Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Division of Forestry

Annual Work Plan

For

Blue Rock State Forest

For the Period of

Fiscal Year **2013**
(July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013)

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5-16-2012
(Date)

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6-22-2012
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 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 Blue Rock State Forest under the multiple use concept promoting land management, forest sustainability, and back country recreation.
- Continue to implement policies 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: History & Description: The Federal Government during the 1930's under the Resettlement Administration originally acquired most of the marginally productive farmland. Surface ownership was later transferred to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources-Division of Forestry while the Federal Government retained three-fourths interest in the oil and gas rights. Subsequent reforestation and the application of forest management and protection practices have transformed low quality farmland into one of Ohio's most beautiful and productive forests.

Blue Rock State Forest is located in Blue Rock Township, Muskingum County south of Duncan Falls, Ohio. The 4579-acre Forest is accessed primarily via State Route 60 and Cutler Lake Road and is about 12 miles southeast of Zanesville, Ohio.

Field staff report daily to Blue Rock State Forest with day-to-day operations being managed out of Hocking State Forest. Blue Rock Forest crews also work at the Old Zanesville Nursery and Perry State Forest.

IV. Resource Management

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

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

				Acres	Acres	Acres
State Forest	Compartment	Vol. Bd. Ft.	Tons Pulp	Clearcut / Openings	Shelterwood / Deferment	Selection / Improvement
Blue Rock	A-2	767,810	1,608		76	88
Blue Rock	A-13		2,012	12		8
Blue Rock	A-21	31,690	5,770	28		36

The following areas will be marked in FY 2013:

				Acres	Acres	Acres
State Forest	Compartment	Vol. Bd. Ft.	Tons Pulp	Clearcut / Openings	Shelterwood / Deferment	Selection / Improvement
Blue Rock	A-12	594,113	7,867	23	149	26

These planned harvests resulted from previous cruising and are expected to be marked in FY 14 or beyond.

				Acres	Acres	Acres
State Forest	Compartment	Vol. Bd. Ft.	Tons Pulp	Clearcut / Openings	Shelterwood / Deferment	Selection / Improvement
Blue Rock	A-1	24,300	43			11

Following is a table listing the compartments that will be inventoried this year. There may be some additional cruising completed for the purpose of building a more accurate forest inventory.

State Forest		Compartment(s)		Acres
Blue Rock		A-16		379

Following is a listing of compartments that will receive noncommercial timber stand improvement activities.

State Forest	**Compartment**	**Total Acres**	**Work**
Blue Rock	A-2	47	Mechanical and chemical control of grapevine
Blue Rock	Various	350	Chemical Ailanthus control

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. No merchandising sales are expected at Blue Rock SF next year.

Minerals: Two natural gas wells are currently located on Blue Rock State Forest. The Federal Government has ¾ interest in all oil and gas rights. The Rocky Express Pipeline (REX) is constructed across part of the forest. The Division of Forestry is currently reviewing and pursuing the potential for oil and gas activity on each state forest. In coordination with other Divisions within the Department of Natural Resources, Best Management Practices have been developed and suitability analyses have also been conducted. During this analysis, specific areas within the land holding Divisions of the Department have been identified as potential locations for the various types of oil and gas activity. Also, the mineral rights for each property are also being researched and identified in preparation for potential leasing activity. These leases may be with the state or with other private mineral rights owners on state lands. In either case, the Division is fully prepared to manage and implement these activities with the least amount of disturbance necessary to accomplish the task.

Invasives: Invasive species are a challenge at Blue Rock State Forest. Tree of heaven, multiflora rose, autumn olive are some of the woody invasive species that have been targeted for control. Vegetative management on right of ways, roadside edges, and regeneration areas are monitored by foresters for control. All invasive control projects utilize the noncommercial project proposal process. Acreage targets are listed in the noncommercial timber stand improvement table.

Boundary: All of the Division of Forestry boundaries are maintained to ensure location of property lines in the field. Once every four (4) years, boundaries are repainted to ensure location and to review if any obstructions have been placed on Division of Forestry lands. Forest Officers ensure security of land boundaries at Blue Rock State Forest. Forest crews manually paint approximately 13 miles of boundary each year. All boundaries are painted in yellow for easy recognition in the field.

