

Cherokee National Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative

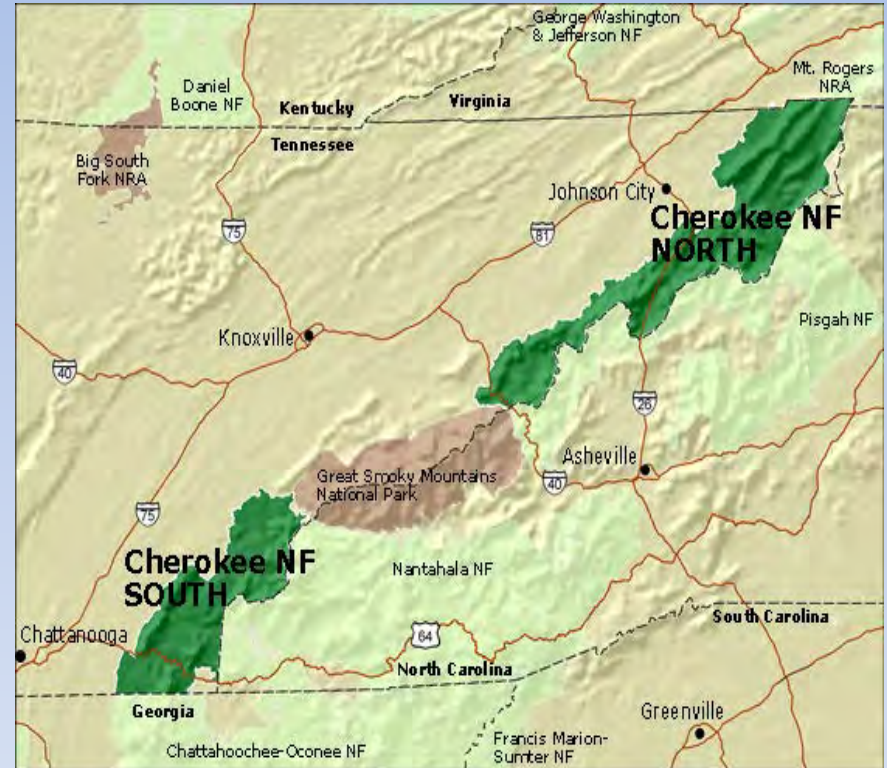


Public Meeting September 20, 2011
Erwin, Tennessee

Photo by Witt Langstaff

Cherokee National Forest

- North Zone
- 7 counties
- 340,000 acres



Steering Committee

- Geoff Call, US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Dennis Daniel, National Wild Turkey Federation
- John Gregory, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
- Steve Henson, Southern Multiple-Use Council
- Josh Kelly, Environmental Community At-Large
- Dwight King, Logging and local community At-Large
- Joe McGuinness, US Forest Service-Cherokee National Forest
- Katherine Medlock, The Nature Conservancy
- Catherine Murray, Cherokee Forest Voices
- Danny Osborne, TN Dept. of Agriculture, Division of Forestry
- Terry Porter, TN Forestry Association
- Mark Shelley, Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition
- Parker Street, Ruffed Grouse Society

Our Goal

Develop a set of scientifically sound, ecologically appropriate, consensus based recommendations to the Forest Service.

