

32.22-07 - FOREST MANAGEMENT (ISSUED: 07/11/2005)

Supersedes

- DNR Department Procedure 2207.7 - FOREST MANAGEMENT, Issued June 9, 1978.

NOTE: The content of this document has not been revised since Issued June 9, 1978. The only change involves the conversion and numbering to the current DNR Policies & Procedures Manual Structure.

<< Information >>

The State Forests shall be administered by the Forest Management Division. However, as the forests are to be managed for multiple-use benefits, both the Wildlife and Forest Management divisions are jointly charged with the responsibility of developing a comprehensive management plan for each State Forest unit.

Forest Management and Wildlife staffs shall jointly prepare and issue guidelines to the field to direct the foresters and game biologists in preparing the plan for each forest. Throughout the planning effort the following principles shall , apply:

<< Procedure >>

1. In compliance with the guidelines and directives issued by staff, the area forester and wildlife biologist shall prepare the initial plan for the forest. Following a review by district, region, and staff the plan in final form shall be approved by Forest Management and Wildlife staffs, and shall become the official plan for managing the forest. Any differences in judgment which cannot be resolved will be referred to the Director's Office for decision.
2. In determining the management goals for each State Forest, the following factors must be examined to decide to what degree each program should be developed:
 - a. What are the present and future public needs for timber products which the forest might provide?
 - b. What are the kind and volume of timber products now available from the forest?
 - c. What percentage of the timber products needed by industry is available from private and other public lands?
 - d. What are the present and future public needs for wildlife resources from the forest?
 - e. What are the present wildlife resources of the forest?
 - f. What is the current capability of the forest to maintain the present wildlife population?
 - g. How much of the demand for wildlife resources can be supplied from private and other public lands?
 - h. What volume of timber products may the forest supply if the forest is managed for maximum timber production?
 - i. How much will the wildlife population increase or decrease if the forest is managed for maximum timber production?

- j. What volume of wildlife will a specific forest area supply if managed for maximum wildlife production?
- k. What volume of timber supply will be produced if the forest is managed for maximum wildlife production?
- l. What is the demand for other outdoor recreational use of the forest?
- m. What is the potential of the forest to meet these other recreational demands?
- n. Will the outdoor recreational demands conflict with managing the forest for timber and/or wildlife?
- o. What input is necessary to manage the forest for:
 - 1) Maximum timber production?
 - 2) Maximum wildlife production?
- p. What combination of inputs will most nearly meet the public need for timber products, wildlife, and recreational uses?
- q. What is the Department's capability to furnish those inputs which will produce in combination the highest volume of timber, wildlife, and outdoor recreation?

The goals and management program for each of the State Forests cannot be determined until after all of these factors have been studied for each forest.

- 3. Cover type maps of each State Forest, including all State lands within the dedicated forest boundaries, shall be prepared using standard symbols to identify such things as forest cover types by species and age composition, roads, trails, lakes, rivers, campgrounds, water access sites, natural forest preserve areas, and other features important to planning. These maps shall be kept up-to-date and a general revision made at least every ten years.
- 4. Manipulation of the forest vegetation is the key to managing for wildlife as well as timber products. Successful management for these two purposes depends upon achieving the desired combination and distribution of age classes by forest types in keeping with the stated multiple-use policy and overall sustained yield management goals of the forest. Each cover type or combination of cover types shall be managed according to the following prescription:
 - a. Coniferous swamps are important as winter deeryards and shall be managed primarily for deer. The objective shall be to maintain them for this purpose and through commercial cuttings and silvicultural practices, improve these areas to provide winter cover and food for deer.

To increase the winter deer carrying capacity of these "yards", the adjacent upland edges shall be managed primarily to provide winter food supply for deer. However, as these borders are some of the most productive timber producing areas, every attempt will be made to manage through means of commercial timber sales cut on the shortest possible rotation. Where commercial sale is not possible, then management shall be by subsidized commercial harvest, use of mechanical tree cutters, or hand crews, to increase the supply of winter deer food.
 - b. Hemlock type shall be managed primarily for deer. Hemlock was a significant component in the virgin northern hardwood forest, but did not reproduce extensively after timber harvest. The present stands rate a high priority as game habitat, especially as winter cover for deer. Management will be directed toward maintaining present stands and expanding the type where feasible.

- c. On soils suitable for the propagation of pine types, jack pine, because of its greater food and cover value to wildlife and its high demand for pulpwood, will be the preferred species. Red pine and white pine will be encouraged on suitable sites where the primary goal is for the production of timber products. In those areas where the primary management goal is wildlife production, pine stands will be established only if additional winter cover is needed. Otherwise, on such areas conversion of forest growth to pine will be discouraged.
 - d. Wetlands having suitable waterfowl habitat shall be preserved and managed primarily for waterfowl.
 - e. Northern oak stands are now largely one age class. Generally, even-aged management is the best prescription for oak with the regeneration cut being a complete clearcut. In order to get better age distribution, clumps, strips, or blocks will be treated at intervals to eventually give representation to all age classes within an area or compartment. Within extensive areas of the oak type where there is an excess of oak for wildlife needs, conversion to other types will be encouraged. On the better sites, aspen is a more desirable species and will be encouraged; on the poorer sites, jack pine will be preferred.
 - f. Northern hardwood type now occupies approximately ten percent of the total State Forest acreage. Of this type acreage, about ten percent is on sites which should be managed for pulpwood. On the remainder, the single tree selection system shall be employed with a cutting cycle of about ten years.
 - g. In general, the forest shall be managed to encourage intolerant forest types. As aspen is highly demanded for commercial purposes and is of equal importance to wildlife, it shall be perpetuated and expanded wherever feasible.
 - h. Forest openings are necessary to wildlife and shall be developed where needed and maintained in that proportion of total area necessary to the desired wildlife population and as needed by the particular wildlife species existing on the forest.
 - i. Insofar as it is desirable to outline specific policies for forest cover, it also is desirable to outline specific policies for users of the cover, wildlife being one of these. It shall be the policy to manage the wildlife resources by the most advanced, scientific methods. Harvesting of wildlife will be strictly regulated to maintain populations at a level which will not be detrimental to the range or the quantity and quality of the forest cover type for which a particular site is managed.
5. When a primary use unit within a forest area requires special administrations and extensive management for a special purpose, such as development for intensive waterfowl management or concentrated camping requiring sophisticated sanitation, that portion of the State Forest area necessary to the project may be rededicated by the Natural Resources Commission and administrative functions transferred to that division having primary interest in the project. When this occurs, a memorandum of understanding shall be promulgated between that division and the Forest Management Division to establish the responsibility of each to the project.
6. All divisions are encouraged to conduct experimental work on the State Forests. Such experimental work shall be under the direct supervision of the involved division. However, if and when an experiment involving cover management becomes a proven operation, the practice shall be incorporated into the forest management program.

