# Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry

### **Annual Work Plan**

For

## Mohican-Memorial State Forest

For the Period of

Fiscal Year <u>2013</u> (July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013)



Prepared By	Approved By:	
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(Name & Title)	(Name & Title)	
July 6, 2012	July 19, 2012	
Date	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 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 compatible with sustainable forest management
- 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:

- 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

- Provide recreational trails and facilities that offer a "back to basics" experience and ensure the protection of the natural resource with proper maintenance and repairs.
- Continue to develop and promote the Discovery Forest and work with outside agencies on long-term research in the area of disease resistance for American chestnut and elm trees.
- 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

#### History & Description:

Mohican-Memorial State Forest is located in southern Ashland County, midway between Columbus and Cleveland. It is easily reached from I-71 and State Routes 97 and 3. The natural attributes of the area combined with state and nearby commercial facilities have made this region one of the more popular year-round attractions of the state.

Mohican-Memorial State Forest is managed under the multiple-use concept for timber and wildlife habitat, forestry research and demonstrations of good forest land management, primitive recreation and natural beauty, tree seed for forest nurseries and protection of soils and watershed. Timber products obtained from harvest, stand improvement and thinning operations include saw logs, veneer logs with some pulpwood and firewood. Pine plantation thinnings yield fence and guard posts and poles.

During the spring and fall fire seasons, a major objective of the forest organization is to prevent, detect and suppress wildfires that occur on state and private land within the protection district. The many gas wells and transmission lines that you see are a result of the development of a natural gas storage field underlying the forest.

Land acquisition for the forest began in 1928 and has continued with the accumulation of over 4,500 acres (exclusive of state park land). The land use history of the forest is typical of eastern Ohio. Original forests were cleared for agriculture, but eventually erosion ensued and fertility decreased. Farms were abandoned and subsequently reverted to brush and woodland.

At the time of acquisition, planting of trees on abandoned land was a high priority activity. This resulted in the many plantations of white and red pine and mixtures of these and other pine species that you see today. Much of the tree planting was done by personnel of the Civilian Conservation Corps whose camp was located on the forest during the 1930s. Native hardwood of the oak-hickory and beech-maple types and associated species of gum, aspen, ash, cherry and walnut occur on unplanted areas. Native white pine and hemlock are also found.

#### IV. Resource Management

The Division of Forestry has newly acquired baseline forest inventory data that will assist decision-making regarding growth and yield calculations, forest management planning, and compliance with Forestry Stewardship Council and Sustainable Forestry Initiative certification. Mapping analysis activities suggest that Mohican-Memorial State Forest is composed of 36% Mixed Mesophytic (Moist Sites – Poplar, Maple, Ash, and Beech) Hardwood stands, 24% Oak / Hickory stands, and 40% Pine Plantations (Mostly White Pine and Red Pine).

Mohican-Memorial State Forest has an estimated standing timber inventory of 32 million board feet of hardwood sawtimber and over 250,000 tons of pine. Data suggests that the annual growth of hardwood sawtimber is approximately 647,000 board feet per year of hardwood sawtimber growth and nearly 9,000 tons per year of pine growth.

## Silvicultural Practices (Scheduled Harvests, Cruising, Marking, Timber Stand Improvement, etc.):

- Parts of compartments B-03 and B-04 in the "A" Zone are to be cruised in 2013.
- Parts of compartments B-03 and B-04 in the "B" Zone will also be cruised in 2013

#### High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) Monitoring:

Maintaining and promoting the features that make areas designated HCVFs is important to the Division of Forestry. To accomplish this task we will partner with the Division of Wildlife's Biodiversity Program to monitor a select number of Zone 1 areas each year. HCVF areas at Mohican are found in Zones A and B. This year, part of Zone A south of State Route 97 will be monitored.

#### Merchandising:

Any logs generated from the Columbia Gas's right-of-way clearing operations will be graded and be offered for sale to the public through the sealed bid process.