1. Re-engage the public
2. Use the best available science
3. Work together

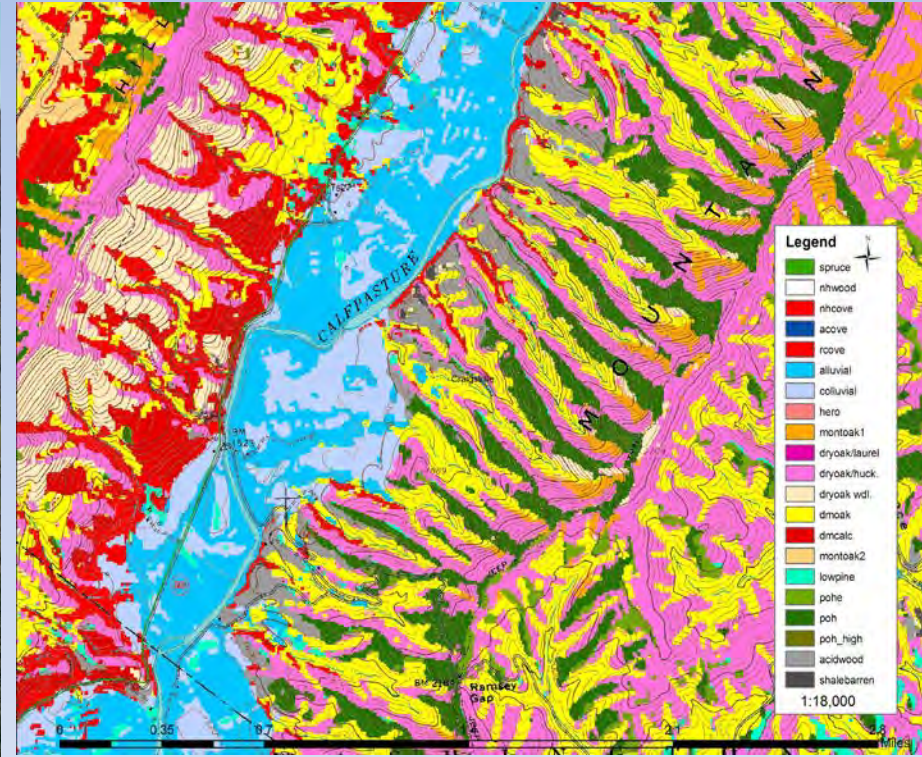


E-CAP Overview

- Uses Ecological Systems found in LANDFIRE BpS models.
- Uses Vegetation Dynamics Development Tool (VDDT) to model scenarios.
- Determines restoration goals by comparing BpS to current condition
- Allows multiple scenarios to be compared (including ROI)



Ecological Systems=Dominant vegetation type expected in the physical environment (geology & climate) under a natural disturbance regime



We “localized” LANDFIRE maps

Natural Range of Variability

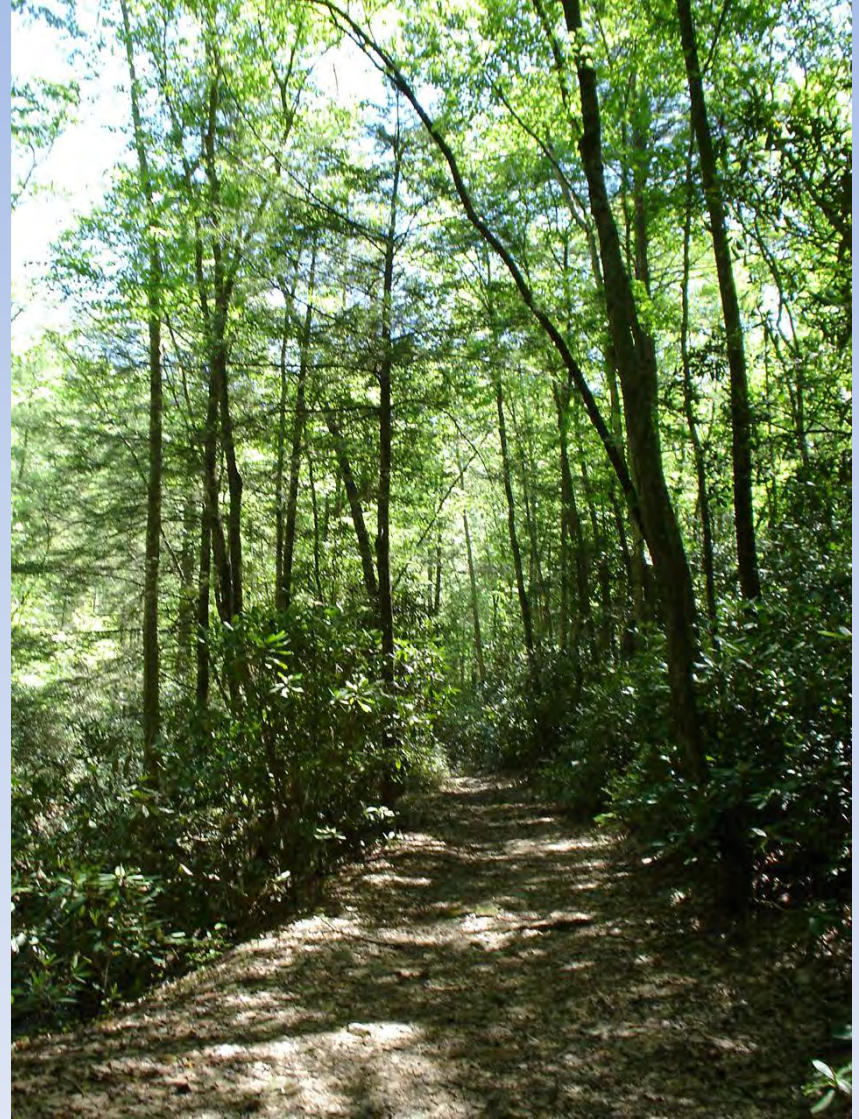
- Each Ecological System has a Natural Range of Variability (NRV) that is determined by:
 - Composition (System Classification)
 - Disturbance (Age- Early, Mid, Late, Old)
 - Structure (Open vs. Closed)
 - Condition (Natural vs. Uncharacteristic)



