

Bald Eagle State Forest

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 Bald Eagle 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

Recreational Events with Activity Agreements

2016 Events

All 2015 recreational events with current activity agreements are expected to take place in 2016. Exact dates and times will be determined closer to the event, but will be in the same general timeframe as past years.

August:

- Circle M Horseback Ride (150 riders)

September:

- 7 Mtn. Enduro Mountain Bike Ride.
- PaTRA Motorcycle Ride, also impacting Poe Valley, Poe Paddy, and R.B. Winter State Parks (450 riders)
- Raven Run ½ Marathon (100 participants)
- Damn Half/Full Marathon (500 participants)

October:

- Bald Eagle Mountain Bike Association (BEMBA) Jamboree
- Boulder Beast (1,000 participants)

TIMBER MANAGEMENT

Marked and sold, potentially active

- Verizon Tower – This sale is 129 acres in size and located on the eastern end of the Shade Mountain tract along both sides of Shade Mountain Road in Perry Township. Small diameter red maple, black gum, witch hazel, black birch have been treated and/or cut and treated with herbicide to prevent sprouts from becoming a competitive problem. The area is being treated with a shelterwood harvest. The sale was already sold, but the logger was not able to carry through with the contract and so it was re-advertised for cutting in 2016. The sale has been awarded, and cutting is anticipated to begin in the winter of 2016. We will monitor development of tree seedlings here and possibly erect a deer enclosure in a future year.
- Lost Creek – The bid for this sale has been awarded and cutting may begin at any time. It is located east and south of the intersection of PA 235 and Shade Mountain Road. This

sale is in excess of 200 acres in size and includes a mix of overstory removal, 2 age treatment, and shelterwood harvests. Future plans include deer enclosure and prescribed fire.

- Top Ten Pine Sale – Nittany Ridge Road, Lamar Township; approximately 155 acres of mixed shelterwood and overstory removal. This sale was bid out and became active in 2016. Cutting is currently suspended.

Marked but not yet sold

- Nittany Mountain – off Mile Run Road, West Buffalo Township. This will involve approximately 100 acres of a combination of overstory removal and shelterwood treatments. The sale is currently being marked and should be bid out in the second half of 2016.
- Nittany Forest Sale – This 135 acre sale includes mainly shelterwood treatments to provide light conditions that will allow existing oak regeneration to develop as well as two aged treatments and pine plantation thinning along Green’s Valley Road in Potter Township. The contract was awarded and cutting could begin in November 2016.

Proposed

- Stone Mountain – Stone Mountain Haul Rd – off route 45, Hartley Township. This will involve 40 acres of mainly overstory removal from existing oak regeneration. It is in the planning stage at this time, but will mainly involve salvage of dead and dying trees.
- Running Gap – Running Gap Rd., West Buffalo Township, Union County. This will involve 17 acres of mainly overstory removal from existing oak and yellow poplar regeneration.
- Stitzer Gap Removal – Stoney Beacon Haul Rd. off Stony Run Road, Hartley Township. This will involve approximately 41 acres of overstory removal from existing oak regeneration. This area has received two prescribed fires and requires a third. Further planning has been suspended until this fire, that was delayed due to unfavorable weather conditions can be accomplished.
- Crabapple Path Sale – Located off McCall Dam Road in Miles Township. This is a 45 acre mainly potential overstory removal. The area is currently fenced and has received a prescribed fire. It was evaluated in 2016 to determine if the sale will be conducted here. The results of that examination are still forthcoming. Future plans include further prescribed fire to maintain the competitive dominance of oak regeneration.
- Decker Path – Located off Decker Valley Rd., Potter Township, Centre County. This sale is 25 acres. The area will receive a basal bark/cut stump herbicide treatment and will be evaluated and marked as either a shelterwood or overstory removal based on the amount of advance oak and pine regeneration present. A potential conflict as pointed out by the Pennsylvania Museum and Historical Commission is temporarily postponing further progress on this sale.



- Horse Path Sale – This sale located along Breon Road in Green Township, Clinton County is 42 acres in size. It will involve about 20 acres of two aged harvest along Breon Road, and about 22 acres of shelterwood harvest outside of the road buffer. The site was previously treated with herbicide in the shelterwood area and mowed in the buffer area in order to reduce the amount of competition from mountain laurel. This area was marked and will be bid out in the second half of 2016.
- Other sales potential being contemplated are located in Union and Snyder counties and would involve a mix of shelterwood and overstory removal on approximately 175 acres combined.