#### Minerals:

Columbia Gas Transmission holds a lease with the State of Ohio for operation of 54 natural gas storage wells and about 13 miles of pipeline right-of-way located on the forest. In fiscal year 2013, Columbia Gas will continue its right-of-way maintenance project that began in 2007 with tree clearing on approximately thee miles of pipeline rights-of-way. This is an ongoing project. Rights-of-way will have trees removed in a 30 foot width over gathering pipelines and a 50 foot width on main transmission lines. This activity occurs during the winter months when recreational visitation is low.

#### Invasives:

Invasive plant species are targeted for control by forest operations. In fiscal year 2013, state forest personnel will continue to target bush honeysuckle, ailanthus, English ivy, and other invasives as they are encountered on the forest.

#### Boundary:

- Approximately eight miles of forest boundary will be repainted with yellow and/or red paint.
- Signage and boundary markers will also be checked and replaced as necessary.

#### Licenses/Leases:

Columbia Gas and The Energy Cooperative (electric company) leases and agreements will be monitored to assure compliance when operating on the forest

#### Insects & Disease:

- An educational area on the emerald ash borer (EAB) has been developed in the Discovery Forest. The area deals with the effects of the insect, the Ohio Department of Agriculture's (ODA) quarantine and ideas for landowners on uses for the ash trees on their wood lots.
- Cooperate with the ODA with their EAB monitoring efforts.
- Monitor for gypsy moth activity on the forest.
- Cooperate with the American Chestnut Foundation in their research effort to bring back American chestnut trees to North America.
- Cooperate with the ODA and the US Forest Service with their hemlock wooly adelgid monitoring efforts.

#### **Utilization & Marketing:**

Public firewood permits are available at the state forest office on a first-come, first-served basis. Permits are issued as the need for firewood removal arises and are intended for homeowner use only, not for commercial firewood businesses. Interested individuals may contact the state forest office for information regarding firewood permits.

#### Research:

- Work with the US Forest Service with the elm tree research project. The planted Elm trees are hoped to be resistant to Dutch elm disease. There are currently 30 trees planted in the research project that began in the summer of 2003.
- Maintain the two acre American chestnut planting in cooperation with the American Chestnut Foundation. This planting is enclosed by an eight foot high deer fence and was planted with 100% American chestnuts in the spring of 2008. One hundred and forty-four hybrid American chestnut trees were added in the spring of 2009.

#### Summary (2-3 year projects):

Most of the above projects are ongoing and expected to last a numbers of years. No cruises are scheduled for 2014.

#### V. <u>Maintenance</u>

#### **Buildings:**

• Perform general maintenance, routine cleaning and repair to the 12 buildings and structures located on the forest.

Forest Office
 Service Center
 Saw Shop
 Shrine Latrine
 Bridle Latrine #1
 Mountain Bike Latrine
 Office Well House
 Brime Well House
 Bridle Latrine #2
 Fire Tower

• The Department of Youth Services has vacated the Mohican Youth Correctional Facility, which is located on the forest. By agreement the buildings and any contents left on the premises become the property of the Division of Forestry. The Division

and the Department are actively seeking a new tenant/buyer for the facility. Until a new owner/tenant is found we will maintain the facility's buildings, infrastructures and grounds to minimum standards.

- Engraved pavers from the Shrine Walkway Project sales will be installed in the Memorial and Friends walkways.
- Maintain the grounds around the Memorial Shrine, Forest Office, Fire Tower, Old Bridle Day Use Area, Service Center, North and West Entrance Signs.
- Bridle Volunteers provide lawn care for the New Bridle Day Use Area.
- No other major repairs are planned or anticipated.

#### Infrastructure (water, wastewater, utilities):

- Replacement spot lights for the Shrine's flag will be replaced with something more vandal resistant.
- The metal conduit in the well pump house will be removed and replaced with PVC conduit. This was also recommended by the BWC safety inspection.
- Work with Mohican State Park to maintain the Public Water System wells at the Shrine and Forest office to Ohio EPA standards.
- Day to day maintenance of the Mohican Youth Correctional Facility will be done by a contract vendor.
- The vault latrines will have the septic pumped by a qualified service contractor as needed.
- No other major repairs are planned or anticipated.

