

Sand Dunes State Forest Stakeholder Advisory Group – Meeting 1

Meeting Summary and Notes

Date: June 27, 2016, 6pm-9m

Location: Big Lake High School Cafeteria; 501 Minnesota Ave Big Lake, MN 55309

The meeting agenda can be found in Appendix A.

Attendees included:

- 23 stakeholder advisory group members, which included one DNR staff member assigned to the group; additionally, 2 State Representatives – Representatives Erickson and Newberger – joined the meeting and participated with the advisory group.
- 16 audience members
- 11 other DNR staff, 1 facilitator from MN Management & Budget

The meeting began with introductions from the stakeholder advisory group and audience members. Advisory group members were asked to state one thing that made the Sand Dunes State Forest (SDSF) valuable to them (Appendix B). These introductions were followed by remarks from the Director of the Division Forestry, Forrest Boe, the Director of the Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Luke Skinner, and the Director of DNR's Central Region, Keith Parker. The directors expressed their enthusiasm for the public involvement process and the DNR's willingness to listen to the concerns and ideas of stakeholders.

Opening remarks were followed by an overview of the public engagement process that will be used over the next six months (appendix C), John Korzeniowski, the project manager and area forest supervisor, and Erica Hoaglund, Regional non-game wildlife specialist provided an overview of the DNR's Operational Management Plan for the Sand Dunes State Forest (which can be found online, see appendix F for link). Advisory Group members asked several follow-up questions to clarify points in the presentation. The PowerPoint that John and Erica used will be posted on the project website.

Advisory group members and audience members were then asked to respond individually to a set of discussion questions (appendix D) that explored reactions to the Operational Management Plan, ideas for making the next six months of meetings meaningful, measuring success of the public involvement process, and any other thoughts they wished to share. Attendees then formed small groups to discuss their responses. After the discussion, a representative from each of the small groups shared a few ideas for each discussion question with the large group (audience small group ideas were collected and read aloud by the facilitator). The ideas were written on post-it-notes and were placed on a wall at the front of the room. The facilitator asked for clarity and elaboration as the ideas were posted on the wall.

The meeting concluded with an opportunity to share final thoughts. Several attendees shared thoughts on the process and future meeting topics. Director Boe made concluding statements and the meeting adjourned.

Summary of Participant Responses and Small Group Ideas

Individuals and the small groups offered a wide range of ideas in response to the discussion questions. Their detailed responses are compiled in Appendices E and F. What follows here is a summary of all the responses:

- What some meeting participants say they like about the plan:
 - Sustaining, enhancing, and managing for unique habitats and populations of rare/threatened native plants and animals for future generations
 - Expansion of rare species habitat, including oak savanna
 - The emphasis on eco-system management
 - Managing for biodiversity and diversification of habitat; reduction in plantation trees
 - Wildlife
 - Recreation experience and opportunities
 - Timber management/silviculture (including needed thinnings, white pine planting)
 - Mixed usage of SDSF
 - Managing for decreasing the expansion of invasive species
 - Management of trust lands
 - Clear, science-based plan objectives
 - Discussion of alternative revenue generation opportunities
 - Opportunity for ongoing public input on plan
 - General satisfaction with the plan

- Concerns that some meeting participants say they have about the plan:
 - Conversion from forest, specifically concerned about conversion to prairie and savanna
 - Uncertainty that habitat needs are rare when surrounding landscape (e.g. SNWR, SNA) is considered
 - Uncertainty that rare species need room to expand
 - Concerns about loss of diversity from conversion
 - Clear-cutting/over-cutting of trees
 - Concern that Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge has not been successful in bringing back rare species
 - Cutting of trees up to property border without buffer
 - Concerns about loss of recreation opportunity
 - Cost effectiveness to tax-payers of conversion
 - Prescribed burns - fire hazard of slash, air quality impacts, poison ivy smoke
 - Herbicide use and water quality impacts
 - Erosion of sand dunes/blowing sand
 - Removal of pines around Ann Lake campground – loss of ‘up north’ feel
 - Monoculture pine crops are diversity dead zones
 - Concerns about potential climate change impacts from conversion plans (e.g. carbon sequestration impacts)
 - Accelerated rotation age of pines
 - Suitability of topsoil for plans
 - Too much emphasis on “eco” management – let nature take its course
 - Plan doesn’t go far enough – all land should be restored to native plant communities (timber harvest could still occur)