7. To the fullest practical extent, the forest aesthetics shall be enhanced by maintaining living clumps of white birch, flowering shrubs, large-crown trees, unusually shaped trees along roads, trails, lakes, and streams in harmony with openings to provide vistas of high quality.
8. Management practices shall not be conducted within 100 feet of a water body without prior approval of the Fisheries Division.
9. Land exchanges with private individuals, companies, corporations, or other units of government may be made when the land offered in exchange is of such a character as to better fill a public need than the land desired by the applicant, or if the land desired by the applicant is needed for a public facility or a commercial enterprise which will be of a substantial benefit to the community or state. All factors involving the total public interest shall be evaluated in the consideration of a land exchange; however, priority shall be given to receiving those lands which provide access to landlocked state lands or lakes and streams, and which have high environmental preservation significance such as stream frontage to maintain water quality and wild river conditions.
10. The use of the State Forests for camping, hunting, fishing, hiking, berry picking, bird watching, driving, scenic enjoyment, snowmobiling, and other recreational activities shall be encouraged. Wilderness campgrounds and picnic areas shall be developed and maintained on lakes, streams, or other desirable locations. Trails and scenic drives shall be developed. Areas of unusual or significant scenic, historic, or scientific value shall be preserved consistent with the overall policy of forest management.
11. Forest insects and diseases which may cause serious damage shall be controlled where possible and economically justifiable. Measures employed may be through forest management practices which create conditions unfavorable for infestations or direct control using Department of Natural Resources approved pesticides.
12. Exploration and production of oil, gas, and metallic minerals may be conducted on State Forest lands under State laws and Department rules, regulations, and established procedures pertaining to such activities and providing that the resulting environmental alterations will be compatible with present and anticipated use of the site and surrounding areas.
13. State-owned nonmetallic minerals, including gravel, sand, stone, fill dirt, clay, marl, or similar materials may be removed if it has been determined by the Department that the resulting surface alteration will be compatible with the present and future anticipated use of the site and surrounding area. The materials are not to be sold if the Department or other state or local public agency has need for them in present or anticipated future projects, nor will they be sold in direct competition with privately owned sources of supply in the vicinity.
14. Permits for the use or occupancy of State Forest lands may be issued for specific purposes when such uses are in accord with approved land use practices and are not in conflict with the forest management plan, as well as the general public interest or other Department needs.
15. Easements for rights-of-way for State highways, county roads, electric powerlines, telephone lines, railroads, pipelines, and sites for substations or relay stations shall be issued when not contrary to the public interest. The timber resources in such areas shall be harvested if practical before such easements are approved. When feasible, easements for utilities shall be located on private land as it is the private sector being served.

Utility companies shall be required to make joint use of utility strips whenever use of the same land for pipelines, underground cables, powerlines, and telephone lines would be compatible and technically feasible.

All utility lines in high use recreational areas and on other lands having high aesthetic, scenic, natural, or historic values shall be buried. All telephone lines and all power lines up to 34.5 K.V., except those which can be placed on existing rights-of-way, should be buried whenever it is practical and feasible.

16. Signs for commercial public service establishments such as resorts, motels, hotels, restaurants, service stations, and accommodations for the vacationing and traveling public may be permitted. Signs for these establishments on State Forest lands shall comply with criteria, specifications, and requirements as specified in the Department sign policy.

Signs for Department of Natural Resources installations and other purposes shall follow specifications and procedures as approved in the Department Sign Manual.

17. Water areas for waterfowl, swimming, fishing, boating, or other recreational use may not be created by impounding streams without first seeking approval of the Fisheries Division. Generally, impoundments will not be developed on trout streams or their tributaries.
18. In managing or changing any forest growth to benefit wildlife, the following methods will be employed in this order of preference:
 - a. Commercial timber sale;
 - b. Subsidized timber sale;
 - c. Department project by use of mechanical tree cutters or hand crews.

Any differences in judgment in interpreting this procedure or in deciding any particular management project or program which cannot be resolved shall immediately refer to the next higher level of the Department's organization. Under no circumstances is one office to hold up a proposal of another because of disagreement.

It is to be remembered that all proposals for forest treatment, whether they be commercial timber sales or noncommercial cover treatment, require the approval of both the Forest Management and Wildlife divisions.

<< Reference >>

Policy No. [2207](#).