

Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Division of Forestry

Annual Work Plan

For

PIKE State Forest

For the Period of

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



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7/1/2009
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Table of Contents

Page

I.	Strategic Plan	1
II.	Summary of Strategic Plan Actions Bullet Statements: Actions that directly support Strategic Plan Goals & Objectives	
III.	Forest Overview History & Description	
IV.	Resource Management Silvicultural Practices (Scheduled Harvests, Cruising, Marking, TSI, etc.) Merchandising Minerals Invasives Boundary Licenses/Leases Insects & Disease Utilization & Marketing Research Summary (2-3 year projects)	
V.	Maintenance Buildings Infrastructure (water, wastewater, utilities) Vehicles & Equipment Roads Signage Residences Dams Capitals Projects Summary (2-3 year future projects)	
VI.	Recreation Trails (bridle, backpack, etc.) Campgrounds ATV Areas Shooting Ranges Grants Summary (2-3 year future projects)	
VII.	Wildland Fire Suppression Preventions Prescribed fire Inter-Agency Fire Crew Training Fire Department Contacts FireWise	

FEPP/FFP
Grants
Summary (2-3 year future projects)

VIII. Law Enforcement.....

Philosophy/Purpose
Training
Equipment
Patrol Priorities
Special Projects
Other Duties (VFD's, FEPP, Court, Boundary, etc.)
Summary (2-3 year future projects)

IV. Employee Development

Employee Lists/Vacancies/Table of Organization
Training (tuition reimbursement, etc.)
Safety
Other Employee Development

X. Public Information/Outreach

Planned Events
Partnerships
Volunteers
Interpretive Programs
Summary (2-3 year future projects)

XI. Budget

Operational Budget (personnel, maintenance)
Revenue
Summary (2-3 year projected budget)

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 Resources Service through the Environmental Quality Incentive program's hiring of an Invasive Species Forester.
- An enhanced communication program through a web based information resource, Project Learning Tree, and the Information and Education Program Administrator.

III. Forest Overview

History & Description: Pike State Forest is located in the hills of south central Ohio in northwest Pike County and southeast Highland County. Land acquisition began in 1924, with the objective of returning abused hill farms and fire-damaged timber lands to productive forests. The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Division of Forestry completed most of the reforestation work in the 1930s with the planting to trees of eroded hillsides. Presently there are over 12,000 acres broken into 13 separate, irregular tracts. This separation makes it difficult to manage for continuous recreational facilities, as well as the management and patrol of the forest resource. Opportunities offered within the forest include timber harvesting, research and many recreational activities.

IV. Resource Management

Silvicultural Practices (Scheduled Harvests, Cruising, Marking, TSI, etc.): Schedules cruises are listed below by compartment. These inventories are based on a 20-year cruise cycle, but may change in the future to accommodate growth and yield models.

The following areas were marked in FY2009 but have not yet been sold:

State Forest	Compartment	Board Feet	Tons	Treatment	Acres
Pike	D-6	190303	603	Regeneration Clear-cut	19
Pike	D-15	518623	934	Pre-salvage Thinning	197

The following is a listing of the inventories that were completed this past year and have resulted in proposed harvests for fiscal year 2011:

Cruising Reports					
State Forest	Compartment	Board Feet	Tons	Treatment	Acres
Pike	A-6			TSI	39
Pike	A-6	300,491		Improvement selection	97
Pike	B-15			Re-cruise 20 years	200
Pike	B-15	330,600		Improvement selection	95
Pike	D-4			Re-cruise 20 years	3
Pike	D-5			Re-cruise 20 years	89
Pike	D-7	164,046		Improvement selection	57
Pike	D-7	400,725	826	Regeneration harvest	25

The following is a listing of the management activities that will be implemented this year and were previously presented in an open house:

Marking					
State Forest	Compartment	Board Feet	Tons	Treatment	Acres
Pike	B-9	220,777	350	Regeneration harvest	24
Pike	B-9	244,536	107	Regeneration harvest	23
Pike	B-28			Re-cruise 20 years	71
Pike	D-10	56,325	42	Regeneration harvest	5
Pike	D-11	289,500	517	Regeneration harvest	25

Below is a listing of the compartments that will be inventoried this year for potential management activities in fiscal year 2012:

Cruises Schedules				
Forest		Compartment		Acres
Pike		A-5		135
Pike		A-8		161
Pike		D-13		60
Pike		D-14		26
Pike		D-17		144
Pike		D-19		4

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 are no mineral leases at Pike State Forest.

