Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Division of Forestry

Annual Work Plan

For

PIKE State Forest

For the Period of

Fiscal Year <u>2012</u> (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012)



Prepared By:

Approved By:

Mark Hassel, Forest Program Admin.
(Name & Title)

5/31/2011 (Date) Nate Jester, Acting District Manager (Name & Title)

6/16/2011 Date

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
l.	Strategic Plan
II.	Summary of Strategic Plan Actions Bullet Statements: Actions that directly support Strategic Plan Goals & Objectives
III.	Forest Overview History & Description
IV.	Resource Management
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
X .	Public Information/Outreach
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

- Manage Pike State Forest under the multiple use concept promoting land management, forest sustainability, and back country recreation.
- Continue to implement new policies as presented in the revised Land Management Manual that will maintain third party certification.
- Continue to develop employee skills and abilities through training thereby improving productivity and efficiency.

III. <u>Forest Overview</u>

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 timberlands 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.

No permanent field staff currently report to Pike State Forest. Operations on the forest are managed from Scioto Trail State Forest.

IV. Resource Management

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

The following areas were marked in FY2011 but have not yet been sold:

State Forest	Compartment	Board Feet	Tons	Treatment	Acres
				Improvement	
Pike	B-15 b	306,869	552	selection	95
				Improvement	
Pike	D-7 b	164,046	498	selection	57
				Deferment	
Pike	D-7 d	400,725	326	harvest	25

The following is a listing of the inventories that were previously completed and have resulted in proposed harvests for fiscal year 2012:

				Acres	Acres	Acres
State Forest	Compartment	Vol. Bd. Ft.	Tons	Clearcut	Shelterwood	Select/Partial
Pike	A-2	617,000	2643	9	65	51

Pike	A-5	260,000	468			63
Pike	A-8	360,000	648		54	
Pike	B-13	538,000	968			100
Pike	D-13	245,000	441			87
Pike	D-14	120,000	216		26	
Pike	D-19	43,000	77	4		

This year, in select state forests, the division will transition to a stand based cruising model built upon data obtained by the 2009 forest inventory project. Silvicultural activities will be proposed in fiscal year 2013 based on the stand verification cruise reports completed by division personnel. Listed below are a combination of stands that will comprise the individual reports during the period of this workplan.

Cruises Schedules		
301104101	Compartments*	
Forest		Acres
	A-15, A-16, A-17, A-	
Pike	18	204
Pike	B-3, B-4	360
Pike	B-9, C-5, C-6	277
Pike	B-28, B-29	248
Pike	D-9, D-21, D-22	145
Pike	D-24	248

^{*}Only selected stands in the compartments will be visited.

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), and Paulownia tomentosa (Princesstree).

Note: Last year the Division of Forestry received a grant from the US Forest Service to implement the Ohio Woodlands Job Corps for the control of invasive plants within the state forest system. Division staff will continue to identify areas to control throughout the year through the project proposal process.

Boundary: Pike State Forest is encompassed by roughly 98 miles of boundary. Current rotation for painting entire boundary is four (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 gypsy moth. That project is managed by the Department of Agriculture. Forest staff informally monitor for a number of forest pests, including emerald ash borer, gypsy moth, Asian long-horned beetle as well as numerous other pests.

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): Implement post harvest cruising to better develop the growth & yield model. Develop a backlog of scheduled sales to project at least 2 years of proposed treatments.

V. Maintenance

Buildings: There are three (3) buildings in use; service center, garage and a gashouse. 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.

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: 7 highway vehicles (5 pickup trucks, 1 dump truck, 1 transport); 1 bulldozers; 2 tractors; 2 trailers (1-16' and 1 8'); 3 lawn tractors; 1 APV; 1UTV; 2 finishing mowers (1-5' and 1-6'); 1-6' bush hog; a 7' box grader; a 6' grader; a post hole digger; 1-42" bush hog for an APV; 2 slip in units; 2 back pack blowers; 3 weed whackers; varies hand and power tools. These will be evaluated for serviceability and safety and a decision will be made to distribute some items to other forests or keep the items at this location.

Roads: There are no forest roads. Access roads will be mowed and creek crossing graded and maintained as needed. All access roads will be formally inventoried, mapped, and an inspection report will be completed. The results of the inspection report will guide the maintenance efforts of the forest staff.

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. Carsonite posts, wooden signs, and yellow plastic 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 occasionally require replacement. Yellow plastic signs are used for information and interpretive purposes.

Residences: There is one (1) 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 three (3) outbuildings that are schedule for demolition. These are located on Greenbriar Ridge road.

Dams: There exists one (1) earthen dam at Pike State Forest at Anderson Lake. The dam and area is maintained as needed.

Capitals Projects: Currently there are no capitals projects planned for Pike State Forest.

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Replace garage doors with insulated doors. Replace highway vehicles every 125,000 miles. Paint the interior of the service center. Replace the roofs on the buildings at the headquarters.

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 need.

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. The BTA performs all maintenance on this trail.

Campgrounds: N/A

APV Areas: The APV trail system is the only system with seasonal closure. The trail system is closed from Deer Gun Season to April 1st. There are ten (10) miles of APV 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 is used for reimbursement of maintenance costs on the APV area. Each year all equipment and personnel costs are tracked and the Division is reimbursed at a rate of 80% of costs.

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Over the next two (2) years, the entire bridle trail system will be graded with mechanical equipment. Culvert headers will be constructed for the roadway through the novice area. Aesthetic and functional barriers will be constructed along the edges in the APV parking lot areas.

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: in Pike County; Fair, Oktoberfest, Dogwood Festival, Jingle Bells Parade and various school programs. Additionally, we will participate with a fire prevention program at the 5th Grade Conservation Field Day

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 (1) 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 (1) 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): Explore any potential opportunities to utilize prescribed fire for oak regeneration purposes.

VIII. Law Enforcement

Philosophy/Purpose: State Forests currently have eight commissioned law enforcement officers and two 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 polices 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 ten (10) fire department association meetings each in Pike and Ross counties; administer 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. <u>Employee Development</u>

Employee List/Vacancies/Table of Organization: Reference Scioto Trails State Forest Plan

Training (tuition reimbursement, etc): Reference Scioto Trails State Forest Plan

Safety: Forest employees participate in monthly training sessions and many other safety oriented discussions in the field. The Division also participates in the Public Employment Risk Reduction Program and will continue to repair minor infractions that resulted from these inspections. Division Staff is also required to attend the Annual Division of Forestry Safety Training. Other safety trainings will be utilized as opportunities arise.

A safety plan is currently being developed for each State Forest and will be included in future Annual Work Plans. Division staff will be conducting internal hazard and safety assessments and will provide mitigating practices to eliminate or reduce the risk. Forest Staff will also utilize the policies and guidelines

contained within the Division Safety Manual to further improve the agency's safety culture.

Any type of emergency (medical, fire, police, etc.) will be acted upon by staff member(s) consistent with their training, experience and ability to act.

Other Employee Development: Reference Scioto Trails State Forest Plan

X. <u>Public Information/Outreach</u>

Planned Events: Pike State Forest will be represented at the Athens and Shawnee Open Houses in August 2011; will present timber revenue checks to the county commissioners and the local school boards.

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: Continue to participate and support 5th Grade Days at Pike Lake State Park.

Summary (2-3 year future projects):

XI. Budget

Operational Budget (personnel, maintenance): See budget in Scioto Trail State Forest plan.

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): Future budgets cannot be anticipated since the State of Ohio budget for the next two fiscal years has not been passed by the General Assembly.