



More Trees, Healthy Forests

Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry

Open House Summary

District 4 State Forests

Hocking

Blue Rock

Perry

Zaleski

Shade River and Gifford

Fiscal Year 2009

Open House Invitation

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources – Division of Forestry cordially invites you to attend one of five open houses located throughout Ohio. The location and dates of our open houses are as follows:

September 10, 2008

Time: 3 pm – 7 pm

Location: Maumee State Forest Office, 3390 County Road D, Swanton, Ohio 43558

Telephone: 419-822-3052

September 3, 2008

Time: 6 pm – 8 pm

Location: Eastern State Forests and Mohican, New Philadelphia Office, 2205 Reiser Ave SE., New Philadelphia, Ohio 44663 Telephone: 330-339-2205

September 2, 2008

Time: 4 pm – 6 pm

Location: District 4, Athens District Office, 360 E. State St, Athens, Ohio 45701

Telephone: 740-593-3341

September 3, 2008

Time: 5 pm – 7 pm

Location: District 5, Chillicothe Office, 345 Allen Ave., Chillicothe, Ohio 45601

Telephone: 740-774-1596

August 26, 2008

Time: 3 pm – 7 pm

Location: District 6, Shawnee State Forest Office, 13291 US 52, West Portsmouth, Ohio 45663

Telephone: 740-858-6685

Each year the Division of Forestry opens our doors to interested citizens and neighbors and displays our upcoming forest management activities for the upcoming year. A number of activities including timber harvesting, prescribed burning, timber cruising, grapevine control, recreation trails, and facility maintenance that are proposed for the upcoming year are on display.

Interested citizens are encouraged to attend and meet local forest managers and staff who will be present to answer any questions that you may have. In addition, citizens are encouraged to comment on cards that will be provided concerning any topic relating to state forest management.

Thank you for your participation in state forest management. We look forward to meeting you!

David Lytle
Chief and State Forester

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Purpose

Ohio DNR Division of Forestry **open houses** are held each year as an opportunity for citizens to learn more about state forest management for the upcoming year. This document is provided to interested citizens and visitors to state forests. Citizens are encouraged to attend any one or all of our upcoming open houses located throughout the state this summer. At each open house, citizens will have a chance to visit with local forest managers and staff to ask questions on the details of these projects. This is a great opportunity for interaction with your state foresters.

This document outlines important activities such as timber harvests, prescribed burning, recreational trail activities, and other activities that are scheduled for the upcoming 12 months on District 4 State Forests including Hocking, Zaleski, Blue Rock, Perry, and Shade River State Forest managed by the ODNR - Division of Forestry.

The information contained in these open house documents is accurate to the best of the Division's knowledge and is intended for interested citizens. However, citizens should be aware that the items listed here are scheduled and anticipated activities. While being good stewards, it often becomes necessary to alter, change, add, drop, or re-evaluate projects due to changing conditions.

Overview of State Forests

Ohio operates 20 state forests, covering more than 185,000 acres in 21 counties, mostly in Ohio's unglaciated southeastern region. The history of Ohio's State Forests officially began in 1916, but its roots go back much further. Before Ohio was settled, it was virtually all forested. But by the late 1800s, many of those forests had been cut down, leaving the state with only 20 percent forest cover.

Today's state forests are a reflection of decades of stewardship. With careful nurturing by generations of dedicated, trained and committed foresters, Ohio's forests have become models of resource management and protection.

Lands virtually devoid of merchantable timber now boast an inventory in excess of 1.2 billion board feet. At the same time, more than 400 million board feet of forest products have been removed and processed over the last 50 years through carefully planned and executed forestry operations. The current value of the revenue to the state for these products removed would be in excess of \$100 million.

But state forests are more than timber. State forests are outdoor havens for millions of recreational visitors, habitat for almost 100 endangered species, and home to some of the oldest tended trees in the United States.

Today, the Division of Forestry manages with its original purpose in mind. Yet, management has broadened to ensure that other natural resource values, including endangered species, wildlife habitat, and backcountry recreation are protected or enhanced.

