

BUCHANAN STATE FOREST DISTRICT

2022 MANAGEMENT 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 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 Buchannan 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

- **Sideling Hill ATV Trail Improvements** – Maintenance staff fixed the grading and reshaped sections of the ATV trail in the fall of 2020 and added slate in 2021. We have rerouted the closed section of Meredith Trail and are currently working on applying slate to this area.
- **Bear Valley Multi-Use Trail System** – In 2020, an Environmental Review was proposed by a volunteer and approved for a 4-part trail system in the Bear Valley Division. Part 1 was completed in 2020 and parts 2 and 3 were completed in 2021. This trail system named 3 Bears Trail is being designed for mountain biking but is open for multi-use. It will connect to existing trails and make the trails in the Bear Valley Area much more user friendly.
- **Evitts Mountain Tract Infrastructure Improvements** - The Hardwood Trails land acquisition, located in Bedford County near Lake Koon and Lake Gordon, was acquired in 2014. The Welsh Tract was added to this area in 2017. This combined area, now called the Evitts Mountain Tract, will undergo assessment of current infrastructure and planning for recreation and timber resources will continue to occur throughout this and upcoming years. The development of a parking and access area began in 2017 in hopes of allowing access for hunters during the fall season. Additional work is proposed for this year, budget and COVID restrictions permitting.
- **Hawbaker Tract Infrastructure Improvements** - The Hawbaker Tract, located in Franklin County near the top of the Tuscarora Mountain along Route 16, was acquired at the end of 2014. The development of a parking and access area is proposed for this area. Budget and COVID restrictions permitting, the plan is to use existing infrastructure from past timber sales and improve the area to allow safe access for hunters and other recreation.
- **Cunard Tract Infrastructure Improvements** - This small tract adjacent to state forest land near Breezewood was acquired in 2017. We will continue to assess current infrastructure and resources for best uses. The development of a parking area is being considered to allow better access to the snowmobile trail system and improve the area to allow safe access for hunters and other recreation.
- **Organized Events** - The following events are proposed for this year
 - Special Activities Agreements / Letters of Authorization - various weddings, Scout group activities, Capital Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association to use several locations for their activities, Holy Cowans Gap 50k on State Park and State Forest Lands Memorial Day weekend
 - Commercial Activities Agreements - Wild Wanderer's PA to use parts of State Forest Land for guided youth tours and activities.

TIMBER MANAGEMENT

The Buchanan State Forest manages forest lands in western Franklin, Fulton and Bedford Counties. To meet our goal of balancing forest age classes and establish a productive, sustainable forest the harvesting of standing timber is occurring in the areas listed below. These harvests include shelterwood and overstory removal treatments as well as a few other treatment types. Shelterwoods are designed to encourage the growth of new tree seedlings in the forest to replace ones that died or have become mature and will be harvested. Overstory removals harvest the main canopy to release established tree seedlings to grow in the full sunlight and develop into the next forest stand. Most harvests listed below fall into one of these two categories.



Previously marked sales that are likely to be active in this year include:

