Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Division of Forestry

Annual Work Plan

For

Eastern
State Forests

For the Period of

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

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6/19/2009
(Date)

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Date

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OHIO DIVISION OF FORESTRY

I. STRATEGIC PLAN (*Effective 2008)*

Our Vision: Ohio's state forests will be the best managed forestlands 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

Bullet Statements: Actions that directly support Strategic Plan Goals & Objectives:

- Manage forests to ensure the health and sustainability of forest systems by continuing Timber Stand Improvement projects at Harrison, Fernwood and Yellow Creek State Forests
- Provide recreational trails and facilities that ensure the protection of the natural resource by assessing conditions, proper maintenance and repairs when necessary.
- Provide unique forestry education sites and promote outreach through the Forest Heritage Festival
- Maintain a highly trained staff by conducting monthly safety meetings, offering training opportunities in the areas of forest management, firefighting and law enforcement.

III. Forest Overview

The Eastern State Forests include five state forests: Harrison, Fernwood, Yellow Creek, Beaver Creek and Sunfish.

State Forest	County	Acres
Fernwood	Jefferson	3,023
Harrison	Harrison	1,344
Beaver Creek	Columbiana	1,122
Yellow Creek	Columbiana	756
Sunfish Creek	Monroe	637
	TOTAL	6,882

A substantial portion of the land in Fernwood and Harrison Forests has been strip mined for coal. However, the production of acid mine water is minimal because of the neutralizing effect of limestone deposits. The majority of unstripped lands are located on ridges or in valleys, and are in forest cover. Subsequent reforestation and installation of recreation facilities, funded through the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965 and the Ohio Capital Improvements program, have restored the area to a beautiful, healthy forest, providing visitors with many outdoor recreational opportunities. Three areas were reforested in 1992, 1993 and 2000. Over 200,000 trees were planted on over 300 acres.

Yellow Creek State Forest adjoins the Highlandtown Wildlife Area. The land for Yellow Creek was purchased between 1947-1960. The land for Sunfish Creek was purchased in 1963. There are no developed facilities at either forest.

In 1998, ODNR acquired an additional 1,122 acres near Calcutta, Ohio in Columbiana County that became Beaver Creek State Forest. The need for accommodating diverse outdoor recreation coupled with the protection of the unique, Beaver and Little Beaver Creek's Watershed was a primary factor in establishing Ohio's 20th State Forest under the multiple use management philosophy of the ODNR Division of Forestry.

IV. Resource Management

Silvicultural Practices (Scheduled Harvests, Cruising, Marking, TSI, etc.):

				Acres	Acres	Acres
State Forest	**Compartment**	**Vol. Bd. Ft.**	**Tons**	**Clearcut**	**Shelterwood**	**Select/Partial**
*Fernwood	A04	561,643	871	65.22		23.67
Harrison	A02, A03, A04	586,326		51.42		86.46
Yellow Creek	A04		1,674	59.7		3.3

* Continue to administer the Harvest at Fernwood State Forest: C-4/130 ac.

Following is a listing of management activities that were inventoried this past year and are being proposed to be implemented this coming winter.

				Acres	Acres	Acres
State Forest	**Compartment**	**Vol. Bd. Ft.**	**Tons**	**Clearcut**	**Shelterwood**	**Select/Partial**
Harrison	A2, A3, A4	586,326	750	51.42		81.9
Yellow Creek	A04	Approx. 100,00	Pine 1674	59.7		3.3

Following is a table listing the compartments that will be inventoried this year.

State Forest	Compartment	Total Acres
*Fernwood	MacIntyre Tract	589.03
*Harrison	A5, A6, & A7	515.45

**will be stratified between mined and un-mined and inventoried according to what is found.*

Following is a listing of compartments that will receive noncommercial timber stand improvement activities.

State Forest	Compartment	Total Acres	Work
Fernwood	A1, A4,A5, A6	178	Kill invasive (especially ailanthus) which could seed in the A04 timber sale.
Yellow Creek	A4	63	Kill the grapevines in the sale area.
Harrison	A2, A3, A4	134	Kill invasive plants in and around sale area that would seed in the openings after the sale and kill the grapevines in the sale area.

