



Public Input
Early Successional Habitat Creation Project
Green Mountain National Forest – Manchester Ranger District

Organization (if applicable):	Town of Dover		
Title (if applicable):	Town Clerk		
First Name:	Andy		
Last Name:	McLean		
Address:	PO Box 527		
City:	West Dover	State:	VT Zip Code: 05356
Email:	dvrclerk@sover.net		
Phone Number:	802 464 5100 x2		

You may provide your written input on the back of this form. Although the use of this form is optional, please provide us the same contact information as requested above if you use another means to submit your input. Comments will be received through April 6, 2018. THANK YOU!

How to submit feedback:

1. Written input
 - Mail: USDA Forest Service, 2538 Depot Street, Manchester Center, VT 05255
 - FAX: (802) 802-362-1251, ATTN: Brett Hillman, ESHC Project
 - Email: comments-eastern-green-mt-finger-lakes-manchester@fs.fed.us
 - Electronic input must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text (.rtf), Word (.doc or .docx) or Portable Document Format (.pdf); please include the subject header "ESHC Project" in your email
2. Hand delivered comments
 - Written input can be hand delivered to the Manchester Ranger Station at 2538 Depot Street, Manchester, VT, 05255 during normal business hours, Monday to Friday, excluding holidays (8:00 am – 4:30 pm)

Andy McLean
Dover Town Clerk
PO Box 527
West Dover, VT 05356

Brett Hillman
Wildlife Biologist
Manchester Ranger District
Green Mountain National Forest
2538 Depot St.
Manchester Center, VT 05255

Dear Brett,

I would like to provide some comments on the Early Successional Habitat Creation Project as it may impact the Town of Dover. (Please see attached map.)

I attended the informational meeting you held which answered many of my questions.

My first concern has to do with bears and mast crops. In Dover we have relatively few oaks. These are concentrated in a few stands in East Dover. One of these stands is centered around Stand 2 in Compartment 186 on Whites Hill (if I'm reading your map correctly). While there are a few beech in the area and a number of them display bear scarring, what really draws the bears are the acorns. Two years ago before the acorns dropped you could find many instances of bears breaking off large acorn laden limbs high up and throwing them down to eat on the ground. I had a game camera set up in an area about 100 yards from the proposed treatment stand which took more pictures of bears than I have ever seen before. Huge old bears, mothers with cubs, younger single bears - at least one per day that fall and many times several per day.

While there are plenty of oaks as you move down in elevation toward Newfane and Brattleboro, what makes this stand unique is that it is not in the denser human population areas toward Brattleboro. It is right up in the huge forest block that stretches from Dover to Glastenbury. There are plenty of beech in this huge area but very few oaks. Much of this is true of the stands just north of this in Wardsboro that are slated for treatment.

I hope that given the importance of these mast stands, the steepness of the terrain, etc. you could forgo any treatment in this relatively small section in Dover.

The other area of concern is the bear scarred beech stand on Rice Hill in Dover. Stands 9 & 10 in Compartment 52 are the closest to these mast crops but I'm not sure if working in this area would affect the bears' usage.

My other concerns have to do with the public trails that would be used to access these jobs. Many of these trails are Town rights of way and are used by our residents and second home owners. We are a tourist community and these trails are a part of our local economy.

Any harvesting should be done during January and February when the ground is well frozen. "Shelterwood" treatments should be used if near these trails to preserve as much as possible the aesthetics that draw people to our Town. Preferably, a buffer of undisturbed forest could be left next to the more popular trails such as Johnson Hill Trail, Hathaway Trail and Cheney Brook Trail.

Related to this is the problem of ATV use in the National Forest. Given the limited resources of the National Forest Service there is no enforcement of regulations regarding this. Miles of new unauthorized trails have been added over the past 20 years. I'm concerned that these harvests will create miles and miles of de facto ATV trails where none now exist. I don't know what can be done about this but, figured I'd mention it as it could be a significant problem as a result of this project.

Finally, I believe this is a sound project and implemented responsibly will benefit wildlife. I am very appreciative of the work that has gone into this on your end. I have heard from many people over the years of my public service that something like this should be undertaken. I look forward to working with you on the implementation phase.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andy McLean', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Andy McLean
Dover Town Clerk

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Wardsboro

South Wardsboro

Podunk

999

999

C186

C53

Hathaway Trail

Johnson Hill Trail

Cheney Brook Trail

Area of concern
Rice Hill

Area of concern
Whites Hill

C52

Goose City

East

Dover

C192

C117

Dover

West Dover