- **02-2018BC01 Rock Oak** sale located off Bark Road near Rock Oak Road in Fulton County. This sale is 318 acres of various treatments. The sale includes 144 acres of overstory removal designed to release the ample regeneration in this area, 87 acres of first stage shelterwood treatment in an oak stand that will receive an accompanying herbicide treatment for problem mid-story species, and 87 acres of two-age road buffer treatment designed to regenerate oak.
- **02-2019BC02 Artistry in Motion** sale has two areas of activity one is located off Bark Road near Bald Hill Trail in Fulton County and the other is located off Route 30 near Waltz Trail in Fulton County. This sale is 322 acres of various treatments. The sale includes 292 acres of overstory removal designed to reset this stand and allow the present oak regeneration to thrive, and 30 acres of two-age road buffer treatment designed to regenerate oak. The Waltz Trail side harvest was completed and then received severe impacts from the 2021 cicada population and will be reevaluated for possible mortality this year.
- **02-2020BC01 Mt Zion Pine** sale located off Mt. Zion Road in Bedford County. This sale is 72 acres of mostly overstory removal. This pine sale is designed to address the declining pine stand now to encourage the stand to regenerate as a pine stand with areas of mixed oak and hickory.
- **02-2020BC02 MHN** sale located off Blankley Road, Bedford County. This sale is a two-age shelterwood to regenerate this 47-acer area back into a healthy oak stand. The site has received a prescribed burn treatment to remove an interfering midstory and an herbicide application in 2019 to eliminate fern.
- **02-2020BC03 Akersville Road** sale located off Akersville Road, Fulton County. This sale is a combination of a two-age buffer treatment and an overstory removal treatment to address mortality caused by anthracnose and regenerate this 125.8-acre area back into a healthy oak stand. The site has received herbicide treatments to manage the stiltgrass along the road edges and prevent incursion into the forest.
- **02-2020BC04 Reservoir Road** sale located off Reservoir Road, Bedford County. This sale is an overstory removal treatment to address mortality caused by anthracnose and regenerate this 104.6-acre area back into a healthy oak stand.
- **02-2020BC06 Summit Road 2** is part of a 5-sale complex located off Summit Road, Fulton County. This sale is a two-age buffer treatment to address mortality caused by anthracnose and regenerate this 110.3-acre area back into a healthy oak stand. The site has received herbicide treatments to manage the stiltgrass and mile-a-minute spots along the road edges and prevent incursion into the forest.
- **02-2020BC07 Summit Road 3** is part of a 5-sale complex located off Summit Road, Fulton County. This sale is a two-age buffer treatment to address mortality caused by anthracnose and regenerate this 172-acre area back into a healthy oak stand. The site has received herbicide treatments to manage the stiltgrass and mile-a-minute spots along the road edges and prevent incursion into the forest.

Recent sales that are less likely but could potentially see activity this year are:

- **02-2020BC05 Summit Road 1** is part of a 5-sale complex located off Summit Road, Fulton County. This sale is a two-age shelterwood buffer treatment to address mortality caused by anthracnose and begin the process to regenerate this 167-acer area back into a healthy oak stand. The site has received herbicide treatments to manage the stiltgrass and mile-a-minute spots along the road edges and prevent incursion into the forest.
- **02-2021BC02 Fairview Trail** is a 99-acer sale that will be part overstory removal and part shelterwood located off Blankley Road, Bedford County. The overstory removal treatment will



address mortality and release the regeneration scattered over the stand. The shelterwood area will be treated for competing vegetation and invasive species. The site has received herbicide treatments to manage stiltgrass and mile-a-minute spots located in various openings in the stand.

- **02-2021BC01 Anderson Trail** sale area is part of the 5-sale complex located off Summit Roads, Fulton County. This sale is an overstory treatment to address mortality caused by anthracnose and begin the process to regenerate this area back into a healthy oak stand.

Areas under evaluation for future sales are as follows:

- **02-2020BC08 Summit Road 4** is part of a 5-sale complex located off Summit and Enid Roads, Fulton County. This sale is a two-age buffer treatment to address mortality caused by anthracnose and begin the process to regenerate this area back into a healthy oak stand. The site has received herbicide treatments to manage the stiltgrass and mile-a-minute spots along the road edges and prevent incursion into the forest.
- **Browning Trail** sale area in Bedford County is being evaluated for a combination of shelterwood and overstory removal treatments to treat the maturing oak stand. This area also has the potential for an improvement block or an additional sale in the future.
- **Ragged Mountain** sale area in Bedford County is being evaluated for a removal sale to treat the aging pine plantations and adjacent stands along Ragged Mountain Road across from the Pine Ridge Natural Area.
- An area around Dickens Trail in Bedford County is being evaluated for an overstory removal treatment to treat the maturing oak stand.
- An area between Jerry Road and US Route 30 in Fulton County will be evaluated for a shelterwood treatment designed to clean out mortality and an interfering midstory to allow the stand to regenerate.
- An area near Winter Trail in Fulton County with oak regeneration will be evaluated for a treatment.
- An area along Old Gilbert and Old Bear Valley Road in Franklin County is being evaluated for an improvement cut.
- An area along Woodridge Road in Fulton County is being evaluated for a shelterwood treatment to promote the regeneration of the oak stand.