- Concerns about maintenance of roads and right-of-ways
 - No formal process to evaluate when school trust should/could be sold.
 - Concern about the need to buy out trust holdings in order to do ecosystem-based management
 - Lack of climate considerations in plan
 - What's "broken" about current management?
 - Concern that micro-management will decrease wildlife diversity
 - Concern that locals will not have adequate input/collaboration opportunities for the plan, or that communication to public will be insufficient
 - Lack of communication of implementation activities
 - Concern that local input will have too much influence on plan ("not in my backyard" philosophy) when SDSF belongs to all Minnesota citizens.
 - Concern about DNR meeting with individual stakeholders outside of process
 - Lack of representation/overrepresentation of some groups on advisory group
 - Concern about changing the plan through legislation – subversive, avoids public participation in resource management
 - Communication about management outside of plan activities
 - General dissatisfaction with the plan for some
- What some meeting participants say will make the next six months of the public involvement process meaningful to them and how DNR could measure the success of the process:

Process-based:

- Come to compromise/mutual agreement on how SDSF is managed; arrive at consensus
- Conversation and listening in meetings; honesty and civility of participants
- Communication and feedback; email updates
- Clearly define stakeholder concerns and expected outcomes
- Listen to concerns of locals and why
- Success = Stakeholders understand the plan and share their concerns
- Creative solutions
- A new or revised plan
- Plan incorporates citizens' values
- Develop ongoing process for public input
- Equal representation in advisory group
- Detailed reports/minutes from advisory group meetings shared publicly
- Allow local citizens to facilitate meetings/set agenda items
- Public feedback must be majority opinion
- Circulate a rough draft of report to legislature
 - Summarize all viewpoints and identify final directions
- Disclose actions that will happen in SDSF in short term

What some meeting participants identified as desirable changes to the plan:

- Cease clearcutting and halt conversion of forest to savanna; Limit overall acres of prairie
- Management uses science-based practices
- Concrete decisions how DNR will maintain Right-of-Way and roads.
- Firm decision to NOT convert school trust lands until a final plan is developed to consolidate school trusts

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- Eco-Services should develop a plan to mediate road salt migration into wetlands.
- Working toward best interest of rare/valuable public resource – greatest common good without destroying sensitive habitat
- Plans for rare species/diversity be adopted
- Keep the campground wooded

Appendix A: Meeting Agenda

SAND DUNES STATE FOREST – STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP MEETING AGENDA

June 27, 2016

Big Lake High School Cafeteria; 501 Minnesota Avenue Big Lake, MN 55309

5:30 Doors Open

6:00 Welcome and Introductions

6:20 Sand Dunes State Forest Public Involvement

6:40 Overview of Sand Dunes State Forest Operational Plan

7:00 Overview of Management Activities

7:10 Discussion Questions: as individuals, respond to the discussion worksheets

7:20 Break

7:30 Small Group Breakouts: discuss the worksheets in small groups

8:15 Large Group Reflections: share some of the ideas from the small groups

8:45 Final Thoughts

9:00 Adjourn

9:30 Doors Close

Appendix B: Individual responses to introductory questions

The facilitator recorded these ideas on flip charts.

Introductions: What is one thing that makes the Sand Dunes state forest valuable to you?