Invasives: Common invasives at Pike State Forest include: Ailanthus altissima (Tree of Heaven), Lonicera japonica (Japanese Honeysuckle), Rosa multiflora (Multiflora Rose).

Recently the Division of Forestry received a grant from the US Forest Service to develop an Ohio Woodland Job Corp 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: Pike State Forest is encompassed by roughly 98 miles of boundary. Current rotation for painting entire boundary is 4 years as such approximately 24 miles, more or less, will be painted to meet the goal.

Licenses/Leases: None currently issued.

Insects & Disease: Not only in the 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. Oak decline is another concern but research is on going to determine its exact cause.

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: Currently no ongoing research projects are taking place within Pike State Forest. Opportunities to conduct research projects exist for any person or groups. The only requirement being a special use permit needs to be applied for and approved for the activity.

Summary (2-3 year projects): Continuation of the merchandising program and traditional stumpage sales. Controlling invasive species where they are most abundant.

V. Maintenance

Buildings: There are three buildings in use; an office/garage, garage and a gas house. They will be maintained in a safe, organized, and clean condition. This applies to the inside and outside. Once a year they will be inspected for needed repairs including windows, doors, gutters, downspouts, roofing, eaves and painting. Items needing corrected will be attended to as soon as possible. Any damage occurring to buildings will be attended to immediately. Painting trim on doors, painting gas tank and supplying electric to the gas house will be done this year. Risk assessment walk through was done in May of '08. Corrective measures will be taken care of that were identified as needing attention to ensure the safety of the employees.

Infrastructure (water, wastewater, utilities): The septic system was replaced in July 2009. It is a leach field type septic system. The office areas are heated by electricity although a wood-burning stove is used to reduce the cost otherwise the electric bill would be much greater. Firewood, approximately 13 cords, will be collected and used for heating.

Vehicles/Equipment: Current inventory includes the following: 6 highway vehicles (4 pickup trucks, 1 dump truck, 1 transport); 2 bulldozers; 2 tractors; 2 trailers (1-16' and 1 8'); 3 lawn tractors; 7 APVs; 2 finishing mowers (1-5' and 1-6'); 1-6' bush hog; a 7' box grader; a 6' grader; a post hole digger; a 4' sickle bar mower; 1-42" bush hog for an APV; 2 slip in units; 2 back pack blowers; 3 weed whackers; various hand and power tools. Vehicles will be repaired and maintained in house unless it is beyond our scope of ability.

Roads: There are no forest roads. Access roads will be mowed and creek crossing graded and maintained as needed.

Signage: Signs are used to mark and identify trails, identify areas and for information purposes. They are used in the All-Purpose Vehicle area, on horse trails and hiking trails. Currently carsonite and wood signs are used. Appropriate decals are used with the carsonite signs. They are replaced when damaged or vandalized. Wooden signs are routed with the description and painted. Usually they are repainted but at times are in need of replacement so new ones are made.

Residences: There is one residence currently being occupied by a forestry employee. It is adjacent to the Pike State Forest Headquarters on State Route 124. There is also an old residence, unoccupied, with 3 outbuildings that are scheduled for demolition. These are located away from the headquarters area on Greenbriar Ridge road.

Dams: There exists one earthen dam at Pike State Forest and it is referred to as Anderson Lake. The dam and area is maintained as needed.

Capitals Projects: Currently there are no capitals projects planned for Pike State Forest. If Capitals become available two projects will be proposed: Wood fired boiler heating system and replace the garage doors with insulated doors.

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Replace the current heating unit with a newer system. Replace highway vehicles every 125,000 miles.

VI. Recreation

Trails (bridle, backpack, etc.): There are approximately 33 miles of bridle trails that will be maintained and cleared on an as needed basis (e.g., after significant storm events). Once a year we will clear the trails of downed debris. We also will work with the Ohio Horseman's Council to brush them back when it is needed. Some of the trails that use the access roads will be mowed once a year; after a weather event (i.e. heavy rain, high winds and ice) we will check the trails

for obstacles. From time to time it is necessary to reroute a section of trail to take advantage of a better route. The Buckeye Trail Association maintains approximately 43 miles of the Buckeye Trail that traverse Pike State Forest east to west and the all maintenance on this trail.

Campgrounds: There are none.

