



News Release

February 4, 2000

For Immediate Release

New Bern.....The Croatan National Forest will host a public open house to present a draft plan revision that will set management direction for the Forest over the next 10 to 15 years.

The open house will be held on Thursday, February 24, 2000 from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the Havelock Holiday Inn on Highway 70 in Havelock, North Carolina. Forest Supervisor John Ramey and Deputy Forest Supervisor Ranotta McNair will welcome interested individuals to a summary presentation of the draft plan revision. Opportunities for questions and discussion with planning team members and Croatan National Forest staff will highlight the early evening meeting.

The proposed plan revision emphasizes recovery of the red-cockaded woodpecker and restoration of the longleaf pine natural vegetative community that supports the endangered species. Forest management and especially fire management are keys to the ecosystem restoration strategy. Linkage through land acquisition is another proposal that can secure the National Forest, a healthy ecosystem, increase water-based recreation sites and the quality of life in eastern North Carolina.

Management direction in support of recreational development, especially trails, is also proposed. The White Oak River and Brice Creek are eligible for potential designation to the national Wild and Scenic River System.

Croatan District Ranger Lauren Hillman is inviting anyone interested in the Croatan National Forest to attend the February 24 Open house in Havelock. "Please take this opportunity to share your comments, ideas, and specific interests with the Croatan National Forest as progress is made toward finalizing the plan revision," Hillman said.

Copies of the proposed plan revision and accompanying environmental impact statement can be obtained from the Croatan National Forest in New Bern (252-638-5628.) The plan is also available on the National Forests in North Carolina website at <http://www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc>.

Public comments on the proposed plan revision will be accepted until April 10. The final Croatan plan revision should be released by the end of the year.

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