

United States Forest Service
Land Between The Lakes National Recreation Area (LBL)
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
March 17, 2016

The Land Between The Lakes (LBL) Advisory Board convened at 9 a.m. on Thursday, March 17, 2016, at the Forest Service Administrative Office. Building, 100 Van Morgan Drive, Golden Pond, Kentucky 42211. The meeting was open to the public: Nine Board members (eight primary and one alternate) a facilitator, two members of the public and seven Forest Service (FS) employees were in attendance.

Advisory Board members present:

Betsy Allison (P)	Della Oliver (P)	Paula Flood (P)
Donnie Holland (P)	Chris Garland (P)	Sally Whittington (P)
Bill Purkes (P)	Dwight Van de Vate (P)	Tony Black (A)

(P=Primary; A=Alternate)

Advisory Board staff present:

Dr. Jerome Thomas, Advisory Board Chairperson
Tina Tilley, Designated Federal Officer (DFO)
Christine Bombard, Advisory Board Administrative Liaison
Nancy Walters, Facilitator

Forest Service Staff present:

Jeff Laird, Customer Service Department Manager
Jan Bush, Communications Department Manager
John Westbrook, Environmental Stewardship Department Manager
Barbara Wysock, Area Planner
Peter Gaulke, Regional Planning Director
Kevan Paluso, Transportation Program Manager
Yvonne Helton, Forester

Members of the public present:

John Ruffli-Friends of LBL, Bobbie Foust-Lyon County Herald Ledger newspaper

Dr. Thomas opened the meeting and thanked the Board for their attendance. He expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity for collaboration today. Tina also welcomed the group and reaffirmed that this meeting will be a continuation from previous meetings. The Boards engagement is critical to helping the Forest Service continue to learn how better to share information with the public to more effectively communicate land and resource management activities.

Becky Allison was recognized in her new position as appointee for the USDA-TN seat on the Board.

Bill Purkes asked for clarification on Fox Hollow, specifically was this just a case study or is it a project. Tina shared with the Board that this is a case study around the various stages of a project. The proposed needs/actions that we will discuss today-may lead to a proposal and a subsequent project. At this time the Forest Service does not have a project in mind for Fox Hollow. What develops out of this case study into a project will be built collaboratively with this Board and the public involved.

Nancy Walters, facilitator took time to remind the Board of the engagement guidelines that had been agreed upon in a previous meeting, and that we were going to use these guidelines moving forward.

- Seek balanced participation
- Balance advocacy & curiosity
- Respect different views
- Listening to understand

Old Business

Previous meeting minutes that had been posted to Basecamp were reviewed and accepted for finalization without any additional edits.

1. Advisory Board Communication Guidelines:

Jan Bush presented the “draft” communication guidelines document that was produced by Ginny Grulke, after having reviewed the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) and the USDA Forest Service policy.

This document provides clarification for the following:

- Who the Board can communicate with and when (i.e. the public, Constituency groups, the media and other Board members)
- Stating the difference between our personal opinion, opinions of our publics and the opinions of other Board members
- Types of information can we talk about outside of our meetings
- Methods of communication that are not allowed or recommended

Dwight Van de Vate proposed the Board vote on approval of the document. Dwight proposed adoption of the document and that it be made final. Donnie second the motion and all are in favor.

Decision: The document has been reviewed, approved by the Board as the guiding principles regarding communication within FACA and will be posted to Basecamp.

2. Basecamp:

Jan Bush made a brief presentation to the Board on Basecamp. At the November meeting the Board decided to use Basecamp as a tool to share information between meetings and the Forest Service set it up for all Board members to have access into the program. The Forest Service also hosted a training session for Board members since the November meeting that a few members in attendance had the opportunity to participate.

Those that had used Basecamp shared with others the functionality of the program. Jan offered additional training if needed but the best way to learn the program is just to get on and use it. It was agreed that it is an effective tool and will be useful between meetings. The Board will continue to use this tool moving forward. Jan reminded the Board that this site is not just for the Forest Service to post information but Board members as well. Dwight Van de Vate shared that he had started a second Basecamp for Resource Management/Environmental Education. He posted Quail Forever document for the Boards review.

