



Carolina Mountain Club

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What's going on with the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests?

by Michael Fisher

What's going on with the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests?

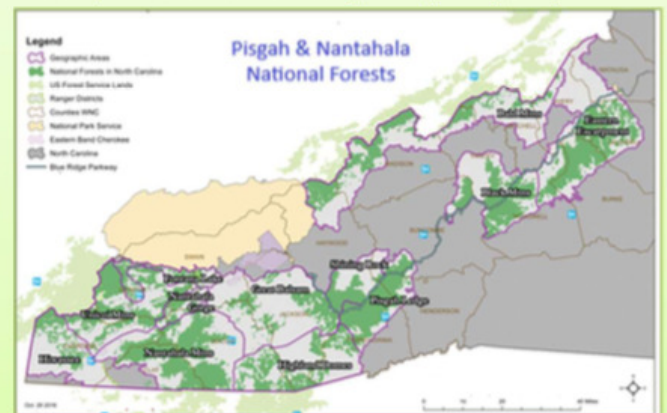
The National Forest Service (FS) is updating its plan for managing the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests. The plan will address trails, conservation of special natural areas, logging, and many other issues for the next 15 to 20 years. The FS is expected to release a draft of the Revised Plan at the end of the summer. Because these are the public lands on which most of the CMC's hikes and trail maintenance activities occur, and they provide huge opportunities for hiking and back country recreation, the Revised Plan is a true "big deal" for the CMC, its members and hikers. The FS is required to incorporate interests of citizens into the Plan, *and the FS listens*. Although the CMC has participated in stakeholder groups throughout the planning process, comment letters from individuals will be very important as the FS finalizes the Plan. So expect further information and guidance as release of the Draft Plan nears.

Why is the Revised Forest Plan important to the Carolina Mountain Club and its members?

The Revised Plan will set policy and priorities for managing the Pisgah and Nantahala forests for the next 15-20 years. The Revised Plan will cover many issues that affect our enjoyment of the lands and trails where we hike and provide maintenance.

What are the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests?

The Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests are public lands managed by the FS, which is part of the US Department of Agriculture. By law, National Forests are managed to serve a range of public interests, including hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, and other recreational uses, but also commercial interests, such as timber harvesting, mining, and grazing.



These forests include over a million acres in western North Carolina, extending from near Grandfather Mountain to the Tennessee and Georgia lines at the southwest corner of North Carolina. Many of the CMC's activities occur on these lands.

For example, the Revised Plan will cover:

Planning for timber projects, facility development, and other impactintensive activities. These activities affect trails, nearby lands, and the hiking experience. The CMC supports participation of hiking and recreation groups in early planning of timber projects, in oversight, and post-project rehabilitation. The CMC wants the FS to assign high value to hiking, other recreation, and general conservation in deciding where and the extent to which timber projects are undertaken. The CMC also supports strong oversight and enforcement of land and habitat protections during performance and rehabilitation of lands affected by timber projects. Category designations of land areas throughout the forests, which affect future development, management and use of the FS lands. Some lands will be classified as interface, which means that the lands will be managed and developed with the expectation of high public use, such as areas around visitor centers and campgrounds. Other areas will be managed as backcountry lands, which means that the lands would see limited development and be protected for

uses like more remote hiking, camping, biking and similar land-use experience. Another category, matrix, falls between these classifications, and would see less development but also less protection for back-country uses. The CMC generally prefers to hike on, and to maintain, trails that fall in the back-country classification. Management of lands as candidates for federally designated Wilderness. A related issue concerns classification of lands as candidates to become federally designated Wilderness. The North Carolina mountains have several federally protected Wilderness Areas (e.g., Linville Gorge and Shining Rock). Many other areas are strong candidates to become

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The CMC hikes a lot in our National Forests.

