

DELAWARE STATE FOREST DISTRICT

2020 ACTIVITY PLAN

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 Activity Plan is to communicate to the public about upcoming management activities, projects, and events that will be conducted to implement the SFRMP on Delaware 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

- District staff will assist the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission stock trout at Bushkill Creek, Lily Pond, Lake Minisink, Little Mud Pond, and Saw Creek.
- Lily Pond—A new parking area was created at the site of two cabins that were demolished winter of 2019.
- New picnic tables and BBQ grills are planned to be installed at the Ambush pavilion near the Owego Maintenance Headquarters, off U.S. Route 6 in Blooming Grove Township.
- Four new informational kiosks will be installed in 2020. Locations will be: Hobday landing, Pecks Pond dam, bottom of Laurel Run Road near gate and one at a newer acquisition along Snow Hill road.
- Parking areas and access points—Improvements to multiple parking areas will consist of minor grading work, addition of stone over existing base, and placement of rocks to help delineate parking areas. A new parking area will be constructed on Five Mile Meadow road to enhance access to Rock Hill pond.
- Forest leased campsites (cabins) will receive their standard inspections, or on request, by staff.
- Snowmobile trail improvement is planned for the Crossover Trail between Standing Stone and Saw Creek trails. Tailgating of AASHTO#1 stone to provide a solid trail base will occur, with a top dressing of smaller 2RC stone in the following year.
- An ATV trail improvement project is planned as a continuation of the upgrades at Burnt Mills Trail. Tailgating of AASHTO#1 stone to provide a solid trail base will occur, with a top dressing of smaller 2RC stone in the following year.
- Pecks Pond Dam Rehabilitation Project—Construction began in spring 2019 and concluded this summer. A kiosk will be installed at the dam site later this summer and educational and interpretive signage will be installed within the next year. The pond has refilled and PA F&BC has started stocking the pond as part of their repopulation plan.
- Dixon Miller Recreation Area will have a new entrance sign installed on SR 115.
- Stream crossing signs will be installed to help visitors identify the stream name along our State Forest Roads.

Organized Events

- The District expects to renew and administer multiple commercial activity agreements for 2020. The activities include environmental education, guided nature hikes, guided horseback riding, ATV trail access, and guided biking trips.

TIMBER MANAGEMENT

Marked and sold, potentially active

- Pike County, Greene Township—In 2019, an overstory removal sale was marked and sold along Burley Inlet Trail in and around the Burley Inlet East deer exclosure. The timber harvest encompasses 133 acres and may be cut in 2020.
- Pike County, Porter Township—The Highline Spur timber sale, a 107-acre overstory removal timber sale was completed in 2019. This timber sale is located along Highline Spur Road. The purpose of the sale is to release the advanced oak regeneration that has developed since the Highline Spur prescribed fire. The sale's landing and perimeter are now open for public fuelwood cutting with a permit.
- Pike County, Porter Township—A 96-acre overstory removal timber sale, located between State Route 402 and the Pine Flats Fireline Trail, was retired in 2019. The purposes of this sale were to regenerate the oak stands and to remove dead standing timber for wildfire fuel reduction. The sale's landing is now open for public fuelwood cutting with a permit. The interior of the sale and portions abutting SR 402 are not open for fuelwood cutting.
- Firewood Cutting Permits—During 2020, the public will be able to buy fuelwood permits to cut wood at the Pine Flats Fireline Timber Sale landing and along a network of roads west of State Route 402 along Highline Road. Permits will also be available at the Tanglewood Mountain area in Palmyra Township and at the Millbrook Trail fuelwood area in Greene Township, except during the winter season at Tanglewood. Additional sites may become available.
- Pike County, Porter Township—The Red Rock Salvage will be active soon. The buyer will start this winter. It is 174 acres of Gypsy Moth Salvage located east of route 402, on the east side of Luke Road.
- Pike County, Lehman Township—The Minks Pond Removal sale was sold last summer. It is 44.5 acres of overstory removal. The area has a deer fence and is located East of the Bushkill road, at the end of Browns Mill road. Cutting has not started yet and will probably start summer 2020.
- Monroe County, Middle Smithfield Township—The Ivan Hiawatha timber sale sold fall 2019. It is an 82 acre overstory removal that is located west of Marshalls Creek Road, along Hiawatha and Ivan Swamp roads. It was first cut as a shelterwood and fenced to establish regeneration. Cutting probably will not start until at least summer 2020.
- Pike County, Porter Township—The Thunderbird Removal timber sale at the north end of Flat Ridge Road and Bald Barren trail totaling 70 acres was marked and sold. The old shelterwood of 48 acres will have the overstory removed. An additional 20 acres located to the northwest of the trail will have a shelterwood harvest. Additional acres will be landings and road. The sale is expected to be harvested by September 30th, 2020.

