

TIOGA 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 the Tioga 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

- **2022 Recreation Events:**
- The **Mt. Tom Challenge** will take place on February 13. This timed trail run utilizes that Mt. Tom trail system near Ansonia.
- The **Canyon Sled Dog Challenge** will take place on February 26, weather permitting, along the Pine Creek Rail Trail. This event will be from the Marsh Creek Access of the rail trail to Tiadaghton campground.
- The **Mammoth Gravel Endurance** bike ride will be held in downtown Wellsboro, PA on May 7. This bike ride has options of 32, 70, or 140 miles of dirt and gravel township and state forest roads in Tioga County.
- The **Rail Trail Relay for Life** will take place in late June on the Pine Creek Rail Trail. This event helps raise funds for the American Cancer Society.
- The **Tioga County Homeless Initiative Rail Trail Bike Hike Fundraiser** will take place on June 25 on the Pine Creek Rail Trail. This event helps raise funds for and bring awareness to the homeless situation in Tioga County.
- The **Pine Barrens Adventure Motorcycle Tour** is tentatively planned for late June. This event has been expanding since it was first held in 2017 and will be held in several state forests in the PA Wilds region. Only licensed motorcycles are allowed.
- **Conquer the Canyon** will take place on July 23. This event will include both a full and half marathon on the Western side of the PA Grand Canyon and a 5K run in Wellsboro.
- **Brayden's Trail of Strength** will take place on August 6. This trail run is a 10 or 20-kilometer race that serves as a fundraiser for the Chromosome 18 Registry and Research Society. This race uses selected trails in the section of the Tioga State Forest that lies north of Rt. 6.
- **Kanyon Kids** will take place for its second year on August 6. This 5k run for the youth of the area starts on private land and uses a couple miles of our trails in the Clay Mine area.
- The **Eastern States 100** will be taking place on August 13-14. This 100-mile trail run uses selected trails and roads in the southwestern portions of the Tioga State Forest. This event takes place in several other forest districts as well.
- The **Susquehannock Trail Pro Rally** will take place on September 17. The pro rally uses selected public use roads in the western and northern portions of the Tioga State Forest.

- The **Pine Creek Challenge** will take place on September 10. This 100-mile run takes place on the Pine Creek Rail Trail.
- The **Laurel Classic** mountain bike race is on September 10. This race uses selected trails and roads in the “Asaph Block” of the Tioga State Forest that lies north of Rt.6.
- The **Green Monster** trail challenge happens on October 9. This race has 15, 25, and 50 km course options that use selected trails and roads in the “Asaph Block” of the Tioga State Forest that lies north of Rt.6.

2022 Recreation Trail Improvement Goals:

- The **Green Monster** trail system will be re-blazed in 2022.
- **West Rim Trail** signage replacements/ upgrades and re-blazing will continue and hopefully be completed in 2022.
- The **Bee Tree Trail** that is located between Rexford and Ansonia will continue to receive upgrades in 2022. The trail will be linked with other adjacent trails to create a more extensive ski and multi-use trail system.
- In 2021 a foot bridge was built with the POC crew on the **Mid-State Trail** near **Sand Run Falls**. Two foot-bridges will be constructed in this area in 2022.
- Continued facility improvements and interpretation installation at the Darling Run camping area.

TIMBER MANAGEMENT

Marked and sold, potentially active

- There are currently 20 timber sales under contract in the district. Many of these sales will have activity on them in 2022. Sale activity will be in the scattered throughout the district. The contracts for eight of these sales will expire in 2022.

Marked but not yet sold

- Currently, 14 timber sales totaling approximately 1,300 acres are proposed for bid in 2022 on the Tioga State Forest. These sales are scattered throughout the district. These sales are mostly overstory removal and shelterwood treatments.

Regeneration projects

- There are 13 blocks totaling 691 acres scheduled to be treated with broadcast herbicide in 2022. These blocks are located throughout the Tioga State Forest. These blocks are being treated to control interfering vegetation such as fern, beech brush, and striped maple.
- There are four blocks totaling 147 acres that are planned to have the brush cut in 2022. These blocks are located throughout the Tioga State Forest.
- There are three woven-wire fences proposed to be constructed in 2022. These fences are located throughout the district. These fences are being constructed to protect developing regeneration from browsing deer.

RESTORATION AND HABITAT PROJECTS

- **Stream Improvement Projects:** There is a stream bank improvement project on Babb Creek planned for 2022. One is also planned for the Tioga River for 2022 as well.
- **Fish Habitat Improvement Projects:** Sections of Blue Run will have fish habitat projects conducted on them. These projects will involve using trees cut and placed along the stream to create eddies and pools.
- **Wildlife Habitat Projects:** Several wildlife projects will be taking place throughout the Tioga State Forest in 2022. This year will see a transition in projects funded by the Ruffed Grouse Society. The Shin Hollow Project was wrapped up in the spring of 2021 with a prescribed burn of 147 acres. Following the burn, hard and soft mast shrub and tree seedlings were planted in portions of the unit. This year the Landrus Heights projects will build on the 25 acres of aspen cutting that was completed in 2021. Approximately 20 acres of aspen cutting will be completed in the Nickle Run area of the Arnot LMU in 2022. Additional acreage will be cut in the following two years for a total of nearly 90 acres. In the spring, brood cover and hard and soft mast plantings will be installed near the cut area. Additionally, district staff will construct a woven wire fence around the plantings to protect them from deer browsing. Cooperation with the PA Game Commission will allow for several food plots and wildlife openings to be reestablished across the district. Other projects involve

