

HSF Virtual Public Meeting-20250826_183740-Meeting Recording

August 26, 2025, 2:37AM

1h 28m 14s

● **Preston, Geneva S (DNR)** started transcription



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 0:03

Question or comment?



Keirn, Fabian J 0:06

Yeah, this is Fabian Kearns here with the BIA with the regional forester. I just wanted to make a note that I clicked on your link for that PDF and when it opened up to a OneDrive, I was unable to open it or access it.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 0:06

Already.



Keirn, Fabian J 0:26

So it's letting you just let you know.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 0:26

Oh.

Interesting. OK.

Thank you.

Let's see. Ashley, do you have access to that through the e-mail that I shared with you last week?



List, Ashley R (DNR) 0:35

Yeah.

I will see if I can share that another way.

I'll work on that, Fabian.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 0:46

OK.

Thanks. Thanks Fabian and.



Dobell, Trevor (DNR) 0:47

I.

I tested it and it does lead to OneDrive.

It doesn't work for me either.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 0:52

OK.

Well, we will do our best to get you all access to that.

Little information packet as soon as possible.

While folks are working on that, I will pull up.

Some information.

That I put together.

For this meeting. So.

Hopefully everyone is expecting to be in a public meeting for the scoping process of the Haines State Forest Resource Management Area Management Plan amendment.

Umm.

Sorry, I'm having a hard time making my presentation advance. OK, so we went through some introductions briefly.

When we were in person yesterday, we had the three names that you see on this slide and then this evening we're fortunate to have some insight from additional DOF staff.

But.

I'm.

Thinking with this slide, I'd like to share with you all sort of the the process thus far and and how we find ourselves at this meeting today, so the revision of this management plan began in May of 2024.

We released public notice that the plan would be revised.

We held an introductory meeting in the spring and throughout the summer encouraged members of the public to interact with.

Online surveys and an interactive map that was available on our project website.

So folks were using that over the summer, those resources and in October of last year.

We held sort of like a review meeting to go over the responses that were submitted to those surveys and we were thinking at that time that we would move forward to begin developing our updated policy for the management plan. So as we started on that process.

We determined that.

With our one of our primary goals in the revision to be adding language to allow carbon offset projects within the state forest, we might need to make.

Additional changes that we hadn't originally.

Presented to the public as part of this amendment, and so in July of this year, this past summer, we published a public notice announcement.

That specified.

That we would be revising policy to allow timber harvest in areas where it had previously been prohibited and that that was different.

Policy change than had originally been presented and so we decided to resume that scoping period and allow an extended opportunity for the public to provide input in this scoping period before moving on to agency review.

So this meeting is part of that extended scoping period.

It's an opportunity for the public to have some transparency from the division of forestry about.

The.

The nature of this amendment and.

The intended management moving forward that the division of forestry thinks will be effective for the goals that we're working towards.

And moving forward from this.

We are hoping to release a updated draft plan for public review this winter.

A public review period will last at least 30 days.

There will be additional public meetings during that time.

And our goal is to complete that public review and hopefully have an updated draft submitted to the DNR Commissioner's Office before May of 2026.

So our goals this evening are to summarize the timeline that we're thinking we'll be working with for the remainder of this plan amendment.

To identify the avenues that you all as members of the public have for communicating with the division and the planning team during this process and hopefully the majority of our time this evening can go towards.

An opportunity for folks to ask questions and.

Open up for some discussion with the planning team.

So this is sort of like a generic diagram of the planning process.

For a forest management plan, I think.

The piece that I really hope to emphasize with sharing this diagram with everyone is just to illustrate that from the perspective of.

A member of the public, it might seem like our process is kind of sporadic because we have these little blips of communication where we release a public notice, or we host a public meeting and they might seem disparate or random. But underneath the surface.

You know, below the Gray line. This is the process on the side of the division of forestry and that it's sort of this.

Continuous.

Flow of development from.

Our local forester using and reviewing this plan for the last three decades and making notes about what's been working for him and what hasn't in managing the forest.

To the scoping period where we're requesting input from the public, and during that time DOF staff is also reviewing the plan, reading through adding notes and suggesting recommendations.

And we are moving towards the close of this scoping period and preliminary internal review.

And again, hopefully sometime this winter we'll find ourselves in the public review period where the updated draft is released for members of the public to submit comments or recommendations

And after that comments are consolidated and the division will release responses to those comments.

And if all goes accordingly, that would lead us to submitting the draft for approval. So.

In this meeting, I really wanna emphasize the opportunities that members of the public have to participate in this process.

We have kind of two phases that that we're inviting the public to participate in. Right now, we are in the scoping period and we're nearing the end of the scoping period.

But the avenues that members of the public have to contribute to the scoping period.

Include the surveys on our website.

An interactive map that you can add information to at our website.

Or.

Like just written thoughts or ideas through e-mail, through physical mail.

A phone call to me at my phone number will be on the last slide in this presentation, or if you're a local here in Haines, you can always stop by the office and have a chat with Greg.

After the Public Review Draft is released, you might notice that this list of options for communicating with the division looks very, very similar.

And there's a note here that your information about that release of the draft will be available through the public notice system online.

So.

We may be noticing that these two lists have a lot of overlap and so might be important to identify how these two phases are different.

The main difference is that in the scoping period, this is a preliminary measure. These are considerations for DOF as we are developing the updated plan content. Once the public Review Draft is released.

Those comments are a response to the text that DOF is proposing to adopt.

So that text has not been released yet, but once it is,

the comments that are submitted during the public review period would be a response to that. Those comments that are relevant to the plan and the plan content will be summarized and the division will publish a response to the comments that are submitted during the public review period.