- Pike County, Porter and Delaware Townships—113 acres of dead and dying timber proposed for harvest along Coon Swamp Road was marked and sold. Treatments include a Two-Aged Buffer and Salvage Overstory Removal. The logger has until September 30th, 2021 to complete the sale.

Proposed (not marked yet)

- Pike County, Porter Township—An oak regeneration timber sale will be proposed along Spring Roberts Trail off Highline Road. The timber harvest will encompass about 250 acres. Part of this timber sale's purpose is to create early successional habitat for golden-winged warblers and associated species such as woodcock and grouse.
- Pike County, Porter Township—An overstory removal will be marked north of Whittaker Farm road, along the powerline. It will be 50 acres and is fenced. The area was treated with a prescribed fire previously. It will probably be marked and sold this summer.
- Pike County, Blooming Grove Township – An overstory removal sale will be laid out along Ambush Road across from Costa's Fun Park just south of Route 6. The sale will remove most of the overstory trees located inside of the three fences along the east side of the road totaling 37 acres. Another 33 acres will be marked outside of the fences to remove the overstory and allow for natural regeneration of the site. The total sale area will be 70 acres. Conifers and oak seedlings will be planted inside the fences once logging has been completed.

Regeneration projects

- In 2019, Bartleson Road, County Line West, Irishman, Big Bush South, and Big Bush Removal deer exclosure fences were taken down. The reason for the removals is that adequate regeneration has developed from a combination of natural regeneration and planting of the sites. The majority of desirable seedlings are above the deer browse height, allowing for the teardowns.
- **This project is on hold until further notice**—In 2020, two fences will be expanded on Tanglewood Mountain in Palmyra Township, Pike County. The expansions of the Tanglewood Powerline and Tanglewood Billard fences will add 62 acres and 57 acres of additional fence, respectively. These woven wire fences will be installed around a shelterwood cut that was harvested in 2017-2018. The goal is to protect seed and seedlings from deer herbivory to develop regeneration of a high-quality stand which reflects the current overstory. Deer pressure is high in this area due to its close proximity to a large housing development. These

fences are located on highly productive growing sites which produce some of the highest quality timber in the Delaware Forest District.

- Vegetation Impact Protocol Plots (VIP plots) will be completed on State Forest Land to assess deer browsing impact on regeneration and native plants.
- The District will participate in the Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) in an effort to achieve or maintain a deer population that is balanced with its habitat.
- **This project is on hold until further notice**—Tree seedlings will be planted at Millbrook Trail in Greene Township, Pike County. A total of 13,909 white pine seedlings will be planted at this location. The site was treated with an overstory removal with biodiversity reserves during 2016-2017. The conifer tree seedlings will augment the natural regeneration of mainly hardwoods with a conifer component for wildlife habitat and species diversity. The conifers will provide winter thermal cover and escape cover for wildlife.
- **This project is on hold until further notice** Tree seedlings will be planted at Pine Flats Fireline Trail in Porter Township, Pike County. A total of 24,031 white pine seedlings will be planted on 96 acres at this location. The site was treated with an overstory removal with biodiversity reserves during 2018. The conifer tree seedlings will augment the natural regeneration of mainly hardwoods with a conifer component for wildlife habitat and species diversity. The conifers will provide winter thermal cover and escape cover for wildlife.
- **This project is on hold until further notice** Tree seedlings will be planted at Highline Spur in Porter Township, Pike County. A total of 24,130 white pine seedlings and 400 red spruce seedlings will be planted on 108 acres at this location. The site was treated with an overstory removal with biodiversity reserves during 2019. The conifer tree seedlings will augment the natural regeneration of mainly hardwoods with a conifer component for wildlife habitat and species diversity. The conifers will provide winter thermal cover and escape cover for wildlife.
- **This project is on hold until further notice** A silvicultural treatment called weeding is being performed at two previously regenerated timber sales, the Badger timber sale along Song Dog Road and the Royer timber sale along Big Dam Ridge Trail in Greene and Palmyra Townships, Pike County. The project consists of cutting, by hand, competing vegetation less than 6" diameter. Specifically, sweet birch, striped maple, beech, and hophornbeam will be cut to release sugar maple, black cherry, oak, red maple, and white pine seedlings and saplings. The project size is 180 acres and is funded by the Department's regeneration fund.
- **This project is on hold until further notice** A silvicultural treatment called weeding will be performed at a previously regenerated timber sale along Burley Inlet Road in Greene Township, Pike County. The project will consist of cutting, by hand, competing vegetation less than 6" diameter. Specifically, sweet birch, striped maple, beech, and hophornbeam will be cut to release red, white, and chestnut oak saplings. The project size will be 54 acres and will be funded by the Department's regeneration fund.

