

Sproul State Forest

2023 MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

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.

The SFRMP is implemented at the local level by district-specific resource management plans that aim to balance many uses and values of the forest, while maintaining ecosystem health and the wild character of the forest.

The purpose of this Management Activities document is to communicate to the public about upcoming management activities, projects and events that will be conducted to implement the SFRMP on Sproul State Forest. For questions, comments or more information about this plan, please contact:

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RECREATION

- **Whiskey Springs ATV Trail** - The Whiskey Springs ATV Trail will be closed for the winter ATV riding season. The summer riding season begins on May 26, 2023 and closes on September 24, 2023. Regular maintenance work is scheduled for this trail system during the summer field season.
- **Bloody Skillet ATV Trail** - The Bloody Skillet ATV Trail will open for the winter ATV riding season on January 17, 2023, and closes March 31, 2023, the summer riding season starts on May 26, 2023, and closes on September 24, 2023. Regular maintenance work is scheduled for this trail system during the summer field season.
- **Donut Hole Trail (DHT)** - This trail is scheduled to receive maintenance work through volunteer work weekends with Keystone Trails Association and through the Pennsylvania Outdoors Work crew.
- **Chuck Keiper Trail (CKT)** - This trail is scheduled to receive maintenance work through volunteer work weekends with Keystone Trails Association and through the Pennsylvania Outdoors Work crew.

The district tries to host only one organized event per weekend, though several events are based out of adjoining State Forests and utilize small adjacent sections of the Sprout. This policy is in place to ensure the District's Ranger staff can accommodate the demand. Given the ongoing illegal use issues with ATV's, we want to ensure there is an ability to have a law enforcement presence in problem areas while still having rangers available to help with the organized event if the need arises.

April

- **Saturday, 8th** - Eagleton Trail Challenge, an organized 10km, 25km, 50km hike/run event centered around PA Route 120 and the Eagleton Road in Grugan, Bald Eagle and Beech Creek Townships, Clinton County.
- **Saturday, 22nd** - Hyner View Challenge, an organized 16.5/31-mile foot race on existing trails surrounding Hyner View State Park in Grugan and Chapman Townships, Clinton County.

June

- **Sunday 4th** - Durty Dabbers Dual Sport Motorcycle Ride, this is an organized National Dualsport and Adventure bike motorcycle ride on roads and trails on both the North and South Blocks of the Sproul State Forest.
- **Saturday, 10th** - Cruise for a Cure Trail Ride, this is an ATV guided ride benefiting the Cancer Society and starts in Renovo, PA. The route goes to the Whiskey Springs ATV Trail, into the Susquehannock State Forest, and returns to Renovo, PA.
- **Saturday, 17th** - Sproul 10K Trail Race, this is an organized trail foot race on existing trails, namely the Jack Paulhamous/Garby Trails in the Hyner area, in Chapman and Noyes Townships, Clinton County.
- **Sunday 18th** - Little Loggers Trail Fest, this is a 3-mile foot race for kids in the Hyner area, on the McCloskey snowmobile trail and the Garby trail in Chapman and Noyes Townships, Clinton County.
- **Wednesday, 22nd – Sunday, 26th** – PA Wilds Four Tour Motorcycle Ride, this event will be held on the area of the Sproul North of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River and will be centered on Hyner Run State Park.
- **Wednesday, 28th – Friday, 30th** – Endless Mountains Adventure Race - This event will occur in the Northwestern part of the Sproul State Forest. This is a 350-mile, 5-day course consisting of biking, trekking, paddling and map/compass navigation.

July

- **Thursday, 27th – 30th** - Soggy Bottom Moto-fest, this is a group dual sport motorcycle ride for recreation on roads and trails on the South Block of the Sproul State Forest and the Bloody Skillet ATV Trail Area.
- **Sunday, 30th** - Brandywine Rattlesnake Enduro Ride, an organized timed motorcycle event on roads and trails in near Tamarack, PA in Leidy, Noyes and Chapman Townships, Clinton County.

August

- **Saturday, 12th – 13th** - Eastern States 100, this is a 100-mile trail run that will be partially located on the Sproul State Forest in the Haneyville, Hyner Run State Park, Dry Run Road areas.
- **Saturday, 26th** - Hyner Half Trail Race, this is an organized 14-mile trail foot race on existing trails and roads starting and ending at Hyner Run State Park in Chapman Township, Clinton County.