That's called an issue response summary.

That's one of the main differences between these two phases of the public participation.

So that's all the information that I wanted to share and kind of like present and speak on for this. I'd like for the rest of our time together to just be an opportunity for folks to ask questions and share information.

So I'll go ahead and open the floor for that.

That if one of our DOF staff can help me keep an eye on the the chat or raised hands while I figure out how to keep the information on the slide visible and see controls in the teams window, that would be a huge help.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 11:38

OK.

Thank you.



List, Ashley R (DNR) 11:59

And I see we have a raised hand here from Avey.

So I'll go ahead and.

Enable that.

And you should be able to speak now.



Avey W Menard 12:13

All right.

Thanks for everyone from the departments who's here helping and for the back end tech support.

Much appreciated.

Hi, I'm Avey Menard.

I'm on yesterday's meeting and didn't get a chance to ask.

To just hear from DOF and DNR reps to get a little more detail about the proposal to or even the connection between the carbon offset program in the Haines State.

Forest and opening up the forest in terms of reclassifying the whole forest for timber harvest.

So yeah, I would just love to hear more about what that management intent is, what went into that decision, if that's definitely going to be in the plan amendment and what that will mean in terms of management going forward of the Haines State Forest.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 13:26

So.

Your question about.

Classification of the land.

It's a little bit.

Challenging to.

To address it's not a change in classification. So the way that.

The Haines State Forest is managed, we have 4 land classifications.

That a parcel might fall into. And that would be forest lands, resource management, lands, wildlife, habitat lands or public recreation lands.

And those are sort of legal and regulatory tools that the state of Alaska uses to describe. I get the the language and regulation is the highest and best use of a piece of land, but my interpretation of it is more that it's that's language that's used to describe. The the features on a landscape or the values on the landscape that are prominent. So the decision to update our policy to allow timber harvest on those lands. It would not be a reclassification. They would still retain the same classification name. Wildlife habitat will remain wildlife habitat because those are the prominent resources on that site. The change would be that the name wildlife habitat doesn't automatically eliminate the possibility for forest management to occur on that site, which might look like a timber harvest, or it might look like a carbon offset project. Or it might look like a forest health treatment or a fire like a fuels mitigation treatment.

So the question is not so much one of changing the classification or ignoring the values and uses that are present on the landscape.

But the the question is more of how to accommodate multiple uses on these sites. With the different primary classification use that's that's identified through that classification name.

So the goal in in updating the policy is to to find a way that we can accommodate both wildlife habitat and timber harvest or both, public recreation and timber harvest does that address some of some part of your question?

 **Avey W Menard** 16:39

Yeah it does.

Although I would just like to know if the overall effect is that timber harvest would be available and pursued in every unit of the forest in ways that would not have been allowed under the previous management plan.

 **Preston, Geneva S (DNR)** 17:00

Greg Palmeri, do you want to speak to that a little bit?

 **Palmieri, Greg J (DNR)** 17:07

Yes, the answer is simply yes. That is correct.

Timber Harvest could now be designed and planned for in all units as they're classified for multiple use.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 17:35

I see another.
Raised hand.



List, Ashley R (DNR) 17:40

Yeah. So, Geneva, I was thinking the second part of that question was some questions about the how it works with the carbon projects.



List, Ashley R (DNR) 17:53

And so I was thinking this might be a good time for Trevor Fulton to explain a little bit more about that.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 18:03

Of course.
Thank you.



Fulton, Trevor M (DNR) 18:08

Sure, Ashley. Again, this is Trevor Fulton, Carbon offset program manager.

You know from the carbon offset program standpoint?

The classification of forestry and the expansion of that classification to all units, like Greg pointed out.

You know, really the definition of forest classified lands is is that these are going to be lands whose primary.

Value is the production utilization and sustained yield management of forest resources, so.

In terms of the carbon offset program, what that means is that also opens up those same areas for a carbon offset program development. I mean in in theory, carbon offset projects can be developed on any classified lands, but there's more likely to be depending on the type of.

Project and generally what we're talking about is improved forest management projects.

Which is a specific type of carbon offset.

Project where the goal is to increase carbon stocking on forested lands year over year, essentially.

So forestry classification lessens the chance of there being a incompatible secondary use or other use of that.

Particular parcel of land?

Other than that, I I I wouldn't have.

I wouldn't be able to speak much to the.

You know the the decision process.

Behind expanding those areas, I I can say that it does expand the availability or more or less.

Improved availability for carbon offset projects in those areas.

I hope that answers your question.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 20:10

I do just want to chime in and clarify that.

We're expanding the opportunity to harvest timber, but we are not expanding the acreage of land that's classified forest. The classifications as they currently are will not be changed in this plan amendment.

Let's see. Do I see a hand raised?

By Nick, I'll try to give you access to your microphone.



List, Ashley R (DNR) 20:49

And it looks like they should have access to their microphone now.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 20:53

OK.



Nick Szatkowski 21:07

OK. Can you hear me now?



List, Ashley R (DNR) 21:07

And.



Nick Szatkowski 21:08

Did that work?

 **List, Ashley R (DNR)** 21:09

Yes.

 **Preston, Geneva S (DNR)** 21:09

Yes.

 **Nick Szatkowski** 21:11

OK.

Yeah. So my name is Nick Szatkowski.

I live adjacent to Haines State Forest. Lands have have lived there for 25 years.

I also work in tribal government and.

I just want to make it clear that.

I am dismayed deeply by the direction that you're proposing, and I think it's it's easy to see that it looks like you're playing a shell game.

