

United States Forest Service  
Land Between The Lakes (LBL)  
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
September 24, 2015

The Land Between The Lakes (LBL) Advisory Board convened at 9 a.m. on Thursday, September 24, at the Forest Service Administrative Building, 100 Van Morgan Drive, Golden Pond, Kentucky 42211. The Meeting was open to the public. Eleven Board members, a facilitator, four members of the public and nine Forest Service (FS) employees were in attendance.

**Advisory Board Members present:**

Paula Flood (P)  
Chris Garland (P)  
Ginny Grulke (P)  
Donnie Holland (P)

Tim McGinnis (P)  
Terry Mott (P)  
Della Oliver (P)  
Bill Purkes (P)

Michelle Rogers (P)  
Dwight Van de Vate (P)  
Sally Whittington (P)

**Advisory Board Staff present:**

Dr. Jerome Thomas, Advisory Board Chairperson  
Tina Tilley, Designated Federal Official (DFO)  
Rosemary Bray, Acting Advisory Board Administrative Liaison  
Nancy Walters, Facilitator

**Forest Service (FS) Staff in attendance:**

Christina Wampler, Acting Environmental Stewardship (ES) Manager  
Barbara Wysock, Area Planner (NEPA)  
Jan Bush, Communications Department Manager  
Pat Kowalewycz, Acting Deputy Area Manager  
Yvonne Helton, Silviculturist  
Peter Gaulke, Regional Planning Director

Four members of the public were: John Ruffli - Friends of Land Between The Lakes, Bobbie Foust- Lyon County Herald Ledger Newspaper, Allison Crawford- WKMS Public Radio, and Roger Kendall, -member of Back Country Horsemen of America.

Dr. Thomas opened the meeting and thanked the Board for their attendance and their willingness to work. He explained that the new planning rule encourages engagement of the public in forest planning using a collaborative process. Historically, a national forest would do the scoping for a project and develop alternative actions. The public had limited opportunity to comment during a defined scoping period and when the analysis was completed. If there were disputes on decisions, they were addressed through an appeal process. Using a collaborative process, stakeholders are engaged much sooner in the process of scoping and developing alternatives. And, the Agency now uses a pre-decisional objection process which allows the Forest Service to continue to work collaboratively with the public on continuing issues. This works to build a greater understanding between various stakeholders and collaboratively build a proposal.

## Old Business

The Board was asked to comment on any clarity needed on the Questions & Answers discussed at the July meeting. Clarity was asked about the following questions:

- #1. *The data from those monitoring sites. What reports or publications have resulted from these data? Your assessment of progress on this project. When will native grasses be established? If native grasses are not established, what will you do?* The Board requested that we put in the data that we currently have acknowledging that the study is not completed.
- #2. *Over time, how many acres of LBL will be converted to the Pre-European landscape plan of grasslands, barrens, savannahs and woodlands?* The term pre-European applies to all of LBL and it is use frequently throughout the agency. It was selected because of diversity on the landscape at that time. It references a timeframe which the Area Plan's range of alternatives was developed.

The area plan established a variety of land allocations. One of these land allocations is the oak grasslands. This is the area that management will be focused on oak grassland development. Lands outside of this area are not planned for conversion.

- 13. *Has the budget for campgrounds and facilities, such as Nature Station and Home Place, been affected by costs of land management such as logging? Has spending on these areas increased or decreased over the past 10 years?* Congress allocated funding for specific purposes. Funding for land management such as logging cannot be use for recreation facility management. Allocated recreation dollars has decreased over the last 10 years, but we have offset this reduction with revenues.
- #14. *How much money does LBL make off of timber sales and where does the money go from the sales?* Some board members felt that the revenues generated from the sale of the timber sales are not adequate to cover the cost of preparation, administration and the member questioned the rationale for having timber sales [that are "below cost."] Tina explained that there are other resource areas that benefit from timber sales, such as road maintenance that is associated with the timber sales, re-planting of the stands that do not have adequate regeneration of trees, and the improved wildlife habitat. There are others that believe that the Forest Service is making a lot of money on timber sales. There is a need to have a better discussion with the board to clarify this issue for the public. The Board inquired about the monitoring of timber sales to make sure the management plans are being followed and staying within guidelines.

Roads- Board members expressed concern about the conditions of the roads in LBL. In the original Protection Act the States (KY & TN) are given responsibility for paved roads. The current highway bill does not allow funding for maintenance and we are concerned about the impact this will have, it will take legislation to change it. Tina is dealing with this issue.

Questions 1, 2, 13, and 14 will be reworked to provide more clarity. These reworked questions will be brought back to the board at the next meeting (or before) for review, prior to making available to the public. The Board also discussed the value of posting hard copies of the Q&A's at strategic places in the Area in addition to posting them on the web and distributing to the media.