Current Vegetation

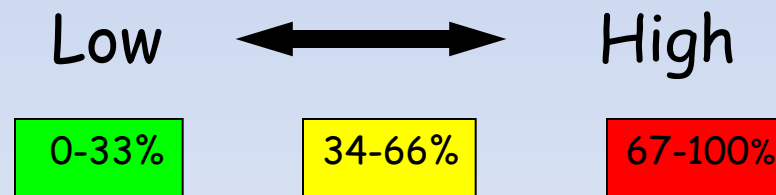
Actual current vegetation classes for each ecological system based on FS Veg and additional info.

- early to late succession
- open vs. closed canopy
 - natural vs. uncharacteristic



Ecological Departure

- E-CAP defines restoration needs by determining the Ecological Departure.
- *Departure* of current vegetation from its natural range of variability (NRV) -- i.e., dissimilarity between expected and current vegetation classes

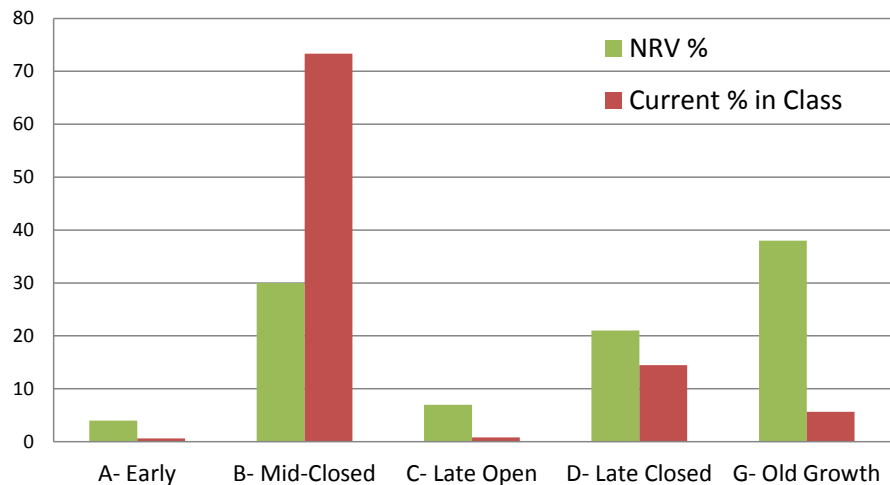


Ecological Departure = which vegetation classes are "out of whack"