It looks like you're going to first say suddenly all the Haines State Forest is available for timber.

So that you can then say, oh, well, we're we won't log these areas that you wouldn't have logged anyway.

And then make it seem that you're offsetting that and qualify for carbon credits.

And I think that's disingenuous.

I think that the highest and best use of this forest lands includes many, many other things that are not timber related, and I think it's well past the time that the management for the Haines State Forest.

Starts recognizing this basic fact, highest and best use is not.

Chopping down mature forests.

For export or for whatever, use whatever.

The use is obviously lots of people.

In the.

In the Chilkat valley, use harvested wood for a variety of you know for firewood or for building or other things.

Some amount you know is sold for lumber locally.

But we don't have any need to export it to Asia or elsewhere.

The economic return on that kind of activity is pathetically low.

And to talk about cutting down.

In many cases, old growth forest in many cases, trees that are hundreds of years old.

And have them exported to be made into toilet paper or what?

Ever. It's really deeply offensive and it's so, so frustrating.

To see this kind of management focus.

Still pushing forward.

Where the the sole beneficiaries really are just the the small number of people who make a business out of cutting those trees down.

Or a couple. You know, again one or two people who have operated a local mill. If we were just talking about the amount of logging that is done by the local operators currently in in the Chilkat Valley and the couple of small scale saw mills that they feed.

It would be a.

It would be a very different conversation, but unfortunately the Haines State Forest keeps putting forward these large scale clear cuts with the intention of export like Chilkat Ridge or baby Brown. And it's overwhelmingly inappropriate in that landscape that that forest connectivity in that region.

Is already naturally highly fragmented because of water bodies.

Obviously the river systems, lakes, wetlands and then, you know also open river flats.

And so that's the natural condition already.

Now luckily it's not so fragmented that it's inhospitable or unusable for those species that do require some degree of forest connectivity, like, say, martens, flying squirrels, forest owls, things like that.

That are critical in maintaining the overall health.

Of the forest ecosystem.

I I can't.

It's it's so hard to to to see year after year.

No. No forest ecologist on staff.

No forest biologist on staff nobody. There's no.

There's no identification of indicator species that guarantee the forest health.

And no recognition of the role that mycorrhizal fungi play in the health of the forest of the way trees grow.

Currently on that very forest.

It's it's mind boggling. Honestly, based on existing science that's already out there.

That's known.

It's been known for decades.

I'd like to share with you a quote by a forest scientist that.

Is from 1997, so talking approximately 30 years ago.

Talking about is referring to a study.

Done by Reece Forest researcher who was identifying in their research in the field how mycorrhizal fungi are able to transfer carbon between different species of trees.

And so he's saying that the study is showing unequivocally that considerable amounts of carbon, the energy currency of all ecosystems, can flow through the hyphae of shared fungal symbios from tree to tree.

Indeed, from species to species in a temperate forest, because forests cover much of the land surface in the northern hemisphere, where they provide the main sink for atmospheric CO₂ an understanding of these aspects of their carbon economy is essential.

That's almost 30 years ago.

I remember going on a walk that our local forester put together and invited local media and residents to go out on.

I asked him, what did he know about?

Fungus and local fungal species in the Haines State Forest, he said.

Well, I've seen armillaria, so I know that's fungus, so that must be a good sign.

Armillaria introduced.

By human intestinal activity, it's actually it kills trees.

It's exactly the kind of species that other mycorrhizal fungi can actually.

Healthy armillaria spreads and kills trees.

But that's the degree of sophistication, of understanding around these issues that are critical to how forests actually do grow.

So I think it's time to put the brakes on any kind of continued clear cutting or large scale forest harvest at this point and start actually studying.

The way the forest actually works.

Another side to this is that.

There's current science that I don't think the Haines State Forest management is up to date with.

There's also ancient science that also is not being paid attention to.

I'm at a actually a conference currently with tribal governments and overwhelmingly the opinion that's expressed over and over again from the traditional knowledge is that.

Intact forests.

Ancient forests are what keep the health of the entire landscape.

That's what maintains the health of the salmon.

Populations and it's dangerous. Dangerous for landslides. It's dangerous for for salmon habitat.

To to take so much of the forest landscape away, large scale, clear cuts, clear cuts across the landscape.

Already, the Kelsaw River drainage has been harvested to the point that it really, seriously degraded the king salmon habitat. There basically eliminated it.

To push any further with it so you know you can respond if you want to to my comments, but obviously.

You can see I'm not.

I'm not asking for a a question that I expect you to resolve for me, but if you want to respond to to my thoughts about this, of course, you're welcome to.

I guess that's all I wanna share for now.

Thanks for listening.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 29:44

Thank you for sharing.

I could.

I can hear in your voice that you have a lot of passion around this this topic.

One thing that I do want to clarify.

Specifically, in the context of this management plan and the management plan amendment is that this is intended to be a very long term guiding document and the management plan itself does not.

Propose or approve.

Any specific decisions it it doesn't.

Propose or approve any specific timber harvest.

And that any proposed management activity on the forest will will be.

Developed in a way that includes a series of opportunities for public input and review.

I'd also like to say that.

That this scoping period and the upcoming review period for this management plan amendment.

Is an invitation to the public to help the division.

To help the division, imagine what it might look like to accommodate the multiple

uses.

And the many many values that that the communities of Hanes and the Chilkat Valley.

Appreciate and use within the state Forest so I I can definitely hear from your from your comment and from your input that there.

