

Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Division of Forestry

Annual Work Plan

For

Eastern State Forests

For the Period of

2020/2021

December 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021



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Date: _____

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I. Forest Overview

The Eastern State Forests include five state forests: Harrison, Fernwood, Yellow Creek, Beaver Creek and Cravat. The headquarters office for the Eastern State Forests is located at Fernwood State Forest.

State Forest	County	Acres
Fernwood	Jefferson	3,023
Harrison	Harrison	1,344
Yellow Creek	Columbiana	1,122
Beaver Creek	Columbiana	756
Cravat	Belmont	350
Total		6,595

A substantial portion of the land in Fernwood and Harrison state forests has been strip mined for coal. However, the production of acid mine water is minimal because of the neutralizing effect of limestone deposits. The majority of unstripped lands is located on ridges and is in forest cover. Subsequent reforestation and installation of recreation facilities, funded through the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965 and the Ohio Capital Improvements program, have restored the area to a beautiful, healthy forest, providing visitors with many outdoor recreational opportunities. Reforestation efforts have occurred on various reclaimed strip mine areas on these two forests

Yellow Creek State Forest adjoins the Highlandtown Wildlife Area in Columbiana County. The land for Yellow Creek was purchased between 1947-1960. There are no developed facilities on Yellow Creek State Forest.

In 1998, ODNR acquired 1,122 acres near Calcutta, Ohio in Columbiana County that became Beaver Creek State Forest. The need for accommodating diverse outdoor recreation coupled with the protection of the unique Little Beaver Creek watershed were primary factors in establishing Ohio's 20th state forest under the multiple use management philosophy of the ODNR Division of Forestry.

In 2018, ODNR acquired 350 acres near Saint Clairsville, Ohio in Belmont County that became Cravat State Forest. There are no developed facilities on Cravat State Forest.

II. Resource Management

All proposed harvest activity is reviewed by a cross-sectional group of DOF staff to determine which harvests are best suited for stumpage harvests and for forest product sales. These recommendations are then provided to the chief for consideration and final decision. Harvests will be accomplished using a combination of stumpage sales and product sales as defined below.

Prescription Cruising:

The purpose of prescription cruising is to monitor the health and silvicultural needs of the forest based on Division of Forestry goals. The cruises will follow a stand-based cruising model. The U.S. Forest Service, research developed, OAK SILVAH decision support system will be used as the primary reference to develop prescriptions for oak stands. In the next year, the Division has identified the following parcels for prescription cruising.

State Forest	Compartment(s)	Vol. Bd. Ft.	Total Ac.	Singletree or Group Selection	Clearcut / Openings	Shelterwood	Deferment	Thinning / Improvement	County / Twp
Fernwood	A-1	241,000	70					70	Jefferson/Cross Creek

Stumpage Harvests (standing trees):

The following stumpage harvests are marked and proposed to be harvested in the upcoming fiscal year.

State Forest	Compartment(s)	Vol. Bd. Ft.	Total Ac.	Singletree or Group Selection	Clearcut / Openings	Shelterwood	Deferment	Thinning / Improvement	County / Twp
Yellow Creek	A-5	709,904	70	17	6		47		Columbiana/Wayne

Forest Product Sales:

Harvesting through forest product sales consists of hiring contract loggers or utilizing state crews to deliver whole trees (stringers) to a central location for processing, sorting and selling of products. These products will be sold through a competitive bid process.

High Conservation Value Forest Monitoring:

Maintaining and promoting the features that make areas designated HCVPs are important to the Division of Forestry. Approximately 200 acres of HCVP at Beaver Creek State Forest in Section 25 of St. Clair Township are planned to be monitored this year.

Minerals:

A substantial portion of the land at Fernwood and Harrison state forests has been strip mined for coal. The state does not own subsurface rights for much of these properties as they were severed prior to state surface ownership.

Invasives:

Non-native invasive species such as ailanthus, bush honeysuckle, multi-flora rose and autumn olive in areas at Fernwood and Harrison state forests will be targeted for control as they are encountered. These invasive species, especially ailanthus, will need to be killed in and around the timber sales at Fernwood and Harrison to prevent the invasion into the openings created during the sales. Ailanthus stands will be monitored for presence of Verticillium Wilt, a beneficial biological control agent.

Boundary:

There are approximately 70 miles of boundary lines around the Eastern Forests.