Update on Revised Management Plan for Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests August 30, 2019 2
Wilderness based on their remoteness, lack of human disturbance, opportunity for recreation, and environmental and socio-cultural value. These areas may be classified as Wilderness Study Areas, which protects them from development while they remain under study to become Wilderness. The Revised Plan is expected to include decisions on which of these candidate areas to retain as Wilderness Study Areas. The CMC generally supports continued protection of such lands for Wilderness Study, and eventual designation as Wilderness. Maintenance and protection of existing trails; development of new trails. The Revised Plan will set policy and priorities for maintaining and protecting existing trails, including potential decommissioning, and for development of new trails. Among the trail-related considerations that the Plan will address are whether and when trails would be managed as multi-use trails – that is, permitting recreational bikers and/or horse-riders to use existing or newly developed trails, which have otherwise been managed as hiking-only trails. Here, the CMC is concerned that trails provide an enjoyable and safe hiking experience. The Revised Plan will address numerous other areas of concern. A final point: The Revised Plan is expected to govern management of the FSs for the next 15-20 years, which underscores the importance for the CMC and its members to participate in the Revised Plan process when the Draft Plan is released, and to work to ensure that the Revised Plan best meets the priorities of the CMC, its members, and hikers. What is the process and schedule for the Revised Plan? The FS has been working on the Revised Forest Plan since 2013. This process has involved substantial interaction with regional stakeholders including hikers, hunters, anglers, bikers, general recreational users, Native American interests, general conservation interests, timber and mining interests, the tourism industry and other commercial interests, and counties and communities in the FS area. In developing the Revised Plan, the FS operates under a federal process in which it will first release a draft of Revised Plan alternatives and a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) assessing their environmental, economic, and socio-cultural impact. Following release, the FS will receive comments from the public – both as organizations and as individuals – on the Revised Plan alternatives and the DEIS. This public comment process, which is expected to last 90 days, is legally required to finalize the plan, and allows the public to provide its last round of input, with preferences for the final plan. The FS is required, by law, to consider these comments in developing the final plan, and to document how it accounted for them in its formulation. The latest information indicates the FS will release the draft Revised Plan and DEIS in September. Following receipt and review of public comments, the FS is expected to release the final plan in 2020.

You Can Get Anything You Want On the Carolina Mountain Club Website

Excepting Alice

By Stuart English

Get that board out of that old woody station wagon and come surf with me on www.carolinamountainclub.org. Go to the public Home Page and you will see a beautiful mountain vista and our club motto created by former club president and editor of the Let's Go newsletter Gerry

McNabb: HIKE, SAVE TRAILS, MAKE FRIENDS! Then look for a changing slide show of pictures, a short information statement about our purpose, how to join, volunteering, donating, and links to the various committees that make up our club. There is a Breaking News Box, a calendar of events, Awards, and the Youth Partnership Challenge. You can find the current eNews, Let's Go Hike schedules, a link to the CMC Facebook page, and the CMC collection of Interviews - all without logging in.

Then you can go to the Members Area after logging in with an easily obtained password. Here, you will find your personal history with the club, how to contact other members, council minutes and finance info, hike search, hike reports, Request to lead a hike, Trail Maintenance info, personal Hike Log, signup sheets that can be printed out, the eNews archives, and much more.

Having been a part of the transition from the old website to the new one, I remember all the effort, consternation, and frustration during that period in our history. It is still a work in progress. So, I feel very strongly about our website that Jim and Judy Magura do such a great job managing. As Historian for the club, I am familiar with the files that are in the UNCA library going back to the 1920s. But on our website, there is more immediate history going back at least to the year 2000. Learn to appreciate it. It is yours!

A SPECIAL HIKE FOR FAMILIES!

by Jan Onan

To celebrate National Public Lands Day, Jack Dalton will lead a family friendly hike in Hot Springs. This is a 3-mile in and out hike on the Pump Gap Trail. There is about a 300 ft. elevation gain, stream crossings and interesting things to see along the way.



Meet at Pump Gap/Silvermine/ Lovers Leap Trailhead, which is just around the corner from the Nantahala Outdoor Center parking area in Hot Springs.

Saturday September 28

10:30 meet at Pump Gap trailhead

Contact Jack Dalton at home: 828-622-3704, if you plan to attend or have questions.

Photos for Annual Dinner Slideshow

by Bobbi Powers

You have 5 more weeks to submit photos!

The Annual Dinner will be held Saturday, Oct. 26, and the deadline to submit photos for the social hour entertainment - your photos on a running loop on the big screen - is Saturday, Oct. 12.

Your **WITS** should be sharp by now, so get those 6 photos sent in to CarolinaMtnClubPhotos@gmail.com

For any dim**WITS** who have forgotten the guidelines, your pictures should feature any of the following:

Waterfalls,

Insects,

Trees,

Stones.

Use your creativity!

Your name on your photos and a pat on the back are your thanks for participating.

Thanks!

Secondary Trails Adoption Program

by Les Love

Thanks again to all who have stepped up to adopt one of CMC's Secondary Trails and make this program a success (the A.T. & MST are our primary trails) See the attached spreadsheet as there are still a few openings if you would like to help. Rich Evans will show you what needs to be done as a tool-carrying maintainer or you can just be an observer, reporting issues that need to be addressed. To sign up email Les at lesrlove55@gmail.com

[Secondary Trails Spreadsheet](#)



The eNews is published on the first Friday of each month. Articles are due on the last Friday of the previous month. send your news to eNews@carolinamountainclub.org. Please limit articles to no more than 1,000 words. You may send up to two photos as jpg attachments.

To join Carolina Mountain Club go to: www.carolinamountainclub.org. Click on "Join CMC" on the right side. Follow the instructions. Send all address and email changes to Dennis Bass at dbass3607@gmail.com. Your email changes will be automatically reflected in eNews delivery.

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