Are there are areas in which the division's management either has not been clearly communicated or is not in alignment with what you would like to see and I think

If you would like to share information about or ideas about what you would what you would like to see or what would be acceptable through your eyes or

considerations of Information or resources that DOF staff Should be considering as we develop this new policy See, especially in the context of allowing carbon offset projects, I would encourage you to to share those with the division as well.

 **Nick Szatkowski** 32:27

Continue to stay involved.

 **Preston, Geneva S (DNR)** 32:32

I'm sorry. I think your microphone cut out a little bit. Can you repeat that?

 **Nick Szatkowski** 32:37

Oh, I was just saying.

Thanks for your invitation and that I will continue to stay involved.

 **Preston, Geneva S (DNR)** 32:44

Great. Thank you.

 **List, Ashley R (DNR)** 32:51

One note on the science piece.

Division of Forestry and Fire Protection definitely has a focus on applied science and applied management as opposed to research.

There have been various studies on the Haines State Forest Resource management area and other state forest lands as well.

But we don't have a dedicated research budget.

But I think most of us would love to to see that type of work.

But it's not our our focus, it's more of.

A situation where we're happy to host researchers and to have state land be used for that purpose.

I will say though that the only research project that we're currently sponsoring, which is unusual because we don't typically have funding for it happens to be a project looking at redback voles in the dispersal of mycorrhizal fungi.

So that is a project that's happening up on the Tana Valley State Forest, but hopefully has applicability elsewhere.

It's a well known relationship in Northern Forests that hasn't been looked at in Alaska before, so we have these like pretty limited opportunities for that type of work, but.

We have an interest in it and we do try to incorporate research from our partners.

In other agencies that are more focused on research.

So I just wanted to share that and that we're definitely open to having the Haines State forest or resource management area be used in that capacity.

By partners who have those research capabilities.

NS Nick Szatkowski 35:14

I.

I guess I'll just say this verbally.

I was trying to chat but I couldn't get the chat to work and I don't wanna keep hogging the mic here, but I just wanna mention Ashley your the feed cut out right when you were explaining what the actual research is that you're doing on the Tanana Forest. So I didn't hear what it was.

LR List, Ashley R (DNR) 35:33

Oh, I'm sorry.

I'm gonna see if I can be closer to my mic here on the laptop. So the research that's going on there is there's a PhD student who's looking at the relationship between red backed voles and the dispersal of microorganisms.

That and regeneration success that's been shown in other northern forests, but hasn't been looked at specifically.

In Alaska, so we do have that project going on right now, but it is unusual for us to be able to fund something like that.

Ourselves. So it's an opportunity where if we, if we can find funding for it and find interested researchers, then we try to support it whenever we can and have those.

Yeah, mainly.

Mainly the funding opportunity.

Fabian, I think your mic should be enabled. If you can go ahead and speak.

 **Keirn, Fabian J** 37:08

OK.

I just just wanted to wait for that.

So I just had a question on so right at currently the was the current management on the Haines State Forest. Where can carbon offset projects occur?

Is that only within those forest land classification which is?

It looks like it's up to Chilkat Valley.

On the east side.

If I'm just trying to think of like if if this didn't move forward.

Where would these projects be able to be done?

 **Preston, Geneva S (DNR)** 37:56

So that question is a little bit complicated because.

Technically, a carbon offset project is not.

Specifically limited to.

A forest based carbon project. And so in terms of.

The enabling statutes and Trevor Fulton please jump in if I misrepresenting this, but my understanding of the enabling statutes is that.

A forest or a carbon offset project.

Of some kind can occur.

On any classification of state owned land.

And beyond that, any classification of land?

Has the primary.

Values represented by the classification but is available and intended to be managed for multiple use, whilst focusing on that primary classification.

So perhaps with some exceptions, a carbon offset project could occur on.

Any classification of land, however.

It's most likely that a carbon offset project in a state forest would be.

A forest based project and it would involve.

A change to forest management practices and so currently and Greg Palmeri. Please jump in and correct me if I'm misrepresenting this.

But under the management policy that's described in the 2002 version of the Haines

management plan, Haines State Forest Management Plan.

Forest classified and resource management classified lands are considered and used in the calculation for allowable cut.

So those two classifications represent the timber base that's described in the 2002 management plan.

Does that answer?



Fulton, Trevor M (DNR) 40:24

Geneva this this is Trevor Fulton.

I can. I can.

Color I can add a little bit of color to that comment.

Generally, I I would concur with everything you said there.

I I would start off by.

Pointing out Fabian, that.

In order.

For there to be a any type of carbon offset project in a state forest like the Haines State Forest and resource management area.

By statute, first the management plan has to be has to allow for carbon offset projects.

To.

Within to to to occur within the Forest, so.

That's a big part of why this amendment is occurring and and I'll let division of forestry speak to that more than I will, since they're the ones who are driving the bus on the amendment.

But what?

Geneva said about.

A specific type of project called improved forest management projects.

They really do kind of need either that forest classification or that resource management classification.

In order to meet the carbon Registry requirements, there has to be sort of a credible opportunity for timber harvest, and that's most likely to occur in in those two classifications.

So one of the one of the litmus tests that improved forest management, carbon project must pass in order to generate credits is there must be a a demonstrable opportunity for timber harvest.

Now expanding forest classification.

Does sort of check that box even though that box is like Geneva pointed out, sort of already checked.

I guess expanding classification sort of checks and underscores that box, but there's a lot more boxes that need to be checked in order for a project to pencil out.

You also have to prove that the carbon project either increases forest growth or it defers harvest.

You really have to demonstrate that the project creates a legitimate carbon benefit.

