

Recreation Facility Analysis



5-year Proposed Program of Work and Programmatic Effects of Implementation website version

WAYNE National Forest
September 26, 2007

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document is a living, working road map to guide the Forest in providing a quality, sustainable recreation sites program. It describes the vision for the overall Forest recreation program and outlines proposals specific to individual developed recreation sites.

The proposals and guidance contained in this document were developed through, and are the end result of, the national Recreation Facility Analysis (RFA) process. Existing and projected visitor demands, recreation program niche, resource conditions, links to the community, program costs, and revenue were all considered in developing proposals.

This document will serve as a framework from which the Forest will prioritize investments, and pursue changes in operations or maintenance of recreation sites. Proposals are wholly consistent with the Eastern Region's "Recreation Strategy" and the Wayne Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

The Forest recognizes that site-specific analysis and further public involvement may be necessary prior to implementing some of the proposals contained in this document. As implementation of site-specific proposals are considered, they will be evaluated to determine if they are subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and all required procedures shall be executed.

2. PURPOSE OF RECREATION FACILITIES ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF PROCESS

A. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS

The purpose of the Recreation Facility Analysis process is to display the tasks needed over the next five years to bring the Forest's recreation infrastructure into alignment with the resources available to operate and maintain it to standard. Many of our facilities were built 30-50 years ago and have reached the end of their useful life without significant deferred maintenance investment. Other facilities receive no or little use, and no longer serve the demand that existed 30-50 years ago. The fundamental premise of the program of work is to create an inventory which is sufficiently sustainable and flexible to be adapted annually to any changes in available resources. The program of work has been developed to meet the following objectives:

1. Operate and maintain sites to standard within available revenue stream.
2. Reduce deferred maintenance by 20% over the 5 year life of the program of work.
3. Focus available resources on sites which conform most closely to the Forest Recreation Program Niche.
4. Maintain and enhance customer satisfaction with available sites.

Deferred Maintenance - "Maintenance that was not performed when it should have been or when it was scheduled and which, therefore, was put off or delayed for a future period."

When allowed to accumulate without limits or consideration of useful life, deferred maintenance leads to deterioration of performance, increased costs to repair, and decrease in asset value.

Proposed Management Categories

The RFA process defines the proposed actions for management of forest recreation sites in order to meet the desired future condition that aligns with the Forest Plan. For purposes of the analysis and planning for future proposed actions, four criteria categories (A-D) of proposed management are used:

Category A: sites that are under some type of operational or contractual agreement whose terms are longer than the 5-year period of the RFA.

Category B: sites that meet the unit niche; are environmentally sustainable within the capability and capacity of the natural resources; are supported by and provide support to local communities; and have a sustainable management cost-benefit ratio.

Category C: sites that do not meet all of the above criteria, but with a combination of mitigation, additional resources, or other type of action could be made to qualify for Category B status.

Category D: sites that do not meet all of the (Category B) criteria; or fall sufficiently short in one or more of the criterion so as to render the capability of meeting it unsustainable. These sites may be managed for dispersed recreation opportunities.

Sites were evaluated and ranked based on conformance to the forest niche and amount of recreation use (35%), financial efficiency (35%), and environmental and community sustainability (30%).

3. ANALYSIS OF MANAGEMENT SITUATION

The Forest Service manages 150 national forests and 20 national grasslands. Nationally, it has an estimated \$346 million of recreation deferred maintenance (DM) backlog. At the beginning of the RFA process the Wayne National Forest's DM was \$1.3 million or 0.38% of the national total. With recreation facilities repairs and upgrades in fiscal year 2007, especially at Oak Hill Campground, the Forest reduced DM to \$919,000. This represents a 29% reduction, thereby exceeding the national target of eliminating at least 20% of DM by year 2012. All national forest are mandated to reduce 90% or more of DM costs by 2020.

Three of the Wayne's campgrounds (Iron Ridge, Oak Hill, and Burr Oak Cove camps) contribute 72% (\$662,000) of the total current DM cost on the Forest. A majority of the remaining 38 recreation sites have fewer than \$10,000 worth of DM costs associated with each of them.