Regeneration Projects planned for this year are as follows:

- **Deer Fence Installations** – No fence installations are planned this year.
- **Deer Fence Removals** – No fences are in place on Buchanan State Forest.
- **Herbicide Projects** – The following sales have herbicide applications included as part of the contract to reduce problem mid-story species: **02-2018BC01 Rock Oak**. District staff continue to treat the invasive species found in sale areas prior to harvest and any post-harvest recurrences. Significant treatments of ailanthus have been conducted in the Bedford County area and will be treated again this year at those sale locations.
- **Planting Projects** – In 2021 we had a successful contract planting of 73,000 pines in the following sale areas: 02-2015BC01 Broad Mountain, 02-2015BC03 Blankley Rehab, 02-2016BC01 Bigford Improvement, 02-2016BC02 Forbes Road 2, and 02-2016BC04 Northcraft. No planting projects are planned for 2022



RESTORATION AND HABITAT PROJECTS

- **Tuscarora Summit LSR.** - The Tuscarora Summit LSR is a wildlife treatment area near the Fulton/Franklin County line encompasses parts of the area around the Ernie Gish Road and Tower Roads. These areas are targeted as part of a treatment area where there is currently low-quality habitat. The goal is to partner with other organizations to mow the brush in these areas to remove the gum and birch components and create future prescribed fire blocks. This will allow us to establish rotating areas of early successional and Pitch Pine Scrub Oak ridge top forest that is good for many types of wildlife but especially Ruffed Grouse and Golden Winged Warbler. By putting this treatment area together with the 02-2017BC01 Gish Rehab sale, 02-2013BC03 Grouse sale and the 02-2007BC03 CCO sale there is the potential to create over a 500-acre area to manage on this rotating succession. Hand mowing was completed on a small block at the north part of the treatment area. A Dozer contract was also completed to construct the fire lines needed to allow for our burn plans. We were unable to burn in 2020 but were able to treat a partial block in the spring of 2021. We are hopeful that we can attempt additional burn acreage this year if the weather cooperates.
- The PA Game Commission's **Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP)** offers us the opportunity to help us focus deer management efforts on the Buchanan State Forest and reduce deer browse to enhance desirable seedling growth. We plan to continue offering our **DMAP block 1884 which is in LU Lands in Bedford County** that contains all the state forest land east of the Chaneyville Forest Foreman Headquarters and West of Purcell. Scientific data is collected on survey plots throughout the Buchanan State Forest that allow us to monitor the habitat conditions and determine if the DMAP blocks are necessary.
- Currently we have several wildlife habitat plots that we are maintaining. The occurrence of CWD in the areas around our state forest has complicated the planning, number, and location of these areas as we wish to improve wildlife habitat without creating congregation areas that encourage the spread of disease. We were able to seed several sites in late spring of 2020. We will continue working with the Ecoservices Section to implement treatment and seeding plans to create sites that will provide pollinator habitat, wildlife cover, and food sources. We had some good results for the first-year flowering and hope to see more in year this year.

ROAD AND BRIDGE PROJECTS

- **Evitts Mountain Tract Infrastructure Development** - The Evitts Mountain Tract encompasses areas that were acquired from the Welsh and Hardwood Trails purchases near Lake Koon and Lake Gordon in Bedford County. In 2017, the access road and parking area were rehabilitated in time for hunting season and will provide the primary access for recreational opportunities in this area once highway occupancy issues are resolved. Additional improvements are in the planning process and will be implemented over the course of the next several years.
- **Culvert Replacements** - Several small culvert replacements are anticipated to take place during the year. None of these small projects will impact road travel for more than one day.
- **Culvert Conversions** – We submitted a project request to FD&C to replace two large culverts with bridges. One project is located along Oregon Road near the Oregon CCC Camp and the other is on the Roaring Run Trail. Oregon Road will be closed to through traffic for the duration of the construction period and alerts will be posted on the web page. We have submitted a request to replace a 4' "squash pipe" or arch culvert that carries Meredith Run under the Horton Road, with an open bottom arch bridge.