Stakeholder Advisory Group + State Representatives:

- Economic opportunities
- Recreational opportunities
- Wide array of wildlife and nature
- Good horse camp and trail riding
- Unique forest – pine, oaks and so much more
- Habitat for wildlife
- Trees
- To be out in the woods
- As good as the boundary waters and a lot closer
- Beautiful area
- Trees
- Scenery with wildlife in back yard
- Kid growing up in the area, cross-country ski options
- Wildlife. . .
- Proximity to Twin Cities, ability to show forest (and all its amenities) to people in Cities who do not get to see this
- Road and their upkeep are a concern
- All of the above
- To be able to track the audit of the forest
- Unique biodiversity
- Kids' education
- Everything about the forest; underused
- People that live around the forest
- Variety of species – support the variety and use for education
- Diversity

Appendix C: Project Description

Sand Dunes State Forest - Stakeholder Engagement

Purpose of the Stakeholder Advisory Group

- **To Listen** to one another
- **To Learn** from one another
- **To Discuss** ideas and perspectives about managing Sand Dunes State Forest
- **To Enhance** our individual/collective understanding about managing Sand Dunes State Forest
- **To Identify** options for modifying plans, actions, and expectations about managing Sand Dunes State Forest and for additional stakeholder engagement activities

Process for the Stakeholder Engagement Project

- **Build on existing** stakeholder engagement activities (by DNR, by individuals, by other org.)
- **Assemble a Stakeholder Advisory Group** comprised of various local and statewide interests
- **Host monthly meetings** with the Stakeholder Advisory Group that are open to the public – June through November
- **Clarify plans, actions, and expectations** for managing Sand Dunes State Forest
- **Identify options** for modifying plans, actions and expectations and for additional stakeholder engagement activities
- **Produce meeting summaries** – distribute to the advisory group, place on DNR website, send to GovDelivery email list
- **Write a report** * for the Minnesota Legislature about stakeholder engagement in Sand Dunes State Forest

*

Minnesota Session Laws 2016 – Chapter 189 Section 47 SAND DUNES STATE FOREST REPORT

(a) Until July 1, 2017, the commissioner of natural resources shall not log, enter into a logging contract, or otherwise remove trees for purposes of creating oak savanna in the Previous Sand Dunes State Forest. This paragraph does not prohibit work done under contracts entered into before the effective date of this section or work on school trust lands.

* (b) By January 15, 2017, the commissioner must submit a report, prepared by the Division of Forestry, to the chairs and ranking minority members of the house of representatives and senate committees and divisions with jurisdiction over environment and natural resources with the Division of Forestry's progress on collaborating with local citizens and other stakeholders over the past year when making decisions that impact the landscape, including forest conversions and other clear-cutting activities, and the division's progress on other citizen engagement activities.

Appendix D: Compilation of small group answers to discussion questions

Small groups offered one or two key ideas per question from their discussion. This is a direct transcription of the ideas they offered.

1. What do you like about the DNR's plan for managing Sand Dunes State Forest?

- Recreation – forest experience
- Recreational areas
- Timber management – white pine management (less clearcutting), cleaner cutting
- Timber management
- Sustaining rare plant and animals for future generations
- Oak savanna and rare species expansion
- Up to now, having a well, diverse, thought-out use of Sand Dunes State Forest giving users outdoor opportunities and experiences
- Emphasize eco-system management
- Retain and enhance rare species habitat
- Diversification of habitat in a thoughtful approach
- Maintaining biodiversity is critical
- Managing invasive species
- Getting public input
- OK with plan
- Flora and fauna enjoyed as is now
- The plan is not final. . .

2. What concerns do you have about the DNR's plan for managing Sand Dunes State Forest?

- Lack of past collaboration – past efforts were “informational” not collaborative
- Conversion – aesthetics, recreational experiences
- Concerned about prescribed burns and herbicides
- Concerns about control burns and use of chemicals
- Concerns of clear-cutting, slash and wildfires
- Air pollution from burning, for example – poison ivy smoke
- Micro or over managing forest – balance of rare flora and fauna with what's already there
- What changes will impact recreational use?
- Are the management practices cost effective?
- Concerns about cost to taxpayers
- Has the plan gone far enough to protect biodiversity?
- Consider leaving a buffer of 50 feet between state land and private land owner
- No plan for road and right-of-way maintenance
- Winter shade – icy roads
- Road salt – impact on wetlands

- A lot of logging trucks on roads
- How are the priorities for the plan determined?
- Prefer pine forest to oak savanna because of becoming inaccessible to people
- Trail use diversity in addition to horse; need snowmobile, hiking, biking trails
- Pine plantation could end up a huge mono-culture – how does DNR deal with it? Expansion of oak savanna; need to ensure diversity
- Desired future conditions need a better understanding
- Concern if input/concerns of local land owners is weighted more heavily than the needs of biodiversity; we all own this land – the greater area, county and state

3. What will make the next six months of advisory group meetings meaningful to you?
How should the DNR measure success for these meetings?

