

# Tioga State Forest District

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## 2016 MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY PLAN

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.

One of the policies in the bureau's strategic plan ([Penn's Woods: Sustaining Our Forests](#)) includes, "Public participation will be an integral part of the management of state forest lands." The purpose of this Management Activity Plan is to communicate to the public about upcoming management activities, projects, and events that will be conducted to implement the SFRMP on Tioga State Forest. This document will be revised at the start and middle of each calendar year to provide sufficient time for public review, questions, and feedback. The bureau is committed to considering the views and perspectives of the public and stakeholders and strives to accommodate public interests in planning management activities and decision making. We encourage comments or questions regarding planned or proposed activities be directed to the state forest district conducting the activity.

For questions, comments, or more information about this plan, please contact:

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## RECREATION

- The **Susquehannock Trail Pro Rally** will take place the Saturday following Memorial Day. This pro rally uses selected public use roads in the western portion of the Tioga State Forest.
- The **PA Grand Canyon Marathon** will be taking place in late July. This marathon starts at Colton Point State Park and uses portions of Colton, Painter-Leetonia, and West Rim Roads to run a half and full marathon.
- **Brayden's Trail of Strength** will take place in early August. This trail run is a 10 or 20 kilometer race that serves as a fundraiser for the Chromosome 18 Registry and Research Society. This race uses selected trails in the section of the Tioga State Forest that lies north of state route 6.
- The **Eastern States 100** will tentatively be taking place in mid-August. This 100 mile trail run uses selected trails and roads in the southwestern portions of the Tioga State Forest. This event takes place in several other forest districts as well.
- The **Pine Creek Challenge** will take place in early September. This 100 mile run takes place on the Pine Creek Rail Trail. This event takes place in early September.
- The **Laurel Classic** mountain bike race takes place in late September each year. This race uses selected trails and roads in the section of the Tioga State Forest that lies north of state route 6 otherwise known as the Asaph block.
- The **Green Monster** trail run takes place in early to mid-October. This race has a 16 and 32 mile course that uses selected trails and roads in the section of the Tioga State Forest that lies north of state route 6.
- **Sand Run Ski Trail Improvement** – In 2016 the trail improvement work will be completed on the Sand Run Ski Trail System that is located in the central portion of the Tioga State Forest near the village of Arnot. The trail improvement involves trail surface improvements, signage, and improvements to the main trail-head.
- **Ash Removal along Pine Creek Rail Trail** – In early 2016, the white ash removal project will be completed. This project involves the removal of ash within a tree length of the Pine Creek Rail Trail from Route 6 to the Tiadaghton Campground. Once the trees are removed, debris will be removed and the trail and access road repaired were necessary.
- **Scotch Pine Trail Improvement** – The Scotch Pine Trail System is located in the Asaph area. This trail needs some trail surface improvement to complete improvements that started several years ago.
- **Bee Trail Improvement and Restoration** – The Bee Trail in the northern portion of the district was improved and a portion of the trail re-established.
- **Rattlesnake Panel at Blackwell** – An interpretive panel regarding timber rattlesnakes will be installed at the Blackwell Canoe Launch and Pine Creek Rail Trail Access Point.

## TIMBER MANAGEMENT

### Timber Sales:

#### Marked and sold, potentially active

- There are currently 37 timber sales under contract in the district. Many of these sales will have activity on them in 2016. The most concentrated area of activity will be in the Leetonia area.

#### Marked but not yet sold

- Currently, 18 timber sales totaling approximately 2,000 acres are proposed for bid in 2016 on the Tioga State Forest. These sales are scattered throughout the district. The heaviest concentration is in the Leetonia area with 9 sales proposed. These sales are mostly salvage shelterwood treatments in response to an oak and ash mortality events. The other sales are located as follows: 4 sales located in the "Asaph" block north of state route 6, 1 sale on Mt. Tom, 1 sale near Colton Point State Park, 1 sale off Clay Mine Rd, and 2 sales in the eastern portions of the district.