You can't just expand forest classification.

By in that action, by itself isn't just going to allow you to generate credits there.

There's a lot more that goes into making these projects pencil out and proving them to the carbon registries. who are the ones that issue the credits.



Keirn, Fabian J 43:01

OK.

Thanks for that clarification. And and reminder that that.

A forest management plan's got to be able to have the have it specified for the for carbon offset project to occur.

And then I can.

And then I see that.

You know, when you when you change the what is it the intent to allow?

Multiple use.

In other words, to allow timber harvest or carbon projects in the in a broader sense that then that would allow the the state to defer.

The the timber harvest and essentially.

Accrue carbon, do I?

Am I capturing that correctly?



Fulton, Trevor M (DNR) 44:00

Yeah, I I think you paraphrased it well.

Really, there's two primary ways you you create that carbon benefit with an approved forest management project. You either undertake activities that increased forest growth, you know of pre commercial thinning would be a good example or you you generally take activities that are gonna defer harvest. So you maybe.

Extend rotations or you do more selective harvesting or something.

Like that.

And and those activities are more likely occur or or be allowed in areas that are classified as either forest or resource management classifications. And I welcome division of forestry any of the division of Forestry staff to to add anything to that that I might have missed or potentially misstated



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 44:59

Thanks for that discussion Trevor and Fabian.

I do.

I want to follow that up with again, just emphasizing that there in this management plan amendment, there's no proposal to change any land classification.

It's a revision of policy that prohibits timber harvest on some areas, classified public recreation or wildlife habitat.

So the classifications will remain the same in this current amendment.

The policy that allows multiple use on those lands, including forest management, will be revised.



List, Ashley R (DNR) 45:51

And I see Avey Menard's hand up.

I think your mic should be enabled.



Avey W Menard 45:57

Hi, thank you. Just.

On the carbon offsets and as Geneva, you just mentioned not changing the land classification but revising the policy that you know basically takes the prohibition away from certain classified lands.

Does DOF for DNR have any economic modeling about what the sort of do nothing versus do that options would be in terms of the effects on overall,

You know, projected revenue from carbon offset and or timber harvest.

And is something like that available for, you know, public review?



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 46:44

I'll let other other staff jump in if they have other information, but.

That sort of modeling I think might be involved with the proposal of a specific project.

And so at this time, specific to the Haines State Forest land base, I'm not aware of any reporting like that because we don't have any specific projects proposed because it's not a possible use yet.



Fulton, Trevor M (DNR) 47:26

Don't have much to add.

This is Trevor Fulton. I don't have much to add to that.

Geneva, I think you're accurate that.

Were it and when some economic analysis at that level were to occur, it would probably be during the best interest finding process on a specific project, not at a broad management plan level like this.



Avey W Menard 47:54

Thank you.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 48:25

Go ahead, Avey.

It looks like you still have access to your mic.



Avey W Menard 48:28

Alright, I'll just keep firing off 'cause. It seems like there's a most of the folks on the call are state reps, so.

Any other community members or public members please just.

Elbow me out of the way. If I'm taking up too much space.

But on a similar topic to what's being discussed right now in terms of opening up the whole forest to carbon offset and timber harvest simultaneously, I was looking at the the prior round of of scoping surveys and I have in front of me those survey responses for a trio of questions that I just wanted to get feedback from DNR or DOF on with respect to this very question.

So I'm looking at.

The last set of surveys that were closed before the new ones opened up, the first question should the state make all of Haines State Forests available to carbon offset projects by making timber harvest activities possible throughout the Haines State Forest, it looks like 22% said yes and 78% of respondents responded no.

The next question, do you support increased Forest access to aid development of

forest resources, including carbon offsets?

Again, there's a 78% no response with 11% yes and 11% don't know.

And then the third question, would public use and management of HSF resources benefit from making all state lands within HSF available for all the resources present?

And the response was 56% no, with 33% yes and the rest abstaining.

I'm wondering how that first round of public responses has been incorporated into DOF's intent intentions to change the the management plan with the specific points that Geneva you've mentioned of you know, without reclassifying the lands opening up the all the areas to all of the available uses specifically, timber harvest and carbon offset.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 50:32

That's a that's a great question. I think the.

The kind of missing link in in this is that our responses on those surveys were generally quite low and the sample size for those percentages that you just described is 12 individuals.

And so.

In in reviewing this, the survey responses we arrived at the conclusion that 12 individuals is not.

Not representative of the the community at large and that most.

Of most most people didn't use the surveys, and so it just didn't seem like an accurate representation to lean on for for policy development.



Avey W Menard 51:43

Thank you for clarifying that and I'll hop off in a second.

I think those same questions are part of the the current scoping surveys.

Does DOF or DNR have any thought about if that public feedback percentage of you know opinions stays more or less the same at a at a larger scale?

Basically like what amount of public input that doesn't seem to be.

Be interested in the management intent would be enough for DNR DOF to seriously consider whether it has, you know, the right approach to meeting the public's needs.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 52:33

I think one thing that's that's really complicated in this process is that.

DNR DNR and the division of forestry we find ourselves in a position where.

We are receiving equally vehement feedback from.

All sides of the spectrum in terms of opinions about how land should be managed.

And so for.

The the feedback that we receive.

On the side of opposition to the to the strategy, that's kind of proposed right now.

We have an equal and opposite force of feedback asking for something more. And so our role is to find.

A balance where?

The the most possible use is made available to the Alaskan public by DOF's management of the forest.

And so.

With that in mind.

I think it's. It's our priority to to focus on.

On making them the widest range of resources available.

in Haines state forest.