With a 5-year rotation schedule, approximately 15 miles of boundary will be inspected and repainted as needed each year.

Licenses/Leases:

- Oil and Gas pipeline license agreements:
- Harrison SF: Enterprise Liquids Pipeline (ATEX)
- Harrison SF: Cardinal Gas Services
- Harrison SF: Sunoco Pipeline L.P.

Beaver Creek State Forest: Abandoned Railroad ROW license agreement with Columbiana County Park District for the development of a recreational trail.

Insects & Disease:

Ash trees being killed by the emerald ash borer will be salvaged where possible. Staff will continue to monitor for gypsy moth and hemlock woolly adelgid on the state forest units.

Utilization & Marketing:

Firewood permits will be issued on a request basis for downed trees along roadways, trails and facilities.

Certification

The Division of Forestry will continue third party dual certification under the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) standards. Surveillance audits will be conducted in the fall of 2020. This year will mark the 5th surveillance audit of the state forest system.

Research:

There are no research projects currently on any eastern region state forests.

Summary (2-3 year projects):

Most of the above projects are ongoing and are expected to last several years. Land management activities will continue depending on recommendations from foresters. Recent reforestation efforts on over 200 acres at Harrison and Fernwood state forests will be monitored. Invasive species control will need to be implemented in these areas.

III. Maintenance

Buildings:

Perform general maintenance, routine cleaning, and repair to the 9 buildings and structures located at Fernwood and Harrison state forests.

Fernwood State Forest	Service Center/Office Equipment Barn Herbicide Storage Shed Latrine (Round Top Picnic Area) Latrine (Hidden Hollow Camp) Kiosk at Hidden Hollow Campground
Harrison State Forest	Latrines - 2 (Trailriders Camp) Latrine (Ronsheim Camp) Kiosk at Trailriders Campground

Infrastructure (water, wastewater, utilities):

No major repairs are planned or anticipated.

Vehicles/Equipment

Perform routine maintenance, timely service and repairs to the unit's fleet of vehicles and equipment.

Vehicles

- Dozer transport, 1999 Freightliner, diesel, dovetail bed, MARCS equipped
- Ford 1 ton Dump truck, 2008, 4x4
- Ford 1 ton Crew Cab, 2006, 4x4, Gas, Utility Body, 10,000 lb., MARCS equipped
- Ford ¾ ton Pickup, 2005, 4x4, extended Cab, 5,000 lb.
- Ford ½ ton Pickup, 2015, 4x4, Super Cab, 5,000 lb., MARCS equipped
- Freightliner Dump Truck.
- Dodge ¾ ton Pickup, 2019, 4x4, Super Cab, 5,000 lb.

Equipment

- John Deere Dozer 450 w/ angle blade, rear winch w/ chokers
- Bobcat Skid Steer, High Flow hydraulics, Forest Mulcher head, angle blade, drill, bucket, brushhog
- John Deere Tractor, 65 hp, 4x4 w/ bucket and grapple/forks/brushhog/angle-tilt blade.
- Case wheel tractor.
- Caterpillar D7 dozer.
- Heavy equipment Trailer.
- ATV trailer, 6'x12', 2" ball hitch, single axle rear gate ramp, 4 wire flat plug
- Trailers, (1), double axle, 8' x 20'. 7,000 lb.
- Polaris Sportsman 500, 4wd, 3,000 lb. front winch
- Kawasaki Mule, diesel/4wd/1,000 lb. hydraulic lift bed/1,200 lb. tow capacity w/1.25" and 2" frame hitch/2,500 lb. front winch/convertible from 3-6 passenger capacity
- John Deere Gator 825I w/4500 lb. front winch

- 50 gallon UTV sprayer unit, electric pump, 30' reach, fits into K-Mule
- 50 Gallon UTV slip on unit, 50 gpm pump, fits in the bed of the Kawasaki Mule
- 150 gallon slip on unit, 23hp, 200 gpm pump w/Class A foam proportioner

Roads:

Approximately 30 miles of limited access roads are annually inspected at Fernwood and Harrison state forests. GPS and inventory all access roads in the eastern forests.

Dams:

Harrison State Forest has one class III dam, Ronsheim Dam, that will be monitored throughout the year. The Division will cut and treat woody vegetation on the dams located at Fernwood and Harrison state forests.