Licenses/Leases: This is an ongoing event at Blue Rock State Forest with natural gas storage, right of way entry requests for access of utilities, land management Activities, and access to isolated areas from public roads. Each request is reviewed by the manager and submitted to the District Forester for individual review.

Insects & Disease: Land managers at Blue Rock State Forest continually review the forest for invasion or occurrence of disease or insects. Gypsy moth prevention includes spaying of isolated areas; Hemlock Woolly Adelgid has had random sampling and review; Emerald Ash Borer is informally monitored by state forest staff. All of these monitoring and samplings occur with partnerships from Ohio Department of Agriculture, Ohio State Extension, and Division of Forestry specialists to constantly monitor forest health of Blue Rock State Forest.

Utilization & Marketing: Forest products will continue to be offered for sale through both 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 the Blue Rock State Forest. Opportunities to conduct research projects exist for any person or group. Researchers must apply for a special use permit. All research activities are approved by Division Staff and the permit is issued by the Chief.

Summary (2-3 year projects): Implement a stand based cruise schedule based on the comprehensive inventory and a growth and yield model. Try to identify sites at least two years ahead of scheduled treatment.

V. Maintenance

Buildings: Blue Rock State Forest has four (4) buildings (Service Center Headquarters, Fuel building, Equipment Storage Building, and Carpenter Shop) Building maintenance planned for FY13 includes:

1. Painting of equipment storage roof
2. Replacement of gutters on equipment storage building and Oil House
3. Service headquarters drainage improvement
4. Service headquarters block painting, gable end repair and painting
5. Carpenter Building metal siding installation
6. Fuel storage tank repainting and signage replacement
7. Service center headquarters electric heater replacement (Outside Wood Furnace)
8. Installation of carpenter shop equipment salvaged from the Marietta Nursery

Infrastructure (water, wastewater, utilities): Water is supplied from a well located on Service Center Compound. Water will be tested periodically to check water quality from Local Health Board. Water has to be purchased for potable water purposes.

Vehicles/Equipment: All vehicles and equipment used are from Blue Rock State Forest Headquarters and is serviced by Blue Rock Crew.

Blue Rock State Forest Equipment FY12

Equipment	Model	Year	Highway Use	Forest Use	Application
Ford Pickup	F250	1997	Yes	Yes	Land Management
Dodge Pickup	1500 Crew Cab	2001	Yes	Yes	Land Management
Ford Pickup	F150	2009	Yes	Yes	Law Enforcement

Dodge Pickup	2500 Crew Cab	2009	Yes	Yes	Land Management
Ford Dump	Ford Super Duty	1999	Yes	Yes	Material Transfer
John Deere	350 C	1978	No	Yes	Fire, Trails, Land Mgt
Ford	5030 Tractor	2001	No	Yes	Trails, Land Mgt
Ford	4630 Tractor	1991	No	Yes	Trails, Land Mgt
Flatbed	Trailer 20"	2001	Yes	Yes	Fire, Trails, Land Mgt
Flatbed	Trailer Utility	2005	Yes	Yes	Fire, Trails, Land Mgt
Polaris	400 quad	2010	No	Yes	Law Enforcement
Polaris	Ranger Quad	2010	No	Yes	Fire, Trails, Land Mgt
Woods Bushhog	7 Ft Cutter	2006	No	Yes	Roads, Access
Landpride	7Ft Blade	2010	No	Yes	Roads, Access
John Deere	Garden Tractor	1991	No	Yes	Lawn Care
Dixie Chopper	Mower	2009	No	Yes	Lawn Care

Planned repairs scheduled for FY13 includes:

1. Routine maintenance in accordance with the Division of Forestry policies.
2. Replacement of rear tires on Ford 4630 Tractor
3. Cutting edge replacement on JD 350C Dozer and winch line

Roads: Two forest roads are on Blue Rock State Forest- Forest Road 8 and Browning Road Bypass. FR 8 is a paved road with a length of 1.3 miles and was recently resurfaced. Browning Road Bypass (0.3 miles) is a gravel road. Most access roads at Blue Rock State Forest are used for land management purposes and are not open to the public travel. Forest Road 8 and Browning Road Bypass will require maintenance yearly including grading, ditching, mowing, and sign replacement.

