

Talking Points for Technical Steering Committee Public Forums

- The original focus of this process was only on DCR forest lands, but the end result is recommendations for all state lands, and for private forestlands. Because of this change in focus many affected stakeholder groups were not represented.
- The report states that MODR worked with the various stakeholder communities to identify appropriate representatives, yet they never contacted the Mass. Wood Producers Assoc., which has represented the state's wood products companies for over 50 years.
- The report is biased against consumptive uses of forest resources without providing any basis for this bias. It assumes that active management is detrimental to other desired benefits but does not substantiate that belief or provide any evidence that it is so.
- The report gives no weight to the potential economic benefits that could be provided by increasing management on state forests. As evidenced by the work of the CCC in the Great Depression, state forestlands provide an immense opportunity to put people to work and stimulate local economies, yet this important factor was not even considered.
- Forest harvesting in Massachusetts is governed by the most comprehensive forestry and environmental laws in the eastern United States and meets the highest standards for responsible forest management. Yet the recommendations call for the adoption of even stricter regulations that have not been released for public comment.
- There needs to be a cultural change in DCR to create a more transparent and accountable process for forest management of state lands, but DCR's mismanagement of a handful of jobs is no basis for eliminating forest management from the majority of state lands.
- Forest management of state lands provides an example for private landowners, a laboratory for developing new ideas that benefit private landowners, and it supports an infrastructure of foresters, loggers, and end users that benefit private landowners.
- Halting or reducing harvesting on DCR forests will have a negative economic impact on rural communities. Jobs will be lost, businesses will be closed, and the indirect economic impact of harvesting activity will be lost.
- Loss of harvest revenue will place a greater economic burden on taxpayers for the maintenance of state forestland.
- The Draft recommendations contain no mention or analysis of the economic impacts of removing up to 75% of state lands from active management.
- Managed woodlands can accommodate more recreational uses and users than non-managed forest.
- The vast majority of forest species present in Massachusetts thrives under managed conditions. Non-managed forests support fewer species and age classes, decreasing the forests resiliency.

- A wider range of wildlife species benefit from managed conditions than from non-managed forests.
- Halting or reducing harvesting will reduce overall forest health and increase the likelihood of catastrophic fire, blowdowns, or insect outbreaks, and destroy the forest's capacity to recover from such events.
- Halting or reducing harvesting will lead to degraded habitat and less diversity of habitats in our forests, negatively impacting our wildlife populations, especially threatened and endangered species depending on early successional habitat.
- Halting or reducing harvesting will lead to reduced access and dangerous conditions for those using the forest for recreational purposes. Harvesting maintains and improves existing infrastructure and creates better access for recreational users.
- Halting or reducing harvesting will create critical safety hazards, and place an unnecessary and hazardous burden on rural fire and rescue organizations responding to emergencies in the forest.
- Massachusetts has a moral obligation to maximize local production of forest products to reduce the exporting of our demand for these products to environmentally sensitive tropical forests and forest areas where the environmental protections fall short of our standards.
- Massachusetts forest companies, which are almost exclusively small family businesses, and which provide rural communities with valuable jobs and tax revenue, rely on a steady and consistent source of wood from state forests.
- Under current Massachusetts laws, regulations, and policies, harvesting wood biomass from state forests will not and cannot threaten forest health and diversity. In fact, it will lead to healthier, more diverse forests, and it will significantly reduce our state's energy costs.
- Restricting harvesting on state forests will further reduce the availability of locally produced sawdust that is needed for animal bedding, forcing farmers to obtain this material from out-of-state sources at a greater expense.
- The loss of revenue for the state due to loss of sales will not decrease the cost of the DCR budget. They will still need the same amount of foresters to maintain the property.
- Harvesting fiber for biomass is not the primary objective of a timber sale. It is a byproduct of one.