Following is a listing of compartments that will receive reforestation related activity:

State Forest	Compartment	Total Acres	Work
Fernwood	C15,C16, C17	18	Subsoil @ 3- 4 foot depth reclaimed soils
Harrison	C3, C4	265	Subsoil @ 3- 4 foot depth reclaimed soils
Harrison	C4	3	Site preparation: apply herbicide, plant 2,000 seedlings

Merchandising:

Logs salvaged from storms or right-of-way clearing operations will be graded and be offered for sale to the public through the sealed bid process.

Minerals:

A substantial portion of the land at Fernwood and Harrison State Forests has been strip mined for coal. At present, there are no current mineral issues on the Eastern Forests.

Invasives:

If available, Special Project TSI Crews will be coordinated to remove invasive species, such as Grapevines, Ailanthus, bush honeysuckle, multi flora rose and autumn olive in areas at Fernwood and Harrison State Forests. This will be priority in and around the sales. The invasive species, especially ailanthus, will need to be killed in and around the timber sales at Fernwood and Harrison to prevent the invasion into the openings created during the sale.

Boundary:

There are approximately 70 miles of boundary lines around the Eastern Forests. With a 3 year rotation schedule we inspect and repaint (as needed), approximately 24 miles of boundary each year.

Licenses/Leases: N/A

Insects & Disease:

- Cooperate with the Ohio Department of Agriculture with their monitoring efforts of the Emerald Ash Borer.
- Monitor for Gypsy Moth activity on the forest.

Utilization & Marketing:

- If available, Special Project TSI Crews will be coordinated in Fernwood and Harrison for Firewood projects and the utilization of undesirable growing stock (UGS)
- Firewood permits will be issued on a request basis for downed trees along roadways, trails and facilities.

Research:

- Currently, there are no research projects on any eastern region state forests

Summary (2-3 year projects):

Most all of the above projects are ongoing and are expected to last a number of years. Land management activities will continue depending on recommendations from Foresters and Land Management Staff. Reforestation efforts will continue at Harrison and Fernwood Sate Forests as time and budget allows.

V. Maintenance

Buildings:

Perform general maintenance, routine cleaning and repair to the 8 buildings and structures located at Fernwood and Harrison State Forests.

Facility Inventory		
Eastern State Forests	**Fernwood State Forest**	Service Center/Office
		Equipment Barn
		Gas House
		Latrine (Round Top Picnic Area)
		Latrine (Hidden Hollow Camp)
	Harrison State Forest	Latrines - 2 (Trailriders Camp)
		Latrine (Ronsheim Camp)

- Install gutters and downspouts, and repair roof leaks on the Fernwood Equipment barn
- Install new siding on gables and soffits of gas house
- Install airline outlets and 220 volt electric outlets in middle garage bays at Service Center
- Add on a 10' x 24' building extension to the Fernwood pole barn

Infrastructure (water, wastewater, utilities): See "Buildings"

- Pursue the replacement of the Service Center heating system with an outdoor wood furnace system

Vehicles/Equipment:

- Perform routine maintenance, timely service and repair's to the unit's fleet of vehicles and equipment

Equipment		**Eastern Forests**
Vehicles		Patrol/SUV, 2005, 4x4, 00lb. Hitch, Electric Brake Controller, 7 wire round plug, LE equipped
		Dakota Crew Cab, 2007, 4x4, 5000lb. Hitch, 7 wire round plug, 4 wire flat plug, Cap, Ladder Racks, MARCS equipped
		Dozer transport,1999 Freightliner, diesel, ducktail bed, diesel supply tank, MARCS equipped
		1ton Dump truck, 2008, 4x4, pintle hitch, Electric Brake Controller, 7 wire round plug, w/out MARCS
		1ton Crew Cab, 2006, 4x4, Gas, Utility Body, 10,000lb. Hitch, Electric Brake Controller, 7 wire round plug, MARCS equipped
		3/4ton Pickup, 2005, 4x4, xtended Cab, 5,000lb. Hitch, 7 wire round plug
		Dakota Pickup,2002, xtended cab, 2wd, tool box, bumper hitch, 4 wire flat plug
Dozers/Tractors		
		Dozer, JD450 w/ angle blade, rear winch w/ chokers
		Tractor, JD 65 hp, 4x4 w/ bucket and grapple/forks/brushhog/angle-tilt blade
Trailers		
		Trailer, double axle, low boy, 8'x24', 14,000 lb. Beaver tail, elec. brakes, manual ramps, 7 wire round plug
		ATV trailer, 6'x12', 2" ball hitch, single axle rear gate ramp, 4 wire flat plug
ATV's		
		Yamaha Pro Hauler, 250cc 2wd, 500 lb rear payload (4'x4' stake bed)
		Yamaha Big Bear, *350cc/4wd/Standard front-rear racks*
		Kawasaki Mule, *Diesel/4wd/1000Lb Hydraulic lift Bed/1200Lb tow capacity w/1.25" and 2" frame hitch/2500Lb front winch/Convertible from 3-6 Passenger Capacity*
Misc./Other		
		50 Gallon UTV slip on unit, 50gpm pump, *fits in the bed of the Kawasaki Mule
		150 gallon slip on unit, 23hp, 200gpm pump w/Class A Foam proportioner