- Real listening and discussion; all sides, give and take
- On-going input process (Friend of the forest group)
- Citizen's heard, new plan developed
- Use local citizen input; success = consensus; success = change
- Giving users outside of DNR management a voice
- Clearly define concerns, get answers
- Good communication from both sides
- Concrete decisions
- Provide continuing reports on thoughts coming out of work sessions
- Provide report summarizing all view-points and identifying final directions
- Communication, feedback in e-mail update
- Recap of prior meeting to start the meeting
- Examine the public values and uses of the Sand Dunes State Forest
- Statewide biomes
- Success should be measured by at least 85% support of participants
- Would like to come to a compromise on how the Sand Dunes State Forest is managed

4. Any other thoughts you would like to share?

- School trust issues
- Keep the forest people friendly
- Current concerns with management of the area. Needs a "friends of the Sand Dunes" volunteer group to help with maintenance, clean-up, etc. Get involvement of other trail users.

Appendix E Discussion Questions and Responses - Full Version

DNR asked each individual advisor to respond in writing to discussion questions provided on a handout. What follows is a transcription of all the responses we received. We also gave audience members an opportunity to share their thoughts, and their comments are presented as well.

Q1: What do you like about the DNR's plan for managing Sand Dunes State Forest? (e.g. desired future conditions, timber mgmt., ecological mgmt., recreation mgmt., trust lands, wildlife, invasive species)

Stakeholder Advisory Group + State Representatives:

Comment 1:

- Replanting white pine

Comment 2:

- I like the DNR management that has been operational for last 50+ years...

Comment 3:

- From what I know about their plans, I'm in favor and look forward to seeing these changes take place and hopefully I'll be able to witness the resurgence of these native species. (i.e., hognose snake, Blanding's turtles, etc. etc.)

Comment 4:

- The Sand Dunes State Forest has a good opportunity to sustain plant and animal species for future generations. Being located on the sand dunes, this is unique habitat.

Comment 5:

- Timber mgmt. but not clear cut, leave the forest.
- Don't like much at all. Not people friendly.

Comment 6:

- Not much. Do reasonable thinning and that's all that needs doing – no clear cutting.
- Why just go back in time to pre-settlement days? Why not go back to pre-glacier days?

Comment 7:

- Saving it for our grandchildren is great.

Comment 8:

- Mix usage and respect for habitat and wildlife

Comment 9:

- Timber management/silviculture
- Management of Trust Lands
- Ability to maintain recreational opportunities

Comment 10:

- We like the emphasis on ecosystem mgmt., retention and expansion of rare plant and animal species populations/habitat and permitting those recreational activities/timber mgmt. activities that are compatible in the forest with rare species.
- We also like the plan for dealing with invasive species in the forest and the staging of mgmt. activities in order to not see invasive species accelerate in expansion.

Comment 11:

- Very little (with the Ops Plan) – timber management is ok

Comment 12:

- Up to now having a well-diverse thought out use of Sand Dunes State forest. Giving us as users outdoor experiences.

Comment 13:

- I like the way it is now and not the way its planned

Comment 14:

- Clear objectives
- Science-based
- Discusses alternative ways to generate revenue for area (seed harvest)

Comment 15:

- The operational plan seems to address multiple comprehensive interest with SDSF. I am impressed with the thoughtfulness of plan.
- The monitoring and research of the rare plants and animal species and concern to restore them and the rare habitat they live on.

Comment 16:

- Recreation mgmt.
- Wildlife

Comment 17:

- That the DNR shall be working in collaboration with the citizens and stakeholders. Hence, all parties, citizens, stakeholders and DNR will have to come to a mutual decision. It will be encouraging to see this occur.