Division of Forestry Mission Statement

Our Mission is to Promote and Apply Management for the Sustainable use and Protection of Ohio's Private and Public Forest Lands

► We will

- Reforest rural lands, where appropriate, through the growing and selling of high-quality forest tree seedlings, emphasizing hardwoods.
- Encourage the best management of Ohio's non-industrial private forests through stewardship-oriented assistance that meets landowner management objectives.
- Provide multiple public benefits from forests owned and managed by the ODNR-Division of Forestry that include being a source of aesthetics, forest products, recreational opportunities, quality streams and diverse wildlife habitats. These properties will be individually managed to enhance their unique features.
- Establish, maintain, and improve urban forests through expanding cooperative efforts with Ohio's communities.
- Encourage rural economic health by emphasizing quality products from Ohio's woodlands and wood-using industries.
- Provide wildfire management leadership including prescribed fire.
- Promote the health of Ohio's forests.
- Facilitate understanding of the vital role of forests in Ohio's environment and economy.
- Develop and maintain partnerships, such as Ohio Tree Farm Committee, Ohio Forestry Association, woodland owner groups, 4-H, Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Society of American Foresters, and others, that support these goals and objectives.

► We will foster

- An educated and informed workforce
- An innovative workplace that promotes excellence and personal growth
- The trust of the public that is earned on a daily basis.

Strategic Plan

The Division of Forestry has formulated a new Strategic Plan to guide State Forest management for the upcoming 2-5 years. The Strategic Plan is an effort to focus our management activities on the highest priorities. The Strategic Plan also incorporates the important step of Certification of our State Forests. Governor Strickland issued a Directive on October 25, 2007 for the ODNR-Division of Forestry to achieve third-party certification.

The Division of Forestry encourages you to comment, respond, or make suggestions to our new Strategic Plan prior to implementation. The copy of the plan can be found in **Appendix 1**. Feel free to comment on one of the provided comments forms or on a separate sheet of paper.

State Forest Land Management

All state forestland is divided into “zones” that direct the recommendations for management. These zones are intended to provide for management activities on our forest while protecting sensitive features.

Management activities on state forests are designed to improve our forests. They promote the health and vigor of the forest, provide for timber production, improve recreational opportunities, and protect our natural heritage. Activities such as timber harvesting undergo a rigorous review process, before final decisions are made. State foresters make considerations for potential impacts to a variety of features in order to ensure good stewardship.

Timber harvests on state forests are sustainable. Approximately 2 % of the entire acreage of state forests receives some type of harvesting in any given year. On average, 75% of timber harvests are partial harvests or thinning harvests where only selected trees are cut and many trees remain on the site. Clearcutting is limited to no more than 25 acres in size and represents an average of 25% or less of the total harvested acreage each year. Revenue from forest management activities such as timber harvesting is shared with local county, township, and school district governments. As required by law, the Division distributes 65% of the net proceeds from timber sales back to the local county, township, and school district in that particular area. This is known as the “Trees to Textbooks” program.

Timber Sales

Our State Forests are “working” forests. Timber harvesting is a valuable tool in the management of a forest. Harvesting protects, promotes, and provides for healthy forests. Harvesting can re-align the species composition of a forest to a more natural and historic state. An example would be to favor oak-hickory forests by removing more shade tolerant species such as maple.

The Division of Forestry administers timber harvest each year on state forests. Proposed timber harvests undergo an internal review process that considers impacts to sensitive features or species while conserving forest productivity.

The following timber sales have been reviewed and are scheduled to be sold. It is anticipated that these will be sold in the next six to 12 months. Maps of these timber sales will be available at each open house. Each timber sale will be assigned a four-digit contract number at the time of sale such as 09xx.

State Forest	Compartment	Board Feet	Total Acres	Acres Clearcut	Acres Partial / Select Cut
Hocking	B2/B3	240,593	37	0	37
Hocking	C-10, pine	1,366 tons	27	27	0
Hocking	D-3, pine	1,378 tons	30	6	24
Hocking	D-8, pine	3,847 tons	58	12	46
		82,279 B.F			
Blue Rock	A-25, pine	2000 tons	26	14	12
Zaleski	D23	399,037	80.64	16.96	63.68
Zaleski	D9/D13	Pine	40.27	31.76	8.51
Zaleski	A2	364,523	101.95	13.03	88.92

Marking Plan

The review process on the following compartments has not been completed. These compartments are scheduled to be reviewed, marked and cruised within the next 12 months. The volumes and acreage are estimates. During the review process the boundaries and acreage, volumes, and conditions may change. This list represents a snapshot in time of forecasted timber sales. Maps of these areas will be available at each open house.