September

- **Saturday 16th** - Keystone Gravel Bicycle Ride, this is an organized cycling event to showcase the importance and beauty of the Pine Creek Valley State Forest region. It is partially located on the Sproul State Forest in the Carrier Road, Robbins Run, Robbins Road and Ritchie Road areas in Gallagher and Grugan Townships, Clinton County.
- **Saturday, 9th** - Renovo Heritage Park ATV Poker Run – Whiskey Springs ATV Trail in Noyes and Leidy Townships, Clinton County. This is an ATV poker run event on the Whiskey Springs ATV trail to benefit the Greater Renovo Heritage Museum.

October

- **Sunday, 2nd** - Black Forest Ultra 100K, this is an organized ultramarathon foot race that begins and ends at Hyner Run State Park. The race is located on the Donut Hole trail and the T2 Trail in Chapman Township, Clinton County, in the Sproul State Forest to get to the Black Forest Trail in the Tiadaghton State Forest.

November

- **Sunday, 5th** – The View 25K, an organized foot race on trails and roads around Hyner View State Park in Chapman Township, Clinton County.

TIMBER MANAGEMENT

The district marks an average of 1500+ acres in timber sales per year. The sales are made up of multiple silvicultural treatments including salvage, selection, improvement, shelterwood, and overstory removal. The acreage takes around a year to complete from start to finish. A sale marked in 2023 will be cut in 2024 or later. Most sales awarded in the bid process have a 2-to-3-year contract window to allow the contractor ample time to complete the sale cutting.

The staff working in timber management consists of 7 foresters and 2 forest technicians. In addition to timber management, duties each forester administers other areas or duties, which include Gas & Oil, wildlife & food plots, fire, cooperative forest management and Spongy Moth suppression. The currently vacant forester position, will be transitioned from a timber management forester to a recreation forester, whose duties will include: administering the leased campsite program, recreational special and commercial activities

agreements, hiking and river trails, snowmobile and ATV trails, and other recreational based programs in the district.

Our Foresters have plans to initiate the following timber sales in 2023.

- Nasty Crabstick Removal, 125 acres – 10 acres 2-Age Buffer, 115 acres Overstory Removal, Burnt Shanty and Left Fork of Burnt Shanty, Yost Ridge Road, PA. State Route 144, Burnside Township, Centre County – Forester T. Myers
- 190 acres – Two-aged Removal, Harbrac Trail to Tin Smith camp access road, Fields Ridge Road, Burnside Township, Centre County – Forester T. Myers
- Sand Springs, 130 acres – Overstory Removal / Shelterwood, Sand Springs Road, Beech Creek Township, Clinton County – Forester Mills
- Tin Foil Hat, 217 acres – Overstory Removal / Shelterwood, Panther Road, Burnside Township, Centre County Forester Mills
- Ditch Chicken Paradise, 251 acres- Overstory Removal/Shelterwood, Petes Run Road, Noyes Township Clinton County- Forester B. Myers
- Boogeyman Snake Trap Removal, 40 acres- Overstory Removal, Pats Ridge Road, Grugan Township, Clinton County- Forester B. Myers
- Bobcat Pachul, 537 acres – Overstory Removal / Shelterwood / Selection, Cole Run Road, East Keating Township, Clinton County – Forester Melman
- Fornost, 111 acres – Overstory Removal / Shelterwood, Teats Run Road, Grugan Township, Clinton County – Forester Greenaway
- Sausage Removal, 98 acres- Overstory Removal, Little Sandy Run, State Line Road, PA. State Route 144, Snow Shoe Township, Centre County. - Forester T. Myers
- Kickin' Rocks, 800 acres – Two-aged removal / Shelterwood, Tamarack Tower Road, Leidy Township, Clinton County. - Foresters Dayhoff & Alexander

The following timber sales are likely to have harvesting activity in 2023

- Hognose, 185 acres - Overstory Removal / Shelterwood, DeHaas Road, Curtin Township, Centre County – Forester Dayhoff
- Trust the Process, 333 acres, Romola Road, Curtin Township, Centre County – Forester B. Myers
- Polish Power Sale, 221 acres, Coon Run Road, Beech Creek Township, Clinton County – Forester B. Myers
- Sonny Corleone, 124 acres, PA State Route 144, Beech Creek Township, Clinton County – Forester T. Myers

