

Sproul State Forest

2015 MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

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.

The SFRMP is implemented at the local level by district-specific resource management plans that aim to balance many uses and values of the forest, while maintaining ecosystem health and the wild character of the forest.

The purpose of this Management Activities document is to communicate to the public about upcoming management activities, projects and events that will be conducted to implement the SFRMP on Sproul State Forest. For questions, comments or more information about this plan, please contact:

Doug D'Amore, Sproul District Forester

Sproul State Forest
15187 Renovo Road
Renovo, PA 17764
570-923-6011
ra-fd10@pa.gov

RECREATION

- **Whiskey Springs ATV Trail** - This project involves the reclamation of approximately 100 acres of unreclaimed strip mines using a Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) contract administered by the Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation. The heavy truck traffic associated with this project required the closure of the atv area for the 2015 riding season. Project is scheduled for completion in September 2015.
- **Dry Run Snowmobile Trail** – This trail was constructed by a gas operator in Fall of 2014 due to Marcellus Shale development impacts. Once the erosion and sedimentation permit is closed, the District staff will be making some minor changes to the trail system to facilitate

the riding experience.

- **Dick McKinney Snowmobile Trail** – This trail was constructed by a gas operator in Fall of 2014 due to Marcellus Shale development impacts. Once NPDES permit is closed the District staff will be making some minor changes to the trail system to facilitate the riding experience.
- **Donut Hole Trail (DHT)** – The section from Rattlesnake Run to Hyner View will be constructed in cooperation with the Nature Conservancy. This is a reroute made to help mitigate impacts from the Marcellus Shale development in the Grugan and Gallagher Township areas.
- **Bloody Skillet ATV Trail Connector** – The portion of the connector trail on the Kato-Orviston Road in Snow Shoe Township will be closed for a portion of the riding season due to pipeline construction.

2015 Organized Events:

April, Saturday, 18th; Hyner View Trail Challenge

June, Sunday, 7th, Durty Dabbers Trail Ride
Saturday, 13th, Cruise for a Cure Trail Ride

July, 17th to 19th, Prowl the Sproul Hiking Weekend
26th Brandywine Rattlesnake Enduro Ride

August, West Branch of the Susquehanna Sojourn
Eastern States 100 Trail Race

TIMBER MANAGEMENT

- Thirteen timber sales were either proposed or sold in 2014. The acreage, 1885 acres, met the district’s allocation goal of 1700 acres. Silviculture treatments include Salvage (531 acres), Overstory Removal (461 acres), and Shelterwood (893 acres). Logging operations of these sales could run through 2016 depending on size and products derived from the sale. Sale locations were determined through either landscape examinations, insect mortality, or following through on a silviculture prescription. Timber sale areas are readily identifiable by blue paint bands at breast height and yellow timber sale signs around the perimeter. The 13 sales are located on the following roads: Fork Hill, Hyner Mt, Red Buck, Cooks Run, Two Mile, Coon Run, Yost, Dry Run (south), Kato-Orviston, Crowley, and Lebo.
- In addition to the 13 timber sales in the works for 2014, approximately 3400 acres were sold in 2013 and have been completed or are in the process of being logged. The vast

majority of these acres were gypsy moth caused mortality salvage sales located primarily in the southern part of the district. A typical timber sale contract allows the operator two years to complete logging operations. The district's timber sale program is ever evolving.

- The district currently has 133 deer enclosure fences with 12 to be erected in 2014 and 16 to be erected in 2015. The average fence size is 60 acres and around 7,000 lineal feet. Height growth of the regeneration is the determining factor on the life of the fence. The regeneration has to be out of the reach of deer before the fence can be removed. On average, district fences remain in place from 7 to 12 years. Two fences are scheduled for dismantling in 2014 and another 18 for 2015. The fencing program was established in 1996 and the majority of the 130+ fences were erected from 1996 to 2006 as foresters erected fences not only on current sales they were working but prior sales that needed protection from deer browsing, especially the Oak Leaf Roller salvage sales that occurred in the 1970's.
- Inhibiting ground cover in the form of mountain laurel, fern, and stripped maple is a huge problem in regenerating trees on the district. In 2014 herbicide (Oust & Accord) was applied to 433 acres to control fern on 5 sites, Benjamin Run (256 acres), Mill run Road (32 acres), Hicks Road (81 acres), and Pat's Ridge road (81 acres). For 2015, 365 acres are scheduled for herbicide application and the average acres sprayed per year over the last five years is 400 acres. Mountain Laurel is controlled for seedling establishment in the form of mowing and one 50 acre site (Hyner-Slide Point Hollow) is planned for 2015.
- Tree planting is conducted mainly on salvage timber sales where there is no regeneration present or live trees to produce seed. Also, trees are planted to increase species diversity and this usually occurs inside a deer enclosure. In 2014, 70,000 trees were contract planted. Species planted include: Red Pine, White Pine, Red Oak, and White Oak. For 2015 the district will plant 115,000 trees with the contract planter with the above listed species.
- Timber sales in the planning process for 2015-16 include: Dry Run Road (South) – 100 acres overstory removal & 75 acres shelterwood, Fisher Road – 50 acres salvage, Lebo Road – 30 acres overstory removal & 110 acres shelterwood, Salt Lick Trail – 100 acres overstory removal, McCloskey Trail – 160 acres overstory removal, Cole Run Road – 200 acres shelterwood, Sugar Camp – 80 acres shelterwood, Red Buck Road – 200 acres shelterwood, Dry Run Road (North) – 220 acres overstory removal, Hyner Run – 100 acres overstory removal, Coon Run Road – 132 acres shelterwood, Bloom Draft Trail – 104 acres shelterwood. The timber plan could be altered if the forester staff has to deal with an unforeseen occurrence such as forest fire, insect infestations, and wind & ice storms for example.
- ***Other sales could potentially begin in 2015, but forecasting that activity at this time is difficult due to a variety of reasons that may inhibit them coming to fruition. We will periodically update this document throughout the year to better inform our constituents to the Sproul State Forest.***

