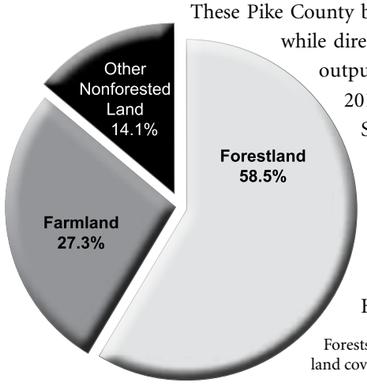
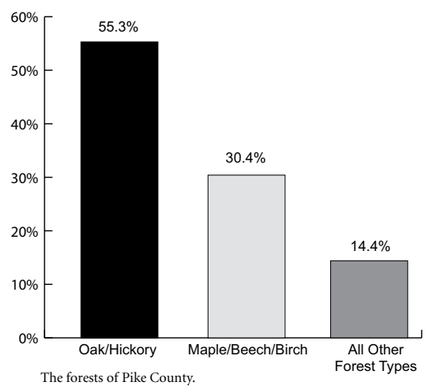
Pike County – One of Ohio's 88 Greats

By Eric McConnell

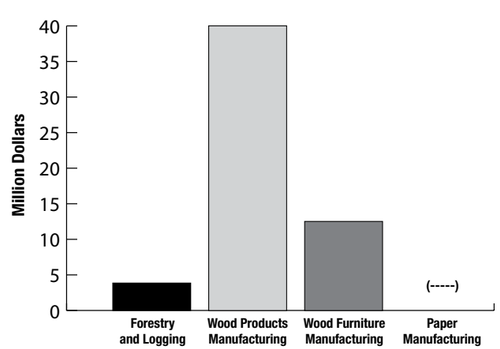
Pike County contains 165,000 acres of forestland, which are 86 percent privately owned. Responsibly managing these woodlands provides community support to the county's forest industries. These Pike County businesses employed 389 people while directly generating $56.4 million in output and $3.21 million in taxes in 2010. *Sources*: United States Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis, 2010; Pike County 2011 forest survey database; and Minnesota IMPLAN Group, 2010 Ohio state and national package database, MIG, Inc., Hudson, WI.



Forests make up 58.5% of the total land covering Pike County.



The forests of Pike County.



Direct industrial output of Pike County's forest industries, 2010.

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- Legislative Representation

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By Greg Smith

Taking advantage of the forest resource of their county, the Pike County Commissioners sponsor the annual Pike County Forestry Field Day for all of the county fifth graders. The event has been held for 16 years at Pike Lake State Park in early October when the leaf colors are beginning to change.

The commissioners dedicate a portion of the monies they receive from timber sale stumpage revenues generated by ODNR Division of Forestry management activities at Pike State Forest. They purchase hot dogs grilled on site by Pike SWCD staff and volunteers and other lunch items assembled by the Pike County Career Technology Center for the enjoyment of the 450 students, teachers, and program leaders attending the field day.

The commissioners are adamant that the youngsters gain a better understanding of the tremendous natural resources in their county. Many of the children's families own woodlands or are employed in local forest industry. The students listen intently as natural resource professionals discuss forestry, wood products, tree identification, nature lore, wildlife, insect pests, and wildfire topics. ◆