- **This project is on hold until further notice** Tree seedlings will be planted along the 16 Mile Run Road. There will be 10,000 White Pine planted in areas of Gypsy Moth mortality and the heavily burned area of the 16 Mile Run fire.
- **This project is on hold until further notice** Tree seedlings will be planted on the east side of Standing Stone Road. The focus will be inside the southern portion of the overstory removal block. 25 acres will be planted with 700 red spruce, 7500 Norway spruce, and 6850 eastern white pine. The area was harvested in 2017.
- A 37-acre deer fence along Silver Lake Road just west of Fivemile Meadow Road is slated to be removed. The site was harvested a few years ago and has regenerated quite nicely.

RESTORATION AND HABITAT PROJECTS

- Delaware State Forest will continue to partner with Indiana University of Pennsylvania in an ongoing effort to create Golden Winged Warbler habitat in a 2500-acre Special Management Area. Sites are located along Pine Flats Road and Highline Road. These habitat projects are beneficial to warblers and a host of other game and non-game species.
- Work will continue on the 2-acre wildlife habitat opening located along Steam Mill Trail. The area was herbicided to kill non-native grasses and shrubs. A 200' buffer around the opening was burned to stimulate new shrub growth. The buffer had some of the trees cut to open it up and create a "soft edge". The opening was planted in May 2019 with a mixture of native grasses and wildflowers. The site has only seen one growing season and has responded nicely. Two more growing seasons are needed for the opening to reach its' maximum growth ability.
- Another 2-acre wildlife habitat opening is being proposed for rehabilitation just south of Route 6 and north of Hatton Trail. The site will most likely be burned to remove growth of old, dead and dying vegetation, then herbicided to provide a "clean slate" in preparation for planting. DCNR's Ecological Services Section as well as The National Wild Turkey Federation will most likely be aiding in funding the project.
- Nesting boxes for various wildlife species will be installed throughout the district to help promote species such as wood ducks, bats, and bluebirds.
- The Fire Tower Road wildlife opening in Westfall Township, Pike County will be enhanced with new seed and soil supplements in the spring of 2020. This project is funded by the NWTF and completed by DCNR Forestry and the Pennsylvania Game Commission staff.
- The numerous herbaceous openings in Monroe and Pike county will be maintained for various species of wildlife.

ROAD AND BRIDGE PROJECTS

- Laurel Run Road will receive almost 6,800 tons of DSA stone improving 3.5 miles of roadway in spring 2020.
- Burnt Mills ATV trail will receive approximately 3,250 tons of AASHTO #1 stone and approximately 2,850 tons of 2RC stone as an ATV trail improvement project.
- Culvert replacements—Whittaker Trail, Sixteen Mile Run Road, and two at locations at Camp William Penn will receive culvert replacements this year.
- Laurel Run road, over Mud Run, and Sixteen Mile Run road, over High Swamp Run, are culvert replacements planned for 2020.
- The Hay Road off Pine Flats Road will receive more 2RC stone as a top-dress to improve this joint-use road.
- Ranch Road in Blooming Grove Township, Pike County has a plan for additional stone and the construction of two French mattresses. This project is not funded yet.

