



POSTON PLANT LANDS WILDLIFE AGREEMENT AREA

Athens County



DISTANCE FROM MAJOR POPULATION CENTERS

4 miles from Athens

43 miles from Lancaster

53 miles from Zanesville

73 miles from Columbus

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

This 2,240-acre area lies in the northwestern portion of Athens County. Many county and township roads provide direct access to several major tracts. In combination with surrounding Wayne National Forest lands, a block of nearly 50,000 acres of public hunting land is available in this region. This area is situated in the hilly unglaciated Allegheny Plateau and consists primarily of rounded ridges, steep slopes, and narrow ravines. Numerous old fields reverting to forest are intermixed with woods which are generally second and third growth timber. Oak and hickory dominate the ridges and upper slopes. Tulip, poplar, beech, maple, and red oak are frequent lowland and ravine tree species.

HISTORY AND PURPOSE

This property is the former Poston Power Station that is owned by AEP. The company is one of the major owners of land and mineral properties in southeastern Ohio. The AEP Company has developed a long-range timber management plan, under which foresters will harvest timber on a sustained yield basis. On much of the area short-term cutting rotations will be employed for the production of pulpwood. On the better growing sites the trees will be managed for larger timber. In 2006 AEP Company and the ODNR Division of Wildlife entered into a cooperative agreement permitting public hunting, trapping, and fishing. Hunting is the major recreational use. Other uses include fishing, mushroom and berry picking, hiking, nature study, and bird watching.

WILDLIFE

Gray squirrel, ruffed grouse, deer, raccoon, and gray fox are the principal game and fur species on the area. Fox squirrels, rabbits, opossums, skunks, red foxes, and muskrats are present in smaller numbers. Wild turkeys that have become established in adjacent portions of the Wayne National Forest also use some tracts of this wildlife area. Grouse and deer will increase as a result of the forest management work being done. A rich variety of songbirds is found on the area in association with the diverse mixture of habitat types.

HUNTING AND TRAPPING

The most productive areas for grouse are along the woodland edges of the many naturally reverting fields. Among the better areas to hunt deer are the woods recently harvested for pulpwood, which provide an abundance of food and cover 5 to 10 years after cutting. Squirrel hunting is good in the more mature woods, which are generally confined to the steeper slopes and narrow valleys. Rabbits can be found along brushy woodland borders and in old fields.

Raccoon hunting is generally good throughout the area. Beaver trapping may be permitted to remove problem beaver, but only with special permission from the Company. The Division of Wildlife enforces all state laws on these lands including hunting and fishing regulations. Enforcement priorities include prohibiting littering, off-road vehicle use, and timber theft and destruction.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Further information may be obtained from the Wildlife District Four Office, 360 E. State Street, Athens, Ohio 45701; telephone (740) 589-9930.

TURN IN A POACHER

Ohio's TIP, "Turn In a Poacher," program is helping curtail poaching throughout the state. TIP is designed to involve the public in reporting wildlife violations. Citizens who observe wildlife violations should call the TIP toll-free hotline, 1-800-POACHER.

FREE PERMIT REQUIRED

A free permit is required to use this area. Permits can be obtained from the following sources:

Division of Wildlife
360 East State Street
Athens, OH 45701

As indicated on the back of the permit, while using the AEP ReCreation Lands area the permittee agrees to:

(1) respect the rights of the property owner, (2) be careful in handling firearms, (3) obey all laws of the Ohio Revised Code and Division of Wildlife rules and regulations reported in the Ohio Administrative Code, (4) observe rules of safety and speed on area roads, (5) leave the area immediately if requested by a Company employee or employee of the Division of Wildlife, and (6) surrender any permit immediately upon revocation. The permittee further agrees NOT to: (1) damage fences, forest plantings, trees, etc., (2) litter the area or dump any rubbish or garbage, (3) remove anything, including trees and parts of trees, plantings, stone, gravel, rocks, etc., (4) use or possess any alcoholic beverage or any illegal or controlled substance, (5) hunt near buildings, (6) trap beaver without special permission of the Company, and only while in season and with the legally required license and permit, (7) swim on Company lands, (8) use off-road vehicles of any kind on Company lands for recreational purposes, (9) cut firewood except by permit issued by the Company, and (10) camp or start a campfire. This free permit is not valid unless signed and carried.