

# WEISER STATE FOREST DISTRICT

## 2022 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 Weiser 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

- Implementation of a CCPP grant awarded to the district. With this grant the district will install\construct seven hiking\biking\equine bridges on Roaring Creek and Haldeman tracts, comfort stations on Roaring Creek and Penn Forest tracts, water bottle fill stations and bike maintenance stand on the Roaring Creek tract. This work will take place over the next two years.
  - District is planning to solicit bids for seven prefabricated fiberglass bridges through the Bureau of Facility, Design and Construction. These bridges will be installed on the Haldeman and Roaring Creek tracts.
  - Purchase and installation of water bottle fill stations at Resource Management Center in Aristes and at the under-construction parking area/state forest access location at Natalie.
  - Through the Bureau of Facility and Design to design and solicit bids for two comfort stations to be installed at Roaring Creek tract (Natalie) and Penn Forest tracts.
- The district is working with SAMBA on a proposed trail system at the Greenland Tract. The trail proposal will link to the Haldeman Tract through Williamstown Water Authority and Lykens Water Authority. This could potentially add 10 miles of shared-use trails to the district.

### Organized Events

- Roaring Creek Tract
  - Cross Country Meet – September, Tentative
  - Hellbender Foot Race, 5k/Half Marathon – August, Tentative
- Haldeman Tract
  - Rattling Creek Foot Race – April, Tentative
  - Rattling Creek MTB Race – April, Tentative
  - Equestrian Endurance Ride – July, Tentative
  - Equestrian Competitive Ride – August, tentative
  - SAMBA BASH MTB – September, Tentative
- Port Clinton Tract
  - Civil Air Patrol Wilderness Survival Training – July, Tentative

## TIMBER MANAGEMENT

### **Marked and sold, potentially active**

- Port Clinton Tract – Blocks 2 and 3 of Labradoodle legs have been harvested. Peach Bottom Logging will return Spring of 2022 to finish treatment on the remaining blocks.

### **Active Sales:**

- Roaring Creek Tract – 146 acres to be harvested with several different silvicultural treatments (two-aged, shelterwood and salvage overstory removal) along Roaring Creek Trail. A portion of the sale has a deer enclosure fence which was erected in 2007 and an herbicide treatment for fern in 2017 and 2020.

### **Potential Sales (not proposed)**

- Greenland Tract - looking at an overstory removal for a former burn unit to create oak-savanna habitat. The sale area will be approximately 70 acres.
- Second Mountain Tract – 103 acres of shelterwood and overstory removal to salvage *Lymantria dispar* mortality and release white pine regeneration.

### **Regeneration projects**

- Haldeman Tract - The district submitted an FMT 34 to plant 41 acres in the Killer B's sale. This treatment will artificially regenerate a recently completed timber harvest with 10,000 white pine and 10,000 pitch pine. The treatment will be contracted out for bids with treatment taking place in 2022.

## RESTORATION AND HABITAT PROJECTS

- Greenland Tract
  - Early Successional Habitat – proposing to conduct early successional habitat work on 100+ acres. A non-commercial treatment on a poor-quality site. Due to Covid-19 this treatment has been put on hold.

## ROAD AND BRIDGE PROJECTS

- Roaring Creek Tract
  - Box culvert replacement is planned for Spring 2022 approximately 2.5 miles east of S.R. 54 on Roaring Creek Trail. Three culverts in all will be replaced.
- Greenland
  - Maintenance staff will be working on Pitch Pine Road to improve the drainage and

road surface. Several culvert pipes will be installed and adding stone to the road surface to elevate the road.

- Port Clinton
  - Approximately 1230 tons of 2A aggregate will be spread on Oaks Road from the entrance off of S.R. 61 proceeding uphill for 0.6 miles.

## PRESCRIBED FIRE

- Roaring Creek Tract
  - Hidden Cabin is a 75-acre prescribed fire located along Black Road Trail and Hidden Cabin Trail. This prescribed fire will treat a poor-quality site to promote pitch pine/scrub oak and to enhance the area for a warming climate and early successional wildlife such as golden winged and prairie warblers and ruffed grouse. Planned for late April 2022
- Greenland Tract
  - Big Larch is a 135 acre burn unit located off Berry Mountain Road and Scrub Oak Road. The objective of this fire is to promote the native species, scrub oak/pitch pine. This ecosystem is lacking within the state forest and grows better in a continually warming climate. Lastly, this burn will enhance that area for early successional wildlife such as golden winged and prairie warblers and ruffed grouse.
  - Little Larch is a 79 acre burn unit off Berry Mountain and Larch Road. The objective of this fire is to promote native species, scrub oak/pitch pine. Pitch pine/scrub oak, ecosystem is lacking within the state forest and grows better in a continually warming climate. Lastly, this burn will enhance that area for early successional wildlife such as golden winged and prairie warblers and ruffed grouse.