Regeneration Projects

Most regeneration projects in the Bald Eagle State Forest are designed to reduce competition from other species in order to create conditions for oak species to regenerate and grow. In 2016 we anticipate the following projects to be completed:

- Mowing – 3 projects for a total of 129 acres. Approximately 2/3 of this acreage is located in Centre County along Faust Valley Trail involving two projects. The other third is located in Snyder County along Hunter Road.
- Broadcast Spray Projects – Mountain Laurel will be the main target with a broadcast herbicide application on approximately 226 acres in three separate areas located along Faust Valley Trail – 49 acres, Johnson Trail – 102 acres, and Brandon Road – 75 acres.
- Other species like fern and smaller red maple, sweet birch and black gum are the targets in 103 acres of broadcast herbicide application. The four sites included are off Hunter Road – 4 acres, the far eastern end of Green’s Valley Road - 48 acres, along Rag Valley Road – 26 acre and along Cooper Mill Road – 25 acres.
- Basal Bark/Cut Stump herbicide treatments – The purpose of these treatments is to reduce the amount of competition from low value, overtopping species, in order to advanced oak regeneration. In addition these treatments allow acorns to be able to accumulate, grow and compete. In 2016 we anticipate that approximately 466 acres will receive this type of treatment. Areas included will be located along the Thomas Dam Rd and Weikert Road area – 70 acres, Strongs Improvement Road (Treaster Mountain Haul Road) – 48 acres, Hunter Road west of the Henstep Trail intersection – 46 acres, Hoofnagle Road south of the intersection with Weikert Run Road – 50 acres, Henstep Trail area – 16 acres, Decker Valley Road – 25 acres and Green’s Valley Road – 135 acres.
- Deer enclosure fencing – Erected either prior to or subsequent to timber sales in areas where white tail deer herbivory will significantly reduce the amount of advance regeneration in the area. In early 2016 a 35 acre fence was erected off the Whiskey Still Spring Haul Road in Lamar Township, Clinton County. In addition a 70 acre fence will be erected in the vicinity of Strongs Mountain and Hunter Roads. Five deer enclosures will

be removed in 2016; one off Joe Road in White Deer Township, two off Winkleblech Road near the Hairy John Picnic area, one off Paddy Mountain Road, and one along Riansares Road.

RESTORATION AND HABITAT PROJECTS

The District will be conducting prescribed fires on 5 acres in four warm season grass herbaceous openings.

ROAD AND BRIDGE PROJECTS

2016 Large Infrastructure Enhancements:

- Poe Paddy Tunnel and Penns Creek Bridge rehabilitation
- Sand Mtn. Fire Tower removal, and creation of a demonstration tower site.
- Bridge replacements - Swift Run Road over Swift Run, Engle Road over White Deer Creek #2
- Bridges in design: Havice Valley Road over Havice Creek, (2) Stony Run Road over Stony Run, Raisares Road over Cooper Run, Cooper Mill Road over Spruce Run, West Engle Road over Tunis Run, and Winter Road over Cherry Run (abandoned by Hartley Township, Union County)
- Jacks Mtn. ATV trail expansion
- Installation of a 5-bay standard pole building at the district office facility, including a new upgrade to the electrical system of the office complex
- Cooper Mill Road 2RC Resurfacing Project (1 ½ miles) Project from wildlife mitigation site south on Cooper Mill Road
- Thomas Dam Road DSA Resurfacing Project (1 ½ miles) Project from Township Road to Coral Run Bridge
- Siglerville-Millheim Pike DSA Resurfacing Project (1 mile) Project from Mt. Church Road intersection traveling north toward Millheim
- FY16 McCall Dam Road repaving project at Eastville and RB Winter State Park. \$300,000 D&G Fund
- Installation of four kiosks (Loganton CCC Camp, Poe Paddy Tunnel, Tea Springs Picnic Area, and new ATV Parking area)
- Re-roofing of two State Forest Picnic Area latrines

PRESCRIBED FIRE

- Stitzer Gap Prescribed Fire – acres located off Stony Run road in Hartley Township, Union County. Purpose is to release advance oak regeneration. This was postponed until 2017 due to unfavorable weather conditions.
- Bartley Gap Prescribed Fire – Approximately 27 acres located off Stoney Run Road in Hartley Township, Union County. Purpose is to reduce the competition that currently exists to good oak regeneration following an overstory removal from mainly sweet birch and red maple. This was postponed until 2017 due to unfavorable weather conditions.
- Vangundy Prescribed Fire – Approximately 21 acres located within a fence along Spruce Run Road. Purpose is to release oak regeneration and to create conditions favorable to the recruitment of additional oak regeneration within a deer enclosure that has had a shelterwood harvest. This was postponed until 2017 due to unfavorable weather conditions.
- Tea Spring Fence Prescribed Fire – Approximately 12 acres located off Sugar Valley Road in Greene Township, Clinton County. Purpose is to release existing oak advance regeneration and create conditions favorable to recruit additional regeneration within a deer enclosure that has had a shelterwood harvest. This was postponed until 2017 due to unfavorable weather conditions.

