



ANNUAL REPORT FY 2011



West Virginia
WEST VIRGINIA

A MESSAGE FROM THE STATE FORESTER

The economic downturn in the forest products industry that started in the fourth quarter of 2008 showed little improvement. The industry continues to be significantly depressed with no signs of improvement in the near future. In fact, modest improvements experienced during 2010 were lost with lumber sales declining to the same level as those in 2009. Thus far, 14 mills have been sold and all equipment removed from the sites; 13 mills have shut down and have an uncertain future; 25 mills remain on a reduced operating schedule; and 35 mills continue to operate with no significant change. The most significant happening in 2011 was the closure of all Coastal Lumber Company's facilities, not only in West Virginia but throughout the nation. Fortunately, the West Virginia facilities were purchased by Eastern Hardwood, Inc. and brought back to some level of production. Also at year's end, American Woodmark announced closure of their Moorefield, W.Va., facilities and closure of their Hazard, Ky., dimension mill and sale of an operation in Oklahoma. NewPage Corp. in Luke, Md., which employs approximately 1,000 people, one-half of whom are West Virginia residents, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

Although markets for high-value lumber are currently poor, some investment is being considered for wood product facilities that utilize lower-valued species. These would be companies that produce specialty products or companies that would utilize wood (biomass) to generate energy, i.e. heat, electricity, etc. While we will support these potential investments, the high-value lumber markets will need to return in order for West Virginia to realize the full economic potential of its forest resource. Working to gain a balance of utilizing high-value species for high-value markets and utilizing low-value species for the other markets will optimize the economic return from West Virginia's forests.

The West Virginia Division of Forestry (DOF) itself is and will continue to be challenged by present economic conditions

as our special revenue income and reserves in those accounts decline. We are working to identify opportunities for additional funding so that the same level of service will be provided to

the public. For example, the DOF increased the number of shared NRCS positions from three to four, and continued providing contractual services to the Monongahela National Forest. Also, harvests on state forests have been elevated to 8 million board feet per year, the allowable sustained level as determined by the Division of Forestry and Natural Resources at West Virginia University.

In an attempt to increase our operating efficiency, the agency introduced legislation relating to forest fires, logger regulation and law enforcement. Changes to the Logging Sediment Control Act include 1) increased licensing and certification period from one to two years; 2) certification training is now required every four years instead of every two; and 3) "Best Management Practices" are reviewed every five years instead of three. Modifications to the fire laws

include 1) increased penalties for illegal burning; 2) charge for commercial burning permits; and 3) reduction of the allowable burning period during the two statutory fire seasons. Last but not least, our law enforcement powers are no longer under Division of Natural Resources, which allows us to focus our training specifically on forestry issues. All three of these code changes will allow the DOF to become more cost effective.

Early in my career one of my mentors told me, "Our greatest challenges can become our greatest opportunities." I have learned through my career that this is true. Therefore, there is no doubt in my mind that all of us that work in the natural resource arena have one of our greatest opportunities before us.



State Forester Randy Dye received the USDA Two Chiefs' Partnership Award in 2011 for his support of conservation and forest stewardship.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Dye".

Randy Dye
Director/State Forester

FIRE PROTECTION

The DOF is responsible for protecting nearly 12 million acres of West Virginia's forestland from damage and destruction from wildfires. In order to reduce the number of wildfires and acreage burned, the DOF's Fire Protection program is divided into three primary areas: prevention, preparedness and suppression.

Fire Prevention

The DOF uses Smokey Bear and his longtime message of "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires" to provide wildfire prevention education to the citizens of West Virginia. Forestry personnel spread the message throughout the year by contacting schools, civic organizations and group programs, as well as through newspaper articles and radio programs.

In FY 2011, the DOF presented wildfire prevention messages to

- 277 schools and 14,412 students
- 165 groups and 34,330 individuals
- 74 camps and 1,459 campers

The DOF also presented 404 wildfire exhibits and was the subject of 193 news articles and radio and television programs.



Numerous wildfire prevention signs also are erected and maintained throughout West Virginia to serve as reminders to be careful with fire. These fire danger signs are placed in areas where citizens can see them daily and be aware of

the potential risks of wildfires spreading due to dry weather conditions.

In addition to providing fire prevention education, the DOF assists forestland owners and woodland home developments



through the Firewise West Virginia program. Firewise West Virginia provides assistance to homeowners and woodland developments to create

passable access for emergency vehicles and defensible space between forestland and houses or other structures to minimize



potential property damage. In FY 2011, the DOF developed wildfire protection plans covering 5,555 acres through this program.