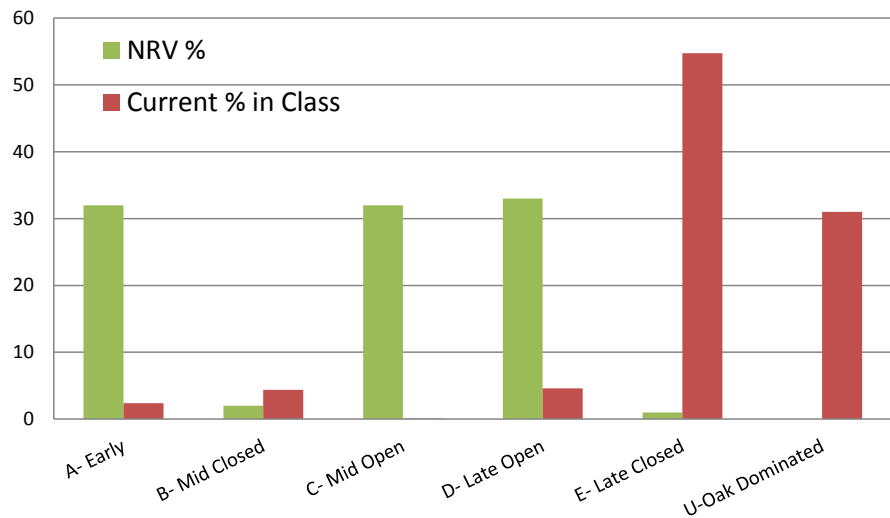
Cherokee NF Ecological Forecasts -- 20 Years

Ecological System	Acres (rounded to nearest 100)	Ecological Departure
		Current Condition
Cove Forest	103,000	47
Dry Oak Forest	65,900	61
Dry-Mesic Oak Forest	40,800	54
Low-Elevation Pine Forest	23,800	90
Montane Pine Forest	21,800	82
Montane Red-Chestnut Oak Forest	71,800	47
Northern Hardwood Forest	11,600	12
Riparian & Floodplain Systems	2,500	54
Spruce-Fir Forest	2,200	40

Cove Forest



Low-Elevation Pine Forest



Why?

- Likely due to management of forests just prior to and shortly after FS acquisition.
- 50 + years of effective fire suppression.