#### Regeneration Projects:

- There are 10 blocks totaling 575 acres scheduled to be treated with broadcast herbicide in 2016. These blocks are located throughout the Tioga State Forest. These blocks are being treated to control interfering vegetation such as fern, beech brush, and striped maple. Most of these blocks are either areas that have been impacted by Oak mortality or they have a high component of white ash.
- There are 2 blocks totaling 77 acres planned to be treated with a basal bark application of herbicide in 2016. One of these blocks are located in the Arnot area and the other block are located off of Sand Road in the northern portion of the district.
- There are 4 blocks totaling 108 acres that are planned to have the brush removed in 2015. These blocks are located in the throughout the state forest.
- There will be 5 woven-wire fences constructed in 2016. These fences are located throughout the district. These fences are being constructed to protect developing regeneration from deer browsing.
- There will be 10 fences dismantled in 2016. The fences are located throughout the district but the majority are located in the Arnot/Blossburg area.

## RESTORATION AND HABITAT PROJECTS

- **Stream Improvement Projects:** Stream bank improvement projects are being planned for 2016. The streams where the projects are located are Asaph Run and Babb Creek.
- **Morris Run Mine Reclamation Project:** An abandoned mine will be reclaimed in 2016. This project is located in the Morris Run area. It is a 40 acre site broken into two blocks. The site will be re-contoured close to original grade and planted with native grasses and trees. The access to the site is off of the Morris Run Rd between the Tioga River and Morris Run.
- **Wildlife Habitat Projects:** Several wildlife projects will be taking place throughout the Tioga State Forest in 2016. Most of these projects involve placing seed, fertilizer, and lime on established food plots throughout the district. These sites include portions of the Dominion Transmission Pipeline in the western portion of the district and food plots along Old Supply Trail, Big Dam Hollow, and Hoffman Campground.

## ROAD AND BRIDGE PROJECTS

- **Owassee, Deadman Hollow, and Clay Mine Roads** will be receiving Dirt & Gravel Rd upgrades in 2016.
- The bridge over Four Mile Run on Painter-Leetonia Road will be replaced in 2016. This portion of the road will be closed during construction operations.
- The bridge on Colton Rd over Pine Creek will be receiving repairs to the bridge abutments in 2016. Traffic will be restricted to one lane during this time.
- The southern bridge in Leetonia over Cedar Run will be resurfaced in 2016. The road will be closed during construction.
- The culvert over Bear Wallow Creek on Right Asaph Road will be replaced in 2016. The road will be closed during construction.

## PRESCRIBED FIRE

- A prescribed fire off of Clay Mine Rd is planned for the spring of 2016. This project is to control red maple and other competing vegetation in order to release the oak regeneration that is already established but being overtopped.
- A prescribed fire at the Lamb's Lookout Vista is planned for the spring of 2016. This project is to control vegetation at the vista site.

## INSECT, DISEASE, AND INVASIVE PLANT TREATMENT

- **Ash Management:** In 2016, the Tioga State Forest plans to continue implementing its

management plan for dealing with the mortality of ash species due to the Emerald Ash Borer. This plan involves the removal of ash trees in higher public use areas such as

campgrounds, roadways, and trails. Also, we will be monitoring the roughly 100 ash trees treated in 2015 with an insecticide to control the borer in to see how they respond. Additionally, we will continue to release biological controls (parasitic wasps) that will attack the ash borer.

- **Oak Mortality Monitoring:** We will continue to monitor the oak mortality in the western portions of the district and see if additional trees are impacted.
- **Hemlock Treatment** – In 2016, hemlock that has been treated to protect from Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and Elongate Hemlock Scale will continue to be monitored and some additional trees may be treated.
- **Invasive plants treatment projects:** In 2016, we will continue to treat and monitor locations of invasive plant species in the district. Most of these projects have been on-going over the past several years. Japanese Knotweed, Mile-A-Minute, and Ailanthus are the main species that we are controlling. Most of the sites are along Pine Creek.