In 2007, the Wayne received authority to increase its recreation fees. The fee increase will be effective January 1, 2008. The additional revenue generated coupled with annual recreation appropriations and state grants would be used to help reduce deferred maintenance and improve recreation facilities and services.

A. WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST RECREATION NICHE (updated 9/4/2007)

The term "recreation niche" is defined as what the Forest has to offer in terms of special places, opportunities and possible experiences, overlapped with what the public desires regarding outdoor recreation. That overlap identifies a narrow decision space within which recreation managers define the focused program the Forest can provide. The following narrative is a description of the Wayne's recreation niche:

Picture rolling mountain foothills; sandstone rock shelters; bluffs and caves on the fringe of the Unglaciated Appalachian Plateau; winding rivers and streams draining into the Ohio River; and pastoral vistas of verdant broadleaf forests. Now, mix all these picturesque elements together you begin to define the natural landscape of the Wayne National Forest.

Surrounding this natural wooded setting is an urban population of more than 12 million people connected to the Forest by convenient interstate access from three directions. Ohio is a densely populated state, and studies show that our biggest visitation draw is from within 100 miles. The Wayne is considered a recreation destination site for off-highway vehicle trail riding and hunting.

The WNF's recreation niche is about the synergy of varied elements of time and place. This concept has recently been coined "geotourism". It incorporates the idea of promoting "home grown"

tourism-- promoting local businesses and groups to work together to offer distinctive experiences based on nature, culture and history, while at the same time maintaining the character of the locale. Geotourism provides the framework within which the WNF recreation program strives to operate.

The area's rich natural resources (clay, timber, coal, salt, iron ore, gas and oil) plus the ease of transportation along the Ohio, Hocking, and Little Muskingum Rivers attracted early settlers. It was these settlers who left us an intriguing history that adds to the Wayne's natural uniqueness.

A drive through the Wayne N.F. allows you to see historic barns, iron furnaces, and covered bridges dotting the countryside. This is an area where criss-crossing routes of the Underground Railroad helped breed a rich cultural history. It is no wonder therefore, that a portion of what the Wayne has to offer in recreational opportunities stems from the chance to interpret the heritage of southeastern Ohio.

The Wayne claims the greatest density and diversity of historic and prehistoric sites in Region 9. We are fortunate to share a curiosity about, and a desire to protect and interpret, these sites and the geographical character of the area with regionally recognized partners. The rich history of Ohio's hill country offers up an especially unique opportunity for preservation and interpretation of the iron furnaces. It was the discovery of high quality ore found only in Ohio and small portions of West Virginia and Kentucky that led to the establishment of 47 uniquely designed furnaces in the tri-state Hanging Rock Iron Region in the early 1800's. Of the 12 that still exist, the WNF owns several. The highly sought-after pig iron produced in these furnaces provides us a special perspective for interpretation of the colonization of the Northwest Territory in the 1700's. The manufacture of armament for the Civil War using this high quality pig iron also carved an important niche in the history of the Wayne National Forest.

The motorized trails the Forest offers specifically for all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and motorcycles are the most popular attraction for recreation enthusiasts. The rolling topography lends itself to challenging rides along these scenic forested trails. Increasing sales of Forest trail permits and ATV retail sales indicate a recreational growth trend that the Wayne is well suited to meet. The Forest currently provides the most miles of designated off-road vehicle trails in Ohio, and it is better positioned to offer motorized riding trails for the public than any other recreation provider of the area. This is due primarily to our relatively large public land base. Though the Forest's fragmented land ownership presents certain challenges for creating lengthy trails, it also provides opportunities for developing partnerships with other land holders, and opens doors for outdoor recreation based businesses and services.

The importance of hunting and fishing on the depressed local economy is especially noteworthy. In a state with only 4% of its land in public ownership, the WNF, with its relatively large expanse of mature forest intermingled with private farms offers excellent habitat for deer and turkey. The Forest's developed motorized trail network provides easy access that attracts large numbers of in-state and out-of-state hunters. Significant numbers of hunting licenses are sold in the 12 counties where the Forest is located, and high percentages of the state's turkey and deer harvest occur in these counties. Fishing visitation at WNF ponds is twice the state average. Convenient public access to many ponds within small areas, especially in the Forest's southern district, attracts anglers of all abilities.