Comment 18:

- What is broken?
- There is a great deal of question about zones?
- Is there a breakdown of each of the major areas of focus? Economic, recreational, and environmental. Area these zones necessary?
- Audit: states that change should be made only when essential – Recommend I – please comment.

Audience:

Comment 1:

- That rare species and oak savannah will be allowed and encouraged to expand for the sake of diversity. Also some plantation trees will be removed that do not represent diversity.

Comment 2:

- Increased recognition of rare and threatened species and the change DNR is making to manage Sand Dunes SF to enhance diversity

Comment 3:

- Public input
- Range of DNR employees present

Comment 4:

- Important natural communities have been destroyed through recent history. Some have been more important to rare and endangered species, some who have already been lost. To restore these areas to nearly what they were for the benefit of these species is a noble – and environmentally important – change to protect these species. People need to realize there is a different kind of beauty to prairies and savannas which are as interesting to many humans – and the species that need them to survive.

Comment 5:

- Maintaining biodiversity is critical – this includes maintenance and restoration of oak savannas. This native flora and fauna has nowhere else to go. Extinction is forever!

Comment 6:

- Planful approach to diversification of habitat to span over the next 5 to 50 years.

Comment 7:

- Sounds reasonable to me at this time with the level of information I have. I have not read the online plan specifics.
- What about natural succession? Ex. Replanting birch in Mille Lacs?

Comment 8:

- We appreciate the plan to ensure the long term survival of the original ecosystem (pre-settlement) in this section of the Anoka Sand Plain.

Q2: What concerns do you have about the DNR's plan for managing Sand Dunes State Forest? (e.g. desired future conditions, timber mgmt., ecological mgmt., recreation mgmt., trust lands, wildlife, invasive species)

Stakeholder Advisory Group + State Representatives:

Comment 1:

- Any type of clear-cutting (burning or using chemicals) should not be done.
- Worry about fire hazard with all the "slash" that has been left behind.
- Campground at Ann Lake needs to be reserved – (no clear-cutting)

Comment 2:

- Removing the trees from half of the SDSF and converting to prairie removes
 - CO2 sequestration
 - Destroys clean air with prescribed burns
 - Bare sand dunes will allow sand to blow again
 - Cost of converting to prairie
 - Loss of revenue from timber harvest
 - Accelerating the rotation age of pines decreases the maximum CO2 capture
 - Destroys the “up north” feel of the campground

Comment 3:

- That we concerned locals might not have much input.

Comment 4:

- It is important that the plan be communicated to communities. Perhaps there should be some ability or capacity for the DNR to collaborate in earnest with community members.

Comment 5:

- Clear cutting mostly
- Leave forest, not so much prairie land, it gets to hot and buggy to enjoy.

Comment 6:

- Too much emphasis on the “eco” management.
- Let nature alone to do what it does.
- If it isn't broke – don't fix it!

Comment 7:

- Clear cutting trees right up to property owner's land. You should leave a bigger buffer.

Comment 8:

- No allowance for DNR to maintain Right of Ways
- “Pilt” funds aren't enough to maintain DNR roads by Township.
- Winter shading causing icy roads. i.e. “233rd Ave NW.”
- No formal process to evaluate when school trust should/could be sold.

Comment 9:

- Conversion of forest
- Communication with stakeholders regarding other activities in the areas – particularly federal wildlife reserve – outside of DNR control

Comment 10:

- Concerns evolve around the need to buy out the trust holdings in order to implement eco system mgmt.
- Another concern is that the DNR not change direction/mgmt. actions based on the “not in my backyard” philosophy. These lands belong to all the citizens of the state of MN.

Comment 11:

- Degree – do we need additional 3000 from SDSF. All dedicated to oak savanna:

- 30,000 savanna in refuge
- Wildlife
- SNA's
- Fort Ripley
- County lands
- Many facets of the conversion component of the plan – huge overreach
- Loss of diversity by converting
- Rare feature concentration is higher in forest than on the refuge. These occurred while managed by Forestry.
- I have already sent a nine-page document on specific concerns with the plan. I could resend if you need it.

Comment 12:

- What changes will affect uses that we have today and/or our tomorrows?