## NATURAL GAS, OIL, AND OTHER GEOLOGIC RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- In 2016, we expect another slow year on the Tioga State Forest relating to oil and gas activity. There will be minimal activity associated with the operations and maintenance of existing infrastructure. At this time there is no planned drilling or fracking activity on state forest land. Also, there are no definite plans regarding new pipeline construction but the follow projects are likely to begin in 2016:
- **Talisman Energy tract 594 to 587 Pipeline** – Plans are being finalized for a pipeline that will connect Talisman Energy's tract south of Arnot to their developed tract in the Fallbrook area.

## TOWER AND RIGHT-OF-WAY PROJECTS

- **Tennessee Gas Pipeline Looping Project** – Plans are being finalized for an additional pipeline to be added adjacent to the Tennessee Gas Pipeline that is located in the Asaph / Baldwin Run Road area. This line would create additional capacity for their transmission line. The only activity would happen late in 2016 and involve tree clearing.
- There will be small maintenance projects on the various pipeline and electric right-of-ways. No definite plans are known at this time.
- The initial plans are being made to construct a new tower in the Morris area to facilitate better coverage for the Tioga County 911 system. No plans are finalized at this point.

## SPECIAL PROJECTS

- **AMD Treatment Facilities:** Maintenance and upgrades will be made to various acid mine drainage treatment systems on state forest land. The Anna S treatment system, between Wellsboro and Morris, will be receiving the most activity. Also, the new Fallbrook Creek system will continue to be monitored and made to run more efficiently.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- **Annual Local Events:** A public contact trailer is staffed by district personnel for the following events: Wellsboro Laurel Festival, Tioga County Fair, and the Westfield Outdoor Show.
- **Pine Creek Watershed Association:** District personnel attend meetings with the Pine Creek Watershed Association.
- **Babb Creek Watershed Association:** District personnel attend meetings with the Babb Creek Watershed Association. This group is responsible for maintaining acid mine drainage treatment facilities on the Tioga State Forest.
- **Pine Creek Rail Trail Advisory Committee:** District personnel attend the bi-annual meetings with the Pine Creek Rail Trail Advisory Committee. The district updates the committee on trail projects, usage, and incidents associated with the Pine Creek Rail Trail.
- **Step Outdoors Recreation Committee:** The district recreation forester attends meetings with a county recreation committee that holds events on private and public lands. Several winter events such as snowshoeing and cross country skiing take place on the Tioga State Forest each winter.
- **Local School Districts:** District personnel give presentations to classes at local schools dealing with forestry related topics such as forest-fire prevention, tree planting, and insect and disease issues.
- **Local Fire Departments:** The district forest fire specialist commonly interacts with local volunteer fire departments to coordinate fire suppression activities and to provide needed equipment and training.
- **Leased Camp Meeting** – In November the district will be hosting a meeting to inform state forest leased camp holders of district activities and updates to leased camp guidelines.

## RESEARCH

- **Oak Regeneration Study:** The Forest Service is monitoring the growth of oak seedlings in 2 areas on the Tioga State Forest. Both sites are in the northern portion of the district. The sites are visited each year to assess seedling mortality rates and take growth measurements on oak seedlings.

## MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

- **Road Re-Surfacing Projects** – In 2015, Mill Run Rd and the lower portion of Left Asaph Road received had road improvements completed. The total aggregate placed was 10,250 tons of 2A and 1,000 tons of R3.
- **Timber Sales** – In 2015, the district forester and technician staff completed 20 timber sales totaling 2,250 acres, 9,715 MBF of sawtimber, and 3,084 HCF of pulpwood.
- **Ash Chemical Treatment** – In 2016, roughly 100 white, green, and black ash trees were treated with an insecticide to protect them from emerald ash borer.
- **Stream Bank Work** – In 2015, stream improvements were completed on Asaph Run and Crooked Creek.
- **Reynolds Spring Trail Improvements** – The lower portion of Reynolds Spring Trail near Leetonia was improved in 2015. There are plans to improve the rest of this trail in 2016.
- **Fallbrook AMD Treatment Facility** – In 2015, the Fallbrook AMD Facility was constructed and began operation to treat the four main mine discharges that impact Fallbrook Creek. The treatment facility will clean the Tioga River water from Fallbrook Creek to Morris Run.