3. Public Meetings:

Barbara Wysock presented to the Board information on the 2012 Planning Monitoring Requirements Process (hand-out provided). She updated the Board about the three meetings that the Forest Service recently held to share information on the process and to start gaining public input. The groups that the Forest Service met with were: 1) Coalition for the Preservation of LBL, 2) Established Partners, and 3) an open house for the public.

Tina shared that these meetings were a result of listening to the public. The public has shared that only using news releases in limited newspapers is not sufficient enough to reach out to the public using Land Between The Lakes. The Forest Service also issued a letter in March requesting comments on the process.

Some Board members commented that they did not received the letter. Barbara will email the letter to the Board members and will also post it to Basecamp no later than tomorrow (March 18, 2016). The documents previously posted to Basecamp will remain and new items will be added.

A couple of Board members stated that they had received the letters, however, it still read very technical and that more people would likely read it if it were put into plainer language. Barbara stated that this is the type of feedback we need to better share information with the public.

New Business

Tina reminded them that Fox Hollow is a case study as to how to we can better build public awareness as a project develops. In the past, the Forest Service would do studies, come up with a purpose and need, develop a proposal and then share scientific based data with the public. We have learned that we need to do a better job of involving the public much earlier in the process.

We are working towards finding a long-term goal for this area, by looking at what the area is now and the need for change potential. It is not a formal project at this time, however, as we move through the process with the Board and public a project could develop. The public will be engaged throughout the process.

The group was given a review of the NEPA triangle to review. The triangle helps to show what stage of analysis it is currently located and what the next steps are. This triangle is located on Basecamp. We are still on the informal or left side of the triangle (no proposal developed).

We are using the information gleaned from Fox Hollow to learn how to better engage the public. New potential projects in the future will follow a similar process with the public. Not all new potential projects will go through this full process with the Board.

Potential needs for Fox Hollow-what actions could be taken to address this potential need/opportunity? Consequences?

The Board reviewed the needs statements from the November meeting. The needs statements have been posted on Basecamp. Refer to page four of the November meeting minutes for cross walk. Tina introduced each topic with examples of opportunities. If something is a need there is a consequence for non-action. The below is in no particular order of importance.

1. Boat & campsite water access:

- Determine current & desired use of these access points
 Survey for permittees
- No action-rutting, erosion, deterioration of access
- Hardening the site-graveling, paving area, facilities-may lengthen life of area
- Update mapping & use brochures
 This has been done in the past coming up on 10 years old
- Whose responsibility is it to manage the impacted areas (Corps, TVA, and FS)?
 Potential opportunity for partnering. Clarify roles first
- Can we choose no action here and partner with the Core of Engineers?
- Limit use to reduce rutting

2. Shoreline rutting

- Environmental Education opportunity to share awareness-partner with the Core of Engineers
 Need to identify who is using it and how
- Be proactive instead of reactive
- Actions: thin to improve sunlight
 Ditch to move water
 Provide mechanism to allow user to report on conditions
 Harden the site
 Sign close to access
 Designate as “primitive access site”

- Question raised: Would it be appropriate for signage limiting to canoe/kayak use with information on where the nearest boat ramp is located? Redirect boat users to go to different (more appropriate sites)
3. *Soil degradation*
 - “Use Creep”
 - Environmental Education-Increase Awareness
 - Define the site to reduce impact on site due to visitor usage
 - What about the use of natural control measures? (i.e. boulders, trees to limit use/degradation)
 4. *Single track trails*
 - Establish and maintain
 - Single or multiple use?
 - Establish for horses-consider a proposal from users
 - No action because there is no current use
 - Consideration: there is no trail which suggests there is no need
 - “Manage by no net gain policy “
 5. *Access to Nolan cemetery*
 - Keep open to an appropriate level of access
 - Cemetery access only
 - Other uses-hunting, birding
 - Restrict some vehicular access
 - Post signs
 - Environmental Education messaging
 - Walk-in access only-consider gate and issue key
 6. *Maintain roads at appropriate levels*
 - Ascertain use (who, why) and expectation
 - Relook at how public knows appropriate use for the roads (road numbering system?)
 - Environmental Education for user on appropriate use-color coding
 7. *Sun to dry out roads (increase sunlight to roads)*
 - Open ditches
 - Cut trees/vegetation to open to sunlight
Do all or just part of the road?
 - Side benefit; fire management
Discussed fire breaks along roads
 8. *Need for surveys*
 - Comprehensive Heritage on the ground survey (historical values inventory)
Seek grants to fund

