

SUSQUEHANNOCK STATE FOREST DISTRICT

2020 MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY PLAN

8/17/20

The mission of DCNR Bureau of Forestry is to conserve the long-term health, viability and productivity of the Commonwealth's forest and to conserve native wild plants. One of the ways the bureau carries out this mission is through the [State Forest Resource Management Plan](#) (SFRMP), a document that guides the management of the 2.2 million-acre state forest system. The SFRMP is updated approximately every 5 years and includes an extensive public engagement process.

One of the policies in the bureau's strategic plan ([Penn's Woods: Sustaining Our Forests](#)) includes, "Public participation will be an integral part of the management of state forest lands." The purpose of this Management Activity Plan is to communicate to the public about upcoming management activities, projects, and events that will be conducted to implement the SFRMP on Susquehannock State Forest. This document will be revised at the start and middle of each calendar year to provide sufficient time for public review, questions, and feedback. The bureau is committed to considering the views and perspectives of the public and stakeholders and strives to accommodate public interests in planning management activities and decision making. We encourage comments or questions regarding planned or proposed activities be directed to the state forest district conducting the activity.

For questions, comments, or more information about this plan, please contact:

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RECREATION

- Clear and mark trails north of Rte. 6 in the Ansley area
- **Denton Hill Ski Trail** –maintenance of 29 miles of trail. Grooming of trails when conditions permit.
- **ATV Trail** – Placement of approximately 2000 tons of stone on the trail in the Block Valve to West Branch section of the trail. Grading and trail maintenance where needed. Working on an ATV connector to Patterson Lumber Co. property that will connect the state forest ATV trail to Ulysses Township road and one business.
- **Snowmobile Trails** – brushing and maintenance as needed. Grooming of 250 miles of trail when conditions permit. Placement of a bridge over Losey Run to permanently re-route the snowmobile trail off of Rock Run Road from Losey Road to the ATV Trailhead.
- **Susquehannock Trail System** – work cooperatively with STS Trail Club to ensure the successful maintenance of the trail system as they have for the last 40 plus years.

Gated Roads Open for Deer Season – This program allows hunters better access to DMAP areas and inaccessible areas. The program helps the BOF to get more antlerless deer harvested in areas where we are seeing higher deer impacts to forest regeneration. Eighteen gated roads are proposed to be opened for the 2019 deer seasons: Final Road List should be on website by mid-late September.

Organized Events

2020 Organized Events:

May, Annual Forest Management/Habitat Tour (Susquehannock State Forest) **Cancelled due to COVID-19**

August, Midnight Madness Mountain Bike Race (Ole Bull State Park & Tioga County Ridge Riders Bicycle Club) **May be affected by COVID-19**

August 1, 2020 , ATV Poker Run **Limited number of riders due to COVID-19**

Events with Public Contact Trailer for 2019

March, Kettle Creek Outdoor Show **Cancelled due to COVID-19**

June, Cross Fork Snake Hunt **Cancelled due to COVID-19**

July, Bark Peelers Convention at PA Lumber Museum **Cancelled due to COVID-19**

August, Woodsmen Show at Cherry Springs **Cancelled due to COVID-19**

TIMBER MANAGEMENT

Marked and sold, potentially active

- Too Tall, off of Card Creek Road
- Attention Deficit, off of Junction Road
- Greenlick Run, off of Shepard Road
- Straight Shot, off of Rauch Road
- Ash Salvage, off of Thompson Hollow/ATV Trail
- Jing Brush, off of Rock Ridge
- String Walkin, off of Windfall Road
- Sticky Fingers, off of Ridge Road
- Widler Removal, off of Pine Island Road
- Return of the Chub, off Rte. 44 near Patterson Park
- Naked Bear, off of Portage Road
- Magical Mushroom, off of Rte. 44 near Watertank Vista
- Stumblin and Bumblin, off of the Whitman Road
- Welded Hood, off of Short Run
- Fleet a Foot, off of Gas Well Road
- Naggin Knat, off of Rte. 44 near Patterson Park
- Bakers Gate, off of Thompson Hollow Road
- Sitting Squirrel, off of Randall Road
- Elk Hollow, off of Culver Woods Road
- Per Diem Pirate, off of Rte. 872
- Homeward Bound, off of Sunken Branch
- Lost Phone Frenzy, off of 12 Mile Road

- Even Tiller, off of Combs Creek Road
- Tent Time Tuesday off of Nelson Run Road
- Almost There, off of Black Diamond
- Wrong Boot, off of Hungry Hollow
- Back Pack, off of Pine Island Road
- Big Lebowski, off of Nelson Run Road
- Walk, off of Odin Road
- Blue Berry Bandit, off of Boone Road
- Randall Road Removal, off of the Randall Road
- Dude There Was, off of Rock Ridge Road
- O Well, off of Spring Brook Loop
- Two and Done, off of Pine Island/Elk Lick Road