B. CRITICAL MONETARY FACTORS

Table A displays asset and expense information for the forest recreation sites in 2007 (Baseline Condition) and the resulting information developed through the facilities analysis process. Figures in the Changed Condition column reflect deferred maintenance work accomplished in 2007 and projected costs and assets within the next five years.

Table A - Recreation Site 5-Yr. Program of Work

Assets and Expenses Summary

Critical Monetary Factor		Baseline Condition	Program of Work (Changed Condition)	Program of Work (Percent Change)
Operational Assets	Appropriated Funds Available	\$203,639	\$203,639	0%
	Fee Receipts Available	\$117,086	\$105,773	-10%
	Other Funds Available	\$57,296	\$57,296	0%
Expenses	Annual Operating Costs	\$171,267	\$140,626	-18%
	Annual Maintenance Costs	\$159,206	\$118,869	-25%
	Deferred Maintenance Costs	\$1,304,343	\$919,774	-29%

Annual operation and maintenance of recreation sites such as campgrounds, trailheads, interpretive sites, boat launches, and picnic sites are funded through a range of resources such as Congressional appropriations, recreation user fees, and grants. Additional assistance is provided through a local senior citizen program and by volunteers and students.

It is estimated that recreation fee sites would generate approximately \$105,000 per year in revenue for operation and maintenance. This total does not include revenue collected at campgrounds being considered for operation and maintenance by concessionaires or partnership with other operators. This explains the 10% drop in revenue from the baseline total as seen in Table A above.

C. INVENTORY

Table B displays the recreation site inventory before and after 5-year Program of Work development. Some management actions listed in the proposed program of work may add additional recreation facilities or opportunities. For example, Iron Ridge Campground is being proposed for conversion from a single family camp to a multiple-use camp (single family and equestrian camp). As a result, there is an additional campground shown in the “Projected # of Sites” column in Table B for “Developed Horse Campgrounds”.

Table B - Wayne National Forest Developed Recreation Sites

Recreation Site Types	Current # of Sites	Projected # of Sites
DEVELOPED FAMILY CAMPGROUNDS	9	9
DEVELOPED GROUP CAMPGROUNDS	1	1
DEVELOPED HORSE CAMPGROUNDS	1	2
DEVELOPED FAMILY PICNIC	3	4
DEVELOPED GROUP PICNIC	3	4
BOATING/SWIM SITES/FISHING SITES	4	6
ATV TRAILHEADS	12	12
HORSE TRAILHEADS	4	4
HIKING TRAILHEADS*	1	1

* Though the Wayne N.F. has considerably more hiking trailheads, only the more developed trailheads that require significant investment of funds for operation and maintenance are analyzed and shown in Table B.

D. PROPOSED MANAGEMENT ACTION SUMMARY

Table C lists the management action categories proposed for recreation sites within the next five years and a percentage make-up of each category. For example, the number of recreation sites being proposed for decommissioning (Category A) makes up 2.2% of the total number recreation sites analyzed in the RFA.

Table C – Management Action Summary

Management Category	Percent of Total
A – DECOMMISSION	2.2%
B – CLOSURE	0.0%
C – CHANGE SEASON	9.0%
D – REMOVE OR ELIMINATE A COST SOURCE or SERVICE SEASON	3.4%
E – REDUCE SERVICE FREQUENCY SEASON	0.0%
F – INCREASE/IMPROVE SERVICES	44.9%
G – CONSTRUCT A NEW AREA	0.0%
H – CHANGE OPERATOR or WORKFORCE	6.7%
I – CHANGE FEES	15.7%
J – CHANGE CAPACITY	2.2%
K – SITE CONVERSION	1.1%
L – REPLACEMENT/REPAIR	5.6%
NC – NO CHANGE	9.0%

4. RECREATION SITES PRIORITY RANKING REPORT

The Forest’s Recreation Sites Priority Ranking Report (Table D) lists recreation sites in rank score priority order. Ranking is based on how well a site meets the following four objectives of the RFA analysis.

1. Operate and maintain sites to standard within available revenue stream.
2. Reduce deferred maintenance by 20% over the 5 year life of the program of work.
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4. Maintain and enhance customer satisfaction with available sites.