- Local survey approach
 - Murray St. College
 - River folk's partnership
 - Focus on family lineage
- Create opportunities for folks to tell their story. Environmental Education opportunities at each site
- Increase effort to capture/record the stories

9. *Environmental Education on home sites at Fox Hollow*

- Increase effort to capture stories, record, develop mechanisms to share more widely
 - Oral histories
- Grants
- Pilot project-see consideration below
- Cades Cove model
- Sense of urgency
- Subcommittee outline steps
 - Designated in the November meeting
 - Donnie Holland to reach out to the other subcommittee members
- Format invitation
- Consideration: Allow the people to identify the place for a pilot, or identify a high use area; Self-organize

10. *Protection of Nolan Cemetery*

- Create a "green vegetation break" just outside to provide fire break & reduce hazard
- Consider using vegetation to improve wildlife habitat

11. *Pine & Hardwood mortality*

- Determine the cause
- Generate options to address cause & risk
- Quantify expansion of loblolly impact on shortleaf and hardwoods mortality
- "Forest inventory"
- Invite public to participate in vegetation surveys

12. *Non-native Loblolly*

- Survey to show the need
- Leave and allow to continue to grow
- Remove selectively
- Planted old fields not up against the Trace-vision concerns
- Survey
- Remove loblolly (to convert: enhance oak-hickory types and open fields) manage to prevent regeneration
- Evaluate commercial viability
- Environmental Education opportunity to better discuss loblolly and how it grows

13. Oak hickory management benefits

- Site specific select thinning with the goal of multiple age classes
- Identify areas that would benefit from treatment to increase health of stand and improve ecosystem for wildlife
- Consider “pocket treatments”, strips, other approaches
- Environmental Education opportunity
- Comment was made that there is a concern for the use of this type of management and recommend the following:
 - Introduce sparingly to demonstrate
 - Smaller scale
 - 2 different terrains

14. Support for moist areas for wildlife

- Citizen science project for wetland bird habitat
- Consider using beavers to help manage wet sites
- Create reservoirs intentionally for shorebirds and waterfowl
 - Check for historical artifacts first
- Evaluate feasibility to enhance wetland habitat
- Partner with Ducks Unlimited

15. Protections of eagle nest

- Survey for nests
- Create buffer zones around nests
- Leave potential nest trees
- Partner with State and Federal Fish & Wildlife organizations
- Environmental Education opportunity

16. T & E surveys (plants & animals)

- If present, minimize impact to species
- Environmental Education opportunity
- Use Citizen science to help monitor

17. Loss of fields to hardwoods/18. Pines in the fields

- Reclaim old fields
- Plant quail habitat
- To favor smaller species
- To increase diversity of wildlife
- Survey and assess which reclaimed fields will stay without too much maintenance
- Also to favor pollinators
- With native grasses

19. *Old Ponds*

- Clean
- Survey amphibians

20. *Open land treatments*

- Continue to look at current open lands decision/program to improve what we are doing
- Look for new partnerships and tools
 - Stewardship agreements & contracts
 - Wild Turkey Federation

21. *Cane break restoration*

- Environmental Education opportunity
- Plant or transplant
- Protect existing cane
- Objective: filters, tribal value, habitat

22. *Wildlife Habitat enhancement*

- Encourage natural ponds inland
 - recreation, wildlife, fire objectives
- Wood duck boxes
- Climate change implications
 - clean, deepen the ponds
- Create brushy interface
- Create early successional habitat
- Old fields, loblolly treatment
- Encourage more oak regeneration

The theme around the need for Environmental Education messages was consistent through-out the discussion. The Board shared how critical it was to share why resource management is needed.