#### Vehicles/Equipment:

• Continue the preventive maintenance, timely service and repairs to the unit's fleet of vehicles and equipment.

#### Vehicles:

- 2011 Dodge Nitro
- 2009 Ford Pickup Truck
- 2011 GMC Pickup Truck
- 2010 Ford Pickup Truck
- 2000 International Dump Truck
- 2011 Dodge Crew Cab Pickup

#### Equipment:

- John Deere 350 Bulldozer
- New Holland TS-90 Tractor
  20,000 lb GRVW Lowboy Trailer
  Polaris ATV (6 wheel drive)
  Honda ATV (4 wheel drive)
- Steiner 430 Riding Mower

- Ford 6640 Tractor

- Scag Zero Turn Mower

#### Roads:

- The paved forest and park road will be maintained and improved over the course of the next fiscal year.
- State Forest staff will mow the roadsides approximately 3 times per year.
- State Forest staff will reduce the number of hazard trees along the roadside during the winter months.
- All parking areas on the state forest will be maintained.
- Limited access roads are monitored annually. Any repairs and/or maintenance needs will be done by the forest or the appropriate agency using the road (e.g. Columbia Gas and other utility companies).

#### Signage:

- Conduct annual inspection of forest signs, repairing and/or replacing as necessary.
- Work with Mohican State Park on standardizing recreational signage within the forest and park.

#### Residences:

There are no residences located on the forest.

#### Dams:

There are no dams located on the forest.

#### Capitals Projects:

- The Memorial Shrine walkway is in need of repair and grouting. Each side of the building needs the flower beds raised and a drainage system installed to protect the foundations from water damage. This project was submitted in 2008.
- The maintenance buildings at the state forest office will be improved with siding and gutters.

#### Summary (2-3 year future projects):

With the exceptions noted above, no major repairs to the buildings and/or structures are anticipated in the next two to three years and no additional vehicle/equipment is anticipated to be requested for replacement. The exception may be the John Deere 350 Bulldozer. It is old and subject to mechanical failure that can result in costly repairs. We will monitor how costly repairs are becoming versus a replacement request.

#### VI. Recreation

#### Trails (bridle, backpack, etc.):

- Recreational bridges will be inspected annually for their integrity, needed repairs or replacement.
- Evaluate the bridle and hiking trail systems for maintenance, repairs and improvements.
- Continue working with volunteers to maintain 25 miles of bridle trail, two bridle day use areas, 2 miles of hiking trail, and the Hog Hollow foot bridge replacements.
- A new kiosk was installed at the mountain bike trailhead and this structure will be maintained by mountain bike volunteers.
- The state forest has tentative plans to build a picnic shelter at the group bridle use area on SR 97 in cooperation with the local chapters of the Ohio Horseman's Council (OHC). Materials for the picnic shelter will be purchased cooperatively through donations from members of the OHC.

#### Campgrounds:

- Campgrounds, picnic areas, trailheads, and other places where forest visitors congregate will be periodically inspected for hazard trees.
- Trees identified as being a possible hazard to forest visitors will be removed by the forest crew.
- Maintain 10 Park and Pack camp sites.
- Continue working with Ashland County-West Holmes Career Center's Natural Resource class to remove hazard limbs in and around the camp sites.

#### ATV Areas:

• Continue working with Volunteers to maintain 6 miles of the snowmobile trail system.

#### **Shooting Ranges:**

There are no public shooting ranges on the forest.

#### Grants:

There are no open grants currently on the forest. In fiscal year 2012, Mohican was awarded \$2,500 from the National Wild Turkey Federation for planting of soft mast shrub species on the forest to promote wild turkey habitat. This project was completed.

