

manage the resources of the National Recreation Area for optimum yield of outdoor recreation and environmental education through multiple use management; (b) to authorize, research, test, and demonstrate innovative programs and cost-effective management; (c) and to help stimulate the development of the surrounding region and extend the beneficial results as widely as practicable.

**Current LBL Management Plan and Planning Regulations:** The LBL Protection Act of 1998 directed the Forest Service to prepare an LRMP for LBL that conforms to the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA). The Act also provided that the Forest Service could continue to use the existing TVA Natural Resources Management Plan as appropriate to provide management direction for LBL until such time as an LRMP is adopted. By virtue of this fact, the preparation of the Area Plan is thus subject to the planning regulations contained in 36 CFR 219 *et seq.*

On May 20, 2002 the Department issued an interim final rule to extend the date by which LRMPs would otherwise be subject to the November 2000 regulations (67 FR 35431). The interim final rule allows units of the National Forest System to continue to use the 1982 version of the 36 CFR 219 regulations until such time as a revision to the November 2000 rule is adopted. Accordingly, LBL will develop the Area plan under the 1982 regulations.

**The Role of the Area Plan:** The Area Plan will guide the overall management of LBL to achieve Area-wide goals and objectives (or desired conditions). The Area Plan will be analogous to a county or municipal zoning plan. The results of these management goals will contribute to ecological sustainability, as well as to stimulate the development of local communities affected by LBL management activities. By direction of the LBL Protection Act of 1998, the Plan will have these emphases: Public recreational opportunities; conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitat; provision for diversity of native and desirable non-native plants, animals; opportunities for hunting and fishing; and environmental education. Decisions made in the Area Plan do not compel the agency to undertake particular site-specific projects and, thus, do not normally make any irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources.

The Area Plan, however, will strive to achieve these provisions; establish limitations on what actions may be authorized; prescribe the general distribution of activities across the landscape; and provide standards for conditions project decisions will meet. The following six decisions will be made in the Area Plan:

- **Area-wide multiple-use goals and objectives.** Goals describe a condition to be achieved sometime in the future. Objectives are concise, time-specific statements of measurable planned results that respond to the goals.

- **Area-wide management requirements.** These are standards for management activities, or advisable courses of action that apply across the entire area.

- **Management area direction applying to future activities in each management area.** This is the desired condition specified for certain portions of the Area, and the standards to help achieve that condition.

- **Lands suited and not suited for natural resource management.**

- **Monitoring and evaluation requirements** to gauge how well the plan is being implemented.

- **Recommendations to Congress,** such as wilderness designation, if any. It should be noted that these requirements are cited from the 1982 36 CFR 219 planning regulations.

#### Purpose and Need for Action

As discussed above, both the National Forest Management Act and the LBL Protection Act of 1998 require that an LRMP be prepared for the Area. The Area Plan will provide a blueprint to guide management decisions within the Area for a period of 10–15 years after the Plan is developed and approved. In addition to satisfying legal requirements, the Area Plan is necessary because:

1. TVA's 1994 Natural Resources Management Plan for LBL does not fully address planning regulations and policy required of the Forest Service. The plan also does not provide adequate guidance on some of the issues discussed below.

2. Certain resource conditions, trends, and visitor use patterns have changed during the past nine years. The new Area Plan will provide a conduit to incorporate new information and to address the changed conditions.

#### Proposed Action

Develop an Area plan that will meet the requirements of the National Forest Management Act and address the public issues.

#### Possible Alternatives

The actual alternatives presented in the DEIS will portray a full range of responses to the significant issues. The DEIS will examine the effects of implementing strategies to achieve desired conditions and will develop management objectives that would move LBL toward those desired conditions. A preferred alternative will be identified in the DEIS. The range of alternatives presented in the DEIS will include one that continues current management direction (that is, a "no action" alternative) and others that will address the range of issues developed in the scoping process.

#### Responsible Official

The Regional Forester for the Southern Region, located at 1720 Peachtree Street, NW., Atlanta, Georgia 30309, is the Responsible Official.

#### Nature of Decision To Be Made

The decision to be made and documented in a Record of Decision will be an Area plan that will meet the requirements of the National Forest Management Act and address all of the significant public issues developed through scoping.

#### Scoping Process

Public participation will be sought throughout the revision process, but will be particularly important at specific points along the way. The first formal opportunity to comment is during the scoping process. Scoping for the LBL Area Plan/EIS will include identifying visions for the future of the Area, as well as issues that should be addressed in the Area Plan/EIS. Scoping for the LBL Area Plan/EIS will be conducted in phases. The first phase is intended to encourage the public to describe their vision for the future of the Area. The following five public workshops are scheduled during this phase. Background information or announcements of additional meetings will be issued in news releases and on the LBL Web site. Requests to be added to the project mailing list can be directed to the Area Planner at the address above.

Date	Time	Location
Saturday, June 28, 2003 .....	1 p.m. to 5 p.m .....	Lakeland Jamboree, Cadiz, Kentucky.
Monday, June 30, 2003 .....	6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m .....	Weeks Community Center, Murray, Kentucky.