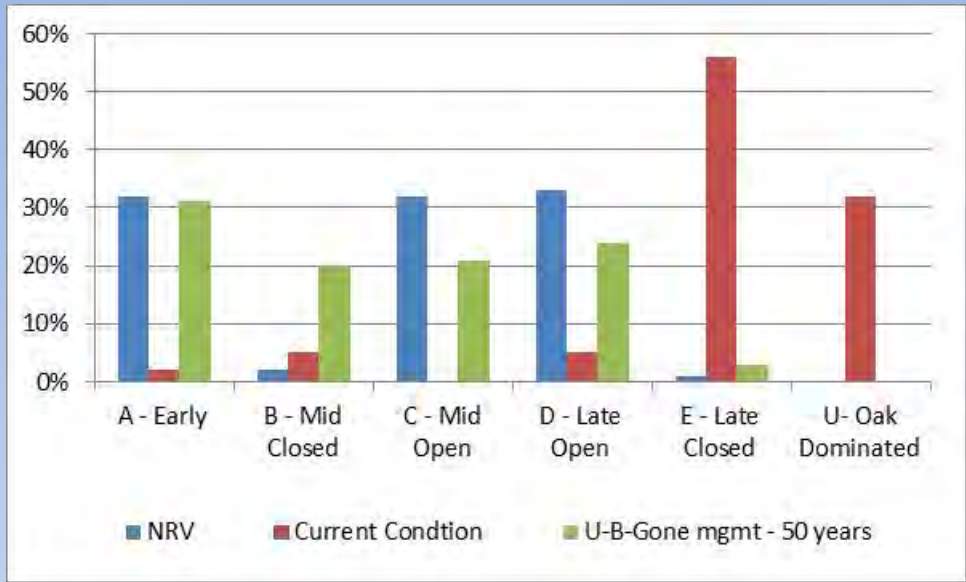


Developing Recommendations

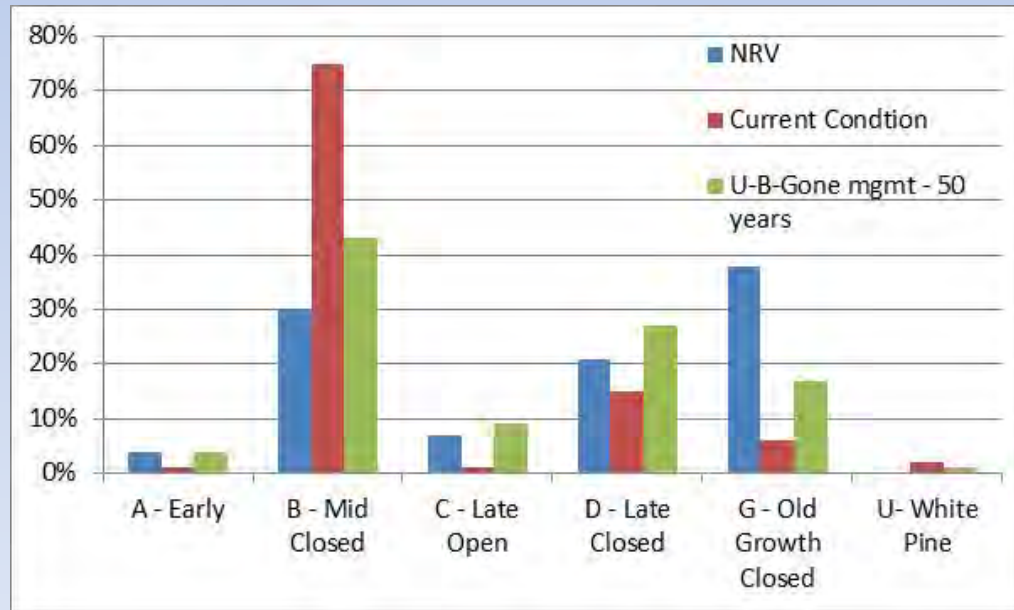
- Diversity of management options including:
 - Rx Fire and fire breaks
 - Commercial harvest
 - Non-commercial harvest
 - Thinning to various degrees
 - Planting
 - Others
- Focus on creating early habitat in systems that are lacking
- Focus on creating open mid-late habitat
- Focus on reducing U-Classes (U-B-Gone)



Low-Elevation Pine



Cove Forests



Additional Recommendations

- Watershed Approach
 - Appropriate scale for planning and measuring success.
- Invasive Forest Pests and Pathogens
 - Significant threat to our Forests
 - Early detection and rapid response is key
 - Additional funding for treatment is key



Additional Recommendations

- Climate Change
 - Use best available science at lowest scale
 - Use adaptive management approach
- Biomass/biofuels
 - If markets become available, this could help make some restoration projects more financially feasible.



Additional Recommendations

- Economics, Feasibility, and Contracts
 - Recommendations must be realistic, therefore, must have flexibility in contracting
- Threatened and Endangered Species
 - Increased focus on rare community restoration efforts
- Roads
 - Current backlog of maintenance is cause for concern



Next Steps



- Incorporate input from the public

Comments from this meeting submit tonight to recorder, on form or, send by Oct. 7, 2011 to:

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- Finalize recommendation language.
- Final draft of entire document to be posted to the web
<http://www.communityplan.net/cherokee/schedule.htm>
and available for comment until Oct. 20, 2011