## New Business

### Briefing on LBL Land Management Plan

Barbara Wysock gave a power point presentation of the Area Plan, laying groundwork for discussion for the afternoon. The Area Plan is comprised of four parts:

- Vision
- Land Allocations
- Area wide Goals & Objectives
- Standards

### *Board Member Q and A on Plan discussion*

- Currently, Land Between The Lakes is scheduled for plan revision in 2019. A need for change must be established before starting plan revision. This includes looking into Social, Environmental, and Economic factors. Changes can be addressed surgically by issue and not necessarily lead to a complete rewrite of a plan. Revision of a plan can take 4 years or more to complete utilizing the 2012 Planning Rule.
- The Advisory Board had a brief presentation on the Forest Service's framework for implementing forest plans under the hierarchy of law, regulation, and policy. Laws passed by Congress occupy the highest position, because they form the basis for subsequent federal regulations. Regulations occupy an intermediate position because they implement laws and require agencies to develop policy which complies with law. Policy is located in the lowest position.

Back in the 1960's and 70's many environmental laws were passed that influence the management of national forests and also apply to Land Between The Lakes. They include, but are not limited to the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act; National Historic Preservation Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, National Forest Management Act, and Clean Water Act. Most importantly for LBL is the Land Between The Lakes Protection Act.

Regulations are detailed in the Code of Federal Regulations. Agency policies are set forth in Forest Service Manual (FSM) and the Forest Service Handbook (FSH). The handbook and manual give us detail on implementing forest plans, planning, projects implementation and other policies associated with management of national forest system lands.

- Board Members were interested in viewing the Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) Report for fiscal year 2014. The M & E Report summarizes the last fiscal year's efforts of implementing our Land and Resource Management Plan (Area Plan). Instruction was given to Members on finding the report on the LBL website.

### Fox Hollow Case Study: a practice in Collaboration

The intention on discussing Fox Hollow was to use a case study to practice collaborating on land management discussions. The Forest Service does not have a specific plan (project proposal) for the area and is just beginning to uncover what it knows and does not know about the area. Input is needed from the board and the public in general. This input will be used to have further discussion about if/what management is needed in the area.

Information was shared with the Board on what is known about the Fox Hollow area and more information was presented to the Board in a binder for all to take home. Fox Hollow is a 560 acre area between Forest Service roads #219 and #220, near Brandon Spring Group Center. Tina used aerial photography to show the changes that have occurred on the landscape.

TVA conducted erosion control and timber management in 1969, and in 1978, timber was harvested. By 1989 open lands were smaller and fields were hard to recognize. Early 1960's to the 1990's the canopy closed in, fields were dominated by mature trees, open lands were reduced. No fire has occurred in this area.

The Board had a discussion on the existing condition of Fox Hollow and what the Area Plan states as the desired future condition. They discussed how the Area Plan's goals, objectives, and standards could be applied. Tina will schedule field trips in October for the Advisory Board and the public to have a conversation on land management in the area. What we learn from the field trips will inform the continued collaborative discussion on Fox Hollow at the November Advisory Board Meeting.

*A member of the Board asked whether the science exists that would enable LBL to do a health assessment of this area.* Tina said, yes, there are a lot of tools to use for a health assessment, one example being soil analysis. Before a decision is made to take the timber off, the terrain and soil must be deemed to be conducive. Tina stated that we need to spend additional time learning about that area before knowing whether any action would be needed there.

#### Wrap-up

Individuals recommended by the board to be contacted for walk in the woods:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Coalition for the Preservation of Land Between the Lakes</li><li>• County Judge Executives</li><li>• Five County Mayors</li><li>• Ed Whitfield</li><li>• Mitch McConnell</li><li>• Michael Pape</li><li>• Back County Horsemen Organization</li><li>• Bicycle clubs</li><li>• National Wild Turkey Federation</li><li>• Between The Rivers Group</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Joe Baust</li><li>• Lynn Hodges</li><li>• Jim Scheff</li><li>• Richie Morris</li><li>• Jeep Clubs</li><li>• First Responders</li><li>• Tennessee Chapter of Heartwood</li></ul>
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The next Advisory Board Meeting will be held on November 12, 2015, at the Administrative Office of the Forest Service at the Land Between The Lakes at 9 a.m.

Terry Mott was recognized for five years of service to the Advisory Board with a certificate and a clock. Tina thanked the Board for their energy and involvement to make the shift with the public and how to communicate more effectively. She reassured members that she wanted to speak in clear and plain language and if it is not clear to let her know so she can continue to make the shift, together, we can do it, was her vision.

#### Action Items

- Clarify question #2: *Over time, how many acres of LBL will be converted to the Pre-European landscape plan of grasslands, barrens, savannahs and woodlands?*
- Clarify question #13: *Has the budget for campgrounds and facilities, such as Nature Station and Home Place, been affected by costs of land management such as logging? Has spending on these areas increased or decreased over the past 10 years?*
- Clarify question #14: *How much money does Land Between The Lakes make off of timber sales and where does the money go from the sales?*
- Email link for M & E Report to Board Members. (Completed Monday, September 28<sup>th</sup>)
- Present information of current FACA regulations at future meeting.

Certified by:

  
JEROME THOMAS  
LBL Advisory Board Chairperson

*November 18, 2015*  
(Date)