Forest Ponds/Dams Eastern Forests		
Forest Location	ID	Acres
Fernwood State Forest	1	1.2
	2	1.2
	3	1.2
Harrison State Forest	1	.4
	2	.2
	3	.8
	4	.5
	5	2*
	6	2
	7	1.6
	8	2.3
	9	.5
	10	2.4
	11	2.4

*One half of pond #5 is on private property.

Grounds:

- Grounds maintenance will primarily consist of mowing all public areas and brush removal at campgrounds.
- Latrines and trash containers maintained at all campground areas.

Capitals Projects:

- There are no major capital improvement projects planned.

Summary (2-3 year future projects):

Future projects other than those listed above include:

- Construction of parking lot area along Little Beaver Creek at Beaver Creek State Forest for canoe access.

IV. **Recreation**

Trails (bridle, hiking, etc.):

There are approximately 26 miles of combined bridle and hiking trails at Harrison State Forest and a three-mile hiking trail at Fernwood State Forest.

- Continue addressing eroded areas and poorly drained sections of trails at Fernwood and Harrison.
- Facilitate the Columbiana County Park District's development of a pedestrian/bicycle trail on the abandoned railroad ROW at Beaver Creek State Forest. They will be assessing the RR ROW and tunnel for trail development
- Continue to monitor RR tunnel project area for erosion.

Bridle trails are currently open all year. Although winter and early spring use represents a small number of total visitors, it can have a disproportionate negative impact to the trail surface. This can create a heavy maintenance need and causes some erosion. **The division is interested in feedback from user groups on creating a proposal to minimize or restrict trail use in the winter and early spring.** No restrictions are planned for the next year.

Campgrounds:

Fernwood State Forest has one campground, Hidden Hollow Campground, with 22 family campsites equipped with picnic tables, fire rings and vault latrines. Campers must provide their own water and self-register at the campground.

Harrison State Forest has two campground areas equipped with picnic tables, fire rings, and vault latrines. Ronsheim Campground has seven camp sites; Trailriders Campground has 20 sites accommodating family and/or horse campers. Campers must provide their own water, and self-register at the campground.

Shooting Ranges:

There is one shooting range at Harrison State Forest and three shooting ranges at Fernwood State Forest, including one trap shoot range, one pistol range, and one rifle range.

- New improvement to shooting ranges have been constructed with contractors and Division of Wildlife at Fernwood and Harrison state forests. These extensive improvements include

- covered benches, ballistic sand, and handicapped access.
- The shooting benches will be repaired and repainted as needed.

Summary (2-3 year future projects)

- Coordinate trail development at Beaver Creek State Forest.
- Continue trail improvement work at Fernwood and Harrison state forests.

V. Wildland Fire

Suppression:

- The Division of Forestry shall aggressively suppress wildland fire starts within each state forest.
- During extreme fire danger periods, stage available resources and equipment at predetermined location, notify local fire departments of availability status, and respond as needed/requested.

Prevention:

- The Division of Forestry will promote wildfire prevention programs through local fire departments utilizing Smokey’s “A Fire Prevention Teachers Workbook.”
- We plan to participate in at least three fire prevention educational opportunities each year.
- We will promote roadside Fire Danger signs in Jefferson, Columbiana, and Harrison counties.

Prescribed Fire:

The following is a list of prescribed fires that are being proposed to be implemented in FY 2021.

State Forest	Compartment	Acres
Harrison	3	44

Interagency Fire Crew:

- Eastern Forest staff members will be encouraged to participate in the Division’s Inter-Agency Fire Crew program as the workload and budget allow.

Training:

- Offer and provide Basic Wildfire Suppression training to VFD’s in Columbiana, Carroll, Harrison, Tuscarawas, Belmont, Guernsey, and Jefferson counties (1/County)

Fire Department Contacts:

- Attend a minimum of one VFD Association meeting per year in each county in the fire protection district.
- Work with fire departments to utilize the online fire reporting system.
- Update fire department data sheets.
- Forest Manager is lead for southern portion and Fire Forester is lead for northeast portion:

Eastern Forests Fire Cooperative Totals		
County	# Fire Departments	# Fire Associations
Ashtabula	24	2, **
Belmont	23	1, *
Carroll	12	1, *
Columbiana	13	2
Geauga	14	1, **
Guernsey	12	1
Harrison	13	1
Jefferson	24	1, *
Mahoning	21	1, **
Portage	19	1, **
Stark	28	1, **
Trumbull	30	1, **
Tuscarawas	20	2, *
Total	253	16, *, **

*Southeast Ohio Fire Chiefs Association includes these counties.