PRESCRIBED FIRE

- **Oregon Road Prescribed Fire** - The Oregon Road Prescribed Fire located in Fulton County will hopefully be treated with a prescribed burn in the spring of 2022 to reduce competing regeneration and allow the oak seedlings to thrive. The burn plan has been developed and the site is being monitored for appropriate burning conditions.
- **Tuscarora Summit LSR Prescribed Fire Block** – The Tuscarora Summit LSR located in Fulton County will continue activity this year. Dozer lines were installed by contract in 2019. We were able to treat part of the first block in the spring of 2021. We anticipate that, weather permitting, we will be able to apply fire to additional areas in 2022. The burn plan has been developed and the site we will be monitoring for appropriate burning conditions. The fire goal in this area is habitat improvement and conversion to a Pitch Pine and Scrub Oak forest.

INSECT, DISEASE, AND INVASIVE PLANT TREATMENT

- Insect and disease monitoring will occur throughout the Buchanan this year and any information will be submitted to the Forest Health Division.
- Aerial surveys for significant populations of defoliators, diseases, and mortality will be conducted in late June.
- Control efforts for invasive plants will continue at locations across the district. Spot treatments will occur at the locations of many current and recent sale areas for ailanthus, mile-a-minute, Japanese barberry, and a few other problem species. Ongoing Japanese barberry treatment sites along Oregon Road and Aughwick Road will be monitored and treated as needed. We plan to continue a treatment projects for Japanese stilt grass at several timber sale locations and along several roadsides. Mile-a-minute control efforts along mowed roadways and trails will continue to be priority treatment sites. Weevils have been released at various locations across the district in 2010, 2014, and 2015, and volunteer weevils have been found at several other sites. We will continue to evaluate sites for future releases.
- Emerald Ash Borer has been confirmed in our area since 2010, and most of the populations of ash have already been impacted. Surveys for any additional roadside or trailside ash mortality will be conducted and hazards will be removed.

NATURAL GAS AND OIL DEVELOPMENT

- No projects have been proposed at this time.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- The new Forest Maintenance Headquarters for Chaneyville plans were put out to bid in late 2020 and the contract was issued in early 2021. Construction started in mid-2021 and is planned for completion in 2022.
- Buchanan State Forest has worked with The Nature Conservancy to move toward the acquisition of approximately 400 acres in Metal Township, Franklin County for an addition to Buchanan State Forest. Plans are on track, thanks to the 2021 Community Conservation Partnerships Program



Grant, for this parcel to transfer to the state in 2022. Plans will then be developed to create trail connectors and provide access to this parcel.

- Buchanan State Forest staff will continue to work towards the removal of the Kinton Knob Fire Tower and transfer road maintenance responsibilities back to the landowners.
- Plans are being developed to replace metal roof on the SH HQ's and Bug Shed.
- Most of the work has been completed to rehab the Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) Base located at the Bedford County Airport with assistance from Forest Fire Protection Division and the great cooperation of the airport authority.
- We replaced a 1981 John Deere Grader with a new John Deere Grader and hope to replace our remaining 1981 JD grader with a new grader.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Buchanan State Forest Staff will assist the Pennsylvania Game Commission to provide a **Bear Check Station** at the maintenance building located just off Route 915 N on the right just after you turn from Route 30 just east of Breezewood. Dates are pending the announcement of the upcoming Bear season. The check station is not open to the public, only to hunters with bears to check.
- The Buchanan Forest District Service Forester is available to provide technical assistance to woodland owners and educate anyone on forest management activities. The public can contact the district with individual questions or to schedule group events.
- The Service Forester partners with the **Woodland Owners of the Southern Alleghenies (WOSA)** to provide additional educational opportunities including an annual Forestry and Wildlife Conference. Details on programs hosted in partnership with WOSA can be found on their web site at www.thewosa.org
- The Buchanan Forest District staff regularly participate in educational opportunities such as school field trips, youth field days, scout groups, Envirothon activities, county fairs, and other environmental events throughout Fulton, Bedford and western Franklin counties.
- The Buchanan State Forest has a Friends Group that meets regularly and schedules work projects for improvements to the recreational infrastructure. Visit the Group's Facebook page at "Friends of Buchanan State Forest" or contact the district office for upcoming meeting dates.
- We are happy to answer questions via phone and email.