Table D - Recreation Site Ranking

RANGER DISTRICTS	RECREATION SITES	RANKING SCORE
ATHENS	LEITH RUN CAMPGROUND	101
IRONTON	BIG BEND BEACH	101
IRONTON	BIG BEND OVERLOOK	101
IRONTON	FURNACE PICNIC GROUND	101
IRONTON	FURNACE PICNIC GROUND	101
IRONTON	IRON RIDGE CAMPGROUND	101
IRONTON	OAK HILL CAMPGROUND	101
IRONTON	PINE KNOB CAMPGROUND	101
IRONTON	ROADSIDE PICNIC GROUND	101
IRONTON	TWO POINTS GROUP AREA	101
IRONTON	VESUVIUS BOAT DOCK	101
IRONTON	VESUVIUS INTERPRETIVE SITE	101
IRONTON	HANGING ROCK A.T.V. TRAILHEAD	90
ATHENS	COMPANY ROAD A.T.V. TRAILHEAD #1	82
ATHENS	COMPANY ROAD A.T.V. TRAILHEAD #2	82
ATHENS	MONDAY CREEK A.T.V. TRAILHEAD	82
ATHENS	COMPANY ROAD A.T.V. TRAILHEAD #4	77
ATHENS	LONG RIDGE A.T.V. TRAILHEAD	77
ATHENS	NEW STRAITSVILLE A.T.V. TRAILHEAD	76
ATHENS	COMPANY ROAD A.T.V. TRAILHEAD #3	73
ATHENS	COMPANY ROAD A.T.V. TRAILHEAD #5	73
IRONTON	TELEGRAPH A.T.V. TRAILHEAD	70
ATHENS	RING MILL	69
IRONTON	LYRA A.T.V. TRAILHEAD	67
IRONTON	WOLCOTT A.T.V. TRAILHEAD	65
ATHENS	LANE FARM	60
ATHENS	WILDCAT HOLLOW HIKING TRAILHEAD	58
ATHENS	HAUGHT RUN	55
ATHENS	LAMPING HOMESTEAD	55
ATHENS	HUNE BRIDGE	53
IRONTON	TIMBRE RIDGE BOAT LAUNCH AREA	49
ATHENS	OLD STONE CHURCH HORSE TRAILHEAD	45
ATHENS	BURR OAK CAMPGROUND	44
ATHENS	SAND RUN	43
IRONTON	SAND HILL HORSE TRAILHEAD	38
ATHENS	STONE CHURCH EQUESTRIAN CAMP	42
IRONTON	PADDLE CREEK HORSE TRAILHEAD	42
ATHENS	KINDERHOOK HORSE TRAILHEAD	38
IRONTON	LEWIS LAKE RECREATION SITE	33
ATHENS	CAPITOL CHRISTMAS TREE	28
ATHENS	HELDMAN	0

5. TABLE OF TASKS

A. SITE-SPECIFIC TASKS

Table E lists one-time cost to implement projects or tasks for each recreation site. Annual operation and maintenance costs are not reflected in this table. Only sites with proposed management changes (i.e. improvements, repairs, fee increases) are listed. Sites are listed by one-time cost to implement action and alphabetically by ranger districts.

