

# ANNUAL FLORENCE COUNTY FOREST WORK PLAN 2023

The Following is the proposed Florence County Forest Work Plan for the year 2023. The plan follows the approved County Forestry & Parks budget. The plan defines and supplements the current Florence County Forest Fifteen-year plan.

## **Timber Harvest**

- a. Sale Preparation – Prepare approximately ten sales on approximately 650 acres. Approximately two hundred acres of Aspen regeneration cuts. The balance is thinnings of Northern hardwoods, Red Oak, and Red Pine stands. Sales will be sold normally spring and fall. If any need for an emergency sale comes up, such as salvage sales due to flooding, storm, insect & disease, or other unforeseen circumstances, those needs will be sold apart from allowable cut.
- b. Sale Administration – Sale Administration will continue on the existing sales plus any of the sales that are sold in 2023 and become active. Administration includes scaling all sales that are not lump sum and continually checking the sales in progress to make sure the contractors are completing the sales according to contract specifications. Most of the time there are about thirty contracts that are open, some active and some not. Administration now includes SFI Certification tracking of all Loggers, and also tracking Insurance coverage (Liability and Worker’s Compensation) at all times that a Sale is Open.
- c. Revenues – The Florence County Forest Total Timber Sale revenue for 2022 is \$501,272.40 as of December 6, 2022.

## **Reforestation**

- a. Site preparation/Planting – There are 2 sites in need of site prep work to prepare for planting as well as 2 sites in need of replanting. In 2023 we will work to prepare the sites for planting which will include spraying and disc trenching. Ordering of trees for a 2024 planting

## **Recon Work**

- a. Sale Close Outs are a continuous process, which includes updating Recon. This will provide needed accuracy on the County Forest recon system. There is no recon that is older than 20 years old. The goal for the department will be to update 3000 acres of recon annually.

## **File Back-up/Scanning**

- a. In 2020, the department started a scanning project aimed at records back up for timbersales. All documents in each Timber Sale File were scanned and saved on the County Computer Network. As we progress in 2022, we will work towards completing the Timber Sale files and then start working on other files such as; Grants, planting records, parks/boatlanding files. The goal would be to back up all files as time allows.

### **Timber Stand Improvement**

- a. There are no plans for any chemical release of stands in 2023.

### **County Forest Roads**

- a. Maintenance - Road maintenance of 36.39 miles of existing County Forest Roads. The County has received \$336.00/mile. We have a stock pile of crushed gravel to be used for road upkeep. Identify approximately 1 mile to be resurfaced each year.
- b. Signage - Maintain County Forest signs at entrance points on main roads that cross County Forest Lands. Work on signing County Forest Roads. In 2022, most signs were taken down and repaired and painted. Continue to do this work to improve the overall look of the county forest. Tower Road Grouse Area sign, Bush Lake Campground Sign are a couple of signs in need of repair.
- c. Finish the Buckskin Lake Road Sustainable Forestry grant project.

### **County Forest Access and Land Sales and Acquisition**

- a. SW Halls Creek Flowage – There is a block of County Forest that has no road access for the public and adjacent landowners have exclusive use of. Florence County received an easement from the adjacent owner for timber management purposes. An access point has been identified and we will be making plans for a foot bridge for hunter access.
- b. Continue to monitor all county lands for encroachments. Currently there is an issue near the Cosgrove Boat Landing, this will be an issue to be rectified in 2022.

### **Surveying**

- a. Fence posts and signage will be placed on the property as warranted. Funding may be available to survey other areas and a series of corners have been identified for priority. There is funding available in the budget for surveying when the need arises for concerns, and/or timber sale boundaries. The department has set a goal to accomplish running and painting 5 miles of lines.
- b. The county does have funding to upgrade GPS technology for the Forestry Department, in 2022 the GPS was purchase and will be a great asset to the department.

### **Forest Protection**

- a. Fire control – Work with the DNR on prescribed burns on the Barrens project and help with any fire control needs on the County Forest and Parks lands. In the event of need the County Forestry and Parks Department will help with Fire Control anywhere in the County.
- b. Insect & disease –Continue to cooperate with monitoring for oak wilt, red pine pocket decline and jack pine budworm outbreaks. Oak Wilt has been discovered on the Tower Road Grouse area, W. Bass Lake Park, and other areas of the county forest. We have treated the areas and have been monitoring adjacent stands closely, this will continue throughout 2023. Current treatment seems to be stopping the spread of Oak Wilt in the treated pockets however new pockets are still forming. Continue to work on education

and prevention of the Emerald Ash Borer, however it appears the insect is throughout the county.

### **Multiple Use -Wildlife**

- a. Hunter Access & Trails – Disc and reseed the Walking Trail areas. These areas are in need of replanting. Most of our road networks are only growing low nutrient value cool season grasses. Areas that are disced and seeded maybe gated to create hunter walking trails to protect investments in the wildlife plantings. Goal is to disc and see 10 miles of trails per year.
- b. Wildlife Considerations -- Continue the rice seeding on several shallow water lakes, (Hall’s Creek, Legerski’s Pond and Kopka Pond). Also, work with Wildlife and Fisheries Biologists for considerations for the Homestead Conservation Pond.
- c. Continue to work as a member of the Spread Eagle Barrens Operations Team and Wild Rivers Advisory Committee.
- d. Walking/Biking/X-Ski Trails – Continue to work with communities on developing trails. The X-ski trails are in in good shape, we will continue to maintain the trail systems for Horse, Hiking, skiing and snowshoeing. Horse trails will be in need of clearing next spring after a recent timber sale.
- e. There is a new mountain bike trail developed starting at the Keyes Peak Ski Hill, work will continue on this as funding allows.
- f. Work with the sheriff’s department to enforce regulations ATV, Snowmobile Trails, Parks, Rifle Range, County Forest Ordinances, patrol timber sales and gated areas and working with Clubs.
- g. Seeding roads, trails, and openings – about ten miles of timber sale roads and landings will be seeded after the sales are completed with a wildlife seed mixture. Working with the WDNR Wildlife Biologist several brushing and mowing projects have been accomplished. This work is expected to continue into 2023.