**Northeast Ohio Fire Chiefs Association includes these counties

Firewise:

- Continue to promote the Firewise program within the Eastern Forests Fire Protection Area.

Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP)/Firefighter Property (FFP):

- Continue to complete annual inspections of federal property within our fire protection project.
- Continue to promote the participation of fire departments in

the FEPP and FFP.

Grants:

- Promote grant opportunities to area fire departments

Summary (2-3 year) future projects:

The Eastern Forests Fire Protection Area covers thirteen counties and has a moderate-severe wildland fire problem, with a potential serious threat to “values” (property/infrastructure) within the Wildland-Urban Interface. Continue the goal of supporting and assisting the cooperating fire departments within the fire protection area with prevention activities, wildland fire suppression and wildland fire training. Continue assisting fire departments with online fire reporting system.

VI. Law Enforcement

Due to re-organization, the Division of Forestry’s Law Enforcement staff was transferred to the Division of Parks in Fiscal Year 2013. These officers continue to enforce laws on state forests, as well as continuing to investigate and enforce Ohio’s wildfire laws.

VII. Employee Development

Employee List/Vacancies/Table of Organization:

William McCormick	Forest Manager
Eric Traczyk	Equipment Operator 2
Dan Randolph	Equipment Operator 2
Tyler Wells	Natural Resources Technician 1
John Mueller	District Manager

Training (tuition reimbursement, etc.):

- Provide proper training and equipment for all employees, including: CPR annually, First Aid every third year, and Interagency Fire Crew Refresher annually.

Safety:

- Coordinate monthly safety meetings for entire staff.
- Conduct annual inspection of lock out/tag out tool boxes.

Other Employee Development:

Employees will be allowed to participate in professional development and educational training programs as workloads and the budget allows.

VIII. Public Information/Outreach

Planned Events:

Harrison Co. OHC Regional Ride at Harrison State Forest:	June, 2021
Fernwood SF 5 th grade Outdoor Field Days:	May, 2021
Fernwood SF Hike for Mental Health	Sept, 2021

Eastern State Forests - Partnerships:

Ohio Horseman's Council (OHC)
Carroll County OHC Chapter
Harrison County OHC
Buckeye Trail Riders
Columbiana County Park District
Lake Erie to Ohio River Trail Organization
North Country Trail group
Ohio Farm Bureau Chapters
County SWCDs
Emergency Management Directors and County Sheriffs
School Districts in Jefferson and Harrison counties
Jefferson, GKL, and Mingo Sportsmen's Clubs
Columbiana and Harrison County Commissioners
Township Trustees in St. Clair/Columbiana, Washington/Columbiana,
Archer/Harrison, Cross Creek/Jefferson, Wayne/Jefferson
National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF)
Wildlife Management Institute (WMI)
ODNR Scenic Rivers Program

Volunteer Groups:

Buckeye Trail Riders
Carroll County OHC
Harrison County OHC

Programs:

State forest staff supports and plans to continue participating in the Fernwood State Forest Outdoor Days. The program provides environmental education to 5th graders of Jefferson County and is coordinated and sponsored by the Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District.

A BMP demonstration area has been recently developed at Fernwood State Forest. The site will serve as a training area for Ohio loggers as part of their Master Logger training through the Ohio Forestry Association. Forest staff will participate and coordinate trainings in the spring and fall every year.

Summary (2-3 year future projects):

Information and Education about forest resources in Ohio is an ongoing

component of the Division of Forestry. In addition to continuing previous events and partnerships: Revise and print new forest maps for Harrison, Beaver Creek and Yellow Creek state forests.

IX. Budget

Operational Budget

The FY2020 operational budget allocated to state forest units covers the general expenses necessary to the operation of the particular state forest. State forest managers and staff purchase supplies, services and equipment to keep the forest unit running, and report all expenditures.

Revenue:

Revenue is generated from timber and product sales, firewood permits and special use permit application fees. A percentage of timber sale income is returned to the local township, county, and local school district through the “Trees to Textbooks” Program. A portion of the timber revenue kept by the Division of Forestry is utilized to pay fire departments for each wildland fire report that is submitted. These reports are generated by the fire department for each fire response that they conduct.



ODNR - Division of Forestry
 2020-2021 Marking Plan
 Yellow Creek State Forest
 DRAFT