INSECT, DISEASE, AND INVASIVE PLANT TREATMENT

- District personnel will identify and treat invasive species giving first priority to those areas located within and adjoining timber sales in order to minimize the spread as a result of disturbance.
- The Bald Eagle State Forest also is participating in a plan to attempt to maintain viable seed bearing white ash into the future in the face of emerald ash borer infestation. In 2014 we treated 110 mainly white ash trees in several disparate areas of the State Forest with *Treeage*. In addition, we will continue to work with Penn Nursery to maintain a green ash seed orchard at the District Forest complex.

NATURAL GAS AND OIL DEVELOPMENT

- There is currently no natural gas or oil development in the Bald Eagle State Forest.

TOWER AND RIGHT-OF-WAY PROJECTS

- No tower or right of way projects planned in 2016

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Long Run Dam Breech – This project was completed in July 2016.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Information is exchanged with the public through attendance at different events and fairs throughout the year. This includes the Beaver Fair, West End Fair, Grange Fair, and Ag Progress Days. Numerous volunteers are engaged in activities such as the maintenance, improvement, or relocation of recreational trails; along with rehabilitation and improvement of state forest picnic areas. This work may be done by individuals, clubs, or through groups such as the Boy Scouts (Eagle Scouts). In addition, the district service forester and recreation forester work on a daily basis to educate the public regarding Bureau of Forestry goals, priorities, and regulations while listening to their concerns.
- Notification regarding district issues is accomplished through the District's web page, the District's Facebook page, press releases, and letters directly to concerned parties.

RESEARCH

- The District continues to cooperate with Penn State University, the PA Game Commission and USGS on the deer forest study in Snyder and Mifflin Counties within DMAP area 2108. Currently PSU will be studying a basal herbicide site along Hunter Road, and a mowing and second basal herbicide site along Hoofnagle Road. The purpose is to compare and contrast with similar sites in the Rothrock State Forest, and determine what effects various regeneration enhancement treatments have in light of reduced herbivory by white tailed deer.
- In conjunction with the Deer Forest Study the District has cooperated with PGC in a fawn predation and survival study. Bear traps were set and monitored as part of this study for a one – two week period in various locations throughout the area that is covered by the Deer Forest Study.
- The District will cooperate for the fourth year with researchers from West Virginia University studying Golden Eagle migration by maintaining and photographing activity at a bait pile through the winter months.

- Penn State Researchers also conducted research entitled “Identifying characteristics and management strategies associated with high avian abundance and diversity in core forest habitats” in conjunction also with 3 other Districts.
- The Susquehanna River Basin Commission is monitoring flow on the upper reaches of White Deer Creek.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

Large Infrastructure Enhancements - 2015

- Jack Mtn. ATV trail expansion finished. Signage, resurfacing of trail treads, cutting of hazard trees, map creation, creation of a new parking lot, and improving various renegade trails to form a looping trail with a total length at this time is 21 miles is completed in the fall of 2015.
- Rag Valley Dam breach off of Rainsaires road was finished in summer.
- Cooper Mill Road 2RC Resurfacing Project (1.5 miles) Project from White Deer Creek Road to the Wildlife mitigation site. Project finished in June 2015.
- Poe Valley Asphalt Resurfacing Project and drainage work (2.5 miles) Starting at intersection Siglerville-Millheim Pike and Poe Valley Road and going east 2.5 miles on Poe Valley road to Poe Valley State Park. Project finished in October 2015.
- Poe Paddy Drive Resurfacing Project (1.5 miles) Starting at Pine Swamp Road and Poe Paddy Drive intersection traveling east to the third vista. Project finished in October 2015.
- Dirt and Gravel – Driving Surface Aggregate Rehab (5 roads) Collaborative project with PSU Dirt and Gravel Road Program to re-establish the DSA aggregate for Buffalo Mills Road (1 mile), Siglerville-Millheim Pike (1 mile), Thomas Dam Road (1 ½ miles), Sand Mtn. Road, (1/2 miles), Swift Run Road (1/2 miles)