### **Recreation Areas**

- a. Snowmobile Trails – Continue the maintenance of 149 miles of trail.
- b. ATV/UTV Trails – Continue the maintenance of 66+ miles of trail.
- c. X-Country Ski Trails – Continue maintenance of the Lake Emily trail. Create a trail at the Ski Hill. Incorporate this with a timber sale and with current forest roads in the area.
- d. Hunter Walking Trails – Mow trails and openings throughout County Forest - which includes four gated areas. Replace gates as necessary and look for other areas to create gated hunter walking trails. Potentially create a new hunter walking trail network in the Lunds/Lamontagne Creek area.

- e. Parks – Maintain and improve two campgrounds and day use areas. Construct a new bathroom/shower facility at the W. Bass Campground. The department will work to prep the area for the building with assistance from the Highway Department. Start working on design and development of an expansion to the Lake Emily Campground.
- f. Ski Hill - Continue to operate Keyes Peak for skiing, snowboarding, tubing, and snowshoeing. Continue to encourage Lodge Rentals for Weddings, Anniversaries, Class Reunions, and Banquets from April 15<sup>th</sup> – November 15<sup>th</sup>. Evaluate the hill for possible expansion of tubing or skiing opportunities. Assist with the uphill truck races in March. The county provided ARPA funds for a new pavilion and sidewalks around the Ski Hill for ease of access from various parking areas. A new parking area is being created at the Keyes Lake Park.
- g. Boat landings – continue to maintain and enhance all landings under our jurisdiction. Current focus is planning for the Spread Eagle Chain of Lakes Boat Landing. Prepare and apply for grants to rebuild that launch. The next launch in need of upgrades will be Cosgrove Lake.

### **State & Federal Funded Projects**

- a. \$.05/ acre – (Approximately \$1,800) use funds to maintain Wildlife openings and trails as listed under multiple uses – hunter access. Other uses for this funding include purchasing gates, locks for gates, rice seed, mowing, etc.
- b. County Conservation Aides – (Approximately \$1,300 this is a 50-50 cost share – Total Project value \$2,600);
- c. Fish Management - Continue to assist the Fish Biologist on area lakes for their survey needs as they need assistance.
- d. USFS Stewardship Project – In 2017 - Florence County entered into a second Stewardship agreement with USFS. We will continue to work on the Grubhoe project as needed. In 2018 Florence County Forestry also began working with the WDNR on the Good Neighbor Authority(GNA). We will also continue to work on this throughout 2023 as needed and time permits.

### **Natural Resource Center**

- a. Exhibit – Continue the efforts to obtain funding to finish exhibits inside and outside.
- b. Maintenance – Continue the same maintenance schedule.
- c. Responsibilities – Administer to the building needs and continue to be responsible for policy, purchases, accounts payable, and billing to agencies for their portion within the building.
- d. Promotion of Tourism is an annual need – work with the Business League, State of Wisconsin, US Forest Service, Florence County Economic Development Department and the Interpretive Center Friends Group.

- e. Forestry and Parks Administrator be involved in decision making policy on any grant fund spending.

**Land Sales**

- a. Advertise and sell lands as directed by the Florence County Board of Supervisors.

**Firewood & Christmas Tree Sales**

- a. Continue to provide the permits for obtaining firewood and Christmas Trees for personal use.

**Personnel - The Forestry and Parks Department personnel includes**

- a. Full Time Administrator of Forestry and Parks.
- b. Full Time Assistant Administrator of Forestry and Parks.
- c. Business Manager.
- d. Full Time Parks & Ski Hill Manager.
- e. Full Time Recreation Coordinator/Equipment operator
- f. Full Time Parks & Ski Hill Assistant.
- g. LTE Summer Help

**2023  
FLORENCE COUNTY  
FORESTRY & PARKS DEPARTMENT**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

*Edwin Kelley, Chairman*

*Fran Modschiedler, Vice Chairman*

*Matt Burnette*

*Susan Theer*

*Joe Mills*

<b>FORESTRY AND PARKS EMPLOYEES:</b>	<b>RATE OF PAY</b>
<b><u>RATES IN 2023 COUNTY BOARD APPROVED BUDGET</u></b>	

<i>Patrick J. Smith, Administrator</i>	<i>\$76,294.00 SALARY</i>
<i>Taylor Ziolkowski, Assistant Administrator</i>	<i>\$59,280.00 SALARY</i>
<i>Mary Podnar, Business Manager</i>	<i>\$26.67 – HR.</i>
<i>Mat Gummin, Rec Coordinator/Equip operator</i>	<i>\$22.07 - HR.</i>
<i>Marvin Davis, Parks/Ski Hill Manager</i>	<i>\$23.00 - HR.</i>
<i>Wayne Harrison, Park &amp; Ski Hill Assistant</i>	<i>\$18.00 - HR.</i>
<i>Summer/Winter LTE's</i>	<i>\$13.26 –HR.</i>