

January 22, 2010

To the interested public,

Attached are the draft recommendations of the Technical Steering Committee (TSC) of the Forest Futures Visioning Process. The TSC met over a period of ten months to arrive at these recommendations. We hope that you will take the time to review them and provide comment. As you will read, there are many areas where the TSC reached agreement about the future management of the Department of Conservation and Recreation 308,000 acres in its State and Urban Parks system and in fostering stewardship of the private forests of the state. In several areas the Committee has either not yet reached full agreement or we have heard from members of an Advisory Group of Stakeholders during our deliberations that some of their members hold differing and/or opposing opinions.

It is now time to hear comments, feedback and suggestions for improvement from you, the general public. The public comment period closes on February 22.

There are a number of ways you can provide your input. These include by email, at public forums and through a simple online survey. Details for each are below.

Written Comment. Comments may be submitted via email to: MODRDCRFFVP@umb.edu.

Public Forums. Five public forums will be held between February 4 and 11. Times and locations can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/news/publicmeetings/forestryfvpcoming.htm>. At each of these forums there will be a brief overview of the recommendations, a short time for clarification questions followed by facilitated table discussion where people can discuss their concerns, suggestions, and/or support for the recommendations. The goal is to help advance the dialogue and understanding of the issues, the recommendations and to provide feedback to the Committee for its final deliberations. This format allows each person to participate and the facilitators will report out to the group as a whole at the end of the forum. All feedback received at the public forums will be captured by scribes and provided to the TSC. It will also be made available for viewing on the DCR Forest Futures Visioning Process website. You may also submit written comments at the meeting.

Survey. A simple online survey is available through a link at:
http://www.mass.gov/dcr/news/publicmeetings/tsc_draft_recommendations.htm

The survey asks about level of support for the vision and each recommendation and provides space for brief written comment.

After the comments are received and the results of the forums summarized, the Committee will review them and reconvene to develop its final recommendations which will be submitted to the Commissioner of DCR and the DCR Stewardship Council.

We thank you in advance,

Lisa Vernegaard

Chair, Forest Futures Technical Steering Committee