PRESCRIBED FIRE

- Pike County, Blooming Grove Township- A prescribed fire will be conducted along the State Forest boundary line with the community of Hemlock Farms in the Maple Run Recreation Area. The fire is a pilot Hazardous Fuels Mitigation Project with the primary objective of reducing fuel loads of 1 hour, 10 hour, and shrub fuels. This fire area is approximately 1.5 miles long and averages 200 feet wide.

INSECT, DISEASE, AND INVASIVE PLANT TREATMENTS

- One hundred ash trees will be chemically re-treated with TREE-AGE, a trunk-injected insecticide. Most of these trees are on Tanglewood Mountain. This treatment is an attempt to save some genetically superior ash trees that would otherwise succumb to the emerald ash borer – a non-native forest pest.
- Staff will continue to monitor for invasive plants and insects across state forest land and they will be treated appropriately. Areas of specific concern are the recently-altered fourteen miles of PPL Susquehanna-Roseland project powerline, as well as, several other electric and gas line projects. Mile-a-minute, tree-of-heaven, phragmites, Japanese knotweed, emerald ash borer, and spotted lantern fly are key invasive species for which the staff will be on the lookout.
- Approximately one acre of wisteria will continue to be chemically treated until it is controlled. Wisteria is an exotic, invasive vine that causes significant damage to the native trees and forest ecology. The wisteria treatment site is located along Old Route 402 near Peck's Pond.

- Approximately one-quarter acre of Japanese knotweed will continue to be chemically treated along the shore of Peck's Pond. Japanese knotweed is an exotic, invasive plant that can detrimentally alter a wetland ecosystem.
- The presence of emerald ash borer was confirmed in Monroe and Pike County in 2017. Ash mortality began in 2018 on the western edge of the district as a result. This mortality has rapidly increased and will continue to spread in the coming years.
- Spotted lantern fly has been confirmed in Monroe County. Spotted lantern fly is an invasive insect that was confirmed in the United States in 2014. This invasive insect could potentially have an impact on State Forest lands in 2020. This pest has the potential to negatively affect many of our native tree species.
- Gypsy moth defoliation levels were low in 2019 on the Delaware State Forest and in Pike and Monroe Counties in general. Therefore, no gypsy moth spraying is proposed by the Delaware State Forest District in 2020.
- Three acres of phragmites in Panther Swamp, Palmyra Township and Saw Creek Swamp, Porter Township were treated through contract this year. Treatment included the hand application of herbicide to kill the invasive species while protecting the native wetland plants. These areas will be monitored in 2020 to determine whether further treatments to control phragmites will be needed.

NATURAL GAS, OIL, AND OTHER GEOLOGIC RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- Tennessee Gas Pipeline company will continue to support invasive plant treatments on Delaware State Forest land right-of-way's and adjacent areas.

TOWER AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY PROJECTS

- PennDOT will be widening State Route 611 in front of the District Office in Swiftwater.
- PennDOT continues to improve Interstate 84 in Dingman Township, Pike County adjacent to Delaware Forest and has recently given Forestry notice of acquisition of approximately 0.5 acres for ROW access.
- The Big Pocono Fire tower, located within Big Pocono State Park, has been tore down and salvaged as well as replaced with a new era Fire Tower. This is a Department of General Services project being coordinated by our Division of Forest Fire Protection. The new tower has been erected and the project is complete. The old tower has gone to Grey Towers, where plans are coming together to re-erect the tower to use for educational and historic purposes.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Staff will continue to promote and enhance the image of the forest and district. One particular task is addressing illegal forest dumping. Staff will investigate and prosecute illegal forest dumpers when applicable. We will continue to remove and clear dump sites when found. Staff are partnering with the Pennsylvania Environmental Council on major cleanups in Pike County.
- Volunteering opportunities for trail maintenance are anticipated in 2020.
- Comments, questions, and concerns pertaining to any and all district activities may be directed to our District Office at 570-895-4000 or via email at FD19@pa.gov