TABLE E - 5-YEAR PROPOSED PROGRAM OF WORK

RANGER DISTRICTS	RECREATION SITES	ONE-TIME COST TO IMPLEMENT ACTION	TASK COMMENTS
ATHENS	BURR OAK CAMPGROUND	\$0	FS to upgrade water system in 2008; Considering partnership opportunity to operate and maintain campground – in discussion phase.
ATHENS	HAUGHT RUN	\$0	Replace minor constructed features as needed to reduce deferred maintenance; potential fee increase in next round of fee request.
ATHENS	HUNE BRIDGE	\$0	Potential fee increase with next round of fee request. Replace vault toilet with new restroom (with grant) or after 2012.
ATHENS	LAMPING HOMESTEAD	\$0	Reduce mowing; replace vault toilet with new restroom (with grant) or after 2012; possible feasibility study for future development.
ATHENS	LEITH RUN CAMPGROUND	\$0	Possible site for concessionaire operation
ATHENS	STONE CHURCH EQUESTRIAN CAMP	\$0	Add drinking water when funds become available or after 2012 and look for a partner to operate.
ATHENS	COMPANY ROAD A.T.V. TRAILHEAD #2	\$1,000	Designate for campfires; Install 4 fire accessible rings.
ATHENS	COMPANY ROAD A.T.V. TRAILHEAD #3	\$1,000	Replace vault toilet with new restroom (with grant) or after 2012; add 4 accessible fire rings.
ATHENS	COMPANY ROAD A.T.V. TRAILHEAD #4	\$1,000	Add accessible fire rings to walk in sites.
ATHENS	HELDMAN	\$1,000	Decommission (partners to remove picnic shelter).
ATHENS	MONDAY CREEK A.T.V. TRAILHEAD	\$1,500	Add a new restroom with grant and 5 accessible fire rings.
ATHENS	WILDCAT HOLLOW HIKING TRAILHEAD	\$1,500	Improve signing.
ATHENS	NEW STRAITSVILLE A.T.V. TRAILHEAD	\$1,800	Replace vault toilet with new restroom (with grant); add 6 accessible fire rings.
ATHENS	CAPITOL CHRISTMAS TREE	\$2,500	Close after Frontier Landing is built. Demolish vault toilet.
ATHENS	COMPANY ROAD A.T.V. TRAILHEAD #5	\$2,500	Replace vault toilets with two new restrooms (with grant) or after 2012; add 8 accessible fire rings.
ATHENS	LONG RIDGE A.T.V. TRAILHEAD	\$2,500	Add 7 accessible fire rings in camping areas.
ATHENS	LANE FARM	\$5,000	Add a canoe launch when grant funds become available.

ATHENS	RING MILL	\$7,000	Replace vault toilet with new restroom (with grant) or after 2012; add canoe launch with grant funds, increase I&E, reduce operating season.
ATHENS	COMPANY ROAD A.T.V. TRAILHEAD #1	\$20,000	Add restroom with appropriations or grants.
ATHENS	SAND RUN	\$21,500	Replace vault toilet with new restroom (with grant) or after 2012; add bulletin board & improve signing, reduce mowing (acres only, not frequency); add picnic shelter (Forest Service or w/Partner in 2009) & charge fee for use of shelter.
ATHENS	OLD STONE CHURCH HORSE TRAILHEAD	\$22,000	Add new restroom with appropriations, define sites, add accessible fire rings.
IRONTON	HANGING ROCK A.T.V. TRAILHEAD	\$0	Add wash station and connect trailheads (grants).
IRONTON	IRON RIDGE CAMPGROUND	\$0	Reconstruct camp ground and add equestrian facilities (Appropriation - \$1.7 million possibly within first 5 years, but likely after 2012).
IRONTON	LEWIS LAKE RECREATION SITE	\$0	Add picnic shelter, upgrade restroom - partnership \$ to construct; Initiate fee.
IRONTON	OAK HILL CAMPGROUND	\$0	Increase fees and lengthen season.
IRONTON	VESUVIUS BOAT DOCK	\$0	Continue partnership with Ohio University.
IRONTON	FURNACE PICNIC GROUND	\$10,000	Add playground (partners); add picnic shelter (appropriations).
IRONTON	PINE KNOB CAMPGROUND	\$20,000	Increase fees and lengthen season in 2008; replace restroom with annual appropriations in 2010.
IRONTON	ROADSIDE PICNIC GROUND	\$20,000	Add electricity and increase fees.
IRONTON	TWO POINTS GROUP AREA	\$20,000	Replace restroom, increase fee, and lengthen season.
IRONTON	SAND HILL HORSE TRAILHEAD	\$30,000	Enlarge parking area.
IRONTON	BIG BEND BEACH	\$42,000	Not expected in next five years unless partners contribute funds for the following new development: Set-up concession stand, add six new cabana-like shelters, and several fishing docks.
IRONTON	FURNACE PICNIC GROUND	\$50,000	Upgrade electrical system, replace lift station, and increase fees.
IRONTON	TIMBRE RIDGE BOAT LAUNCH AREA	\$50,000	Rehabilitate and armor heavily used boat-in disperse campsites (6-8 sites) in 2011.
IRONTON	VESUVIUS INTERPRETIVE SITE	\$50,000	Repair and replace roof, siding, and drainage system on interpretive building.