Comment 13:

- Why can't we wait till the rare species need more room instead of clearing land and hope they will expand?
- Will the snowmobile and horse trails be allowed in the forest like they are now?

Comment 14:

- Does not go far enough, should maintain or restore ALL to NPCs (can still have timber harvest).
- Div. of Forestry: Not following Op. Plan.
- Other concern: DNR meeting with individual stakeholders outside of process.

Comment 15:

- I am concerned with the political maneuvering to change the plan in legislation in what appears to be a very subversive way to avoid public participation in the management of public resources
- Where is the climate change consideration with a 50 year plan? In terms of looking at species management?
- Can we see the information being collected on the rare plant and animal species and their health that Erica referred to?

Comment 16:

- Burning, Herbicides (sandy soils permeate), cutting more trees than necessary
- Making the beautiful camp ground into oak savanna. Who want to camp on a prairie.

Comment 17:

- That the DNR will stop working with the citizens in formulating a SDSF Plan, as prescribed by law.

Comment 18:

- OLA Recommend 2: How and why set priorities? This also was a recommendation in the audit: to set priorities. (Yet I hear about a 10-year research project that does not seem to have an end result that is measurable.)
- Burns, times for burns, herbicides use, conversion to oak savanna, roads, buffers

Audience:

Comment 1:

- That the legislation is [omitted word was unreadable] the DNR, especially from school trust lands to harvest too much forest, especially old growth forest.

Comment 2:

- Your communication to public has not been adequate in the past. Would hope you can improve ongoing notification of activities as your plans are implemented. I am interest in recognizing the progress – maybe this is adding signage, maybe better email and website postings.
- Your description of the rare and threatened species is based only on your like of these. Why are they important? Are they important to overall state resources? National significance or international? Give us a reason to care beyond them being species you really like.

Comment 3:

- Question on creating duplicate habitat (Oak Savanna) in SDSF that is already in place in Wildlife Refuge
- Road and Trail (snowmobile) concerns
- Lack of snowmobile representation
- Suitability of topsoil for plans (not oak savanna?)

Comment 4:

- Consider the species above that of humans in these rare areas.

Comment 5:

- Economic considerations from the forestry industry overlooks the fact that monoculture pine crops are diversity dead zones

Comment 6:

- I'd be concerned if the input and concerns of adjacent landowners weighed more heavily than the greater county/state interests in saving the biodiversity of the Sand Dunes State forest. We all own the land.

Comment 7:

- It is becoming inaccessible to people who use it now as it is.
- Over-management, micro managing. I've spent a lot of time on the wildlife drive in Sherb. Nat'l Wildlife Refuge and have seen what I consider to be a significant decrease in bird activity, only a couple deer, and turtles. I see more wildlife in my own 10-acre "unmanaged" refuge. I know you're not in charge of SWLR just used as an example. I don't think what they're doing is working, so hope DNR plan isn't to duplicate it in the forest.

Comment 8:

- Removal of the "woody" (trees) material in the grey shaded areas. It is a FOREST SDSF no SDOS.
- How do we [unintelligible] if we value different things; trees and all they bring vs. a few rare species
- If the NSWR has had so many acres cleared for this type of habitat for so long, and the species aren't there yet, why is it worth sacrificing a resource, a forest with all that brings, and takes so long to grow back??

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- We had all the pines (SNA in S. Sand Dunes) removed behind our property, and you can't walk a dog back there, ride a horse – "illegal". So we are considered the invasive species I guess. We moved here (husband works downtown) to be next to the Forest.
- With the trees gone – the wind increases, erosion increases too. The poison ivy has gone nuts, and has taken over.

Comment 9:

- U of M Prof. Frelich (Forestry) predicts from his research that climate change will drastically change the eco-zones in Minnesota in the long term (50-100 years) and this will mean that presettlement eco-systems will be pushed north if the life form can migrate or be transplanted by people. I wonder if the plans have taken this fact into consideration?

Comment 10:

- What is going to be the rights of the public to use the forest in the future as they have in the past or will they be locked out at the discretion of the management.

Q3: What will make the next six months of advisory group meetings meaningful for you?
How should the DNR measure success for these meetings?