#### Summary (2-3 year future projects):

With the exception of foot bridge replacements, only routine maintenance to the trail systems and other facilities is expected. Foot bridge replacements on the Hog Hollow Trail are expected to take a number of years to complete due to the number of bridges, funds and staff. The goal is to complete one or two bridges per year until the remaining six have been replaced.

#### VII. Wildland Fire

#### Suppression:

- Aggressively suppress wildland fire starts within the forest.
- When requested, support the 17 area fire departments in their suppression efforts with equipment, personnel and planning.

<ol> <li>Bakersville VFD</li> </ol>	7. Holmes County FD #1	13. Three Rivers FD
2. Bladensburg FD	8. Jackson Township FD	14. Walhonding Valley FD
3. Coshocton City FD	9. Killbuck VFD	15. West Lafayette FD
4. Danville FD	10. Loudonville FD	16. Western Holmes County FD
5. F. C. V. VFD	11. Monroe-Lucas VFD	17. Worthington Township VFD
6. Glenmont VFD	12. Perrysville and Green Township VFD	

#### Prevention:

- Support area fire departments and schools with their fire prevention activities.
- Continue work with volunteers to maintain the Mohican Fire Tower for its historic and fire prevention message.

#### Prescribed Fire:

No prescribed fires are planned for the forest.

#### Inter-Agency Fire Crew:

Mohican staff will be allowed to participate in the Division's Inter-Agency Fire Crew program as workloads allow.

#### Training:

- Training will be offered to employees as workloads and the budget allows.
- Annual red pack inspections (personal protective clothing and equipment) and fire shelter deployment training will be conducted in late winter before fire season.

#### Fire Department Contacts:

- Contact each of the 17 cooperating fire departments in the Mohican Fire Protection Area (FPA) to update our fire department information sheets.
- Attend a fire association or fire department meeting in each of the five counties in the Mohican FPA

#### FireWise:

• Continue to promote the FireWise program within the Mohican FPA.

#### Federal Excess Property Program (FEPP) and Forest Fire Protection (FFP):

- Continue annual inspections of federal property within our fire protection project.
  - 1997 Ford Pickup Truck West Lafayette Fire Department
  - Military, 2 ½ ton, 6 x 6 Walhonding Valley Fire District
  - 1982 Mack 5,000 gallon Tank Truck Western Holmes County Fire District
- Continue to promote the participation of fire departments in the FEPP.

#### Summary (2-3 year future projects):

Generally the Mohican FPA does not have a major wildland fire problem. Still, our goal is to be prepared to support and assist cooperating fire departments within the protection area with prevention activities, wildland fire suppression and wildland fire training.

#### VIII. Law Enforcement

#### Philosophy/Purpose (Provided by Columbus):

State forests currently have 10 fully commissioned law enforcement officers plus three 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.
- Non-mandatory training will be offered to the officer as workloads and the budget allows.

#### Equipment:

- Officer will be afforded all equipment listed in the Division's Law Enforcement manual.
- 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.
- The patrol vehicle, a 2003 Ford Expedition, is scheduled for replacement.

#### Patrol Priorities:

• Respond to emergencies and requests for help and render assistance within Officer's training and capabilities.

- Protect and assist forest visitors through routine patrol and incident investigation.
- Issue warnings or citations as warranted for Ohio Revised Code and Forest Rules violations.
- Investigate assigned wildfire reports and issue warnings or citations for Ohio Revised Code Chapter 1503.18 violations.
- Assist in special projects with other forests and other ODNR Divisions.

#### Special Projects:

- Request special projects as needed to address specific issues/problems in order to maintain a safe and enjoyable experience for the forest visitor.
- Work cooperatively with Mohican State Park on special projects affecting both agencies.
- Assist other forests with special projects as workloads and the budget allows.

#### Other Duties (VFDs, FEPP, court, boundary, etc.):

- Contact each court within the Mohican Fire Protection Area to update court information annually.
- Conduct annual highway vehicle safety inspections on six unit vehicles.
- Annually inspect all highway signs, repairing and/or replacing as necessary.
- Annually inspect all gates, repairing and/or replacing as necessary.