## INSECT, DISEASE, AND INVASIVE PLANT TREATMENTS

- Insect and disease monitoring and reporting will continue in 2022. The focus will be on the priority list provided by the Bureau of Forestry's Division of Forest Health. Report forms will be forwarded to Forest Health Specialist from the District Insect and Disease, (I.&D.) Coordinator to ground truth 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.
- Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) will be monitored throughout the district. District staff will be re-treating effected white ash trees this year at the following locations: Roaring Creek, Jakey Hollow Natural Area and Haldeman tracts. Previously treated white ash trees look healthy.

- District staff will continue monitoring and treating non-native invasive species throughout the district. Focus will be on areas planned for timber sales and/or earth disturbances.
- District staff will continue to monitor spotted lantern fly within the forest tracts. Several counties within the district are in a quarantine area to help prevent the spread of this invasive insect.
- Hemlock wooly adelgid (HWA)-District staff has treated three locations for this nonnative insect, first at the Weiser Resource Management Center, (RMC), the east entrance to Roaring Creek Trail and Penn Forest Fire Control Station in Carbon County over the past years. The fall of 2022 Weiser foresters will begin treating eastern hemlocks in Jakey Hollow Natural Area in Columbia County.

## NATURAL GAS, OIL, AND OTHER GEOLOGIC RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- Presently there are no natural gas and or oil development activities taking place within the Weiser State Forest. There is one pipeline project to take place on the Penn Forest Tract. PennEast Pipeline will be going through the Penn Forest Tract in Carbon County. This pipeline will deliver natural gas from northern Pennsylvania to New Jersey.

## TOWER AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY PROJECTS

- Currently no projects in the works

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Dauphin County Woodland Owners Association is hoping to have their annual woodland owner's conference. This conference is tentatively scheduled for March 2022 as long as a venue is found.
- September 2022 district personnel will staff a booth and answer questions at the annual Bloomsburg Fair, Bloomsburg, PA.
- October 2022 we are providing the public with the opportunity to drive through our Roaring Creek tract. During this "open house" we take comments, questions, and concerns from the public and respond to them.

## SPECIAL PROJECTS

- The remediation and removal of the Natalie Culm Bank and construction of a State Forest administrative access road and public parking area immediately north of Natalie, Pennsylvania is ongoing.
- Planning and site preparation are underway for the Keffer's Fire Tower restoration,

relocation/re-erection. Exact location to be determined, however it will be somewhere on the south rim of the Roaring Creek Tract, near the Weiser Resource Management Center.

- Continuation of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Milton Hersey School and Weiser State Forest, Bureau of Forestry to expand the Governors Youth Initiative by controlling invasive species and encouraging native grasses at Milton Hersey School.

## RESEARCH

- Oregon University. Earth Scope Magneto Telluric Transportable Array site on White Oak Road at the Haldeman Tract for ongoing monitoring of plate tectonic.
- Mid-Atlantic Center for Herpetological and Conservation. Pennsylvania Amphibian and Reptile Survey
- Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Evaluate species richness, pollinator abundance, and floral selection within young forest patches.
- Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Arboviral Surveillance Network.
- Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Tree-ring analysis to determine effectiveness and duration of Hemlock Woolly Adelgid treatments on Eastern hemlocks
- Bloomsburg University of PA conducted field study of the burrows of the common crayfish
- Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association forest health research
- Bloomsburg University of PA conducting vegetation surveys in Jakey Hollow Natural Area.

## MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

- Weiser staff safely and successfully conducted prescribed fire on 69 acres at the Greenland Tract in Dauphin County. The goal of the burn was to create pitch pine/scrub oak savanna and improve early successional habitat.
- Weiser staff safely and successfully conducted a prescribed fire on 112 acres the Roaring Creek Tract in Northumberland County. The goal of the burn was to promote scrub oak and early successional habitat to benefit a number of wildlife species.
- Weiser staff and other Bureau of Forestry personnel successfully completed 93 acres of meadow management prescribed burns at the Milton Hershey School.
- District staff expanded trail system at Taylorsville Tract
- Weiser staff treated a multitude of eastern hemlock at Roaring Creek tract for hemlock

wooly adelgid, (a non-native insect)

- Weiser staff treated a multitude of ash at Roaring Creek and Jakey Hollow for emerald ash borer.
- Old Stagecoach sale at the Jefferson was successfully completed
- Acquisition of the Weatherly Tract adding 2702 acres to Weiser State Forest
- Friends of Weiser Roaring Creek tract conducted one workday, accomplishing trail maintenance.
- Planned, prepared, and submitted funding request to treat 40 acres of mile-a-minute at Port Clinton tract.
- Responded to, suppressed, and investigated 141 wildfires in seven counties.
- Completed 28 total miles of boundary line at: 14 miles at Taylorsville tract, 12 miles at Greenland tracts and 2 miles at the Jake Hollow Natural Area.