State Forest	Compartment	Board Feet	Total Acres	Acres Clearcut	Acres Partial / Select Cut
Hocking	B-5	621,191	118	0	118
Hocking	D-13	170,420	20	20	0
Hocking	D-15	1,100,000	20	20	0
Shade River	A-2	329,630	66	10	56
Zaleski	Plt. 236	Pine	105	5	100
Zaleski	A31	579,399	95	45	50
Zaleski	D36	235,932	52	10	42
Zaleski	D35	340,000	156	0	156
Zaleski	C35	612,765	85	20	65
Blue Rock	A-18	287,360	96	12	84
Blue Rock	A-18	4,436 tons	60	3	57
Perry	A-17	305,184	63	8	55

Prescribed Fire

Wildland fire is a historical component to a healthy forest. In Ohio, fire plays an important role in many of the ecosystems represented on state forests. The benefits of fire are far reaching such as promoting native vegetation, improving forest health, revitalizing ecosystems, creating wildlife habitat, and reducing dangerous forest fuels.

In an effort to return the historical role of fire in the forest, the Division conducts prescribed-low intensity-burns on state forests each year. Trained fire managers conduct fires to remove leaf litter, undesirable species, and create better conditions for forest health.

The following prescribed burning activities are forecasted for the next 12 months. Interested citizens should be aware that prescribed burning is heavily dependent on weather and other atmospheric conditions. The timing and operations of burning are often modified due to changing conditions. In addition, some portions of these areas may be burned while on other portions burning may be delayed for 1 or more seasons. This list will likely be modified as conditions change. For more information or details regarding anticipated prescribed burns please visit one of our district open houses.

State Forest	Compartment	Total Acres
Hocking	B7b	270
Hocking	D-13	70
Gifford	A-1	12
Zaleski	D35	250
Zaleski	D26/D27	300
Zaleski	D10	300
Zaleski	D19 Pine Shelterwood	20
Zaleski	A4/A3	225
Blue Rock	A-12	120
Blue Rock	A-16	205
Blue Rock	A-26/20	57
Perry	Dams	2

Compartment Cruising

A compartment represents 300 to 400 acres of forestland in a state forest. Foresters cruise these compartments and write a prescription for future activities that may be considered or needed in these stands. Each year, state foresters visit and evaluate approximately 5% of the acreage of state forests through the compartment cruising cycle. This process ensures that forest management and timber harvests are sustainable.

State Forest	Compartment	Total Acres
Gifford	A-1	319
Hocking	C-3	711
Zaleski	C30	222
Zaleski	F1	10
Zaleski	C15	132
Zaleski	B11	428
Zaleski	D21	157
Zaleski	E4	298
Zaleski	A4	188
Blue Rock	A21	
Perry	A11	

Forest stand improvement

The compartments listed will have FSI done.

State Forest	Compartment	Total Acres	Work
Hocking	C-10	157	Non-chemical Grapevine Control
Hocking	D-1	84	Non-chemical Grapevine Control
Hocking	D-1	5	Crop Tree Release
Hocking	D-12	53	Non-chemical Grapevine Control
Hocking	D-15	257	Non-chemical Grapevine Control

Recreation and Special Use Permits

Thousands of visitors enjoy the trail system on our state forests. Visitors can use bridle, backpack, hiking, mountain biking, and APV trails. Each year there are a host of maintenance activities that need to be accomplished on our trail system. The Division of Forestry welcomes volunteer labor and contributions to trail improvements.

Zaleski State Forest: Work plans for FY 2009 include inspecting recreation facilities weekly during seasons of heavy use, refurbishing the Atkinson Ridge Fire Tower cabin, and maintaining positive working relationships with volunteer trail users. Brush clearing and erosion control will be performed on the bridle and backpack trail systems.

Blue Rock and Perry: All trails are inspected for safety and overall condition a minimum of twice per year and after major weather events. Repairs and maintenance will be performed as needed. Bridle trails are generally mowed once per year in the dry part of the summer. Recreation facilities are inspected weekly during the recreation season. Routine patrol is performed regularly during the busy season. The busy season is defined for each forest. Perry State Forest has the largest APV area in the state. During the riding season (April to November) there are large numbers of people riding there. This area usually takes priority during these months. Blue Rock State Forest is well known for its horseback riding area and for hunting opportunities. During these times patrol is needed in these areas. Continue repairs to the blue bridle trail at Blue Rock. This trail is very wet in places and needs to be built up with stone.