Stakeholder Advisory Group + State Representatives:

Comment 1:

- Would like to come to a compromise on how the Sand Dunes State Forest is managed

Comment 2:

- When the rare species people decide to maximize usage of the existing SNA instead of thinking that having another 2400 acres to manage is the answer.

Comment 3:

- I'll judge that by what happens in these meetings

Comment 4:

- There should be a lot of conversation and listening at the meetings

Comment 5:

- A new plan with lots of give and take

Comment 6:

- If we can work together and get a decent agreement as to future of the SDSF, all these meetings will be worth the effort.

Comment 7:

- Listen to the people.

Comment 8:

- Concrete decisions how DNR will maintain R-O-W and roads.

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- Firm decision to NOT convert school trust lands until a final plan is developed to consolidate school trusts
- Eco-Services should develop a plan to mediate road salt migration into wetlands.

Comment 9:

- The ability to arrive at consensus

Comment 10:

- Detailed reports (minutes) on the discussions in the Advisory committee and from the audience. Written statements of any conclusions that are coming out of the group. Circulating a rough draft of major components to the DNRs final report for the legislature.
- Success will be a report summarizing all viewpoints but also identifying final directions

Comment 11:

- Success
 - The citizen's values have been incorporated into a new plan
 - Good discussion from various points of view
 - Come away with an ongoing process of public input

Comment 12:

- Giving users outside DNR management a voice. Hopefully DNR addresses helpful input or ideas.

Comment 13:

- If clearcutting is stopped and if turning the forest to savanna halted.

Comment 14:

- Clearly define stakeholder concerns
- Explain/disclose actions happening in interim
 - Existing restoration dollars
- Ensure equal representation in stakeholder group – some groups sent more than one rep.
- Clearly define expected outcomes
- Implement/complete mgmt. to meet objectives via science-based practices

Comment 15:

- Honesty of the participants
- Working towards the best interest of managing this rare and valuable publicly owned resource
- Participation, empathy, listening by everyone
- Creative solutions
- I think measuring success will be challenging, but finding the greatest amount of common goals to work toward without destroying the sensitive habitat

Comment 16:

- Keep the campground wooded.
- Limit acres of prairies.
- Federal land has rare species

Comment 17:

- Local citizens need to be allowed to facilitate meetings and to help set agenda items

Comment 18:

- Need minutes of every meeting made public!
- Public feedback must be majority opinion
- Tell us: What is the cost/benefit of the various research projects? How many state forests are being transformed? Place new plan against [unintelligible], e.g. a PowerPoint or [unintelligible] chart of each pt of plan versus concerns(?) that force(?) change.

Audience:

Comment 1:

- That voices for rare species and diversity plans(?) be heard, considered and adopted.
- That the meetings be orderly and civil with the ability to remove people who are not orderly and civil.

Comment 2:

- Communication and feedback
- Email updates

Comment 3:

- Question if considerations are strictly scientific, environmentally founded

Comment 4:

- I would like to understand why Chapter 189 Section 47 was felt to be necessary. Is the remaining 0.02% of oak savanna taking up too much room?

Comment 5:

- Productive meetings. Hearing from adjacent landowners what their concerns are and why.

Comment 6:

- Not sure, but thought Charlie did a good job of running the meeting.

Comment 7:

- True partnership with citizens to accomplish mutually agreeable goals.

Comment 8:

- Success will be primarily measured by having stakeholders understand the plan and having an opportunity to share their concerns with DNR.

Q4: Any other thoughts you would like to share:

Stakeholder Advisory Group + State Representatives:

Comment 1:

- Hopefully we can agree on the decisions that are being made

Comment 2:

- People can expect changes that come slowly...if they have input on the changes.

