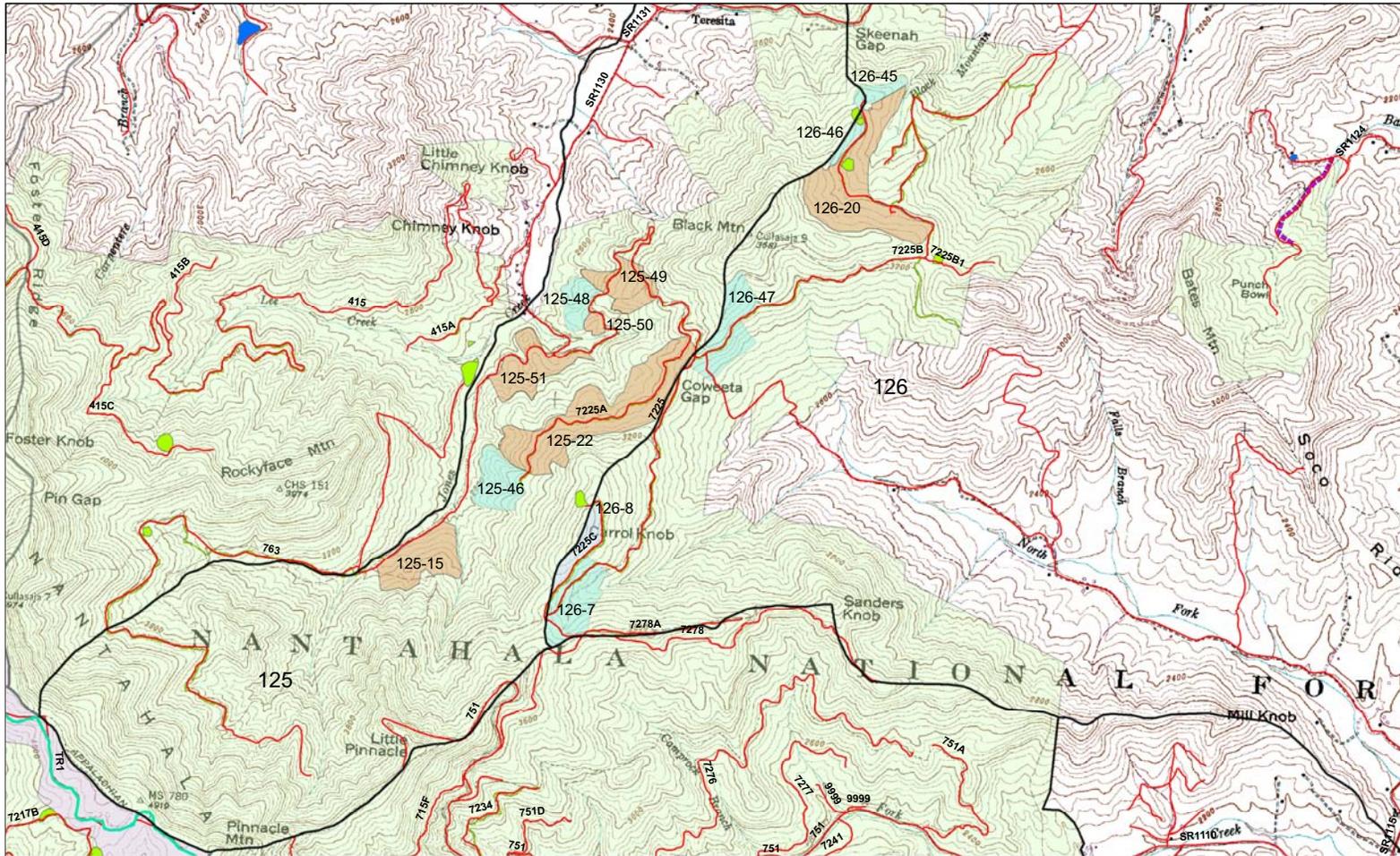
Constr. 0 mi.
Reconst. 1.0 mi.

**Watershed
Rehab.**
0.5 mile

Silv. Trtmts.