- Whiskey Stump, 120 acres, 1st Stage Shelterwood, Hicks Road, Beech Creek Township, Clinton County – Forester T. Myers
- Broken Horn, 251 acres, Dry Run Road, Chapman Township, Clinton County – Mills
- Black Cohosh, 137 acres, Red Buck Hall Road, Snow Shoe Township, Centre County – Forester Mills
- Lost Goat, 121 acres, Carrier / Oak Ridge Roads, Gallagher / Grugan Townships, Clinton County – Forester Mills
- Punji Sticks and Serpents, 68 acres, PA State Route 44, Chapman Township, Clinton County – Forester B. Myers
- Lost Bird Snapper, 49 acres, Overstory Removal, PA SR 44, McClure Ridge, Chapman Township, Clinton County – Forester B. Myers
- Missing Serpents, 118 acres, Two-Age, State Line Road, Burnside Township, Centre County – Forester B. Myers
- Trippin Weasel, 245 acres, shelterwood, PA SR 44, Spring Run Lane, Chapman/Grugan Township, Clinton County- Forester B. Myers
- Coyote Backbone, 1367 acres – Salvage, Mill Branch Road, Grugan / Beech Creek / Bald Eagle Townships, Clinton County – Forester Melman
- Jordan Hollow, 105 Acres, Big Basin Road, Noyes Township, Clinton County – Forester Dayhoff
- Snake in the Grass, 374 acres, Two-aged Removal, Frenchman Trail to Davidson Camp, Yost Ridge Road, Burnside Township, Centre County – Forester T. Myers
- Fence Lizard, 122 acres – Mine Reclamation, Clear cut, Huling Branch / Whiskey Springs Roads, Noyes / Leidy Townships, Clinton County – R. Fitterling
- Nelson Trail, 125 acres – Overstory Removal, Dutchmans Road, West Keating Township, Clinton County – Forester Mills

Regeneration projects

Fence Installation

Contracted Woven wire fence installation will occur on 1 site in the Sproul.

- Eagleton Road – Beech Creek Township, Clinton County:
 - 33 acres, 4,873 feet

Fence Removal

The district is planning for the contracted removal of 7 woven wire deer fences in Chapman Township, Clinton County. The total linear feet of fence to be removed is 17,858 feet. The locations and acreage to be removed are:

- Six Mile Road:
 - 47 acres, 7578 feet
- Crazy Raven Road off Six Mile Road:
 - 29 acres, 4667 feet
 - 33 acres, 5613 feet
- Fork Hill Road:
 - 83 acres, 15,617 feet
 - 36 acres, 6,954 feet

Other woven wire fences planned for removal using district resources include:

- Montour Road
 - 51 acres, 8,362 feet
- Lebo Road
 - 53 acres, 6,512 feet
- Little Greenlick
 - 47 acres, 7,435 feet

RESTORATION AND HABITAT PROJECTS

- Elk Habitat enhancement planting project, in cooperation with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, off Dutchman's Road (8 acres) and off Juneberry Trail (4 acres), West Keating township, Clinton County.
- 4 acre - Flat Ridge herbaceous opening to be re-established in Colebrook Township, Clinton County.
- 2 acre - wildlife planting project in cooperation with Dominion Energy on pipeline right of way off Route 144, near Fisher Hill, in Beech Creek township, Clinton County.
- 4 acre - wildlife herbaceous opening planting project, in cooperation with the Kettle Creek-Tamarack Sportsman's Association in the pipeline corridor off Big Basin Road, in Leidy Township, Clinton County.
- 1 acre – pollinator planting, location to be determined.
- 80 acres – Scrub oak & Laurel Mowing, along SR 144 near Wolf Run Rd and Allen Dam Rd, Burnside Twp, Centre County.

ROAD AND BRIDGE PROJECTS

Road Projects:

- Cattaraugus Road – Paver Place and Roll approximately 5,075 tons of DSA, located in Noyes Township, Clinton County.
- DeHaas Road -Apply approximately 3,850 tons of 2A Limestone road base located in Beech Creek Township, Clinton County and Curtin Township, Centre County.
- Rock Run Extension – Apply approximately 275 tons of 2A limestone road base, in East Keating Township, Clinton County.
- Graham Road – Road rehab from Farrandsville to Graham Run, which will include road widening, pipe installation and 4” minus road based to be tailgated and rolled, in Colebrook/Grugan Township, Clinton County.

Bridge Replacement Projects:

- Graham Road over Graham Run in Colebrook/Grugan Township, Clinton County.