RESTORATION AND HABITAT PROJECTS

- Pennsylvania Forestry Association Tree Planting Ramble – An older failed clearcut from the oak leaf roller days will be planted with a mixture of seedlings. This will be the 26th year of this event.
- Janenne Rock Road Drivable Trail – Approximately 45 acres of abandoned strip mines will receive dredge material from Sinnemahoning State Park. Approximately 70,000 cubic yards of material will be removed from the lake at the park, trucked to the site and applied using Appalachian Region Reforestation Initiative (ARRI) techniques to the sites. One site is a Priority 2 strip mine that will be further rehabilitated using funding from DEP.
- Herbaceous wildlife openings established in previous years continue to be maintained through a mowing.
- Japanese knotweed will be controlled along the Cattaraugus, Crowley, Kingston and Petes Run Public Roads.

ROAD AND BRIDGE PROJECTS

- Eagleton Road Driving Surface Aggregate (DSA) placement from Route 120 to power line crossing at Eagleton Mine Camp Parking Area.
- Mill Run Road (north) DSA placement from Route 120 to Rock Run Road.
- Hensel Fork Road DSA placement from Steward Hill Road to Sandy Run Road.
- Bridge replacement on State Line Road over Beauty Run.
- Pipe replacement with box culvert on Barneys Ridge Road over Barney Run.
- Birch Island Road bridge super structure replacement over Amos Branch.

PRESCRIBED FIRE

- A burn plan is being prepared for the large scrub oak stand south of Allen Dam Road. This project is in partnership with the Pennsylvania Game Commission. Burn will occur in the summer of 2015.
- A burn plan is being prepared for a timber sale off Fork Hill Road. Burn will occur in the spring of 2015.

INSECT, DISEASE, AND INVASIVE PLANT TREATMENT

- The staff treated 87 White Ash trees on six sites in the hopes of saving a White Ash seed source from the devastating effects of the Emerald Ash Borer, EAB. The site locations are at Halls Run, Bakers Run, Cooks Run, Hyner Run, Rattlesnake Run, and Holland Run. These trees will be monitored yearly for EAB presence and will be retreated in the future. The district is currently writing an Ash Management Plan with guidance from the statewide plan.
- Aerial surveillance flights are conducted each year in June. Most forest insect pests are cyclical in nature, i.e. gypsy moth, and the flights enable us to get a sense of any population build up.
- Monitoring/control of Japanese Knotweed and Mile a Minute will occur if the need arises. Mile a Minute has been found on private land adjacent to state forest Land. The banks of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River seem to be a conduit for the establishment of invasive species on the district.

NATURAL GAS AND OIL DEVELOPMENT

- Tract 284 – A gas operator will be constructing 2 Pads along with the associated access roads and pipelines.
- A gas operator will begin pipeline restoration activities throughout their lease holdings.
- A gas operator will be constructing a 12 inch diameter pipeline on approximately one mile of State Forest Land. This is the first phase of a pipeline to State College to help facilitate the conversion of Penn State University's campus steam heating system from coal to natural gas. Associated with this project will be a buried electrical service into a new meter station.
- A gas operator will be constructing a new generator station on Benjamin Point Road within their existing right of way. They will be removing and restoring the site of their current generator station near leased campsites on Benjamin Run Road.
- A gas operator will begin construction of their pipeline along the Snow Shoe Township portion of the Kato-Orviston Road and through the Logway Run strip mine complex to an existing pipeline corridor.
- A gas operator will continue planning for the 3.5 mile looping pipeline which is part of a larger project in the Summerson Mountain Area of Chapman Township.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Sproul Tree Planting Ramble – Saturday, April 25th, this event is sponsored by Pennsylvania Forestry Association and involves approximately 50 volunteers planting trees on selected sites.
- Numerous school programs throughout the year featuring fire prevention, Birth of a Tree,

conservation field days and other programs for schools within the District.

- Leased Camp Owners Meeting – Sunday, November 29th. Meet with leased campsite owners in a central location to discuss changes to the lease program.
- Participation in the Centre County and Clinton County Natural Gas Task Forces and associated sub committees. Meetings held throughout the year.
- Participate with the Clinton County Economic Partnership Tourism Committee. Meetings held throughout the year.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

- May 2014 – Maintenance crew placed 3,731 tons of DSA on Grugan Hollow Road
- June 2014 – Maintenance crew place 2,936 tons of DSA on Rock Run Road.
- July 2014 – Foresters treated 87 white ash trees for emerald ash borer.
- September 2014 – Maintenance crew placed 2,095 tons of DSA on State Line Road.
- September 2014 – Contractor installed box culvert on Penrose Road.
- September 2014 – Contractor constructed Dry Run Snowmobile Trail.
- October 2014 – Contractor constructed Dick McKinney Snowmobile Trail.
- October 2014 – Maintenance crew rehabilitated 2.5 miles of Janenne Rock Drivable Trail for dredge material project.

RESEARCH

- There are many research projects currently active on the Sproul State Forest. These projects range from habitat studies for various species to impacts from the Marcellus Shale Gas play. The Planning Section maintains a database of all active and approved research projects.