ATV Areas: The ATV trail system is the only system with seasonal closure. The trail system is closed from Deer Gun Season to April 1st. There are ten miles of ATV trails on Pike State Forest. They will be maintained to control erosion and re-graded using motorized equipment twice a year. All trails will be open and passable during the recreational user season. Sanitary facilities will be monitored and maintained on a weekly basis. Signs will be replaced as needed. All parking areas, access roads, and emergency roads will be supplemented with gravel. The one vista will remain open through vegetative control measures.

Shooting Ranges: N/A.

Grants: A Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant has been received for the maintenance of the APV area.

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Over the next two years, the entire bridle trail system will be graded with mechanical equipment.

VII. Wildland Fire

Suppression: The Division of Forestry has the statutory authority for fire suppression and protection within the hill country of the state. Pike State Forest is responsible for these duties in Pike and portion of Highland Counties. Division of Forestry employees serve as initial attack resources within the forest boundaries and assist VFD's outside the forest boundaries, when requested. Most requests involve the use of heavy equipment.

Prevention: Public education and awareness is key to fire prevention programs. Prevention programs utilizing Smokey Bear will be as follows: Pike County Fair, Pike County Oktoberfest, MRDD, the 5th Grade Conservation Field Day, and various school programs.

Prescribed Fire: There are no planned prescribed fires for the coming year.

Inter-Agency Fire Crew: The interagency fire crew supports the national effort to suppress wildland fire to protect lives, personal property and natural resources. Participation is strictly voluntary, but all Division of Forestry employees are encouraged to participate in the program.

Training: Members of the Interagency Fire Crew will attend one interagency refresher class. The Fundamentals of Wildland Fire course will be taught in each county at a minimum once per a year.

Fire Department Contacts: The Forest Officer will attend at least one VFD association meeting in the protection area each month. Annually the officer will contact each department and complete the division's VFD contact information forms.

FireWise: Pike State Forest will continue to support the Division's FireWise efforts.

FEPP/FFP: The Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) program is a program administered by the Division of Forestry that loans equipment to fire departments for their use in fire control. Division staff a minimum of once each year must inspect loaned equipment.

Grants: The Division administers several grant opportunities for volunteer fire companies. Pike State Forest will promote the opportunities to local VFD's.

Summary (2-3 year future projects):

VIII. Law Enforcement

Philosophy/Purpose: 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: Commissioned officers will receive the following training: Weapons qualifications, law enforcement in-service training, remain current with CPR and First Aid, and TASR certification. Non-mandatory training will be offered to officers as workloads and budgets allow.

Equipment: Officer will be issued all equipment listed in the division's law enforcement manual. Each officer will be expected to properly maintain all issued equipment.

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

Special Projects: Identify and request special projects to address specific issues and problems in order to maintain a safe and enjoyable environment for forest users.

Other Duties (VFD's, FEPP, court, boundary, etc.): Attend four (4) fire department association meetings; FEPP inspections; court updates; paint 5 miles of boundary; boundary inspection; respond to boundary encroachments by inspecting boundary when/ where encroachments occur; investigate and resolve; investigate fires according to fire manual direction; participate in fire prevention program; update fire department information sheets.

Summary (2-3 year future projects):

IV. Employee Development

Employee List/Vacancies/Table of Organization:

Forest Manager- Mark Hassel
Forest Officer-Dave Adkins
Forester-John Bauerbach
Equipment Operator-Ryan Hancock
Equipment Operator-Jeremy Adkins

Training (tuition reimbursement, etc): Annual CPR and First Aid class will be attended by each employee. Forest Manager and Forester will attend the Forest Health meeting.

Safety: Each employee will attend a monthly safety meeting. Required personnel will participate in the annual respirator fit test.

Other Employee Development: Employees will be encouraged to attend programs or trainings that will enhance the employees' job performance and efficiency.

X. Public Information/Outreach

Planned Events: Pike State Forest will be represented at the Athens and Shawnee Open Houses in August 2009; will present timber revenue checks to the County Commissioners and the local School Board.

Partnerships: Pike Lake State Park, Township Trustees, National Wild Turkey Federation, Ruffed Grouse Society, and local VFD's

Volunteers: Buckeye Trail Association and the Pike County Chapter of the Ohio Horseman's Council

Interpretive Programs: Through out the coming year, the Forest Manager will develop a number of interpretive signs explaining forest management activities that are adjacent to recreational areas.

Summary (2-3 year future projects):

XI. Budget

Operational Budget (personnel, maintenance): The Division will be developing a forest specific budget for Pike State Forest. In the past the budget was listed within the old District 5 structure.

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

Revenue: Revenue from Pike 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 through the Trees to Textbooks Program.

Summary (2-3 year projected budget):