Upon approval from the Recreational Trails Program Grant (RTP) we will work to improve trails in the APV Area at Perry State Forest. Work will be concentrated on the blue trail, above the parking area. Other trails may be improved, but the majority of the work will be concentrated on this trail. Facilities may also be added or improved depending on the awarded grant monies. Some of these improvements may include a loading ramp, pavilion, and new latrines. Continue work on clearing overhanging limbs from trails. This is very time consuming and labor intensive, so work will be done when possible. Volunteer groups may also be utilized for this type of work. Work will continue on re-marking or improving signage on bridle and APV trails at both forests. Special Use Permits will be issued upon request.

Hocking and Shade River: All trails are inspected for safety and overall condition a minimum of twice per year and after major weather events. Repairs and maintenance will be performed as needed. Recreation facilities are inspected weekly during the recreation season.

Routine patrol is performed on all State Forests. Hocking State Forest is well known for its horseback riding area and for hunting opportunities. Peak visitation occurs in the months of September, October, and November. During these times patrol is needed in these areas.

Continue repairs to the bridle trail system at Hocking State Forest. An approved RTP grant awarded this year will make needed repairs to the Orange Trail from "M" to "L". This section of trail will be hardened with stone and 3 large culverts will be installed to greatly reduce trail maintenance demands for state crews. Work is expected to begin in September 2008. Other areas with worked planned are: Spruce Run White trail culvert replacement, Purple Trail at Artesian Well location, Indian Head White Trail, bottom trail work in Long Hollow.

Continue work on clearing overhanging limbs from trails. This is very time consuming and labor intensive, so work will be done when possible. Volunteer groups may also be utilized for this type of work.

Work will continue on re-marking or improving signage on bridle and hiking trails at Hocking State Forest, while Gifford and Shade River projects will benefit most forest visitors. A major reroute for the Buckeye Trail was completed at Hocking State Forest at the Ash Cave Fire Tower in June of 2008. The tower was painted in 2007, tread steps and landings are being replaced, and the tower will be opened for public viewing in the fall of 2008.

Final approval is pending on the proposed group camp at Hocking State Forest on Keister Road. Volunteer man-hours will be relied on heavily to begin to work on this project.

Special use permits vary from forest to forest on special requests; however, each request is reviewed and acted upon in a timely manner by the forest manager.

Infrastructural Maintenance and Improvements

Each state forest provides unique opportunities for visitors to enjoy trails, hunt, fish, picnic, bird watch, and many other uses. It is extremely important as part of our management commitment, to provide a valuable experience to our visitors. Each year, there are a host of improvements and maintenance activities to be done.

Zaleski State Forest: All roads and trails will be inspected for safety and overall condition a minimum of twice per year and after major weather events. Repairs and maintenance will be performed as needed. All secondary (Class II) gravel roads will be graded a minimum of one time per year. All culverts on forest roads are evaluated and recommendations for replacement made through the Division of Engineering. The replacement of culverts and headers will be conducted through the Cooperative Roadway Maintenance Program with the Ohio Department of Transportation. New metal roofing is to be applied to two service center buildings. The state forest manager's residence and garage will be sold, removed, and the site mitigated. One fourth of the state forest boundary will be inspected and repainted as per the DOF boundary maintenance guidelines.

Future capital improvement proposals depend on funding from grants or general revenues approved by the State Legislature. Project proposals include construct shelters over shooting range benches, pave shooting range parking lot and make ADA accessible, replace the horse camp latrine with ADA accessible latrine, upgrade horse camp to comply with ADA requirements, pave walkways through the Forest of Honor to meet ADA standards, relocate the backpack trailhead and parking facility to the Hope School House, add parking and restroom facilities at the Moonville area for the Rails-to-Trails facility, and convert the forest office and main service building to wood-fired heating.

Blue Rock and Perry: Day to day management of Blue Rock State Forest and Perry State Forest takes place out of the Blue Rock State Forest Headquarters. The Headquarters is located in Muskingum County 3 miles from State Route 60 on Cutler Lake Road. Most work projects are

planned each year; however priority of work is accomplished through the Chief's Expectations, Division of Forestry Mission Statement, the Division's Strategic Plan, and the approved budget (see Attachments). The following are some of the goals for FY 2009. Boundary maintenance is an important function in the management of the forest. Properly maintained boundaries prevent encroachment from neighboring properties and from state activities encroaching onto neighboring properties. To accomplish this task, Blue Rock State Forest conforms to the Division's boundary maintenance policies. One fourth of the entire boundary at each forest is painted each year. Any evidence of encroachment is reported to the Forest Officer for investigation.