Roads:

- Coordinate ODOT Projects at Fernwood, which will involve repaving the Service Center parking lot, 1.2 mile road system, parking lots, site pads, and replacing guardrail and boundary posts into Vistas and Hidden Hollow Camp and ranges.
- Coordinate ODOT Projects at Harrison S.F. consisting of repaving access roads, parking areas, site pads, and replacing guardrails and boundary posts into Trailriders and Ronsheim Camps and the Rifle Range.

Signage:

- Pursue highway locator/directional sign installations for Harrison and Fernwood State Forests through Regional ODOT office

Residences:

There are no residences on any of the eastern forests

Dams:

- Continue to monitor and coordinate repairs at Ronsheim Dam at Harrison State Forest.
- Cut and treat woody vegetation on the dams located at Fernwood and Harrison State Forests.

Forest Ponds/Dams			
	Forest Location	**ID**	**Acres**
	Fernwood State Forest	1	1.2
		2	1.2
		3	1.2
	Harrison State Forest	1	.4
		2	.2
		3	.8
		4	.5
		5	2*
		6	2
		7	1.6
		8	2.3
		9	.5
		10	2.4
		11	2.4

**One half of pond #5 is on private property*

Grounds:

- Treat and remove vegetation from Security Fence @ Fernwood
- Treat and remove woody vegetation from Fernwood Helipad, Reseed
- Cut and Spray M-Rose in Hidden Hollow Campsites
- Continue to plant Spruce/Arborvitae site screens in Hidden Hollow and Trailriders Camps
- Contract Mowing, Latrine Cleaning, Trash collection

Capitals Projects:

There are no capital improvement projects planned

Summary (2-3 year future projects):

Future projects other than those listed above include:

- Installation of entrance signs at Beaver Creek, Fernwood and Harrison State Forests
- Repair and replace benches at the shooting ranges at Fernwood and Harrison

VI. Recreation

Trails (bridle, backpack, etc.):

There are approximately 26 miles of combined bridle and hiking trails at Harrison State Forest, and a three mile hiking trail at Fernwood State Forest.

- Incorporate bridle trail reroutes at Harrison during timber harvest
- Rehabilitate and clear trail systems at Fernwood and Harrison as outlined in the 2009 Recreational Trails Program Grant
- Review proposals for Beaver Creek trail development project
- Remove access road and construct ATV road blocks at northern Beaver Creek tract

Campgrounds:

There is one campground area located at Fernwood State Forest: Hidden Hollow Campground, with 22 family campsites, is equipped with picnic tables, fire rings and vault latrines. Campers must provide their own water. Campers must select a site; a forest officer will issue permits, and familiarize visitors with camping regulations.

There are two campground areas located at Harrison State Forest equipped with picnic tables, fire rings, and vault latrines. Campers must provide their own water. Seven family campsites are located at Ronsheim Campground while 20 sites accommodating family and/or horse campers are available at the Trailriders Campground. Campers must select a site; a forest officer will issue permits, and familiarize visitors with camping regulations.

- Remove hazard trees from camp and picnic areas, inspect periodically
- Purchase and install new trash cans in all areas

ATV Areas:

There are no ATV areas located on any Eastern State Forests

Shooting Ranges:

There is one shooting range at Harrison State Forest and three shooting ranges at Fernwood State Forest, including: 1 trap shoot range, 1 pistol range, 1 rifle range.

- The shooting benches will be repaired and repainted as needed.