I don't know. Greg, do you have?

Any thoughts on on that?

 **Palmieri, Greg J (DNR)** 54:24

I'm.

Sure, that will take everything into consideration and we have an opportunity to evaluate all the responses and I hope that.

More people will contribute to that as an avenue. to express themselves in terms of what they're interested in, but I can't speculate on an unknown like that as to whether or not a certain percentage is a is a tipping point for a decision making process when there's so many other things the division has to take into consideration when we're balancing resource use across multiple use areas such as Haines State, Forest Resource management area.

But I want to encourage everybody to contribute because with that contribution, the product can be improved, hopefully for the benefit of all of us.

 **Preston, Geneva S (DNR)** 55:32

Thanks Greg.

I see we have another question from George.

You should have access to your microphone now.

LR **List, Ashley R (DNR)** 56:04

And George, I think you may need to unmute yourself.

GF **george figdor** 56:22

OK. Can you hear me?

Hello you can hear me OK, so I have a couple of questions. Concerns.

 **Preston, Geneva S (DNR)** 56:26

Yes, we've got you.

GF **george figdor** 56:35

And so far you haven't provided any rationale for why all your policy, the policy you're proposing, in which all lands become part of the timber base. You, you know, you've said you've expressed that, but you really haven't provided a rationale for why you would want to do this.

As you know, as a management plan you, you know you say this is looking forward into the future.

Well, you know, I'm not sure that.

That you demonstrate you know that this is, you know, forward thinking it a lot of it reminds me of, you know, some of the thinking of 20 or 30 years ago.

You know things are much different now and I can give an as an example.

with what's happening in a lot of the Tongass, where a lot of the fire service, people who used to be managing timber sales, are now recreation specialists, and they're managing land for recreation use. Because, you know, that's in a lot of ways. That's the future of Southeast Alaska is diminishing of the timber.

Industry and the, you know, sharp rise in demand for recreation.

Lands and in contrast to the Forest Service, you know I have not seen a whole lot of activity that develops the recreation potential despite the demand.

For for that within local people, visitors and the tourism industry.

And so you know, that kind of thing that kind of thinking would be a look into the future versus some vague rationale for, you know, not doing that.

And and not protecting wildlife areas, even though wildlife is one of the, you know, major attractants for both local people and visitors.

You know why?

You know what the rationale would be for including wildlife habitat areas in the timber base.

You know, it just doesn't pencil out. You know, I don't think that will sell very well in Haines.

And and I'm not sure it's enough for you to say well, you know, there weren't enough people who, you know, raised concerns about that.

So we will presume that we have a green light to go ahead.

No, you know, I I don't.

You know that's a non sequitur.

You can't presume that because you know there wasn't a significant number of people that you know, the the breakdown, you know the three to one of people who you don't want that to happen.

Would compel you to find, you know, reasons that you would override that and overlook that.

The second area of concern that I have is with the carbon offset program where again this plan doesn't look into the the future very well, but it is is is very much a throwback to thinking in the early days of carbon offsets.

But now I think is one of the other.

Folks to testify said.

The you know the old growth forests are now, you know, have pretty well been determined to be the most, you know, important forest to protect through carbon offsets because they, you know, they seek, have sequesters and hold the most carbon and sort of cutting those down, the wood, you know, release more carbon than than any other part of the forest and also.

So the the most valuable part of the forest to keep.

In in you know as carbon offsets would be the old growth forest.

Because you know that they would.

You know, they would pay the most to offset and anything else is kind of disingenuous to say. Well, we'll take an area where we really didn't plan to cut it down.

And we'll use that as a carbon offset.

You know that undermines the whole.

The whole rationale of the carbon offset program is to take.

The valuable timberlands that contain a lot of carbon and not cut them.

And have somebody pay, you know, for the for the protection of that, so that the

money is made by protecting it and not cutting it down.

And I don't think your plan shows that kind of forward thinking at all. And you know, I'm not sure what your rationale is for the carbon offset program, but anyway.

You know, those are two areas that concern.

Me and I think.

You know, I think there's a, you know, a significant proportion of the population in Haines that is looking for more rationale and explanation for why you're proposing to do what you're doing at this point in history.

So anyway, I'll leave it at that.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 1:01:58

Thank you for for sharing your insight there.

I kind of listening to you think out loud through some of that. I I wanted to revisit the primary purpose of the Haines State Forest Resource Management area.

So it's written in Alaska Statute that the primary purpose for the establishment of the Haines State Forest Resource Management area, or purposes, plural, are the utilization, perpetuation, conservation and production of the land.

And water.

Including, but not limited to, the use of renewable and non renewable resources through multiple use management and the continuation of other beneficial uses including traditional uses and other recreational activities.

And so it's written in our enabling statute, the reason and the way that the Haines State Forest Resource Management Area exists.

It doesn't make space for the division to to.

Preclude anyone use for the sake of another.

And so.

It's it's really important for us to to find a way.

As carbon offsets have become.

A recognized use on Alaska's state owned lands.

This management plan needs to include language that allows and includes that carbon offset use.

So if.

You who just shared or if other members of the public have ideas about.

About how that could look, how management could include.

The use of renewable and non renewable resources.

Through multiple use management or the continuation of other beneficial uses, including traditional uses and other recreational activities, I know that's a lot of. I mean, it's it's legalese.

It's our statute, but.

Our purpose and our mission is to manage the land, to be available for all of the uses that are listed.

In our enabling statute.

So I'm looking forward to hearing input from folks about how to realize that balanced management, how to make space for recreation and carbon offsets or and timber harvest.