The potential actions discussion generated some discussion about other opportunities that were not necessarily tied to the Fox Hollow case study area.

- Make recreation maps available for users and update them as needed
- Mechanism for publics to report conditions
- Consider using old roadways/trails for new trails, education, recreation and heritage
- Consider better method of communicating appropriate use access for roads in LBL color code on maps & signs
- Forest Service may have a need to work with a Partnership Coordinator

What information should be presented to the public?

Board members shared that there is a need to have data to share with the public. This data is important to help the public understand the potential opportunity or why management is needed. There was also discussion among Board members about only reaching out to groups that may have interest or knowledge about the topics. It was decided that all potential needs and possible actions should be shared with everyone as the process moves forward.

Another common theme was the desire to put energy in documenting the personal histories of those who lived in the area before it became "Land Between The Lakes." It was agreed that the sharing of stories needs to be told by the individuals that were impacted. The Forest Service has committed to facilitate the process and use monies from the trust fund for this project. The Board reaffirmed the Historical subcommittee established at the last meeting, including Donnie, Della, Sally, Paula and Jeff. Donnie agreed to contact the other members of the subcommittee to develop a strategy for engaging former residents, as soon as possible.

How could we engage with the public?

The Board discussed how to move this information forward to the public that may be more effective than the traditional measures used by the Forest Service. It was recommended that the Forest Service reach out to small groups with diverse interests such as chambers, rotaries, recreation interests, existing partner groups, coalitions, judges etc. Goal: to share needs and actions, get input/feedback.

Final decision was that the Forest Service would first share the information with the county judges and mayor. Input from this meeting will better inform who needs to be at additional meetings. Meeting with the Judges and Mayor will take place in April with additional meetings taking place prior to the next meeting.

Basecamp will be used to share data as it becomes available on Fox Hollow. Board Members will be asked to share the information and to provide feedback or ask clarifying questions so the information can be better shared with the public.

Della Oliver and Bill Purkes suggested that Board members play a role in broader public meetings. Board members will be invited to the small group meetings and meeting information will be posted on basecamp.

Peter Gaulke closed the meeting with a discussion on how collaboration works. Historically, the Forest Service has shared information one on one with user groups. Under a more collaborative approach, it is not only important to have back and forth sharing with user groups and the Forest Service but also between the user groups to obtain the best diversity of thought. A collaborative approach also encourages partners to take the role of convener with the F.S. as participant rather than to assume the F.S. always is the convener.

Wrap-up

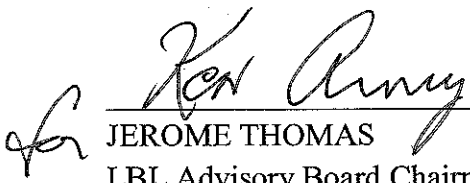
The next Advisory Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 19, at the LBL Administrative Office at 9 a.m.

Tina thanked the Board members for their time and candor.

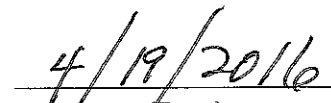
Action Items

- Barbara will email the letter to the Board members and will also post it to Basecamp no later than tomorrow
- Within two weeks:
 - Make a case for any action on Oak Regeneration science
 - Notes to be posted on Basecamp (simplify by grouping)
- Reaffirmed the Historical subcommittee of the following: Donnie, Della, Sally, Paula and Jeff
 - April-Donnie to contact the other members of the subcommittee
 - Subcommittee to develop a strategy for engaging former residents
- Late April: Meet with the three County Judges and two Wildlife Directors (KY & TN)
- Inventories of loblolly pine
 - In April: review aerial photo's
 - Within two months: conduct surveys, develop data, show trends and need for management
- Meet with the leaders from: ATV, hikers, bikers, campers
 - Forest Service to host meeting before the next Advisory Board meeting in July

Certified by:



JEROME THOMAS
LBL Advisory Board Chairperson



(Date)