RESEARCH

- Researchers from Penn State University are conducting research on the success of oak regeneration 10-years after the harvest. This research is part of state-wide research project that looks at all forest districts that complete oak forest type regeneration harvests.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

- The **Buchanan State Forest Resource Management Center** can be found 5 miles north of McConnellsburg along Route 522 at 25185 Great Cove Road, McConnellsburg, PA 17233. This facility was used by many individuals acquiring recreational information, camping and fuelwood permits. Our conference facilities were open for use most of the year and several local



organizations and state agencies hosted trainings and outreach. We were happy to finalize the installation of 4 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in our public parking area.

- With the assistance of the GESA program, we were able to replace the barely functioning oil/wood/coal furnace at the Bear Valley Headquarters with a new and extremely efficient propane furnace; add 4 EV charging stations at the Resource Management Center; and replace all the fluorescent light bulbs and fixtures, in all our buildings with LEDs.
- **Trail Improvements** - As part of our ongoing efforts to increase the accessibility of our recreational infrastructure numerous trails received maintenance including nearly all the trails that can be maintained mechanically and many of the footpath trails. Some the trails that received maintenance this year are as follows.
 - Bear Valley Division: Allen Trail, Bear Valley Ski Trail, Bike Trail, Bridge Trail, Cabin Loop Road, Carrick Valley Rd, Chad Strait Trail, Cougar Road, Deshong Trail, Dickey's Mountain Trail, Forbes Road, Forney Trail, Fry Trail, Gish Road, Gray Birch Trail, Hemlock Road, Lincoln Trail, Lockard Trail, Loop Trail, Mellott Road, Nagle Trail, Old Bear Valley Road, Old Gilbert Road, Pond Trail, Rexroth Trail, Smith Trail, Steep Mutha Road, Tailgate Road, Tobacco Road
 - Sideling Hill Division: Snow Field Trail, Woodcock Trail, Red Bank Trail, Gracey Trail, Keith Trail, Deep Hollow Trail, Rocky Face Trail, Railroad Arch Trail, Tunnel Trail, Big Fill Trail, Sciotha Trail
 - Chaneyville Division: "Day-lighted" several miles of the Blankley Road. Also used the forestry head on a Bobcat skid steer to open several hundred feet of State Forest Boundary and removed a huge patch of Japanese barberry. The "clearing" will help facilitate access with UTV's for continued spray treatments. Numerous trails were cleared by machine and by hand.
- **Friends of Buchanan State Forest Improvements** – This year our Friend's Group worked on trail maintenance on Snow Field Trail and Sciotha Trail in the Sideling Hill Division as well as Jackson Trail and May Trail in the Chaneyville Division. With assistance from the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation, they also acquired a brush mower to allow for easier maintenance of some trails.
- **Buchanan State Forest Bear Valley Bike Trail Improvements** – This year by working with a volunteer group of mountain bikers a new trail called Three Bears Trail was added and signage was posted. This was Phase 1 of a project to update and add connections to the Bear Valley Trail system to allow for better mountain biking opportunities as well as add value for other recreational users on these upgraded and new multi-use trails. In 2022, the group plans to continue to Phase 2 of their work proposal with work to Little Mountain Trail and a proposal for additional updates and additions.
- **Spring and Fall fire season activity** – In 2021 we responded to 7 fires and 1 false alarm. Six of the fires occurred in the spring for a total of 37.5 acres, and the other 2 were fall fires; 1 single tree and one False Alarm. The largest fire occurred on April 13 for a total of 18.1 acers. There was a total of 37.94 inches of precipitation recorded at the RMC. No personnel injuries were reported throughout the 2021 Wildland Fire Season, in Forest District 2.