Hocking and Shade River: Day to day management of Hocking, Shade River, and Gifford State Forests takes place out of the Hocking State Forest Headquarters. The Headquarters is located in Hocking County 3 at 19275 State Route 374, Rockbridge, Ohio. Most work projects are planned each year; however priority of work is accomplished through the Chief's Expectations, Division of Forestry Mission Statement, the Division's Strategic Plan, and the approved budget (see Attachments). The following are some of the goals for FY 2009. Facilities and equipment are maintained in a safe manner and condition. All employees receive training in safety and are provided with and required to use all safety equipment. Safety policies are strictly enforced. Replacing gutters, re-painting gates, re-painting the office complex, and re-painting the various small outbuildings at Hocking State Forest are planned in FY09. At Gifford and Shade River State Forests, the entrance signs will be repainted and areas around the signs will be mowed to improve visitor viewing. Boundary maintenance is an important function in the management of the forest. Properly maintained boundaries prevent encroachment from neighboring properties and from state activities encroaching onto neighboring properties. To accomplish this task, Hocking, Shade River, and Gifford States Forests all are within the Division's boundary maintenance policies. One fourth of the entire boundary at each forest is painted each year. Any evidence of encroachment is reported to the Forest Officer for investigation. Complete removal of abandoned buildings and residences at Cantwell Cliff's complex, manager and ranger residence, and Wiseman property is planned in FY09.

Fire Protection

In addition to providing fire control on the publicly owned lands, State Forest managers are responsible for fire protection areas covering many counties. The Ohio Revised Code gives the Division of Forestry the authority to enforce wildland fire laws on private lands. Within the protection area, the forest staff works to provide training, technical support, and suppression assistance to local Volunteer Fire Departments. The division's wildland fire policies and procedures are documented in the Wildland Fire Manual.

Zaleski State Forest: The forest officer will visit fire departments and county associations, update information sheets, and inspect Federal Excess Property Program equipment, process fire reports, and offer six-hour basic wildfire training to fire departments as requested.

Forest employees participate in Ohio's Interagency Fire Crew. This program gives our employees additional experience and training opportunities that broaden their wildland fire suppression knowledge. Four employees have qualified for this fire crew. Zaleski personnel will accomplish wildfire fuel hazard mitigation as apart of the National Fire Plan and assist other forests with these controlled burns.

Blue Rock and Perry: Personnel assist fire departments with wildfire suppression in the following counties: Guernsey, Muskingum, Noble, Perry and the eastern 1/2 of Licking. This area has 48 fire departments and over 1,000,000 acres of land. A key component of the Division's Wildland fire protection program is to provide training and technical assistance to local volunteer fire departments. Forest personnel attend fire department meetings and conduct training classes in fire suppression methods. The Division will provide local departments with suppression assistance on large fires. Volunteer Fire Departments are monetarily compensated by the Division of Forestry for their wildland fire suppression efforts. The Division of Forestry makes a dedicated effort to investigate these fires and take appropriate enforcement action.

Hocking and Shade River: Personnel assist fire departments with wildfire suppression in the following counties: Hocking, Fairfield, Morgan, Monroe, and Washington Counties. A key component of the Division's Wildland fire protection program is to provide training and technical assistance to local volunteer fire departments. Forest personnel attend fire department meetings and conduct training classes in fire suppression methods. The Division will provide local departments with suppression assistance on large fires. Volunteer Fire Departments are monetarily compensated by the Division of Forestry for their wildland fire suppression efforts. The Division of Forestry makes a dedicated effort to investigate these fires and take appropriate enforcement action.

Law Enforcement

State forests currently have 10 fully commissioned law enforcement officers plus 4 commissioned managers. The purpose of retaining commissioned officers is to enforce the Forest Rules that are depicted within the Ohio Revised Code. One very important aspect of the Law Enforcement program is that of resource protection. Forest Officers protect property boundaries from encroachment, recreation resources from undesignated use, guard against timber theft and watch for signs of watershed degradation. Specific law enforcement polices and procedures are delineated within the Division of Forestry's Law Enforcement Manual.

The forest officers will visit county courts and prosecutors once per year for updates on bond schedules, court dates, and judge and prosecutor information.