 **Nick Szatkowski** 1:05:13

Hi, this is Nick Schatkovski again.

I don't know if you can hear me or not. If it's, is it OK to speak?

 **Preston, Geneva S (DNR)** 1:05:22

Go ahead, nick.

 **Nick Szatkowski** 1:05:25

Yeah. One of the things I think is really important to to be recognized by by agency staff is.

Want some some if if you're trying to maintain the possibility of multiple activities, you have to recognize that some activities.

Preclude or eliminate other activities.

If you clear cut an area, you can't then use that same area for wildlife habitat or as a favored recreation area.

So they don't occur all at the same place.

And one of those uses eliminates for a long time the use of that area for all of the other uses.

And so how many people are benefiting from each place that gets logged?

And how many people and their uses or interests, even if the

Area is available for wildlife habitat or or whether it's helping maintain the right conditions for the salmon habitat in the in the area if people value that, how many of those people that value that are getting their interest precluded because?

One operator did get to log that area and at a certain point the equation just doesn't

work anymore and all the areas that have already been logged
Are already impacting the opportunity for all those other interests and all that all the
matrix of already logged land.

And so it's I think it's not, it's not.

You're not being fair in actually considering the interests of the public who actually
pay for your salaries, like your public employees.

You're you're required to serve the public interest.

And timber, the timber harvest industry is not the public.

That's not who you're supposed to serve.

There they make up a tiny, tiny percentage of the public.

And maybe it's time that you put that look at how many people.

In Southeast Alaska, any any, any size of jurisdiction or area that you want to--

Bill adds up to that people who actually work as loggers and mill operators
combined. It's a tiny percentage of the public.

So why don't you then say OK, That's the percentage of the forest that gets devoted
to that and Oh my gosh, you've already vastly exceeded that percentage of the
forest. If it's like 4%, I think or something like that in Southeast Alaska.

Are employed in timber. And way more than that of percentage of the forest land
base, of course. I'm just saying SE Alaska as a reference point. Now that I think
actually the percentages in the Chilkat Valley would be even more I think even more
the Chilkat Valley Forest has been already logged.

Than it has across the Tongas I think.

I don't know.

You could, you know, debate that point.

I don't think that's an important distinction right now. For this point I'm making.

So if you're actually serving that multiple, use.

Philosophy and serving the public interest. I think it's a good way to follow the
mandate of the Constitution and the management guidelines establishing Haines
State Forest that you say, why not?

You know, it's a great way to to be quantifying and methodical and defensible in how
you handle that multiple use question because people can go, oh, it's so hard to say.

It's a matter of interpretation.

Let's just veer on the side of favoring the timber industry.

So it's time to start veering away from that. I think now that's overwhelmingly the
majority of the public in the Chilkat Valley SE Alaska Nationwide, worldwide majority

of the public aren't seeing logging of old growth forest as the highest and best interest.

I think you must know that it's easy.

It's very easy to find.

That out.

It's easy anyway.

You wanna look at it.

So I think it's it's it's only appropriate that you start heading that direction too.

Anyway I'll.

Thank. Thanks for listening.

 **List, Ashley R (DNR)** 1:10:51

Thank you for that.

And Geneva, if you're speaking, I think you're on mute.

 **Preston, Geneva S (DNR)** 1:11:04

No, I was sort of just.

Letting that marinate for a minute.

I I wasn't speaking yet.

But I appreciate your feedback, I think.

Again, I want to emphasize that this management plan is not.

A decision document and it is not proposing.

Any specific areas for harvest or any specific harvest practices. It's meant to be a discussion on like management guidance to give future managing foresters items for consideration.

As they are making more specific decisions.

So if some of the some of the thoughts that you were just sharing?

Are tied to specific activities or specific uses within specific areas of the Haines State forest. Even on the level of a subunit or a unit.

That information can be useful to us to add considerations for foresters.

To refer to as they're making decisions about what kinds of projects and uses are authorized in those areas in the future.

 **List, Ashley R (DNR)** 1:12:40

one bit of background that we haven't talked about tonight so much, but I think is

relevant to those questions.

About the variety of uses and overall uses is that one difference between this planning process and the planning process in 2002 is that in 2002, the Department of Natural Resources.

Was doing an area plan that covered lands outside of the state forest as well for northern, southeast area and so.

There was.

A.

A wider look at what state lands were being managed for and what the emphasis for different areas should be under the state land use classifications.

And so for this particular planning process.

The Department of Natural Resources not looking at lands outside of the Haines State Forest Resource Management area, and so.

That.

Is why we're more constrained to the statute that describes the intent for the management of the Haines State Forest, so.

To to just kind of describe the difference between where we're at with this planning process versus the last time it was done.

Some of those, you know decisions for how lands will be managed are made when you know the legislature designated this area as the Haines State Forest enlisted those purposes.

Those are our sideboards that were working within which.

I think from everyone we've heard from on this call, I I can tell that everyone here is very familiar with the management of the area.

And has put a lot of thought into that so.

Probably that's, you know, not as surprising you may already.

Maybe you were around for that earlier process back in 2002, but I did want to try to explain why our scope is where it is so.

Hopefully that's helpful framing, but I know that's that's probably not news to a lot of you.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 1:15:35

Thanks for that context, Ashley.

I see Avey you have your hand up and I do just wanna.

Remind folks that we have about 7 minutes left in our meeting time.

So if you haven't spoken up yet, but you have something on your mind.
Now is your chance, but otherwise happy to hear from Avey.

AM Avey W Menard 1:15:59

Yeah. Thank you for the.

Seven minute warning.