placing seed, fertilizer, and lime on established food plots throughout the district. These sites include portions of the Dominion Transmission pipeline in the western portion of the district, the Tennessee Gas Pipeline in the northern section of the district, and food plots along Old Supply Trail, Big Dam Hollow, and Hoffman Campground. Expansion and continued maintenance of several fruit tree orchards across the district is also planned in the upcoming year.

- **Landscape Restoration Project:** Work will continue a landscape restoration project in the Gamble Run area of the district. This will involve prescribed fire and other management activities to enhance large areas with poor site quality on the Tioga State Forest.

ROAD AND BRIDGE PROJECTS

- Two Act 26 funded projects will be done this year. One located on Bear Run Road and the other on Left Asaph Road. Projects to be completed by June 30,2022.
- Landrus Road will have culvert pipes replaced, or added where needed, to ensure proper drainage; the road will be shut down at times during this project. The project will take a few years to complete.
- Right Asaph Road will be replacing pipes and adding new ones where needed. Roughly 1.5 miles of road will be topped with DSA. Penn State Dirt and Gravel is working with and funding a project on a section of the road with drainage issues that require a French Mattress.
- Painter-Leetonia will be getting pipes replaced and adding new ones where needed. The road will be closed during these times. Money was also provided by Penn State Dirt and Gravel to help with the project, which includes pipe work and a French mattress.
- Work will continue the Rail Trail fixing storm damage and working on the service road.
- The crews will be working throughout the District replacing pipes and adding new ones where needed. Roads will be closed during these times for safe working conditions.
- A new bridge will be replaced over Bear Run on Bear Run Road this year.
- Bank stabilization on Babb Creek where it meets Pine Creek should occur this year. The small portion on the Rail Trail in Blackwell will impacted. Bikers will still be able to use this portion with safety barriers separating construction vehicles from bike traffic.
- Work will continue the new access road and parking lot for the ATV pilot program. Also, work will continue working on the walking path from the new parking lot to Colton Point vista.

PRESCRIBED FIRE

- Two prescribed fires are being planned for spring, 2022. The first is a 34-acre site off the Gamble Run Rd. The second is 27 acres and is north of Niles Valley. Both projects are intended to control red maple, and other competing vegetation, so that the oak regeneration that is established will thrive.
- Plans are being made to burn several old food plots on Old Supply Trail, Cavanaugh Access, Old Mtn Road and Hoffman flats. The goal of these prescribed fires is to maintain the sites as wildlife openings / pollinator fields, and to encourage the growth of native non-woody vegetation. The grass units also serve as an important training opportunity prior to the more technical burns in the forested units.

INSECT, DISEASE, AND INVASIVE PLANT TREATMENTS

- **Ash Management:** In 2022, the Tioga State Forest plans to continue implementing its management plan for dealing with the mortality of ash species due to the Emerald Ash Borer. Most hazard trees have been removed and the sites with higher components of white ash have been harvested. 2021 was the third year in the treatment cycle and trees were injected with *emamectin benzoate*. 2022 is a monitoring year, and in early summer an evaluation will be conducted to determine the health and vigor of approximately 97 trees spread over six treatment sites across the district.
- **Gypsy Moth Spray Program:** *lymantria dispar* (formally known as gypsy moth) numbers increased substantially across the district during 2020, and as such an aerial suppression program was executed in May 2021. Substantial defoliation occurred across the district, both inside and outside of aerial spray blocks as numbers surged in 2021. Due to high egg mass numbers, another spray program is on deck for spring 2022. Due to limited funding and high egg mass counts statewide, fewer acres will be treated on the Tioga Forest District this year. Areas and acreages are as follows:
 - Asaph (west): 3,116 ac
 - Asaph (east): 8,833 ac
 - Norris Brook (west): 1,417 ac
 - Baldwin (North): 319 ac
 - Baldwin (South): 283 ac
 - Mt. Tom: 460 ac
- **Hemlock Treatment** – In 2022, approximately 5,000 inches (diameter) of hemlock will be treated in the Asaph tract near Asaph Campground. Additionally, areas where hemlocks have been treated in past years to protect from *hemlock woolly adelgid* and *elongate hemlock scale* will continue to be monitored and some additional trees may be treated.

