Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Division of Forestry

Annual Work Plan

For

Brush Creek State Forest

For the Period of

Fiscal Year **2012**
(July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012)

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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 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 Brush Creek 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. Forest Overview

History & Description: Located in the unglaciated hill country of south central Ohio, Brush Creek State Forest was established in 1928 with the acquisition of 285 acres of land. This and other early land acquisitions were originally part of Shawnee State Forest. As acreage and distance grew, the need to form a separate state forest unit became apparent in order to properly manage these scattered land holdings. In the early 1950's, a new state forest was formed and drew its name from a major stream in the area known as Scioto Brush Creek. Today, Brush Creek State Forest comprises well over 13,000 acres of productive hardwood forested land. Because of its separation into many parts, management for continuous recreational facilities is difficult. Opportunities offered within the forest include timber harvesting, research and recreation including hunting, hiking, car touring and horseback riding.

No field staff reports to Brush Creek State Forest. Day to day operations were previously directed from Pike State Forest but have now shifted to Shawnee State Forest.

IV. Resource Management

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

The following areas were marked in FY 2011, but not yet sold:

State Forest	Compartment	Board Feet	Tons	Treatment	Acres
Brush Creek	A-4	325,000	820	Deferment	41
Brush Creek	B-26 b	315,000	860	Deferment	43
Brush Creek	B-26, 27, 28, 29 30	260,522	632	Clearcut of pine plantations	14

Following is a listing of the inventories that were completed this past year and have resulted in proposed harvests for fiscal year 2012.

State	Compartment	Vol. Bd.	Tons	Acres	Acres	Acres

Forest		Ft.		Clearcut	Shelterwood	Select/Partial
Brush Creek	B-7	361,000	650		152	
Brush Creek	B-28	1,053,000	1896		174	
Brush Creek	D-17 b	140,000	252			48

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.

Forest		Compartments*		Acres
Brush Creek		C-30, C-31, D-4, D-5		296
Brush Creek		D-13, D-14, D15, D-38, D-39		112
Brush Creek		D-88, D-89, D-90, D-96		338
Brush Creek		B-8, B-9, B-10, B-16, B-17		253
Brush Creek		B-5, B-6		116

***Cruise may not be through entire compartment**

Merchandising: The Division of Forestry will offset a significant General Revenue Fund reduction by maximizing a portion of timber harvest funding by selling some planned timber harvests through a log merchandising approach. This effort will maintain a steady level of forest management activities, including a continued and consistent level of timber sales through the Trees to Textbooks Program. After cruising, areas will be identified best suited for the merchandising program. A developed merchandising yard located on SR 73 will continue to be utilized for this program.

Minerals: There are no mineral leases at Brush Creek State Forest.

Invasives: Recently the Division of Forestry received a grant from the US Forest Service to develop an Ohio Woodland Job Corps for the control of invasive plants within the State Forests System. Division staff will identify areas to control throughout the year. We will identify invasives and areas of highest concentration of invasives. We will continue control measures in the areas of greatest concentration by utilizing staff and resources from the invasive species grant. Common invasives at Brush Creek State Forest include: *Ailanthus altissima*

(Tree of Heaven), *Paulownia tomentosa* (Princesstree), *Lonicera japonica* (Japanese Honeysuckle), *Rosa multiflora* (Multiflora Rose).

Boundary: Brush Creek boundary totals 165 miles. Placed on a five (5) year rotation, 33 miles will be painted yearly.

Licenses/Leases: None

Insects & Disease: Ohio Department of Agriculture actively monitors gypsy moth by placing traps within the forest. Division staff perform informal monitoring for forest pests including emerald ash borer, gypsy moth, as well as many native pests.

Utilization & Marketing: The forest product 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: Historically very little research has taken place on the forest. Opportunities to conduct research projects exist for any person or group. The only requirement is that a special use permit that 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. Try to develop a backlog of scheduled sales to project at least 2 years of proposed treatments.

