

CLEAR CREEK 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 Clear Creek 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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CLEAR CREEK STATE FOREST TRACT LOCATIONS

Clarion River Tract – Consists of approximately 2,040 acres in Millcreek, Highland, and Farmington townships, Clarion County and Barnett township, Jefferson County

Clear Creek & Callen Run Tracts – Consists of approximately 9,876 acres in Heath, Polk, Eldrid, and Warsaw townships, Jefferson County

Kennerdell Tract - Consists of approximately 3,3243 acres in Clinton and Victory townships, Venango County

Maple Creek Tract – Consists of approximately 1,116 acres in Barnett township, Forest County

McKeever Tract – Consists of approximately 201 acres in Lake township, Sandy Lake township, and Sandy Lake Borough, Mercer County

Wolf Creek Tract - Consists of approximately 65 acres in Wolf Creek township, Mercer County

RECREATION

- Implement the following recreational trail projects:
 1. Kennerdell Tract - Reroute Ridge Trail to Five Points Parking lot
 2. Kennerdell Tract - Reroute Pipeline Trail off the pipeline
 3. Clear Creek Tract – Apply for a permit to construct a new bridge on the Laurel Trail over Clear Creek
 4. Wolf Creek Tract – Establish Phase 1 of the new shared-use trail loop
 5. Establish a trail system on the McKeever Tract

- Develop and place interpretive panels with site specific and Bureau of Forestry information at:
 1. Beartown Rocks Overlook, Clear Creek Tract
 2. Dennison Point Overlook, Kennerdell Tract
 3. Iron Furnace Historic Site, Kennerdell Tract
 4. Oil Pumping Station Historic Site, Kennerdell Tract
 5. Laurel Fields Native Planting Site, Clear Creek Tract

- Volunteer Project, Kennerdell Tract – remove tires from the Allegheny River along River Road to improve the aquatic ecosystem and help to maintain the scenic beauty of the river

- Create individual tract maps with detailed recreational opportunities for the Wolf Creek, McKeever, and Maple Creek tracts

- Create Pine Run Loop Brochure and update the loop map, Clear Creek Tract

- Improve 5 motorized campsites with new picnic tables, Callen Run Tract
- Install new State Forest boundary signs along public roadways, all tracts
- Construct a trailhead parking lot at the southern end of the McKeever Tract
- Clean up on the McKeever Tract to improve safety and aesthetics, this will include the removal of trees and debris along the entrance way, removal of damaged footbridges, and the removal of debris throughout the tract

Organized Events

- Beartown Rocks Run Race in June, Saturday TBD – This event will start at the Laurel Fields off Spring Creek Road and encompass most of the Clear Creek Tract shared-use trail system.
- Spring Creek Gravel Challenge Bicycle Race in June, Saturday TBD - This event will start at the Laurel Fields off Spring Creek Road and participants will ride on state forest and townships roads in and surrounding the Clear Creek Tract.
- Endless Mountain Expedition Race – The event navigates several State Forests and State Parks within the north central/western area of Pennsylvania and will occur on June 23rd and 24th throughout the Clear Creek Tract trail system and points of interest.

TIMBER MANAGEMENT

Timber management goals are based on the district timber management plan that ranks treatment areas based on current and anticipated future conditions. Through stand examinations, treatment areas were chosen to advance the regeneration process and ultimately create a new, diverse, young forest. The district's harvest allocation model is the foundation for developing the management plan. Overstory removal and shelterwood harvest acres were calculated to be on target at the end of the 10-year period. Meeting these allocation goals will help the district balance its age-class distribution while creating early successional habitat.

Active Timber Sales as of the Beginning of 2022

Timber Sale Contract: 08-2020B_02 (Little Hugs)

Location: On the Callen Run Tract, Jefferson County, near the intersection of Callen Run Rd and Spring Creek Rd
Harvest Type: 52 Acres Overstory Removal
Volume: 496,003 board feet
Price: \$220,474.00
Purchaser: Brownlee Lumber, Inc.
*All harvesting is complete. Site retirement is to be completed in the Spring.

