

Chapter 5. Public Comments on Preliminary Issues and Assessment

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5.1 Background

A public comment period on the *Preliminary Issues and Assessment* document was initiated on September 15, 2009 and ended on September 30, 2009. Comments were accepted via letter, e-mail, or fax. A list of individuals and organizations that submitted comments can be found at the end of this chapter.

The comments submitted are listed below. Comments were read and considered by subsection team members during work on General Direction Statements (GDSs), Strategies, Cover Type Management Recommendations, and Stand Selection. The team's responses to specific comments are listed after each comment.

5.2 Specific Comments and Responses

1. **Comment:** Is there a current plan to create a state or federal park in the Aspen Parklands Subsection?

Response: The AP Team is not aware of any current plans to create additional state or federal parks in the Aspen Parklands Subsection. The team notes that within the subsection there are currently two state parks: Lake Bronson and Old Mill.

2. **Comment:** Care should be taken regarding timing of biofuel harvests, and retention of nutrients on sites following any biofuel harvests, thus minimizing any negative impacts on wildlife and ensuring the sites will be able to regenerate properly.

Response: The AP Team shares these potential concerns over biomass harvests. The team notes that the science behind biomass harvest is very new and evolving. There are currently numerous studies being conducted in an attempt to identify the proper amounts of biomass which can be removed vs. retained on sites where biomass is harvested. As the science evolves, the DNR will carefully consider the evidence in order to ensure that biomass harvest sites are managed properly. In addition, the DNR has developed site level guidelines for the harvest of biomass which will help address these concerns.

The team also notes that currently there is not a demand for potential biomass generated under this plan. Due to the lack of markets at this time, the team believes that the science of biomass harvests will be significantly advanced prior to any actual harvests in the Subsection taking place.

The timing of biomass harvests will minimize negative impacts on wildlife associated with the harvest site. Harvests are expected to be conducted during frozen ground periods.

5.3 List of Individuals Who Submitted Comments

The following individuals/organizations have submitted comments on the *Preliminary Issues and Assessment* document.

1. Gary and Cindy Nelson
2. Dave Bennett – United States Fish and Wildlife Service; Refuge Manager, Rydell and Glacial Ridge National Wildlife Refuge