This past year all access roads will be formally inventoried, mapped, and inspected. The results of the inspections will guide the maintenance efforts of the forest staff throughout this fiscal year.

1. All service roads are mowed annually
2. All service roads and culverts are checked after main storm events and cleared if needed to ensure drainage functions.
3. Brush removal is planned for #8 and Bypass Road (lower limb removal).
4. All road gates are checked for locks, condition, and replaced with pipe-fabricated gates as needed.
5. Signage replacement is completed as needed.
6. Access road off of Coon Ridge at last parking area will have additional stone applied to continue work from FY11.

7. Access road off of Westcrest Road had road improvements in FY10. A service road gate was installed and additional creek gravel will be hauled in FY13 to ensure future use of this road.
8. Forest road west of Cutler-Lake Road in the southwest section of Blue Rock State Forest will have improvements this year. Storm damage from FY12 will be removed and stone will be hauled to improve this road for land management activities. Ditching and crowning of road will improve drainage and insure long term use. Mowing will also be completed on this road.
9. To improve ease of access, all pipe gates will be painted safety orange and numbered in FY13.

Forest Operations Crew and the Forest Manager will be responsible for the following planned workload as well as other issues as they arise:

- Perform Ohio Department of Transportation Scope of Services request once per fiscal year by inventorying road conditions as well as drain tile and header conditions.
- Perform annual ODOT work order request.
- Assist in annual ODOT inspections.

Signage: All entrance signs will be reviewed for condition again in FY13 and repaired or replaced as needed.

Information signs are planned in FY13 around selected post harvest areas to inform the public on what type of harvest activities have recently occurred and what future management activities are planned for these areas.

Residences: None at Blue Rock State Forest

Dams: None at Blue Rock State Forest

Fire Tower: The windows in the cab of the fire tower will be repaired or replaced this year.

Capitals Projects: None scheduled at Blue Rock State Forest

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Continue to identify projects with priorities focused on public and employee health and safety.

VI. Recreation

Trails (bridle, backpack, etc.): Blue Rock State Forest has many recreational opportunities. This includes twenty-six (26) miles of bridle trails. All trails will be monitored after each significant storm event for maintenance needs. All horse trails are mowed annually.

Campgrounds: None at Blue Rock State Forest

ATV Areas: None at Blue Rock State Forest

Shooting Ranges: One shooting range exists on the unit. However, the range requires no maintenance from the forest crew. The area is leased to a private group who is responsible for all maintenance of the area.

Grants: Recreational Trail Program funds may be sought for trail maintenance and improvement projects.

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Identify potential large projects for RTP grant proposals.

VII. Wildland Fire

Suppression: The Division of Forestry has the statutory authority for fire suppression and protection within the hill country of the state. Blue Rock State Forest is responsible for these duties in Guernsey, Perry, Noble, Muskingum and a portion of Licking Counties. Division 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. This protection area has 48 fire departments and over 1,000,000 acres of land.

Prevention: Increasing visibility of Smokey Bear Programs are planned in FY13. Fire Department programs and special events scheduling will allow the Forest Officer to promote Prevention Programs.

Prescribed Fire: No prescribed fires are currently planned for Blue Rock State Forest. The Division of Forestry fully acknowledges the use of prescribed fire as a management tool and is currently collecting data across the southern district in order to better implement a prescribed fire program. The data collected and resulting analysis, will present both the effects of past prescribed burns and opportunities for additional prescribed fire. Two types of burns are being assessed. This includes site preparation burns to determine the effectiveness of establishing oak/hickory on that particular stand and release burns to encourage the success of already established oak/hickory due to previous management practices. The results of the data analysis may yield additional prescribed fire opportunity for future fiscal years.

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 employees are encouraged to participate in the program.

Training: Members of the Interagency Fire Crew will attend one 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 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: The unit will continue to support and participate in the FireWise program.

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 of Forestry staff, a minimum of once each year, must inspect loaned equipment.

Grants: The Division of Forestry administers several grant opportunities for volunteer fire companies. The Forest will promote the opportunities to local VFD's.

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Explore the use of prescribed fire for oak regeneration purposes. Become more active in fire prevention programs such as FireWise.