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- There was no meaningful public input on the operation plan that was formed years ago
- The changes...such as acceleration of pine rotation...was done without public input...and isn't even in the 10-year plan
 - Pine plantations could be slowly converted to white pine without need for large clearcuts

Comment 3:

- In retrospect, sounds like you need a Friend's group

Comment 4:

- People come to the Dunes because of the forest, will not come if it is turned into prairie.
- Keep the forest people useful, and friendly so all can use the hold forest

Comment 5:

- Thinning of the forest is necessary, clearcutting is not!
- Perhaps school trust lands can be purchased by state so a buffer can be used on borders

Comment 6:

- Orrock Township cannot afford to buy out DNR R-O-W's. Some other method should be worked out.
- Twnship is firm on 5 ton/axle year round
- Help to fund 257th Ave NW and 168th St. NW. Needs resurfacing. Need DNR data on visitors, campers, horse camp usage.
- Twnship cannot afford to mow DNR ROW's and properly maintain black top.
- Some roads may not get plowed in the winter.
- Seal coating, chip seal, resurfacing in timely manner

Comment 7:

- Are the benefits of silviculture/forest management (for recreation and wildlife, for example) being adequately communicated?

Comment 8:

- Other issues:
 - Trust land management needs discussion
 - Hopefully there will be no more need for additional overview

Comment 9:

- Myself representing the equine use. With intentions of making a great program even better! Thanks for valuing my input!

Comment 10:

- It's a forest (trees), plant trees grow trees harvest trees and plant some more trees.

Comment 11:

- How is Div. Forestry addressing migratory birds treat act (MBTA) during summer harvest?
- Legislation says, "...no harvest for oak savanna..." still can harvest for prairie?

Comment 12:

- Will need to find common ground to build from, which will come from building relationships with each other.
- Will need to provide lots of factual info on topics and opportunities to experience the fact/information first hand to gain understanding

Comment 13:

- OLA concerns:
 - Recommend 3: Has the Forestry Division created a plan for underperforming logging and implemented penalties for loggers not following plan?
 - Recommend 4: Have you provided guidance on priority of goal – sounds like too much too [unintelligible] in your plan!
 - Recommend 5: Have you improved interdisciplinary work?

Audience:

Comment 1:

- That the DNR not change the original plans very much.

Comment 2:

- Snowmobilers should be represented
- Hiking should be represented
- Biking should be represented

Comment 3:

- In the 1940's, the Minnehaha Chapter of the Izaak Walton League planted many of the pines in Sand Dunes. In those days the interests were very heavily on stopping wind and water erosion. Little was thought of conservation and preservation of species other than game. Today many of us have different thoughts. I would suggest your plan has merit.

Comment 4:

- Current concerns with mgmt. of the area – as I was hiking/exploring today, I saw very rundown, broken and not maintained around picnic and beach area. Very sad.

Comment 5:

- Somehow tactfully suggest childcare

Comment 6:

- I have appreciated learning about specific different plants, animals that are in our backyard, and I have learned about many of those at the meetings.

Comment 7:

- Great job so far on Management Plan but we are concerned that implementation will be slowed down by this process and recent legislation may interfere with Uncas Dunes management.

Appendix F: Reference Information

Where to Find Information about the Sand Dunes State Forest:

1. Link to the Anoka Sandplains Subsection Plan and Appendix C - Operational Plan for the Sand Dunes State Forest:
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/subsection/anoka/plan.html>
2. Instructions on how to subscribe to the DNR GovDelivery service to receive information about recent and upcoming activities in the Sand Dunes State Forest:
 - Go to this address <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/emailupdates/index.html>
 - Fill in your email address in the white box (scroll down to the yellow area labeled "General Public"), then click on "GO"
 - If you are a new subscriber, you will be asked to confirm your email address first. Fill in the form and click "Submit" at the bottom of the page. You should receive an email confirming that you have signed up.
 - Next, under "destinations" check the box next to Sand Dunes State Forest. Scroll to bottom of page and click on "submit."
 - You will automatically receive any future GovDelivery messages sent to the Sand Dunes list.
3. Link to DNR Website With Information About All Minnesota State Forests:
http://dnr.state.mn.us/state_forests/index.html
4. Link to DNR Website for the Sand Dunes State Forest:
http://dnr.state.mn.us/state_forests/sft00045/index.html
5. Lake Maria State Park phone: 763-878-2325
6. Little Falls Area Forestry phone: 320-616-2450

Appendix G: Map of Sand Dunes State Forest Showing Upcoming Management Activities