Grants:

- Administer the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant for the Northern Forests trail rehabilitation project

Summary (2-3 year future projects)

- Coordinate requests for trail development at Beaver Creek State Forest
- Conduct timber stand improvement in buffer zone from Fernwood Service Center to Round Top Picnic Area
- Continue trail improvement work at Fernwood

VII. Wildland Fire

Suppression:

- Aggressively suppress wildland fire starts within the forest.
- During extreme fire danger periods, stage available resources and equipment @ predetermined location, notify local fire departments of availability status, and respond as needed/requested

Prevention:

- Promote wildfire prevention programs through local fire departments utilizing Smokey's "A Fire Prevention Teachers Workbook".
- Promote roadside Fire Danger signs in Jefferson, Columbiana, and Harrison Counties
- On Red Flag days (days when the temperature is greater than 60 F, relative humidity is less than 30% and wind speeds are greater than 10 mph):
- Distribute the electronic newsletter "Smoke Signals", advising of weather conditions, potential fire behavior and fire watch out situations.
- Contact regional media (radio and TV) to record fire prevention interviews and to release pre-recorded PSA's
- Investigate all Debris Burning Fires in Jefferson and Belmont Counties
- Patrol same Counties on *Critical Fire Potential Days

Prescribed Fire:

- Conduct a prescribe burn in Yellow Creek State Forest, compartment A4 on 75 acres of hardwood stand to increase oak reproduction.

Inter-Agency Fire Crew:

- Eastern Forest staff members will be allowed to participate in the Division's Inter-Agency Fire Crew program to make one fire assignment trip as the workload and budget allow.

Training:

- Offer and provide Basic Wildfire Suppression training to VFD's in Columbiana, Harrison, Tuscarawas and Jefferson Counties (1/County)

Fire Department Contacts:

- Attend a minimum of two VFD Association meetings per year in each county in the fire protection district
- Update fire department data sheets

Eastern Forests/Fire Cooperatives Totals		
County	**# Fire Departments**	**# Fire Associations**
Belmont	23	1, *
Carroll	12	1, *
Columbiana	13	2
Harrison	13	1
Jefferson	24	1, *
Tuscarawas	20	2, *
Stark	9	1
Total	114	10*

*South Eastern Fire Chiefs Association includes these Counties

FireWise:

- Continue to promote the Firewise program within the Eastern Forests Fire Protection Area

FEPP/FFP:

- *Continue to complete annual inspections of federal property within our fire protection project.
- Continue to promote the participation of fire departments in the Federal Excess Property Program (FEPP).

*Currently a total of 44 items with an approximate value of $984,285.00 are placed with 32 Fire Departments across 7 Counties.

Grants:

- Promote grant opportunities to area fire departments

Summary (2-3 year future projects):

The Eastern Forests fire protection area covers seven counties and has a moderate-severe wildland fire problem, with a potential serious threat to "values" (property/infrastructure) within the Wildland Urban Interface. Continue the goal of supporting and assisting the cooperating fire departments within the fire protection area with: prevention activities, wildland fire suppression and wildland fire training.

VIII. Law Enforcement

Philosophy/Purpose:

State forests currently have 10 fully commissioned law enforcement officers plus 3 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

Training:

The Forest Officer will attend annual In-Service training, weapons re-qualification, first responder training (CPR and First Aid) and other mandatory training as required by the Ohio Revised Code, Ohio Peace Officers Training Academy regulations, Ohio Department of Natural Resources and Division of Forestry law enforcement policies.

- Conduct and/or coordinate Wildfire Prevention programs as outlined in "Wildland Fire Work Plan"

Equipment:

- Forest Officer will be afforded all equipment listed in the Division's Law Enforcement manual.
- Forest Officer will be provided a patrol vehicle with a MARCS radio system, MCT, overhead light bar, siren and other equipment as listed in the Division's Law Enforcement manual.
- Forest Officer equipment will be maintained and repaired as needed.

Patrol Priorities:

- Patrol and conduct building checks each shift
- Respond to emergencies and requests for help and give assistance within Officer's training and capabilities.
- Patrol and enforce litter, vandalism, forest regulations and Ohio Revised Code on all forests

Special Projects:

- Coordinate three ATV enforcement projects at Beaver Creek
- Assist in special projects with other forests as the workload and budget allows

Other Duties (VFD's, FEPP, court, boundary, etc.):

- Contact Courts within the Eastern Forests Fire Protection Area and update Information sheets prior to Spring and Fall Fire seasons
- *14 Courts serve this seven County Fire Protection Area
- Maintain "No Dumping" signs at Beaver Creek
- Replace vandalized signs at all Forests as needed
- Inventory sign type and location on state forests, and maintain an inventory for replacements
- Install access cable gates at Beaver Creek
- Install new locks and routinely oil all cable access gates on all forests

Summary (2-3 year future projects):

Enforcement of the fire laws, forestry rules and statutes are necessary for the protection of the resources, facilities, residents and visitors. Enforcement activities are accomplished through patrol of the forest by the Forest Officer. The Forest Officer will continue basic duties in all areas as assigned, and also check forest boundaries on all state forests.

