

Summary of Significant Changes in the 2016 State Forest Resource Management Plan

Overall Changes

Since 2007 Update

- Shortened text by approximately 30%. Accomplished this through more concise introductions to each chapter and by removing the guidelines from resource chapters. Rather than include the guidelines in full, we have included brief descriptions of guidelines with hyperlinks to them at the end of each resource chapter.
- The new plan memorializes changes to state forest management that have been developed, updated, or changed since the 2003 SFRMP and 2007 Update document.

Since 2015 Draft

- Reordered goals and objectives within each chapter to begin with broad goals/objectives and progress to the more specific.

Introductory Chapters

Since 2007 Update

- Significantly reorganized the Introductory Chapters:
 - 2003
 - Overview
 - Ecological Considerations
 - 2015
 - Introduction
 - Organization and Management
 - Ecosystem and Landscape Management Considerations
 - Land Classification Systems
 - Monitoring and Adaptive Management
 - Project Planning and Review
- In Ecosystem and Landscape Management Considerations, new section added on Climate Change, regarding both its potential impact on state forest land and the role that forests can play in mitigating climate change.
- In Land Classification Systems, we have introduced the concept of Landscape Management Units.

Since 2015 Draft

- In Planning Foundations, added a reference to the Forest Action Plan.
- In Organization and Management, added sections on Training, Partnerships, and Budget.
- In Core Forests, Fragmentation, and Connectivity, added section on Core Forest Focus Areas.
- In Climate Change, added section on *DCNR and Climate Change – Planning for the Future*.
- In Climate Change, added reference to Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science vulnerability assessment for Mid-Atlantic Forests.
- In Wild Character, added section on Wild Character Focus Areas.
- In Land Classification Systems, the Wild and Natural Area designations proposed in the draft SFRMP are now finalized. Also, Wild and Natural Area guidelines were re-worded to better match the PA Code and provide clarification on their implementation.
- In Land Classification Systems, added the category of Special Consideration Areas and updated the figure on Land Classification Systems accordingly.

Communications

Since 2007 Update

- Sections on web media and education/ interpretation/ outreach have been added.

Since 2015 Draft

- Modified Objective 1.6 to reference “Leave No Trace” principles.

Timber and Forest Products

Since 2007 Update

- Combined “Silviculture/Timber Management” chapter and “Non-Timber Forest Products” chapter.
- Maximum regeneration harvest size increased from 75 to 125 acres.
- Added table of regeneration fund treatments and costs.

Since 2015 Draft

- Added prescribed fire to the table on regeneration practices.
- Separated mechanized harvesting and whole-tree harvesting under two sub-headings.
- Added section on Safety.

Native Wild Plants

Since 2007 Update

- The previous (2003) list of county natural area inventories was deleted and replaced with a reference to the Conservation Explorer tool.
- Added an objective to develop a strategy for the reintroduction of American chestnut.

Wildlife

Since 2007 Update

- Similar to the Native Wild Plants chapter, lists of county inventories were deleted in favor of information on the Conservation Explorer tool.
- A section on the Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) was included as an update to information in the 2003 SFRMP. In 2003, the program was in the proposed stage; currently, it is being implemented.

Since 2015 Draft

- Added paragraph on barrens habitat management.

Water

Since 2007 Update

- Added information and a goal regarding river islands.
- Added information and goal regarding lakes.

Since 2015 Draft

- Added major section on Water Resource Protection and Enhancement, with the following sub-headings
 - Aquatic Habitat Buffer Guidelines
 - Aquatic Organism Passage
 - Stream Restoration
 - Introduction of Large Woody Debris
 - Forest Hydrology Studies
 - Erosion and Sedimentation Control
 - Brook Trout Conservation Plan
 - Aquatic Invasive Species

Soils

Since 2007 Update

- Added goal regarding the identification and management of soil quality problems.

Geologic Resources

Since 2007 Update

- Expanded Introduction and Current Resource Condition sections to explain shale-gas development.
- Developed explicit goals and objectives regarding how/when we will allow extraction of different types of geologic resources.
- Added information and goal regarding the conservation of unique geologic features.
- Added information regarding physiographic provinces.

Since 2015 Draft

- Added paragraph on shale-gas site rehabilitation.
- Added paragraph on bonding for leases.
- Added section on Oil and Gas Revenue.
- Added paragraph on and link to DCNR Oil and Gas Position Statement.

Wildland Fire

Since 2007 Update

- This is a new chapter for 2016. Fire was mentioned marginally in 2003 and 2007.
- A section on wildfire suppression was included. This section has strong foundations in the legally mandated responsibility of the bureau to actively suppress wildfire across the Commonwealth.
- Goals to include prescribed burning have been included since the practice is gaining wide acceptance as a forest management tool.

Since 2015 Draft

- Added reference to National Cohesive Wildland Fire Strategy
- Added information on fire tower evaluation and rehabilitation.

Forest Health

Since 2007 Update

- Information on climate change has been included to reflect Pennsylvania's Climate Change Action Plan. Climate change is also covered extensively in the Introductory Chapter.
- Challenges with forest regeneration discussed, particularly pertaining to impacts from the deer.

Since 2015 Draft

- Added reference to spotted lantern fly.
- Added information regarding management/treatment activities for hemlock wooly adelgid, emerald ash borer, and gypsy moth.
- Added Objective 1.7 on invasive plants.

Recreation

Since 2007 Update

- Shifted focus from "Recreation Inventory" to "Recreation Opportunities" and "Recreation Experiences."
- Added emphasis on conservation of wild character and the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum.

Since 2015 Draft

- Updated data on roads, trails, and commercial/special activities agreements.
- Added section on leased camp sites.

Infrastructure

Since 2007 Update

- Presented a more organized approach to infrastructure management:
 - implement a strategic approach to address infrastructure needs,
 - administer non-state or private infrastructure on state forest land in a consistent and environmentally sound manner, and
 - manage state-owned infrastructure in support of resource management.

Since 2015 Draft

- Updated roads data.
- Added paragraph regarding road bonding.
- Added paragraph on environmentally responsible building practices and use of sustainable local products.

Cultural and Historic Resources

Since 2007 Update

- This is an entirely new chapter in 2016. Focus has been placed on the protection of known cultural and historic resources on state forest land and cooperation with the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission (PHMC).

Since 2015 Draft

- Included text about importance of leased camps.