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Pecks Pond Dam rehabilitation— Construction began in spring 2019 and concluded this summer. A kiosk will be installed at the dam site later this summer and educational and interpretive signage will be installed within the next year. The pond has refilled and PA F&BC has started stocking the pond as part of their repopulation plan. DCNR staff are reviewing and preparing for the 100-acre weed management area at Pecks Pond. Staff continue to monitor vegetation within the pond and will be preparing a contract for aquatic weed control.
- Construct new Resource Management Center with Storage Building—The site selected along Rt. 402 near the Thunder Swamp Trailhead parking area continues to go through design and site testing. It is anticipated that design of the site will be completed by fall of 2020 and construction may start in 2021 or 2022.
- **This project is on hold due to COVID-19 restrictions:** Cabin demolitions—One state leased campsite is planned for demolition along SR402 in Blooming Grove Township, Pike County.
- Lily Pond demolition project—The demolition of three rustic cabins and the Solar Science Center in Milford Township, Pike County was completed in 2019. The contractor has been released from responsibility since seed used to stabilize the site disturbance germinated in the spring of 2020.
- **This project has been delayed due to COVID-19 and will not occur in 2020:** The Edgemere Fire/Maintenance Station will receive a new roof in 2020.

RESEARCH

- A research project is being conducted in the vicinity of the 16 Mile Run fire to study the impact of the fire on the soil and water. The project will try to determine how the soil and water are impacted from the fire and how long it takes for them to return to the pre-fire state.

- A research project is being conducted along Millertown road on a previous prescribed fire. The project is being done along with the 16 Mile Run project to determine how the soil and water are impacted from the fire and how long it takes for them to return to the pre-fire state. The results of the two projects are being compared and published.
- Other research projects continue at multiple sites across the forest district investigating and monitoring groundwater, water quality, and other flora and fauna.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

- DSF staff chemically treated one hundred ash trees by trunk injection to kill emerald ash borer. This treatment is an attempt to save some genetically superior Ash trees that would otherwise succumb to the emerald ash borer – a non-native forest pest.
- DSF planted 32,000 trees throughout the district mainly for wildlife habitat improvement and species diversification.
- DSF staff certified eight shipments of ginseng for ginseng dealers for shipping across state lines.
- DSF staff applied for and received 1,164 DMAP permits covering nine DMAP areas encompassing 85,886 acres in Pike and Monroe counties.
- DSF staff completed 21 Vegetation Impact Protocol plots (VIP plots) on State Forest Land to assess deer browsing impact on regeneration and native plants.
- DSF staff assisted other state and federal agencies with large-scale wildland fires in Colorado, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Texas and California.
- Lily Pond demolition—The Solar Science Center and three cabins were demolished in 2019 to allow the site to return to a natural state. All hazardous buildings and structures were removed and a parking lot was added at the Lily Pond location.
- Delaware Forest staff assisted PA F&BC stock trout at the Bushkill Creek, Lily Pond, Little Mud Pond, Lake Minisink, and Saw Creek.
- TGP treated phragmites, and invasive plant, on the right of way and adjacent to the ROW.
- Lost Camp Trail, Westfall Township Pike County, had 450' improved using quarry slag stone as a base material and 2RC stone tailgated on top. Two culverts were also replaced.
- Hay Road, Porter Township Pike County, had one culvert replaced and two French mattresses installed to improve road drainage. Additional AASHTO#1 stone and 2RC was used to construct and improve that road section.

- Whittaker Trail had 186 tons of AASHTO#1 stone tailgated, graded, and rolled to improve the road base of the snowmobile trail.
- Negro Barren Road in Porter Township, Pike County had one new gate installed and eight stormwater culverts replaced. The road bed was improved with material from Forestry borrow pits.
- Ranch Road in Blooming Grove Township, Pike County had 0.2 miles improved using rock generated from the Pecks Pond Dam Rehabilitation project. This material improved the road base and eliminated historic tire ruts.
- Stairway Road culvert at the outlet of Stairway Lake Dam was replaced and administrative access was improved using native quarry slag stone, topped with 2RC stone.