

Date	Time	Location
Tuesday, July 1, 2003	6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.	Mayfield Extension Office, Benton, Kentucky.
Thursday, July 10, 2003	6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.	Dover Elementary School, Dover, Tennessee.
Saturday, July 12, 2003	1 p.m. to 5 p.m.	Lee S. Jones Community, Bldg, 304, Lee S. Jones Park Road (In The Park).

Preliminary Issues

The following is a summary of the preliminary issues. They are the product of the deliberations of Forest Service staff, historical input received from users of LBL, interested groups, and government agencies; as well as reviews of laws, regulations, policies, existing LBL plans, and scientific information. Additional information on these topics may be found by contacting LBL as stated above.

The following issues will evolve based on public input received through the scoping process. Some issues identified during scoping may not be appropriate for decision at the Plan level. Some may be more appropriate for project level decisions or be addressed through other processes outside of the land management planning process.

1. Recreation and Environmental Education

A primary part of the mission of LBL is to protect and manage the resources of LBL for optimum yield of outdoor recreation and environmental education for the American people. The 1994 NRMP addresses program objectives and guidelines for the management of natural resources, but does not adequately address the strategies for recreation and environmental education. These strategies must be articulated to accomplish the emphases of the LBL Protection Act and the requirements of NFMA. LBL receives over two million visits annually. Sightseeing is the primary attraction for visitors (33%), followed by fishing (19%), camping (12%), and hunting (10%). (TVA 1987) Less than 4%, or 6,400 acres, of LBL is developed with facilities for recreation, environmental education, or administration. Examples of special interest areas in LBL include Turkey Bay Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) area, Elk & Bison Prairie, Wranglers Campground, and Brandon Spring Group Center.

Issue: Management direction for the recreation resource must be added to the area plan. Should the current recreation-related services be maintained, increased, or decreased in the new plan to provide optimum yield of outdoor recreation, environmental education, and stimulation of regional economies?

2. Vegetation Management Practices

Forests: The current condition of LBL's 151,550 acres of forestland is largely the oak/hickory cover type (80%). The remaining 20% include cover types of maple/beech, pine and others.

LBL currently manages for a predominantly oak/hickory forest for these purposes: wildlife habitat; enhanced visual quality; increased environmental awareness about the use of environmentally responsible management practices; research methods and techniques in ecosystem management; and demonstration of sustainable forest management's compatibility with other uses.

The following methods are currently used to achieve these stated objectives: even-aged management; uneven-aged management; timber stand improvement; passive forest management for the biosphere reserve core areas; and deferred management where the determination of a management category has not been made. Open Lands: Approximately 12,050 acres (7%) of the land at LBL is in open land. LBL currently manages the open land to enhance viewing of the forest and lakes, provide early successional habitat for wildlife, and provide for native species restoration.

Issue: How will the vegetation on LBL be managed and what desired conditions would contribute best to the optimum yield of outdoor recreation, environmental education, and stimulation of regional economies?

3. Special Designations

LBL will evaluate areas for possible addition to a roadless inventory. This inventory would contain any areas that are suitable for recommendation in the Plan and subsequent Wilderness designation by Congress. NFMA requires that the Area conduct an inventory of these suitable areas and consider making recommendations in the Plan for Wilderness.

LBL currently maintains specially designated wildlife refuge areas and biosphere reserve core areas. Bear Creek (180 acres), Long Creek (40 acres), and Prior Creek (5 acres) Waterfowl Management Units are wetlands to provide habitat for shorebirds and migrating waterfowl. Approximately

42,500 acres of LBL land is placed in protected status under the UNESCO international biosphere reserve designation. Wildlife refuges and no-hunting areas are maintained on approximately 12,250 acres.

Issue: Should areas with special management designation continue to be managed under these designations or be changed? Should additional areas be designated for special management?

Comment Requested

This notice of intent initiates the scoping process which guides the development of the environmental impact statement. The public involvement process creates an atmosphere of openness where all members of the public are free to share information with the Forest Service on a regular basis. The Forest Service is seeking information, ideas, comments, and assistance from individuals, organizations, tribal governments, and federal, state, and local agencies that may be interested or affected by the proposed action. Public participation will be solicited by notifying (in person, by mail, and/or by e-mail) known interested and affected publics. News releases will be used to inform the public of various steps of the planning process and locations of public involvement opportunities. This information also will be listed on the LBL Web site. Public participation opportunities include written comments, open houses, focus groups, and collaborative forums.

Early Notice of Importance of Public Participation in Subsequent Environmental Review: A draft environmental impact statement will be prepared for comment. The comment period on the draft environmental impact statement will be 90 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**.

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of draft environmental impact statements must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions.