**Questions used to guide the discussion:**

* *What potential aspects of a Forest Reserve framework would make it more likely for your organization to participate in adopting this designation or to pursue new land protection for the purpose of establishing Forest Reserves?*
* *Which Forest Reserve related activities can you envision your organization to be involved with in the next 5 years?*

*a. Establishing new Forest Reserves via land protection actions.*

*b. Designating lands within your organizations’s conserved lands portfolio*

*c. Assisting State agencies to secure lands for expanding existing State Forest Reserves?*

**Comments re. considerations when designating Reserves:**

* Important to consider social resiliency in addition to ecological resiliency – there are rural economies that are dependent upon forests.
* Connectivity and the significance of the forests designated as Reserves should be prioritized over geographic distribution (not every community or even region might have a forest that merits Reserve designation)
* Suggest focus on Biomap Forest Core, CNL. Emphasize most important forests, rather than geographic distribution. There is going to be a bias towards west.
* Role of forest canopy along transportation corridors (eg 128, 495) is very important – is there a way these can be integrated?
* Look at small state forest holdings, particularly those within a matrix of other protected land.
* Reserves are presently an administrative designation, needs legal protection. If Reserve designation is intended to provide an opportunity for natural processes to play out, then permanent protection should be considered.

**Considerations for Reserves on municipal / Land Trust properties?**

* The commitment requested of a landowner should not be greater than the commitment by the Commonwealth – eg. level of protection for Reserves on prvt land should be the same as state lands, whether a legislative designation or other.
* Reserves could incentivize/promote more integrated management across adjacent lands under different ownerships.
* Few municipalities use their forested holding for any timber-oriented purpose. Municipal forest holdings may fit Reserve criteria and funding for appropriate stewardship of these forests would likely incentivize municipalities to participate.
* Water suppliers/Water Departments manage significant forest tracks but need to focus on/communicate how the designation could serve their needs from an economic/water supply interest to succeed in getting them to participate.
* When thinking about how Reserves are protected, consider whether a grant agreement could serve for recorded documentation (similar to some federal grants) – CRs can be cumbersome.
* A multi-partner approach should be encouraged. A diversity of partners can leverage more diverse resources. On the other hand, don’t eliminate the opportunity for a single entity to designate a property a Reserve, if it’s suitable -there are opportunities for Reserves that are under single management!
* Make sure to clarify whether a Reserve model that incentivized many different landowners to participate would maintain the autonomy for each to manage their lands and/or make decisions individually, or if there would be agreements in place that would require consultation/consent/agreement by all involved – make sure that any management agreements/requirements would **work** –multi-party agreements can be very cumbersome and can lead to dysfunction (Mt Watatic).
* Enforcement will need to be part of the designation – documenting the commitment, but also monitoring.

**Potential Incentives for Municipalities / LTs**

* Funding and technical assistance to guide management needed – also potentially assistance with communication materials to convey the benefits of a Reserve, and/or when interventions are appropriate/necessary - LT can spend a lot of time communicating management decisions to public, assistance would help save those resources.
* To encourage participation, award organizations/municipalities points on grants.
* Municipalities and Land Trusts are going to need assistance with evaluating what properties fit the designation – LT’s (and certainly Towns) may not have staff that are knowledgeable and/or have the time.
* Possibly incentive participation by designating a fund that would make payments to LT’s / Municipalities that have designated lands at the conclusion of a specified period of time (e.g. 10 years?) that they can use for forest stewardship needs, additional open space protection, etc.
* Will need to ensure that any Reserve designation process is compatible with existing grant programs (e.g. designation could count towards partner “match” in the Landscape Partnership grant program.)
* LT’s might find the designation attractive regardless of add’l financial incentives if it brings a layer of protection that is less cumbersome or more understandable than say, a CR.
* LT’s could be positioned to pursue designation relatively easily (see: wildlands model), and it would demonstrate their commitment to long-term protection of forested lands presently held in ‘Reserve’ like conditions, but technically un-protected.
* Reserve designation could be attractive, because it doesn’t require a second party to agree to participate (such as a CR does) – could be a Board vote.
* For some organizations the acquisition of new lands for Reserve designation might be easier then identifying/designating existing holdings provided different commitments already layered on some holdings etc.
* Consider a grant program to fund the process of evaluating/designating lands for Reserves.

**Other comments/questions:**

* Solar and trees are both important – look at incentives that will keep both (e.g. locate solar on parking lots).
* How do WMAs fit in to the Reserve designation?
* Explore if there is a way Ch 61 ROFR could be assigned to the Commonwealth by the municipality.
* State needs to look at the concern that rural communities experience with lost property tax revenues.
* It will be helpful if Commonwealth can share the regions/criteria we are targeting to share with LTs and Municipalities for further input.
* Land Trust staff capacity is limited already – need to spend less time on state grant application process and CR process. One way to reduce burden would be to eliminate the requirement that a grant funded LT acquisition be encumbered by a CR.