

<p><b>HOW SHOULD OUR FOREST BE USED?</b></p> <p><b>Options:</b></p>	<p><b>PROS</b></p>	<p><b>CONS</b></p>
<p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVE/WILDERNESS</b> (minimal human activity)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can co-exist with <i>low-impact</i> recreation and snowmobiles if trails avoid sensitive habitats</li> <li>• Can co-exist with occasional, environmentally motivated, <i>low-impact</i> logging in forests, even under carbon offset contracts</li> <li>• Supports low-impact logging jobs (small equipment or horses)</li> <li>• Cost-benefit ratio of possible selective timber harvests improves as stands mature</li> <li>• Maintenance costs decline as erosion declines</li> <li>• Forest &amp; forest floor allowed to reach maximum carbon storage capacity</li> <li>• Restoration of forest soils and fungal networks improve forest health</li> <li>• Research opportunities for monitoring effects of climate change, non-intervention management, and effects on species diversity and ecosystems</li> <li>• Access to a wide range of environmental grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational vehicles other than snowmobiles denied access</li> <li>• Carbon sequestration declines as trees mature</li> <li>• Openings &amp; forest diversity depend on natural attrition of canopy layer</li> <li>• Income for maintenance limited to grants &amp; carbon offsets (decline as forest matures if no openings are created for new growth)</li> <li>• Supports only loggers equipped and willing to do low-impact work (but more researchers &amp; carbon monitoring technicians)</li> </ul>
<p><b>RECREATION, Low Impact</b> (hiking, skiing, hunting, etc)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can co-exist with Environmental Preserve</li> <li>• Public access to natural and historic features</li> <li>• Healthy outdoor exercise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excludes people with mobility challenges</li> <li>• Requires safe, maintained, mapped and signposted trails</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection with the natural world</li> <li>• Spiritual and psychological renewal</li> <li>• Hunting to control deer populations and provide food is part of many family traditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rescue operations may be required</li> <li>• Limited cell phone coverage</li> <li>• Hunting accidents are rare but happen</li> <li>• Hunting for sport is unpopular with many residents and can target natural predators that help control prey species</li> </ul>
<b>RECREATION, non-motorized vehicular</b> (biking, horseback riding, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access for horse owners and enthusiasts of mountain biking and e-bikes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can damage hiking trails, vegetation, tree roots</li> </ul>
<b>RECREATION, all motorized vehicles except snowmobiles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides access to the forest for people with physical challenges, including elderly residents</li> <li>• Facilitates transport of game, tools and materials for trail work, trash removal, etc.</li> <li>• Emergency evacuation of injured visitors or workers</li> <li>• Sport riding</li> <li>• Wildlife viewing (some animals are less fearful of people in a vehicle than on foot)</li> <li>• Properly sited, designed, and constructed OHRV trails can greatly reduce damage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abrades trail surfaces, damages vegetation and wildlife habitat, compacts soils, and contributes to erosion</li> <li>• Most Fairlee Forest's 'trails' are too steep or wet for vehicular use, per State guidelines</li> <li>• The volume and kinds of Off-Highway Recreational Vehicles (OHRVs) using Fairlee Forest has increased dramatically</li> <li>• Increasing speeds and aggressiveness of off-road vehicle sports multiplies the damage they cause</li> <li>• Noise and exhaust from motorized vehicles diminishes the forest experience for others</li> <li>• Design, construction, and maintenance of safe, erosion-resistant OHRV trails is costly</li> <li>• Projected increases in heavy rains will amplify sediment discharges into the streams &amp; lake</li> </ul>

RECREATION, motorized vehicles (snowmobiles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VAST (Vermont Assoc. of Snow Travelers) members help maintain trails</li> <li>• Groomed VAST trails improve access for all winter forest visitors</li> <li>• Most newer snowmobiles are relatively quiet and unobtrusive in the landscape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snowmobile treads on bare or wet ground cause abrasion and erosion</li> <li>• Older snowmobiles create noise and air pollution</li> </ul>
FOREST ACCESS, (allowed but not promoted)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduces numbers on trails and competition for game</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimizes possible business &amp; town revenue from visitor purchases &amp; taxes</li> </ul>
FOREST ACCESS, (promoted as hiking destination)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informational materials make the forest more accessible and interesting to all visitors</li> <li>• Access to State grants for forest recreation</li> <li>• Visitors discover Fairlee and patronize our restaurants, gas stations, shops, and lodgings <i>(some case studies in other Vermont towns show significant income from forest tourism)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased traffic on trails, crowding in parking areas, more vehicles on Bald Top Rd.</li> <li>• Possible increase in need for amenities like outhouses, signs, benches, trash receptacles</li> </ul>
TIMBER HARVESTING: Sustainably moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can yield income for trail maintenance</li> <li>• Artificial forest openings can improve forest diversity (layers and species)</li> <li>• Forest openings, natural or artificial, favor some species of wildlife and migratory birds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In our forest, costs often exceed revenue, a trend projected for forests throughout Vt.</li> <li>• Disturbs forest floor, soil organisms important for forest health, and causes erosion</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest openings promote growth of young trees that <i>sequester</i> (i.e. absorb) carbon</li> <li>• Some logging roads and skid trails can be repurposed for recreation</li> <li>• Properly closed out logging roads eventually revegetate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Openings are often repopulated by invasive species</li> <li>• Openings remove mature trees that <i>store</i> carbon, and growing (“pulpwood”) trees that are <i>sequestering</i> carbon.</li> <li>• Most logging roads are too steep for maintainable recreation</li> <li>• The heavy logging equipment used today compresses the soil and requires wide roads and large landings that take years to heal.</li> </ul>
TIMBER HARVESTING: Minimized or discontinued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can co-exist with Environmental Preserve</li> <li>• Forest continues progress toward a natural state not achieved since late 18<sup>th</sup> Century</li> <li>• Potential 5-figure annual income from sale of Carbon Offsets (see <a href="https://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Legislative-Reports/VFCSWG-Report-Final-Report-1.4.20.pdf">https://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Legislative-Reports/VFCSWG-Report-Final-Report-1.4.20.pdf</a>)</li> <li>• Erosion and other negative impacts of logging gradually decline</li> <li>• Species that favor undisturbed forest may return or become more successful</li> <li>• Quality of water in the streams may improve</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income to Fairlee from timber harvesting declines</li> <li>• Area loggers lose income from our forest</li> <li>• Fairlee’s definition of “working forests” would change as the “product” shifted from wood harvesting to carbon storage and forest tourism</li> </ul>

<b>MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES (Please rank 1 to 6 in order of priority for you, 1 being highest):</b>		
<b>Public Recreation</b>		
<b>Ecosystem Preservation and Enhancement</b>		
<b>Carbon Storage and Sequestration</b>		
<b>Resource Harvesting (Logging, hunting)</b>		
<b>Financially self-sustaining</b>		
<b>Other:</b>		