

Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Division of Forestry

Annual Work Plan

For

Gifford State Forest

For the Period of

Fiscal Year 2010
(July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010)



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OHIO DIVISION OF FORESTRY

I. STRATEGIC PLAN *(Effective 2008)*

Our Vision: Ohio's state forests will be the best managed forest lands in the country, and will be widely recognized as such.

To fulfill this vision, the Ohio Division of Forestry commits to meeting five objectives. We will:

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

To fulfill these objectives, the Division of Forestry will develop and implement strategies and plans that allow us to accomplish the following goals by 2011:

- Manage forests to ensure the health and sustainability of forest systems
 - *Implement a proven, verifiable approach to sustainable management*
 - *Manage for site-appropriate, native forest systems and species*
 - *Maintain long-term forest productivity through conservation of soil, water, and forest resources*
 - *Retain or promote stand and landscape level wildlife habitat*
 - *Assess the distribution and impact of non-native invasive species*
- Produce high-quality forest products that contribute to local communities
 - *Base State Forest harvest volumes on the goals and guidelines for each forest system, current stand and forest-wide inventories, and science-based silviculture*
 - *Develop marketing strategies to capture the maximum value of forest products*
- Provide recreational opportunities that are compatible with sustainable forest management
 - *Develop a comprehensive recreation plan for the state forest system*
 - *Build recognition for unique and varied recreation opportunities on state forests*
- Provide unique forestry education sites and promote outreach and long-term research
 - *Support forest research with an emphasis on sustainable forest management (silvicultural, prescribed fire, native systems, etc.)*
 - *Develop opportunities to showcase forest management practices to the general public, private landowners, and forest industry*
- Maintain a highly trained and well equipped work force
 - *Develop a training, continuing education, and/or certification standard for all division staff*
 - *Inventory and evaluate equipment and facilities and develop maintenance and replacement schedules*
 - *Develop equipment and facilities budgets based on current and projected needs*
 - *Ensure all staff have appropriate health and safety training*

II. Summary of Strategic Plan Actions

Implementation of forest inventory for updated cruising methodology.

- Involvement in managing invasive plant species: co-operation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service through the Environmental Quality Incentive program's hiring of an Invasive Species Forester.
- An enhanced communication program: web based information resource, Project Learning Tree, Information and Education Program Administrator.

III. Forest Overview

History & Description: Prior to ownership by the Division of Forestry, this tract of land was a typical southern Ohio farm. Consisting of 320 acres, it was donated to the Ohio Division of Forestry in 1959 by William Gifford Shelby, under the conditions that it be used for experimentation and research. It was named after Virginia Gifford and her family. The old farm house and barn have long been gone and the area where the buildings once stood has been turned into a picnic/fishing area. A hiking trail starts where the barn once stood. Gifford State Forest is managed by the Division of Forestry primarily as a seed production and seed orchard facility. The existing plantations are composed of genetically superior trees. These plantations are managed to produce seed for use in nurseries for the production of superior planting stock. Seed production from Gifford State Forest is some of the best seed in Ohio. Plantation species at Gifford include: white pine, red oak, black walnut, and pitch pine (a pitch pine/loblolly pine hybrid).

IV. Resource Management

Silvicultural Practices (Scheduled Harvests, Cruising, Marking, TSI, etc.): The following is a listing of the inventories that were completed this past year and have resulted in proposed harvests for fiscal year 2010.

Marking Plan

State Forest	Compartment	Board Feet	Tons	Treatment	Acres
Gifford	A-1	125,503	680	Regeneration Clearcut	34
M Gifford	A-1	60,366	109	Intermediate Thinning	31

Merchandising: The Division of Forestry will continue merchandising a limited portion of its scheduled management activities. This effort will consist of hiring a Master Logging Company, through competitive bidding, to cut and deliver tree length logs to a centralized location where Division of Forestry personnel will manufacture them into sellable and sorted products. This process maximizes the Division's rate of return for its products. The Division's staff will continue to identify sales for merchandizing throughout the year.

Minerals: There is one gas well located on Gifford State Forest that is not owned by the State.

Invasives: Gifford State Forest has a heavy infestation of Autumn Olive. Recently the Division of Forestry received a grant from the US Forest Service to develop an Ohio Woodland Job Corps for the control of invasive plants within the state forests system. From this grant one crew of six people will be employed, temporarily, to work on invasive plant control and timber stand improvement while receiving job-training skills. Division staff will identify areas to control throughout the year.

Boundary: 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, Gifford State Forest conforms to the Division's boundary maintenance policies. The entire forest boundary is painted every four years due to the small size of the forest. Next painting will be FY 2012.

Licenses/Leases: The office and maintenance facility at Gifford State Forest is proposed to be leased to the Division of Watercraft to use as a local facility for one of their officers. Forestry will still retain ownership and will maintain the forest as normal. No personnel are assigned to work at Gifford; staff from Zaleski will be responsible for all forest maintenance.