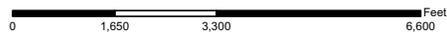
Oak Preharv.
Crop Tree Rel.
Preharv. Vine
Control
Postharv. Vine
Control

DYLAN PROJECT PROPOSED ACTIONS NORTH SIDE

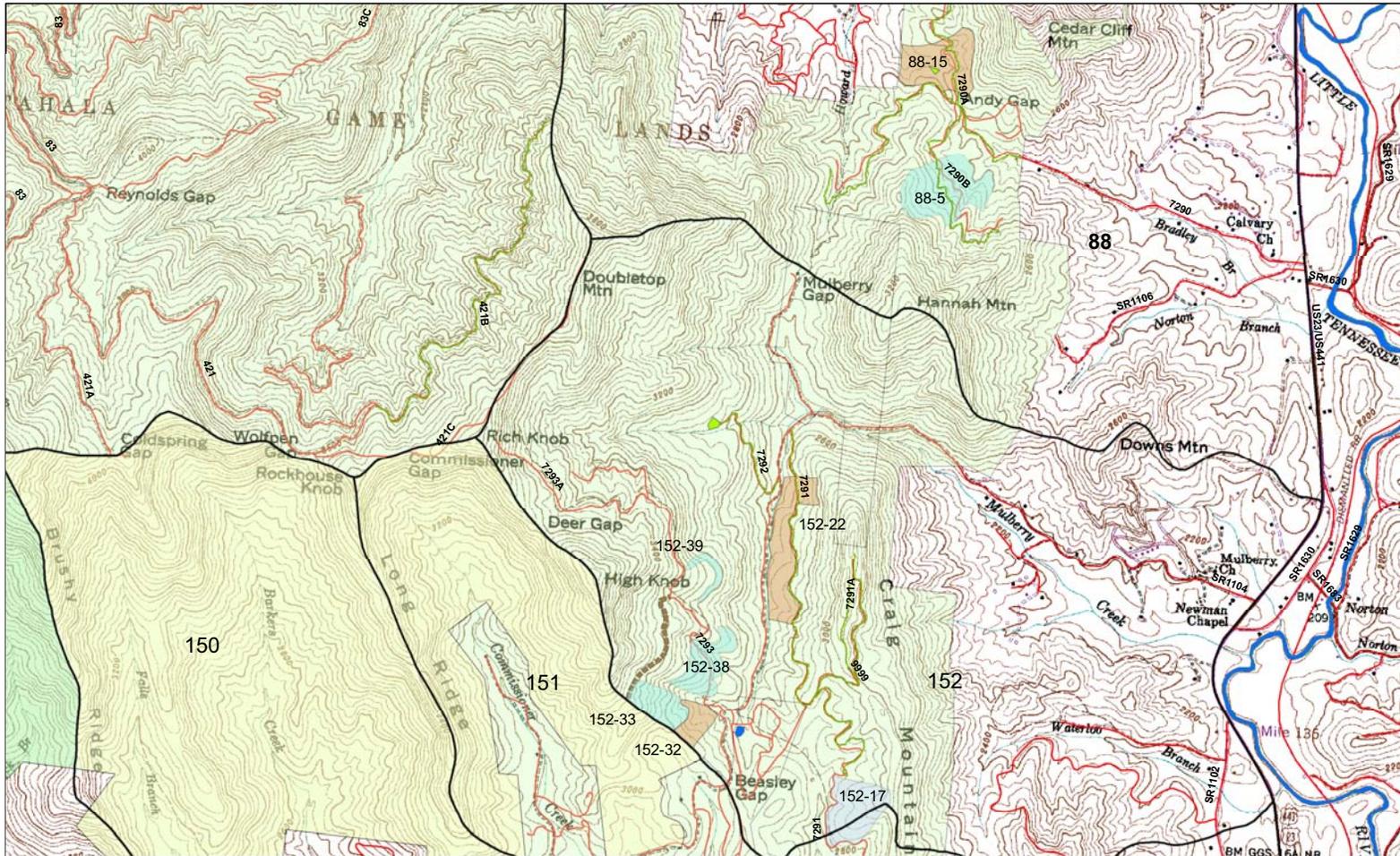


Legend

- Water
- Compartment
- Appalachian Trail
- Existing Road
- Wildlife Road
- Wildlife Opening
- Appalachian Trail Corridor
- Watershed Rehab
- Slash, Burn, Plant Yellow Pine
- Thinning
- Nat. Forest/Private Land
- Two Age Regeneration



DYLAN PROJECT PROPOSED ACTIONS SOUTH SIDE



Legend

- Water
- Compartment
- Wildlife Road
- Wildlife Opening
- Wilderness
- Management Area 5
- Slash, Burn, Plant Yellow Pine
- Thinning
- Nat. Forest/Private Land
- Two Age Regeneration
- Road Reconstruction
- Existing Road