IV. Employee Development

Employee List/Vacancies/Table of Organization:

Frank Corona	Regional Forest Manager
Brian Stamp	Forest Officer 2
Eric Traczyk	Equipment Operator 2
Rick Miller	Land Management Forester
VACANT	Conservation Aide

Training (tuition reimbursement, etc):

- Provide proper training and equipment for all employees, including: CPR/annually, First Aid/every 3rd year, and Interagency Fire Crew Refresher/annually
- Provide a minimum of 36 hours of training for the Forest Officer as mandated by the F.O.P. contract. This will be accomplished through in-service training sessions at the Ohio Peace Officer's Training Academy (OPOTA), annual weapons qualifications, scenarios and other training.

Safety:

- Coordinate Monthly Safety meetings for entire staff
- Conduct annual inspection of lock out/tag out tool boxes.

Other Employee Development:

Employees will be allowed to participate in professional development and educational training programs as workloads and the budget allows.

X. Public Information/Outreach

Planned Events:

- Open House for Eastern Forests September 3, 2009
- Forest Heritage Festival October 16 – 17, 2009
- Regional OHC Ride-Weekend/Harrison State Forest September, 2009 (TBA)

Partnerships:

Ohio Wildfire Exposition,
Ohio Horse Council,
Carroll County OHC Chapter,
Buckeye Trail Riders,
Columbiana County Park District,
Lake Erie to Ohio River Trail Organization,
North Country Trail group,
Ohio Farm Bureau Chapters,
County SWCD's,
Emergency Management Directors and County Sheriffs,
School Districts in Jefferson and Harrison Counties,
Jefferson, and Mingo Sportsmen's Clubs,
Harrison MRDD,
Jeffco Workshop,
Columbiana and Harrison County Commisioners,
Township Trustees in St. Clair/Columbiana, Washington/Columbiana, Archer/Harrison, Cross Creek/Jefferson, Wayne/Jefferson

Volunteers:

Maintain the current Cooperative Volunteer Agreement with the Buckeye Trail Riders for maintenance of the Harrison bridle trails.

Interpretive Programs:

Continue to coordinate and provide speakers for the Harrison County 5th grade Environmental Education and Tree Planting days, and also the Fernwood 6th grade Land Lab

Summary (2-3 year future projects):

Information and Education about forest resources in Ohio is an ongoing component of the Division of Forestry. In addition to continuing previous events and partnerships,

- Revise and Reprint new Forest Maps for Fernwood and Harrison
- Revise and Reprint new Forest Maps for Beaver Creek and Yellow Creek

I. Budget

Operational Budget (personnel, maintenance)

SFY 2009 Budget DNR150035 Fernwood Region

500	**Payroll-Fund GRF**			**$337,925**
510	**Personal Services- Fund 5090 25% per quarter**			**$250**
		Misc Prof Development		$250
520	**Supplies & Maint- Fund 5090 25% per quarter**			**$94,000**
		Harrison OIH		$13,000
		OIH		$36,000
		Operating		$45,000
530	**Equipment**			
550	**Subsidies**			
570	**Capital**			
590	**Settlements & Bonds - Refunds**			
591	**Debt Service**			
			Total	**$432,175**

Revenue: 2009

Timber Harvest (1)= $41,945.76
Firewood Sales (6) = $ 220.00
Total $42,165.76

Summary (2-3 year projected budget):

Budgets will remain very tight for the next two fiscal years. This will present a challenge for managers to find new ways to keep the day to day operations at an acceptable level

****The successful accomplishment of all goals set forth in this document are contingent on minimum staffing levels that include the following full time/permanent employees: 1-Regional Manager, 1-Equipment Operator II, 1-Conservation Aide, 1-Land Management Forester, 1-Receptionist/Fiscal/BSO, 1-Forest Officer. Additional assistance will be needed in the form(s) of additional positions, Volunteers, shared manpower from other DNR areas, and continued OIH contract services.*