Insects & Disease: Not only in the Gifford State Forest but also throughout the entire area monitoring stations are in place for the Emerald Ash Borer and Gypsy Moth, two insects of concern. Both are being managed by the Department of Agriculture.

Utilization & Marketing: Forest products will continue to be offered for sale through both the traditional state forest timber sales (stumpage) and merchandising sales. Additionally, firewood permits will be available for sale to the public.

Research: No new research is occurring at Gifford. However, past tree improvement plantations continue to be managed and maintained.

Summary (2-3 year projects): Continue monitoring for insect/disease infestations and control of invasives.

V. Maintenance

Buildings: Gifford State Forest has a service center and outside storage building. Roof repairs will be performed on the service center building.

Infrastructure (water, wastewater, utilities): Most of the infrastructure will be the responsibility of the Division of Watercraft.

Vehicles/Equipment: See Zaleski State Forest plan.

Roads: There is less than one mile of public roads at Gifford which consist of the driveway to the service center and one access road to the picnic/parking area. All roads are inspected for safety and overall condition minimum of twice per year and after major weather events. Repairs and maintenance will be performed as needed.

Signage: Wooden signs are replaced and re-painted as needed.

Residences: None

Dams: None

Capitals Projects: None

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Maintain buildings under proposed lease as required.

VI. Recreation

Trails (bridle, backpack, etc.): 4 miles of hiking trails exist at Gifford. Trails will be brushed back and re-marked as time and resources allow. 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.

Campgrounds: None

ATV Areas: None

Shooting Ranges: None

Grants: None

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Brush back and re-mark trails.

VII. Wildland Fire

Suppression: See Zaleski Forest plan.

Prevention: See Zaleski Forest plan.

Prescribed Fire: Traditionally the white pine seed orchard is burned to control cone beetle. With the closing of the nursery, the future of seed collection is unclear. However, if there is a need for this seed the 7-acre seed orchard will receive a prescribed fire.

Inter-Agency Fire Crew: See Zaleski State Forest plan.

Training: See Zaleski State Forest plan.

Fire Department Contacts: See Zaleski State Forest plan.

FireWise: See Zaleski State Forest plan.

FEPP/FFP: See Zaleski State Forest plan.

Grants: See Zaleski State Forest plan.

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Continue prescribed burning seed orchards as needed for insect control.

VIII. Law Enforcement

Philosophy/Purpose (Provided by Columbus): State Forests currently have 10 commissioned law enforcement officers and 3 commissioned managers. The purpose of the positions is to enforce the forest rules depicted in the Ohio Revised Code. One very important aspect of the program is resource protection. Forest Officers protect property boundaries from encroachment, recreation resources from undesignated uses, guard against timber theft and watch for watershed degradation. Specific law enforcement policies and procedures are delineated in the Division's Law Enforcement Manual.

Training: See Zaleski State Forest plan.

Equipment: See Zaleski State Forest plan.

Patrol Priorities: Priorities for patrol will be established utilizing the following criteria:

1. Responding to emergencies and help requests with jurisdiction
2. Protect and assist visitors through routine patrol of all facilities and incident investigation
3. Issue warnings and citations for violations
4. Investigate and assign wildfire reports for violations
5. Assist in special projects with other forests and agencies

The Zaleski Forest Officer will patrol Gifford State Forest at least once a week.

Special Projects: See Zaleski State Forest plan.

Other Duties (VFD's, FEPP, court, boundary, etc.): The Forest Officer will visit each county court system and prosecutors office once per year. These visits will be used to update information on bond schedules, court dates, prosecutor and judge information. An updated information sheet will be submitted to the Forest Manager after each visit.

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Continue special projects on an as needed basis identified by the Forest Officer and approved by the Forest Manager.

IV. Employee Development

Employee List/Vacancies/Table of Organization: See Zaleski – Gifford State Forest is staffed from Zaleski State Forest

Training (tuition reimbursement, etc): See Zaleski State Forest plan.

Safety: See Zaleski State Forest plan.

Other Employee Development: See Zaleski State Forest plan.

X. Public Information/Outreach

Planned Events: Contact or personally meet with the Athens County Commissioners and Bern Township Trustees at least once per year. Gifford State Forest will be represented at the Open Houses at Athens-ODNR Headquarters and Shawnee State Forest August of 2009.

Partnerships: Township trustees, Hocking College, and ODNR Division of Watercraft.

Volunteers: None

Interpretive Programs: None at this time.

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Make new partnerships with volunteer groups as needed or applicable.

XI. Budget

Operational Budget (personnel, maintenance): Budget is captured in the Zaleski State Forest budget.

(NOTE: Budget figures provided by Columbus Fiscal and developed with District Forester and Forest Manager. Attach Copy.)

Revenue: Revenue from Gifford State Forest is generated from timber sales, firewood permits, and special use permit applications. A percentage of this income is returned to the local township, county, and local school district thru the Trees to Textbooks Program.

Summary (2-3 year projected budget):