Timber Sale Contract: 08-2021BC02 (Sitting Duck)
Location: On the Callen Run Tract, Jefferson County, Clear Run Rd near the intersection with Jimtown Rd
Harvest Type: 54 Acres Overstory Removal, 9 Acres Selection = 63 acres
Volume: 329,604 board feet
Price: \$210,100.00
Purchaser: Matson Lumber Company

Proposed Timber Sales

Timber Sale Contract: 08-2021BC03 (Waltz Lane)
Locations: Callen Run Tract, SR-949 near Waltz Ln and west of Callen Run Rd
Harvest Type: 116 Acres Shelterwood, 25 Two-Age, 26 Selection = 167 acres

Timber Sale Contract: 08-2021BC04 (Bone Yard)
Location: Clear Creek Tract, South of SR-949 and west of Pine Run Rd.
Harvest Type: 62 Acres Overstory Removal and approximately 5 acres of tornado damage Salvage

Regeneration projects, Clear Creek & Callen Run Tracts

- 3 deer enclosure fences scheduled for removal by 6/30/2022. 949 Fence (16 acres), Trap Run (42 acres), and Callen Run (11 acres).
- 5 deer enclosure fences scheduled for removal between 7/1/22 - 6/30/23. Klingensmith (51 acres), Callen Run Middle (21 acres), Salvage B (17 acres), Brownlee NW (19 acres), and Oak Fence (34 acres).

RESTORATION AND HABITAT PROJECTS

- Maintain chestnut, apple, and pear tree plantings
- Monitor and control invasive plant populations on approximately 4 acres of native pollinator habitat, warm season grasses, and soft edges that benefit wildlife and insect habitat at the Laurel Fields, Clear Creek Tract

ROAD AND BRIDGE PROJECTS

- Clear Run Road, Callen Run Tract, Polk Twp., Jefferson County: Driving Surface Aggregate (DSA) will be applied to 0.7 miles of the road in 2022 by New Enterprise Stone & Lime Company, Inc. The ideal time of placement would occur while the soil and road surface conditions are stable. Placement is tentatively scheduled for early June. DSA is applied with a tracked paving machine to a final compacted depth of 4 inches. The affected section of road will be closed to vehicle traffic until the material has adequately dried. This project will complete the DSA application on Clear Run Road.
- Little Clear Creek Road, Clear Creek Tract, Heath Twp., Jefferson County: 30 culvert installations will occur over approximately two miles of roadway. Other improvements will be made to address road base and erosion and sedimentation issues. This will help preserve the integrity of the roadway, prepare it for the future application of Driving Surface Aggregate, and help protect the watershed.
- Other Roads: Continual maintenance activities will occur on other roads during 2022. These activities include road grading, culvert replacement, aggregate placement, and ditch clearing. During these activities the roads will generally remain open but may have short term closures during the workday.

PRESCRIBED FIRE

- Maurice K. Goddard State Park: Assist the Bureau of State Parks in meeting their goals and objectives pertaining to the management of their warm season grass fields through prescribed fire.

INSECT, DISEASE, AND INVASIVE PLANT TREATMENTS

- Herbicide and mechanical treatment of Ailanthus, Multiflora Rose, and other invasive species on the Kennerdell Tract with a concentrated effort in the Oil Pumping Station area
- Use herbicide to treat the Japanese knotweed, oriental bittersweet, and other invasive species populations on the Wolf Creek Tract

- Treat approximately 60 White Ash trees for the Emerald Ash Borer at the following sites: Clarion University, MK Goddard SP, Cook Forest SP, Clear Creek SP, District Office, and the Clarion Elementary School
- Treat approximately 34,619 tree diameter inches of Hemlock for the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, at Cook Forest State Park, in the Cathedral C Block. This treatment will help stop the invasive Hemlock Woolly Adelgid from stressing or killing the trees.
- Monitor for Glossy Buckthorn in young stands on the Callen Run Tract, in the Callen Run Road Area
- Assist the Forest Health Division with the application of the 2022 *Lymantria dispar* (Gypsy Moth) Spray Program for a total of 9,186.71 acres on the Clear Creek and Callen Run Tracts
- FD08 Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) Invasive Plant Training – June 2nd

NATURAL GAS, OIL, AND OTHER GEOLOGIC RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

In 2021, Seneca Resources Corporation plugged three shallow gas wells and are in the process of plugging a fourth well, in the Callen Run Tract area. The District developed a well plugging plan to ensure the proper remediation of these sites. Final reclamation with a native seed mix will be completed in the spring of 2022.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

The Forest District supports the local schools, universities, the Clarion County Stewardship Committee, the Woodland Owners of the Clarion Allegheny Valley (WOCAV) and the Mercer County Woodland Owner Association (MCWOA).