First off, there's another meeting scheduled for tomorrow, is that right?

But is that one only in person?

 **Preston, Geneva S (DNR)** 1:16:12

Yes, tomorrow's meeting is at the Chilkat Center for the Arts, and it will only be in person.

AM Avey W Menard 1:16:19

Thank you.

My my question is, I guess it's for Ashley. Just as a follow up to that, your last comment in terms of working within the both the constraints and requirements under the enabling act.

Which obviously references the multiple use and sustained yield principle.

I'm. I guess I'm just wondering like what in that specific statute would?

Preclude some of the options that were floated in terms of frankly seeking to do less timber harvesting and I understand there is a it is one of the uses that's listed in terms of, as you mentioned, renewable production of renewable resources.

But doesn't the department have discretion to balance it with other uses?

So I mean, I think there to me it seems like there's a tension between.

Calls from certain community members to ratchet down the timber harvesting and DNR or DOF saying well, we have an obligation to do this, but isn't it just one of the many multiple uses that are, you know, listed in that statute?

LR List, Ashley R (DNR) 1:17:37

It is one of the many uses.

And Greg, feel free to jump in here, but.

With the Haines State Forest Resource Management area and then Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve the way those were created.

And the way the statute reads.

The fact that the Division of Forestry and Fire Protection is the manager of the Haines State Forest Resource Management Area means that some level of timber harvest and continued timber use is intended so.

Does that mean it's, you know, all to one extreme or all to another extreme?

Like, no, there's, you know, there's a medium to land at within, you know, the extremes there.

And so our purpose here in this is, is to talk about.

The you know the management guidelines for the forest and or for the units within the forest and how to get there so.

To say like to say that.

That it would be a, you know, a possibility to not have timber harvest would be.

Contrary to the intent of the creation of the Haines State Forest Resource Management area.

But.

Our job is to try to figure out.

Where that lands in terms of.

What sort of management guidelines and emphasis would be appropriate to see to balance out those various uses with the implication that timber harvest will remain.

One of those uses.



Avey W Menard 1:19:55

Thanks.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 1:20:11

We have one more hand raised and I think this will need to be our our last question for the evening.

But if you unmute yourself, George, I think you should have access to your microphone.



george figdor 1:20:23

OK. Can you hear me?



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 1:20:26

Yes.



george figdor 1:20:27

OK.

So couple quick comments. I'd like to make.

Is it kind of flies in the face of the concept of management plan If you set something up where you classify the lands for different management purposes, so you have recreation, you have wildlife and other categories and then you say. But by the way we can even though we're managing this for one purpose, we can turn around and change all that well. That undermines the whole management. Intent of this plan because.

You're not really managing it for other uses. You're temporarily managing it, but can flip that upside down at any moment. If you'd like to.

It makes no sense, particularly because you there's no demonstration in since the last plan. In which you didn't have that policy. The same law existed, but that policy didn't exist, that every classification would be open for timber harvest. And you haven't said what's changed. Why? Why do you need more a bigger timber base? Is there some kind of pressure out there that nobody here is aware of that all of a sudden there has to be a larger timber base? You know, you haven't really spoken to that. At all.

And you haven't spoken to the fact that this. You know how this cripples your your ability to manage lands by by saying that you on the surface are classified as something, but we can. We can turn that around if we want.

Then where, where? What happens to your management goals?

So anyway, you haven't addressed either of those things, and I'd like to hear more about that.

OK.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 1:22:22

What immediately comes to mind for me is that.

A timber harvest could be a tool for.

For approaching other management goals.

So timber harvests in the past have been used as wildlife habitat enhancement treatments.

Timber harvest could be a tool for.

Like creating space or laying the foundation for like a recreational use in the future.

And so there are certainly examples of ways that a timber harvest does not

automatically eliminate the possibility of other uses and other values on the landscape.

I think I would also like to emphasize that you know the the classification system, that's the state of Alaska's.

Sort of.

Legal tool to.

To monitor the ways that land can be used and and managed and that.

In the regulations that define classifications.

This concept of each classification.

As a multiple use.

A manifestation of multiple uses is really emphasized so.

The state of Alaska and managing its lands and resources.

Is has has been sort of tied to this concept of any classification needs to be managed in a way that allows multiple use, but may focus on the primary classified use.

And I think.

We sort of opened this meeting with talking about.

The the original goal or like one of the.

Division of Forestry's primary goals in amending the management plan.

At this time is to.

To Create space and allow for carbon offset projects as a potential use within Haines State Forest Resource Management area.

And for that to be a realistic possibility.

It needs to be identified in the management plan.

And the division has determined that to make a carbon offset project like a realistic use of the resources in the Haines State Forest Resource Management Area.

Said like, expand the timber base is is a part of that of that process. But I'm seeing we've we're a few minutes past our 8:00 finish time, so I'll go ahead and wrap things up here. I really appreciate the folks that were able to join us this.

Evening. Thank you for sharing your insight and for asking such thoughtful questions.

And for taking time out of your of your week to spend the evening with us.

Information about updates in the plan process will be posted online.

At the Haines Forest.

Management plan amendment website.

And if we did not get the tech figured out for the PDF program information that I

shared at the beginning of the meeting, feel free to e-mail me and I can. I can share a copy of that with you all, and my apologies for the technical difficulties at the beginning of the meeting.
But thanks a lot everyone.



Nick Szatkowski 1:26:34

Thank you for the discussion.
Have a good night.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) 1:26:38

Goodnight.



Keirn, Fabian J 1:26:40

Thank you.



Preston, Geneva S (DNR) stopped transcription