PRESCRIBED FIRE

2023 Prescribed Fire Plan:

Spring:

1. Slush Puppy Rx (Fall Burn) – To rejuvenate oak seedlings and reduce competition from undesirable species in an Oak Shelterwood harvest.
Unit 1: 125 Acres
Unit 2: 59 Acres
2. Pat’s Ridge – Goal: Top-kill competing vegetation to allow for oak to become more competitive within the stand.
Unit 1: 74 Acres
3. Wolf Run Rx – Goal: To promote Scrub Oak and Pitch Pine Barrens by rejuvenating Scrub Oak and seed release of serotinous pitch pinecones.
Unit 4: 174 Acres

Fall:

1. Commissioner Rx (Spongy Moth Damage may delay this burn longer) – Goal: Top-kill competing vegetation as well as impact the leaf litter and duff within the stand.
Unit 1: 76 Acres

Completed in 2022

1. Logway Run Habitat Opening – Goal: Maintain/Restore warm season grasses as a habitat opening.
Unit 1: 23 Acres
2. Broken Horn Trail Rx – Goal: Top-kill competing vegetation to allow for oak to become more competitive within the stand.
Unit 1: 41 Acres
3. Lupine Rx – Penn State University study on the effects of Prescribed fire on Lupine.
Unit 1: <1 Acre

INSECT, DISEASE, AND INVASIVE PLANT TREATMENT

- The *Lymantria dispar* (Spongy Moth) spray program slated for the spring of 2023 will be a substantial increase compared to last year. In the spring of 2022, the district sprayed 16,800 acres. With the population on the rise, this spring, we have proposed to spray 63,369 acres of State Forest Lands in the district. The treatment will be done in early to mid-May.
- In 2022, a total of 55 acres were treated for invasive plants. These plants include Phragmites (Common Reed), Japanese Knotweed, Mile a Minute, Japanese barberry, and Poison Hemlock. There were three herbicide contracts that went out for bid, but two had bidders. The first contract was for Mile a Minute weed; it consisted of 3 sites totaling 18 acres. The second contract that went out for bid was for Japanese Barberry; it consisted of 3 sites totaling 9.25 acres.
- For 2023, we plan on treating the same species as 2022, but will try to treat more acreage. Our goal is to treat 90 acres in 2023. Also, the district will have 4 herbicide contracts to go out for bid.
 - The first one will be for Japanese Knotweed off Cattaraugus Road, totaling 185 acres.
 - The second will be for Mile a Minute, the same as 2022's contract, consisting of 3 sites and totaling 18 acres.
 - The third will be for Mile a Minute and Japanese Knotweed at the Janene Rock area. This area was the dumping site of the dredge material from the Sinnemahoning Dam, which has an abundance of invasives. This site will consist of 20 acres.
 - The fourth contract will be for Japanese Barberry and will consist of 3 sites totally roughly 47 acres.
- Treat 3 sites off Jews Run Road and several other small sites for Poison Hemlock and Phragmites

NATURAL GAS, OIL, AND OTHER GEOLOGIC RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- In 2022, the oil and gas activity on the Sproul state has been quieter than in past years. The main projects were ongoing projects from the previous year. It looks like in 2023 there will more activity though!
- Leidy South project is pretty much finished. The Leidy South project is on Williams Pipeline Company/ Transco. The last of the gates that need to be painted should be done in early spring 2023, weather permitting. All seedlings have been planted for the project and includes the seedlings that got replanted on the Atlantic Sunrise project. The project now focuses on monitoring and treatment of invasives.
- S.T.L Resources completed drilling four more wells on the Sturgis property and removed their freshwater line that ran from the river to their pads. Most of the waterline was on state forest land.
- Eastern Gas Storage and Transmission, previously known as Dominion, will be doing some routine well maintenance. This is normally done every year to upgrade and maintain their Leidy and Tamarack Storage fields. They also are planning to replace a waterline that runs from Kettle Creek to their Leidy station. EGTS plans on continuing their pipeline recoat project out behind the Leidy Village complex as well.
- EQT has provided the district with a drilling schedule for the wells that have not been used yet. They predict activity will start in 2024 with the fracking of more wells.
- TransCanada Energy is looking at doing a cathodic protection project on their 1818 pipeline. The pipeline runs from their compressor station in Young Woman's creek to Hyner Mountain off Ritchie Road. For this project, trees in the right of way will need to be cut/ trimmed to make doing the work easier.
- Capital Oil and Gas (also known as NCL) will be plugging six wells starting in December 2022 and will continue into 2023. These wells were deemed nonproducing and are required to be plugged as pre DCNR and DEP standards.
- Work is finishing up on a major strip mine reclamation project in the Two-Mile Run Watershed. Planning for this project started in the Fall of 2016. This project consisted of 46 acres of strip mine regrading and revegetation, the removal of a dangerous high walls, removal of an area known as "The Pit", excavation of both areas down to the pit floor, adding alkaline addition to the overburden, excavating the former tipple complex, removing, and treating any tipple waste and remaining coal on the site and regenerating the site to a mixture of ARRI plantings and herbaceous openings. Current plans are to create herbaceous openings throughout the site, reestablish several miles of ATV trails, and plant most of the area using ARRI. The former tipple site will be converted to a pond to help treat water and will be fenced to protect it from ATV traffic. The hope is to change quality of the base water

flows from the site and improve the water quality in the Two-Mile Run and Kettle Creek Watersheds.