- Four programs will be presented with the partnership of MCWOA
- Sustainable Backyard Workshop usually held at Butler County Community College- Outdoor in-person event at a suitable park in the general area of Cranberry Township, date TBD
- Earth Day Training at Munnell Run, Mercer County, April 6th, 2022, Virtual Event by Zoom
- Clarion Schools Envirothon – tentative date May 3, 2022
- Forest Health & Forest Birds Field Day – May 13, 2022
- Earth Day at Parker Dam State Park – April 20, 2022

- Vernal Pool Tour, Callen Run and Clear Creek Tracts– tentative date(s) March 21-25, 2022
- Sustainable Practices for Plant Production w/Clarion Conservation District – March 2022
- Riparian Forest Buffers & CREP w/Jefferson County Conservation District – February 17, 2022
- Clarion County Forest Landowners Conference at Clarion University – Converted to a virtual Forest Landowners Conference hosted in cooperation with PSU Extension over four sessions in February 2022 (2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 2/22)
- WOCAV 2022 Programs – Four programs TBD
- Clarion County Schools Trout in the Classroom (TIC) at Cook Forest State Park – date TBD
- County Envirothon’s are TBD due to Covid-19 concerns
- Walk in Penn’s Woods, several events across the Forest District, October 1st or 2nd 2022
- Economy Volunteer Fire Department Prevention Event - October 2022
- S-130, S-190, L-180 Fire Trainings- Shenango Area Fire District (January 2022), Slippery Rock University (Virtual March 2022), Butler County Community College (Virtual November 2022)
- Wildfire Refresher Training to be held at various volunteer fire departments throughout the District – February-March 2022

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- The U.S. Forest Service Oak-SILVAH course, hosted at Clear Creek State Forest, is anticipated to take place in June or July of 2022 in the Callen Run and Clear Creek Tracts
- Good Neighbor Agreement - Supplemental Project Agreement with the Allegheny National Forest is underway with the completion of the first timber sale, Church Run Sale. Phase 2 will be a 15-acre timber sale, Church Run Sale II, and will be out for bid in February. Work on phase 3, a 32-acre timber sale will begin this year.

RESEARCH

- A study, “Evaluating silvicultural treatments to control black birch in young forest” has eight different treatment methods including a prescribed burn in the Trap Run timber sale. Prescribed fire has since been removed from the study. The 9 Points timber sale has the other research plots with treatments including combinations of mechanical and herbicide methods. These are located in the Clear Creek Tract.

- The USDA Forest Service - Northern Research Station, and West Virginia University have an ongoing research project entitled “Assessing the Distribution and Impacts of the Invasive Spotted Wing *Drosophila* (*Drosophila suzukii*) on Pennsylvania’s Forests and the Avian Community on Clear Creek State Forest” This study is conducted in young stands where birds, soft fruits, and the invasive pest are abundant.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

- Significant updates to the District Emergency Resource Plan
- Worked with a local radio station to produce and air a wildfire prevention Public Service Announcement (PSA) related to the dangers of outdoor burning during times of elevated risk
- 2021 Timber Sale Contracts Completed:
 - Timber Sale Contract: 08-2019B_01 (500 Flat)
 - Location: Clear Creek Tract at the top of Little Clear Creek Rd
 - Harvest Type: 35 Acres Overstory Removal + 56 Acres Single Tree Selection = 91 Acres
 - Volume: 314,682 board feet
 - Price: \$135,850.00
 - Purchaser: Cherry Ridge Forest Products
- Redesigned, updated, and printed the Clear Creek State Forest public use map
- Created new tract maps and brochures for the Clear Creek and Callen Run Tracts, and the Kennerdell Tract
- Planted four acres of native pollinator habitat at the Laurel Fields
- Reported 151 wildfires for a combined 346 acres
- Conducted FI-110 Wildfire Training Course in Butler County with 21 individuals certified
- Conducted S-130/S-190 Wildfire Training Courses at Butler County Community College with 22 individuals certified
- Developed a series of informational videos for private forest landowners and homeowners that are available on DCNR’s YouTube channel in place of our normally in-person Making the Most of Your Piece of Nature event.
- Replaced ten culvert pipes on Clear Run Road on the Callen Run Tract
- Installed headwall and tailwall stone on many culvert pipes throughout the District

- Installed one new parking lot on the Wolf Creek Tract
- Improved two parking lots on the Clear Creek Tract
- Hosted a North American Training Solution's Chainsaw Safety Training Course
- Installed new flooring at the District Resource Management Center