The forest officers will issue citations for forest rule violations, investigate fire occurrences in accordance with the Wildland Fire Manual, and work cooperatively with the Division of Wildlife, Division of Parks and Recreation, and county sheriff offices on concurrent enforcement projects.

Information and Education

Our Forest Staff will assist with:

1. The Ohio State Fair
2. The Farm Science Review
3. The Hocking Hills Winter Hike
4. The Paul Bunyon Show

Zaleski State Forest: Information and education is important to interpret our mission and goals. Zaleski State Forest will be taking an active role in resource and conservation education events. Zaleski is the site of the Division of Forestry's Forest of Honor that commemorates past Division Chief's. The Forest Management Driving Tour is a self-guided educational experience on Webb Hollow near the forest headquarters. It is used frequently by college classes to learn about resource management practices. The Division of Forestry Sawmill is used for various training, education, and demonstration programs throughout the year. The forest manager and forest technicians will present forestry programs to various groups as work schedules allow.

Blue Rock and Perry: Information, education, and marketing are an important aspect of any program. Blue Rock State Forest will be taking an active role in the resource and conservation education events. Budgetary constraints and limited staff will not permit forest personnel to participate in educational programs as they have in the past.

- Forest staff will participate the S.T.E.P. (Students Today for Environmental Protection) tree-planting program with the Perry County SWCD.
- Maintain literature at the Blue Rock State Forest office and at information centers on Perry State Forest as staffing and budget allows.
- Participation in school, SWCD and other educational programs is an important Division activity that has been curtailed over the last few years due to time constraints and staffing levels, however participation will continue in these programs as available.

The Blue Rock State Forest staff works very closely with local elected officials. The County Commissioners and Township Trustees are very important political entities that influence the type of programs that transpire throughout the counties connected with the individual forests. Maintaining good lines of communication is extremely important in keeping a viable working relationship. To ensure good communications the following will be attempted:

- Contact the Township Trustees in Blue Rock and Salt Creek Townships in Muskingum County and Clayton Township in Perry County a minimum of once per year.
- Attend, at a minimum, one meeting per year with County Commissioners in Muskingum and Perry Counties.
- Present each Local School District, County and Township with their portion of the resource revenue returns and explain the Division's programs, as well as where/how the monies were generated.
- Inform County Commissioners, County Sheriff's Offices, and County Emergency Management Directors on all information mailings that go to each Volunteer Fire Department.

Hocking and Shade River: staff works very closely with local elected officials. The County Commissioners and Township Trustees are very important political entities that influence the type of programs that transpire throughout the counties connected with the individual forests. Maintaining good

lines of communication is extremely important in keeping a viable working relationship. To ensure good communications the following will be attempted maintain literature at the Hocking State Forest office and at information centers on Gifford and Shade River State Forests as staffing and budget allows. Participation in school, SWCD and other educational programs is an important Division activity that has been curtailed over the last few years due to time constraints and staffing levels, however participation will continue in these programs as available.

- Contact each Township Trustees that has jurisdiction with the State Forests' Purchase Boundary, a minimum of once per year.
- Attend, at a minimum, one meeting per year with County Commissioners in Athens, Hocking, and Meigs Counties.
- Present each Local School District, County and Township with their portion of the resource revenue returns and explain the Division's programs, as well as where/how the monies were generated.
- Inform County Commissioners, County Sheriff's Offices, and County Emergency Management Directors on all information mailings that go to each Volunteer Fire Department.

Other

Blue Rock and Perry: Invasive species control and forest stand improvement are important aspects to maintaining a healthy diverse forest. Infestations of Ailanthus at Blue Rock and Perry State Forests have and will continue to be a problem unless controlled. Grapevines must also be controlled to a point in stands that are heavily infested to reduce damage to young trees and retard their growth. Crop tree release will be conducted in stands primarily to promote oak and hickory and reduce the number of poorly formed or less vigorous trees; however poplar, cherry, walnut and sugar maple will also be released if needed.

Work has started to help control the spread of Ailanthus at Blue Rock State Forest and will continue as time and most importantly money allows. Work will be carried out in stands that are determined to need grapevine control, invasive species control or crop tree release on an as needed basis. Stands in need of work will be identified in the future through the compartment cruise, which will give us the opportunity to treat the areas before harvest. The workload of the forest in the past was such that many of the areas in needed attention did not receive it and therefore, we will concentrate our efforts on an as needed basis across the forest as identified at any time. No specific work plan has been completed; however records will be kept of areas that have been treated.