Planned Timber Sales

- 70 acre shelterwood off the Big Trestle Haul Road
- 40 acre Ash Salvage off of Hungry Hollow Road
- 108 acre overstory removal off the Rauch Road/Bear Run Ridge Haul Road
- 60 acre overstory removal off of Rte. 44 near Hogback
- 75 acres of Ash Salvage off of Ridge Road ATV Trail
- 202 acre Ash Salvage Improvement off of the Big Moores Road
- 77 acre Overstory Removal off of Sunken Branch/Ram Road Trail
- 15 acre overstory removal and 64 acre Shelterwood off of Rte. 144/Indian Run
- 80 acre overstory removal off of Hungry Hollow Road
- 103 acre overstory removal off Pine Island Road

- 85 acre overstory removal and 42 acre shelterwood off Lyman Run Road
- 127 acres of overstory removal/shelterwood off Twelve Mile Road/Wildcat Trail
- 142 acres of overstory removal off Boone Road
- 114 acres of overstory removal off McConnel Road
- 125 acre shelterwood off of Portage Road
- 146 acres of overstory removal/shelterwood off of Nelson Run Road
- 72 acres of overstory removal off Dyer Road
- 74 acre overstory removal off Nelson Run Road/Schoolhouse West
- 70 acre overstory removal off Gardeau Road
- 100 acre overstory removal off Rte. 6/Big Fill Haul Road
- 68 acre overstory removal off of Spring Brook Loop Haul Road

Regeneration projects

- 543 acres of flat herbicide blocks, 1.5 qt. Glyphosate/Oust mix - **Completed in July**
- 921 acres of steep herbicide blocks, 1.5 qt. Glyphosate/Oust mix - **Completed in July**
- 114 acres of hand sprayed herbicide blocks, 1.5 qt. Glyphosate/Oust mix
- 277 acres of weeding/crop tree—**Cancelled due to COVID-19**
- 284 acres of Fertilizer for black cherry regeneration – **Completed in May**
- 344 acres of royer/mowing
- 942 acres of planting with approximately 200,000 conifer and hardwood seedlings – **Cancelled due to COVID-19**
- Planting Project, 50 acres off of Rte. 44 – **Cancelled due to COVID-19**
- Erecting approximately 5 deer exclosures on approximately 200 acres
- Dismantling approximately 8 deer exclosures

RESTORATION AND HABITAT PROJECTS

- **Food Plot Program** – Cooperative efforts between the forest district and PGC Food & Cover Crew complete 200 acres of food plot management across the district. 2020 plans will be decided in February 2020.
- **NWTF, Ruffed Grouse Society, RMEF, Cross Fork Sportsmen Club, Safari International, KECA, Black Forest Conservation Club, Dominion, Shell, National Fuel Gas** – continue to partner with these organizations to work on habitat projects
- **Aspen cuts** – several small wildlife aspen cuts will be completed by the PGC and district staff during winter of 2020
- **Large Woody Debris Habitat Projects** – Cooperative project with PA Fish & Boat, Potter County Conservation District, Trout Unlimited, Tioga and Susquehannock State Forests
- **Grouse/Woodcock management** – Habitat work in Gas Well Hollow and Greenlick area where were have Grouse/Woodcock Management Plans completed.

ROAD AND BRIDGE PROJECTS

- Paver placing of 4000 tons of DSA on 1.45 mile of Sunken Branch Road
- Replacement of culvert structure on Red Ridge near intersection with Windfall – **expected to start early September**
- Replacement of culvert structure on Lebo Road – **currently under construction**
- Replacement of large culvert on Windfall Road near Slip Hollow
- Replacement of 3 large culverts on Eleven Mile Road
- Grade, clean headwalls, culverts, and tail ditches on 168 miles of State Forest Road

PRESCRIBED FIRE

- RX Burn of competing vegetation off of Hungry Hollow Road if conditions allow

INSECT, DISEASE, AND INVASIVE PLANT TREATMENTS

- Insect and disease monitoring and reporting will continue in 2020 and will focus on the priority list provided by the Division of Forest Pest Management (FPM). Report forms will be forwarded to FPM Area Specialist from the District I&D coordinator for ground truthing and possible control efforts for reported insect and disease problems. Aerial survey flight(s) will be conducted in late June/early July to detect possible problem areas as well.
- Continue to monitor for the presence of EAB and continue to initiate ash salvage shelterwoods in stands that are heavily stocked with ash
- Treat 3 areas of Ash (approx. 100 trees) against EAB
- Mile-a-minute treatment will continue in the Pine Island, Elk Lick, and Portage areas.
- Monitor for presence of Ailanthus/Tree of Heaven and eradicate when found
- Monitor for presence of other invasive species