#### Summary (2-3 year future projects):

We expect the next two to three years to proceed as outlined above. No major equipment purchases/repairs are anticipated.

#### **IV.** Employee Development

#### Employee List/Vacancies/Table of Organization:

Chad Sanders Forest Manager - Interim

Matthew Rogers Forest Officer 2

Scott Cawood Equipment Operator 2

- All employees will attend the annual refresher training for CPR.
- Employees will be allowed to participate in other safety related training as workloads and the budget allows.
- The Forest Manager will attend the two forest management training sessions scheduled.
- The Forest Manager will attend the Annual Forest Health meeting.

#### Safety:

- Monthly safety meeting will be held for all employees.
- Affected employees will attend annual respirator training and fit testing.
- Employees will be provided with one pair of safety toed work boots.
- Inspect and replace as needed employees hardhats, eye protection, hearing protection, chainsaw chaps and other personal protection equipment.
- Employees will be provided with two pairs of work gloves.
- 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 Mohican-Memorial State Forest
OHC State Ride and Chili Cook-Off
Gold Star Mother's Memorial Service (Shrine)
Sep

August 1, 2012 September 15, 2012 September 30, 2012

#### Partnerships:

- Ohio Federation of Women's Clubs
- American Chestnut Foundation
- Ashland County-West Holmes Career Center
- Ohio State University Extension Service
- Mohican State Park
- 17 Cooperating Fire Departments in Ashland, Coshocton, Holmes, Knox and Richland Counties
- Ohio Department of Agriculture
- Ohio Agriculture Research and Development Center
- Muskingum Water Conservation District

- U. S. Forest Service
- Columbia Gas Transmission
- Ohio State University
- Mohican Chapter of the National Lookout Tower Association
- Boy Scouts of America
- Mohican Protection Group
- Gorman Nature Center
- Energy Cooperative

#### Volunteers:

Cowboys for Jesus

Holmes County OHC

Wayne County OHC

Mohican Trails Club

Mohican/Malabar Mountain Bike Club

Agreement expires: December 31, 2014

Agreement expires: December 31, 2014

Agreement expires: June 30, 2014

Agreement expires: December 31, 2011

#### Interpretive Programs:

- A Self-Guided Tour brochure is being developed for the Discovery Forest.
- An emerald ash borer demonstration area is completed for the Discovery Forest.

#### Summary (2-3 year future projects):

The Hog Hollow trail is in need of several foot bridge replacements. The Mohican Trail Club has replaced four of the bridges. The first and fourth bridges were 32 feet long, the second and third were 40 feet long bridges. The volunteers have also constructed a total of about 160 feet of boardwalk on the trail to keep hikers off of wet trail areas. We will continue to work with the volunteers to replace one or two of the bridges annually until they are all replaced.

#### XI. Budget

Operational Budget (personnel, maintenance):

**SFY 2012** 

**Budget DNR150025 Mohican Region** 

500	Payroll-Fund GRF			\$267,279	
510	Personal Services \$250				
		Misc Prof Development		\$250	
520	20 Supplies & Maint-Fund 5090 \$85,000			\$85,000	
		General Operating-		\$69,000	
		Shrine Contracts		\$11,500	
		Cost-per-Copy lease		\$3,000	
		Law vehcile radio		\$1,500	
530	Equipment 0				
550	Subsidies \$0				
				\$0	
570	Capital				
590	Settlements & Bonds - Refunds				
591	591 Debt Service				
_	_		Total	\$352,529	

#### Revenue:

Columbia Gas Mineral Leasing \$15,410.60 Log sales from Columbia Gas Clearings \$36,031.59

#### Summary (2-3 year projected budget):

Budgets are predicted to remain very tight for fiscal year 2013 and 2014. This will present a challenge for managers to find new ways to keep the day to day operations at an expectable level.