- The planning is ongoing in 2023 on a DEP, Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation strip mine reclamation project in the Whiskey Springs ATV Area, between the Kettle Creek and Huling Branch Watersheds in Leidy and Noyes Townships, Clinton County. The site, called Five Mile Hollow, is 122 acres in size and will be cleared with a timber sale. This reclamation project is slated to be bid out in the Spring of 2024. The site will be reclaimed using the ARRI process and pollinator and wildlife herbaceous openings. Results of this project include several miles of sustainable ATV trails reconstructed, improved road access, backfilling highwalls, and regrading and restoring a severely degraded environment.

TOWER AND RIGHT-OF-WAY PROJECTS

- Betchel Corporation is currently evaluating the feasibility of building a large natural gas fired electrical power plant in Renovo, utilizing the site of the former railroad repair facilities. If this plant is built, it will require a 16 to 20-inch natural gas pipeline to provide the needed fuel. The company decided on a route that will impact approximately six miles of State Forest. The route will begin in the Robbins Farm Road R and basically follow the First Energy/NYSEG corridor to an area of private property just north of Renovo. The company continues to conduct their planning operations.
- The Dominion 1813 (L1800) pipeline that crosses Elk, Moshannon and Sproul State Forests will be abandoned. The right of way will be retired and restored.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Several rights of way are in the process of being acquired from private landowners to facilitate public and administrative access to the Sproul State Forest.
- A trail is in the planning stage to link the Whiskey Springs ATV trail to Renovo.
- This year, the Sproul State Forest will become part of the ATV Pilot route, with destination connections to North Bend, Cross Fork, Whiskey Springs ATV Trail and Westport, PA and to the existing ATV Pilot routes in the Susquehannock, Tioga and the Tiadaghton State Forest.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

In a typical year, the District will engage in the activities listed below.

- Numerous school programs throughout the year, featuring fire prevention, Birth of a Tree, conservation field days, and other programs for schools within the District.
- Participation in the Centre County and Clinton County Natural Gas Task Forces and associated sub committees. Meetings held throughout the year.
- Participate with the Clinton County Economic Partnership Tourism Committee. Meetings held throughout the year.

RESEARCH

- There are many research projects currently active on the Sprout State Forest. These projects range from habitat studies for various species to impacts from the Marcellus Shale Gas play. The Planning Section maintains a database of all active and approved research projects.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

- February 2021- TransCanada completed work on daylighting their right of way and are working on turning significant portions into wildlife plots. This is a multi-year project.
- April 2021 -Completed two prescribed fires on Cole Run Road (135 acres).
- April 2021- Completed Buckhorn prescribed fire off Eagleton Road (31 acres).
- April 2021 – Completed Stoney habitat opening prescribed fire (14 acres).
- June 2022- District Staff tailgated 4,000 tons of 2A limestone on Kingston and Rattlesnake Roads.
- June 2022- District staff tailgated 2,020 tons of 2A Limestone on Grugan Hollow Road.
- July 2022 – Contractor paver placed and rolled 3,840 tons of DSA on Carrier Road.
- July 2022 – District staff installed 15 pipes and tailgated 2,218 tons of 2A limestone on Graham Road.
- July 2022 – Contractor paver placed and rolled 5,203 tons of DSA on Beech Creek Road.
- August 2022 – Contractor paver placed and rolled 4,497 tons of DSA on Yost Ridge Road.
- In cooperation with the PA Outdoor Adult Crew, trail bridges were replaced over Drury Run and Cooks Run.
- September 2022 – Law enforcement concentration patrol in Kato area for a Friday and Saturday. Citations and warnings were issued for illegal acts.

- December 2022 – A total of 584 acres of silvicultural treatments were finalized with 4 executed timber sale contracts for the year.
- 1,881 acres of silvicultural treatments are planned to be bid out by Spring of 2023.
- Collected data on approximately 45 Deer Browse Indicator Plots.
- 7,040 lineal feet, on 37 acres of Woven wire deer fence were removed near Laurelly Fork and Mudlick by district using the PA Outdoor Corp and district personnel.
- May 2022 - 29,112 acres of State Forest lands and State Park lands in Clinton and Centre Counties were sprayed for *Lymantria dispar*, the caterpillar previously known as the Gypsy Moth.
- October 2022 – District staff removed a failing bridge crossing and installed a legal load limit bridge across Huling Branch in the Whiskey Springs ATV trail.