Grapevine control will generally be mechanical control using hand tools such as loppers and chain saws. Invasive species control will concentrate on areas of high Ailanthus infestations or in areas to be harvested. Invasive species control is best done through the use of herbicides. Crop tree release will be completed in stands densely stocked and in need of release and in areas of high oak/hickory densities, which will help, reduce competition from maples.

Last year work was started to restore the historic Blue Rock Fire Lookout Tower. This tower is the tallest of the remaining 7 towers on public land at 100 feet tall. Painting of the tower was completed last year. This year's work will include removing and replacing the stair treads, restoring the interior of the

cabin and replacement of any deteriorated parts. Hopefully the tower will be open in time for fall color so the public can once again enjoy the view from this historic tower.

In accomplishing all the above tasks, there is an inherent amount of administrative work and tracking that is necessary. These functions include proper purchasing of materials, prompt payment to vendors, making necessary reports, adhering to budgets, and prompt payment of employees. Specific activities include:

- A. Submission of an annual budget and submitting bills for payment.
- B. New and replacement equipment lists will be generated annually.
- C. Answer correspondence from the general public, interagency and other agencies and inquires.
- D. Maintain agency files and records (e.g., activity reports, equipment maintenance, personnel leave, fire department activities, training, and others).
- E. Annual inventory of equipment.

Hocking State Forest: Major renovations of systems, buildings, and facilities are addressed every two years through Capital Improvement Plan. ODNR prepares and submits a plan to the Governor, based on projected funding availability, a list of proposed projects, and priorities. The proposal is then introduced and acted upon by the State Legislature. These projects are distinct from the day-to-day operations of the Division and State Forests, which are funded through a biennium operating budget. Most of the Capital projects are funded through NatureWorks bonds, with some through General Revenue.

The ODNR, Division of Engineering, oversees all phases of the projects from design through construction. Among the criteria used to evaluate the priority of projects are: updating existing facilities to meet federal or state codes and regulations, reducing hazards to public, and mitigating environmental concerns. The impact upon operation and maintenance capability is critical, especially for any proposed new or expanded public use facilities. Major expansions or new facilities are normally introduced through the ODNR master planning process. The following projects have been proposed for construction in future years on the Hocking State Forest:

- Renovate and upgrade the sewage system at the service center complex.
- Renovate and upgrade water system at the service center complex.
- Renovate and upgrade water system at the Horseman's Camp.

Appendix 1

State Forest Strategic Plan

**Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry**



**State Forest Strategic Plan
2008**

DRAFT

Vision:

Ohio's state forests will be the best managed forestlands in the country, and will be recognized as such.

OBJECTIVES

- 1. Manage forests to ensure the health and sustainability of forest systems***
- 2. Produce high-quality forest products that contribute to local communities***
- 3. Provide recreational opportunities that require a large forest land base***
- 4. Provide unique forestry education sites and promote outreach and long-term research***
- 5. Maintain a highly trained and well-equipped work force***

Goals and Strategies

Objective 1: Manage forests to ensure the health and sustainability of forest systems

- *Goal: Implement a proved, verifiable approach to sustainable forest management*
 - Strategy: Achieve Certification of our state forests using the standards of The Sustainable Forestry Initiative and The Forest Stewardship Council in 2009
 - Strategy: Maintain commitment to SFI and FSC by meeting annual requirements.
- *Goal: Manage for site-appropriate, native forest systems and species*
 - Strategy: Review and revise state forest-specific land management objectives, goals, and zoning for forest management by 2009, and utilize appropriate silvicultural guidelines to promote site appropriate native species.
 - Strategy: Address conifer plantation management by establishing a conifer plantation management policy by 2009.
- *Goal: Maintain long-term forest productivity through conservation of soil, water, and forest resources*
 - Strategy: Review harvest standards for water quality, soil conservation, utilization, and monitoring and incorporate needed changes into harvest planning and timber contracts by 2009
 - Strategy: Review SMZ standards and adjust for consistency with FSC-SMZ guidelines.
 - Strategy: Review Wet Weather Logging policy and implement needed changes by 2009.
- *Goal: Retain or promote stand- and landscape-level wildlife habitat*
 - Strategy: Request the development of stand- and landscape-level habitat guidelines specific for Ohio forests from the Division of Wildlife, and implement into our harvest planning process.