NATURAL GAS, OIL, AND OTHER GEOLOGIC RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- Work with PGE on development of severed rights off of Nelson Run Road to possibly include drilling activity, new pads, water impoundments and gathering pipelines.
- Work with PGE on using Card Creek Road to drill an unconventional well on private property off of Card Creek Road.
- Current maintenance and operation of existing gas wells with occur in the following areas: Greenlick Storage Field, Wharton Storage Field, Pine Hill/McConnell Shallow and Marcellus wells, Reed Run Shallow and Marcellus wells, and Tract 001 Marcellus wells.
- Work cooperatively with JKLM Energy who has the Billy Lewis Road bonded for hauling in relation to drilling on private land adjacent to state forest land

TOWER AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY PROJECTS

- No new tower or ROW projects are currently planned for 2020
- Tri-County Rural Electric will be clearing and maintaining ROW's across the district
- Dominion, NFG, and Enterprise Pipeline will be performing maintenance on portions of their ROW's

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Annual Forest Management/Habitat Tour held Sunday after Spring Gobbler Season opens each year. The main objectives of the tour are as follows: To observe and discuss some of the on the ground challenges involved in both sustainable forest and wildlife management, to examine some of the habitat improvements that we are seeing with the current deer management plan, to foster a better relationship with those who use the Susquehannock State Forest and to exchange information that can be taken home and utilized.

Details for the 2018 Tour can be gotten by contacting the district office in early April at fd15@pa.gov or 814-274-3600. **Cancelled due to COVID-19**

- We staff our public contact trailer at the following events each year: Cross Fork Outdoor Show, Cross Fork Snake Hunt, Bark Peeler's Convention, and Cherry Springs Woodsmen Show. **All cancelled due to COVID-19**
- Questions or comments can be asked or made at any time by emailing the Susquehannock State Forest at fd15@pa.gov or calling 814-274-3600.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Demolition of buildings at Rauch Farm
- Boundary line maintenance on 1/5 of total boundary line in district

RESEARCH

- Researchers from Penn State University are conducting a multi-year project called the Deer-Forest Study on the Rothrock, Bald Eagle, and Susquehannock State Forests. This study looks at better understanding the role of deer in context of the many challenges that PA forests face including invasive species, insect outbreaks, soil acidity, tree diseases, and even deer themselves. The goal of this study is to help forest and wildlife managers better manage deer and the forests. This is a cooperative project with researchers from PSU, US Geologic Survey, PA Game Commission, and DCNR Bureau of Forestry. This study area is approximately 69 square miles in size and is in the northern part of the Susquehannock State Forest from Cherry Springs north to US Rte. 6.

- Researchers from the US Forest Service in Irvine are performing a study with the following objectives: The disconnect between deer densities and their concomitant browse impact has led us to ask whether incorporating information on the heterogeneity in vegetation and land use patches across the landscape (e.g., abundance and distribution of high-quality forage) will clarify the relationship between ungulate density and their impact on vegetation. Specifically, we propose to (1) evaluate the relationship between deer densities and browse-impact on vegetation and (2) determine the degree to which forest landscape heterogeneity influences foraging behavior and, in turn, browse impact. Millington et al. (2010) asserted that elucidating the relationship among herbivore distribution, foraging impact, and forest landscape structure was critical to “ensure the ecological and economic sustainability” of forest ecosystems.
- The Susquehanna River Basin Commission is performing research that involves monitoring stream conditions on two tributaries of Pine Creek and one tributary of the First Fork of the Sinnemahoning. They are monitoring turbidity, PH, temperature, and other measures that have the potential to be impacted by Marcellus gas activity.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

- Marked and sold 2236 acres of timber. These timber sales generated \$4.2 million dollars
- Administered the contracts and harvesting of over 30 timber sales
- Completed administration of contract for the herbicide application of Glyphosate (Round Up) and Sulfometuron (Oust) on over 1000 acres to control competing vegetation consisting of beech brush, striped maple, and fern
- Completed the cutting of interfering brush on several blocks
- Planted mixed hardwoods and softwood tree seedlings
- Erected 8 new electric deer exclosures and dismantled 10 deer exclosures, maintained the existing deer exclosures
- Completed the following road maintenance projects:
 - Drainage improvement / gravel placement on Sunken Branch Road approximately 1.1 miles
 - ATV /Snowmobile Trail – upgraded and installed 22 culverts
- Graded, cleaned culverts and headwalls on 168 miles of state forest road

- Held our annual Forest Management/Habitat Tour Had our Public Contact Trailer staffed at the following events answering questions and providing brochures, maps, and other information: Cross Fork Outdoor Show, Cross Fork Snake Hunt, Bark Peelers and Woodsmen Show
- Cleared and marked trails on the Denton Hill XC Trail System, finished clearing trails in the Hammersley Wild Area, completed Hammersley Brochure
- Held Arbor Day activities in 10 school districts (5 in Potter County and 5 in McKean County)
- Opened gated haul roads for early muzzleloader and rifle deer season
- Completed planting and maintenance on 200 acres of food plots in cooperation with the PA Game Commission Potter County Food & Cover Crew
- Did numerous programs for groups at the PA Lumber Museum