VIII. Law Enforcement

Philosophy/Purpose: The Division of Forestry currently has nine commissioned law enforcement officers and one commissioned manager. The purpose of these positions is to enforce Ohio Administrative Code and 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, First Aid and TASER certifications. Officers are to complete all Continuing Professional Training (CPT) and LEADS Certification training as mandated by

the Ohio Attorney General's Office. Non-mandatory training will be offered to officers as workloads and budgets allow.

Reporting: All Forest Officers are to complete and submit annual Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) reports as required. Officers are required by policy to submit copies of their citation logs to the Division Law Enforcement Administrator twice during the fiscal year. Other reports are to be submitted as required by Department/Division policy and the LE Manual.

Equipment: Officers 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 to maintain a safe and enjoyable environment for forest users. Special Projects have been planned for the Zanesville State Nursery Forest to reduce illegal drug traffic and vehicle traffic at this location during restricted hours.

Other Duties (VFD's, FEPP, court, boundary, etc.): The Forest Officer will visit county courts and prosecutors at least once per year for updates on bond schedules, court dates, and judge and prosecutor information

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Continue to focus on projects to protect user safety and positive visitor experiences.

IX. Employee Development

Employee List/Vacancies/Table of Organization:

David Glass, Manager
Charlie Lee, Forester
Schaad Johnson, Forest Officer
Paul Abele, Equipment Operator
Vacant, Conservation Aide

Day-to-day operations are conducted out of Blue Rock State Forest. Day-to-day management decisions are handled out of Hocking State Forest with the Forest Manager and Forester visiting Blue Rock State Forest as needed.

Training (tuition reimbursement, etc): Training will be considered as opportunities arise. Law enforcement and fire training have been addressed in the above sections. CPR and First Aid will be offered to all employees. Other training opportunities may include silvicultural and forestry training, equipment operations, all risk response training, and many on the job training experiences. The Forest Manager or Forester will attend the Forest Health meeting.

X. Public Information/Outreach

Planned Events: Blue Rock State Forest will again host the 7th annual Handicap Turkey Hunt in April 2013. Nearly 150 people will attend. The Y-Bridge Chapter of the Wild Turkey Federation sponsors this event with the Division of Wildlife assisting with Turkey Check in. Blue Rock State Forest will be represented at Open House planned in July of 2012.

Partnerships: Township Trustees, Cutler Lake State Park, National Wild Turkey Federation, Division of Wildlife, and Boy Scouts of America.

Volunteers: The staff will work to identify future volunteer groups to assist with trail maintenance.

Interpretive Programs: Through out the coming year, the Forest Manager will develop a number of interpretive signs explaining forest management activities.

Summary (2-3 year future projects): Blue Rock State Forest will continue to try to improve use of volunteer hours. We understand the importance of assistance and where projects can be used to utilize this resource; we hope to be able to accommodate such requests.

XI. Budget

500	**Payroll-GRF**			**$200,014**
		JOHNSON,SCHAAD D	FOREST OFF 2	$*******
		ABELE,PAUL R	EQUIPMENT OPR 2	$*******
		VACANT	CONSERVATION AIDE	$*******
		OT		$1,278

510	**Personal Services**			**$250**
		Misc Prof Development	Fund 5090	$250

520 Supplies & Maint			**$25,000**
	General Operating- Supplies	Fund 5090	$6,000
	General Operating-Vehicles	Fund 5090	$2,500
	General Operating- Fuel	Fund 5090	$9,000
	General Operating-Utilities	Fund 5090	$3,500
	General Operating- Maint	Fund 5090	$4,000
	Zanesville Operating	Fund 5090	$0
530 Equipment			**0**
550 Subsidies			**$0**
570 Capital			**$0**
590 Settlements & Bonds - Refunds			**$0**
591 Debt Service			**$0**
		Total	**$225,264**

Revenue: Revenue at Blue Rock State Forest comes from timber sales, fuel wood permits, oil and gas leases and royalties. A percentage of these monies are then returned to the local school districts, township and county governments.

Summary (2-3 year projected budget): Future budgets cannot be anticipated and the Division is currently developing a budget for this fiscal year.

XII. Safety

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.

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