- **Invasive plants treatment projects:** In 2022, we will continue to treat and monitor populations of invasive plant species in the district. Most of these projects have been on-going over the past several years. *Japanese knotweed*, *mile-A-minute*, *glossy buckthorn*, and *ailanthus* (tree of heaven) are the main species that are being targeted.
- **Invasive Plant Treatment in Armenia:** In 2022, a contractor will conduct treatment of 12 acres of *Tartarian honeysuckle* on Welsh Mountain road and five acres of *common buckthorn* on River road.
- **Invasive Plant Treatment-Steele Run Area:** There will be an invasive plant treatment project totaling 37 acres that will go out for bid this spring. The project will focus on eradication of *Tartarian honeysuckle* and *Japanese barberry* from two different timber sales that have had white ash trees removed from them.

NATURAL GAS, OIL, AND OTHER GEOLOGIC RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- In 2022, there will be minimal activity in association with gas development in the district. The activity that is anticipated is as follows:
 - Tract 007 (Baldwin Run Rd area): Four additional Utica wells are planned to be drilled this year on existing pad D.
 - Tract 594 (Lower Arnot Rd area): no construction of new facilities/wells anticipated.
 - Tract 595 (North of Arnot): no construction of new facilities/wells anticipated.
 - Tract 596 (Taylor Run Road / Blossburg area): Lessee currently seeking approval from the district to construct a well pad, pipeline and access road. Construction might occur this year.
 - Tract 587 (Fallbrook area): no construction of new facilities/wells anticipated.
 - Tract 1040 (South of Marshlands): no construction of new facilities/wells anticipated.

TOWER AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY PROJECTS

- There will be small maintenance and monitoring projects on the various pipelines and electric rights-of-ways in the district. These mainly involve tree trimming along the ROWs and vegetation control.
- **Water Use Agreement:** Blossburg Water Authority will be entering into a water use agreement with us for use of a test well that was drilled in 2019 along the Tioga River. This well location will be used for a backup water supply for Blossburg.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- **Annual Local Events:** A public contact trailer is staffed by district personnel for the following events: Wellsboro Laurel Festival and the Tioga County Fair.
- **Pine Creek Watershed Association:** District personnel attend meetings with the Pine Creek Watershed Association.
- **Babb Creek Watershed Association:** District personnel attend meetings with the Babb Creek Watershed Association. This group is responsible for maintaining acid mine drainage treatment facilities on the Tioga State Forest.
- **Pine Creek Rail Trail Advisory Committee:** District personnel attend the bi-annual meetings with the Pine Creek Rail Trail Advisory Committee. The district updates the committee on rail-trail projects, usage, and incidents associated with the Pine Creek Rail Trail.
- **Step Outdoors Recreation Committee:** The district recreation forester attends meetings with a county recreation committee that holds events on private and public lands. Several winter events such as snowshoeing and cross-country skiing take place on the Tioga State Forest each winter.
- **Tioga County Concerned Citizens Committee:** District personnel attend meetings with TCCCC. This group focuses on acid-mine treatment projects associated with the Tioga River and its tributaries.
- **Local School Districts:** District personnel give presentations to classes at local schools dealing with forestry related topics such as forest-fire prevention, tree planting, and insect and disease issues.
- **Local Fire Departments:** The district forest fire specialist commonly interacts with local volunteer fire departments to coordinate fire suppression activities and to provide needed equipment and training.
- **District Field Tour:** The district holds a public tour of management projects on state forest land every other year to keep the public informed of activities on the state forest. A tour is planned for 2023

RESEARCH

- **Oak Regeneration Study:** The Forest Service is monitoring the growth of oak seedlings in two areas on the Tioga State Forest. Both sites are in the northern portion of the district. The sites are visited each year to assess seedling mortality rates and take growth measurements on oak seedlings.

- **Gas Development Impact:** There are several research projects in place that monitor the impacts of Gas Development on state forest land.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

- **Timber Sales** – In 2021, the forester and technician staff completed 13 timber sales totaling 1076 acres, 5,328 MBF of sawtimber, and 2,191 HCF of pulpwood.
- **Bank Stabilization** – In 2021, Owassie Road Bank stabilization along Pine Creek was completed. Roughly 200 feet of bank and road was stabilized.
- **Rail Trail** – Approximately six miles of new Trail Surface Aggregate (TSA) was added to the Pine Creek Rail Trail. In the spring, heavy rains caused extensive damage to the trail. Staff quickly made it passable for trail riders. Work continues to fix repairs correctly.
- **ATV Pilot** – A parking lot was put in on Deadman Road for the ATV Pilot Program and two gates installed on Deadman Road as well. We placed one gate near Colton Road and the other by the parking area, which closed this section from any type of traffic. The riders had to park at the parking area and walk to Colton Point.
- **Ansonia**- Our new maintenance building is under construction and to be completed in 2022.
- **Seed Collection** – We collected the following in 2021:
 - White Spruce – 3 bushels
 - Norway Spruce – 1 bushel
 - White Pine – 35 bushels (with Penn Nursery staff)
 - Pitch Pine – 2.5 bushels
 - Red Pine – 1.5 bushels
 - Hemlock – 1 bushel
 - Hickory – 9 bushels
 - Chestnut Oak – 1.5 bushels
 - Black Cherry – 0.25 bushel