V. Maintenance

Buildings: There are two buildings, an office and garage; both are currently being rented to the Rarden Township Trustees.

Infrastructure (water, wastewater, utilities): None

Vehicles/Equipment: Reference Shawnee Forest Plan.

Roads: Coffee Hollow, also designated as Township Road 250 and Forest Rd. 1, has been maintained by Forestry for many years and will continue. This includes clearing of fallen trees, grading, clearing ditches, cleaning out headers and mowing the sides. Ditches will be thoroughly cleaned this fiscal year. Installation of a gate off Dry Run Road, on forest property, to control illegal access onto state forest property will be completed.

This year 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 on the horse trails and hiking trails. Currently carsonite and wood 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 at times are in need of replacement so new ones will be made

Residences: None

Dams: None

Capitals Projects: None

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Replace 2 culverts in Coffee Hollow. Replace headers in Coffee Hollow. Gravel all of Coffee Hollow roadway.

VI. Recreation

Trails (bridle, backpack, etc.): There are ten (10) miles of bridle trails and three (3) miles of hiking trails. Utilizing APVs, the hiking trails will be checked and cleared of trees a minimum of once this year. The horse trails will be cleared, graded and water bars re-installed using the bulldozer. The Coffee Hollow Bridle Trail will be re-routed such that it will not cross over onto private property. The Forest staff will work closely with both the Scioto County OHC and Adams County OHC in maintaining the horse trails. Trees will be removed from the vista on the Stone Quarry Hiking Trail to enhance the view.

Campgrounds: None

ATV Areas: None

Shooting Ranges: None

Grants: None

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Re-establishing the vista near the tower site on Crabtree Cemetery road.

VII. Wildland Fire

Suppression: Initial attack will be done by forestry personnel when available. Shawnee State Forest staff is responsible for suppression in Scioto and Adams counties.

Prevention: Reference Shawnee Forest Plan

Prescribed Fire: No prescribed fires are planned for Brush Creek this fiscal year.

Inter-Agency Fire Crew: Reference Shawnee Forest Plan

Training: Reference Shawnee Forest Plan

Fire Department Contacts: Reference Shawnee Forest Plan

FireWise: Reference Shawnee Forest Plan

FEPP/FFP: Reference Shawnee Forest Plan

Grants: Reference Shawnee Forest Plan

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Staff will continue to foster relationships with volunteer VFD's through training and joint fire suppression efforts. Foresters will attempt to identify potential areas for oak regeneration prescribed fires.

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: Reference Shawnee Forest Plan

Equipment: Reference Shawnee Forest Plan

Patrol Priorities: Patrols will be targeted towards three main areas: illegal APV use, where dumping/litter occurs, and parking locations.

Special Projects: Areas that are targeted are those that show resource degradation by APV use. Spring and fall seasons present the best opportunity for illegal APV projects.

Other Duties (VFD's, FEPP, court, boundary, etc.): Court contacts will be updated once a year at the beginning of the year. Respond to boundary encroachments by inspecting boundary when/ where encroachments occur, investigate and resolve.

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Continuation of deterring illegal APV use. Continue to focus on projects to protect user safety and positive visitor experiences.

IX. Employee Development

Employee List/Vacancies/Table of Organization: See Shawnee State Forest work plan

Training (tuition reimbursement, etc): Reference Shawnee Forest Plan.

Safety: Reference Shawnee Forest plan.

Other Employee Development: Reference Shawnee Forest plan.

X. Public Information/Outreach

Planned Events: Periodically meet with township trustees for each township in Brush Creek State Forest.

Partnerships: Township trustees, Ruffed Grouse Society, local VFD's, Division of Wildlife, Ohio Horseman's Council, National Wild Turkey Federation.

Volunteers: Ohio Horseman's Council – Scioto and Adams Counties Chapters and Buckeye Trail Association

Interpretive Programs: None planned

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Design an interpretive sign for the Stone Quarry hiking trail where current information board is currently located.

XI. Budget

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

Revenue: Revenue from Brush Creek 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.