Objective 2: Produce high-quality forest products that contribute to local communities

- *Goal: Base harvest volumes on the goals and guidelines for each forest system, current stand and forest-wide inventories, and science-based silviculture*
 - Strategy: Establish a base-line inventory for all state forests by first formulating specifications for the level of intensity and criteria for data collection in the next 6 months; followed by a plan of action to accomplish the project.
 - Strategy: Implement and test Growth & Yield model to calculate Annual Allowable Harvest in the next two years.
 - Strategy: Review our current policies on forest inventories for prescription cruising and adjust or develop new harvest schedules/policies accordingly.

The land management staff of the Division of Forestry will be charged selecting a system that will most efficiently and accurately prescribe harvest schedules by 2010.

- Strategy: Establish a plan to accomplish a Pre-commercial Silvicultural Activities in order to nurture young stands into quality, healthy, mature stands.
- *Goal: Develop marketing strategies to capture the maximum value of forest products*
 - Strategy: Immediately identify sales to conduct a pilot merchandized product sale in 2008, from logs harvested from various state forests. Merchandizing and marketing efforts located in Scioto Trail State Forest and shall utilize contract logging services and in-house logging. Evaluate the results of project compared to traditional stumpage timber sales.
 - Strategy: Add value by exploring utilization options, alternative markets, niche markets, and low-grade material markets.
 - Strategy: Implement a Timber Sale Administration training program to maximize our return from stumpage sales. Task to be accomplished by seasoned administrators by 2008.
 - Strategy: Review and revise Land Management Manual to adjust business practices for consistency by 2009.
 - Strategy: Improve and publicize a firewood program on state forests by 2008.

Objective3: Provide recreational opportunities that require a large forest land base

- *Goal: Develop a comprehensive backcountry recreation plan for the state forest system*
 - Strategy: Inventory Recreational Opportunities on each state forest
 - Strategy: Ensure User Safety
 - Strategy: Ensure Resource Protection
 - Strategy: Evaluate User Satisfaction (Quality of Experience)
- *Goal: Build recognition for unique and varied recreation opportunities on state forests*
 - Strategy: Emphasize backcountry (or back to basics) experience
 - Strategy: Work with DOF Communication Team to develop strategies to accomplish this goal

Objective 4: Provide unique forestry education sites and promote outreach and long-term research

- *Goal: Develop opportunities to showcase forest management practices to the general public, private landowners, and forest industry*
 - Strategy: Establish, maintain and promote demonstration sites at state forests

- Strategy: Utilize and improve existing outreach programs to promote forest management to targeted audiences (students, woodland owners, media, recreational users, policy makers).
- Strategy: Utilize new technology as a communications tool
- Strategy: Promote the historical conservation legacy of the state forest system as part of the Division’s strategic communications
- Strategy: Integrate state forest management into the Division’s strategic communications efforts
- *Goal: Support forest research with an emphasis on sustainable forest management (silviculture, prescribed fire, native systems, etc.)*
 - Strategy: Establish a forest research review team

Objective 5: Maintain a highly trained and well-equipped work force

- *Goal: Develop a training, continuing education, and/or certification standard for all division staff*
 - Strategy: Maintain a master training schedule for the DOF
 - Strategy: Develop a training guide for DOF employees
 - Strategy: Select and maintain a database to track employee training and certifications
 - Strategy: Establish training requirements by job classification
 - Strategy: Create and implement a new employee “mentor” program
- *Goal: Inventory and evaluate equipment and facilities and develop maintenance and replacement schedules*
 - Strategy: Establish written equipment replacement standards and schedule with a field request procedure
 - Strategy: Select and maintain a master facility and equipment database
 - Strategy: Establish a facility and equipment maintenance schedule and inspection procedure
 - Strategy: Conduct a facility and equipment needs assessment
- *Goal: Develop equipment and facilities budgets based on current and projected needs*
 - Strategy: Create a dedicated facilities budget separate from the regional maintenance and operating budget
 - Strategy: Develop the equipment budget to account for projected scheduled replacements
 - Strategy: Explore alternative funding sources
- *Goal: Ensure all staff has appropriate health and safety training*
 - Strategy: Determine what training is required by law, policy and position
 - Strategy: Establish an inspection procedure for equipment and facilities
 - Strategy: Ensure safety and health training is a priority

- Strategy: Improve safety awareness that is job specific