



Re: Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) Comments on FSP Sparta Mountain WMA

12/16/18

Thank you for providing the opportunity to review and comment on the FSP for Sparta Mountain WMA. There is an immediate impression that GWWA conservation is a high management priority for this WMA. Recognizing the multifaceted habitats used by this species and the importance of spatial distribution of these as presented in this document will establish mosaic of habitats for multiple species past the life of this plan. This landscape perspective in managing for biodiversity and thinking of management implications beyond the boundaries of Sparta WMA is a welcomed progressive view. Laying the initial sound groundwork as, in my opinion, this plan does provides the base required in developing the more detailed project infrastructure for the entire WMA.

In reviewing similar plans from other states I also appreciate the application of supported scientific research in determining your management direction. In particular the differing sizes buffers used in SMZs. Some states utilize a standard width thus not incorporating current research. A second example is in recognizing the use of young regenerating forest stands by forest interior birds during different parts of their life cycles. We as conservation professionals have a responsibility to manage our natural resources with the concept of species full life cycles in mind to meet those needs to the best of our ability when they are present within the area under question.

As this plan and / or portions become available for general public comment I suggest the continued use of the computer generated before and after treatment diagrams. For the average forest user I believe this is a much easier rendition of '10% retention'. I have not seen these used in other plans or projects within my region and believe they would be an excellent public education and outreach tool.

These are rather general observations vs. comments as I found this FSP to contain pertinent history of the area, discussion on how the forest developed, current conditions, clearly stated need for management, management intentions big picture, and general stand descriptions. I look forward to the next process and engaging RGS members in commenting and supporting active management on Sparta WMA.

Professionally

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