Fire Preparedness

Fire foresters in the fire protection group of the DOF are continually making preparations to safely and effectively suppress wildfires. These foresters increase the wildfire suppression capability of the DOF by taking advanced training, maintaining equipment and training volunteers.

Assistance from volunteer fire departments, local fire wardens, local fire crews, prison inmates and the National Guard is essential to the DOF's fire suppression efforts. These volunteers are trained in safe and effective wildfire suppression techniques, and the DOF assists them with acquiring equipment and personal protective gear to fight wildfires. In FY 2011, 804 volunteers were trained by DOF personnel.

The DOF also maintains a statewide radio system for communication during wildfire incidents and for the safety of firefighters. A statewide system of weather stations is maintained to assist with the prediction of potential fire danger and fire behavior.

Suppression Program

Wildfire suppression is one of the most important activities of the DOF. In FY 2011, DOF personnel and volunteers fought 682 wildfires that burned 14,532 acres. These fires caused \$4.36 million in damages to the natural resources of West Virginia and more than \$93,000 in personal property loss. The number of fires and acreage burned was significantly lower than average, due in large part to a very wet spring.



10-Year Range	Average Number of Fires per year	Average Acres Burned per year
1996-2006	1,105	33,597
1997-2007	1,155	34,027
1998-2008	1,168	35,122
1999-2009	1,217	34,865
2000-2010	1,111	33,749
2001-2011	1,005	24,778

More than 99 percent of the acreage burned in FY 2011 was caused by people or their activities. Wildfires occur mostly in spring and fall when the forests and grasslands of the state are more susceptible to fire due to dry conditions. Because of the increased fire danger during these two times of year, outdoor burning is prohibited between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. in the months of March, April, May, October, November and December.

During FY 2011, the West Virginia Legislature passed legislation that affected the DOF's Fire Protection program. Restricted burning times were extended to 5 p.m. during fire seasons, and the DOF was granted authorization to charge a \$125 fee for burning permits issued to commercial operations.

Investigative Unit

This unit investigates all violations of the West Virginia State Fire Laws as stipulated within West Virginia State Code §20-3, and has the authority to enforce violations of West Virginia State Code §19B, the Logging Control Sediment Act of 1992. With the passage of Senate Bill 460 during the 2011 Legislative Session, the members of this unit are now permitted to enforce violations of the Ginseng Laws under WV State Code §19-1A.

An additional benefit of the passage of Senate Bill 460 was the establishment of the Forestry Special Natural Resource Police Officer (FSNRPO) program within the DOF. Previously this program existed under the auspice of the Division of Natural

Resources, but with the passage of Senate Bill 460, authority for FSNRPO was transferred to the DOF effective June 2011. Responsibility for oversight of the FSNRPO program is assigned to the forestry investigation specialist, and entails training requirements, certification and all equipment needs related to the program, as well as all documentation efforts related to policy revision, updates and compliance with same.

During FY 2011, the investigative unit participated in the prosecution of more than 100 violations of the fire laws and conducted more than 65 extensive investigations. These investigations ranged from simple debris burning violations to felony prosecutions for setting fire on the lands of another. Four felony suspects were arrested and prosecuted as a direct result of these investigations and numerous citations for misdemeanor violations were issued.

During FY 2011, one Forestry Investigation Unit member and his assigned K-9 bloodhound traveled to California to assist the Bureau of Indian Affairs with an investigation of serial wild land fires on the Tule River Indian Reservation. This effort resulted in the development of two primary suspects.



Members of this unit conducted nearly 20 advanced fire investigation training classes for members of state, county and city agencies within West Virginia. Additionally, these members have been requested to instruct advanced wild land fire investigation training classes in the near future in Texas and for the National Park Service in New York.

The two K-9 bloodhound handlers traveled to South Carolina and served as instructors at the annual Police Bloodhound Certification School in York County. Due to the handlers' continued efforts, the DOF is nationally recognized as a leader in the investigation and prosecution of wild land arsonists.

WATER QUALITY

Anyone who buys timber or logs for resale or who harvests timber within the state must obtain a timbering license from the DOF. All timbering operations must submit a notification to the DOF within three days of the start of operations, and have a certified logger present who has been trained by the DOF in Best Management Practices and Safety and Tree Felling and has current First Aid Training.

2011 Logging Data

- Professional loggers trained 1,065
- Licensed certified loggers..... 1,188
- Licensed timber operators.....898
- Logging notifications of harvesting operations.....2,085
- Acres harvested..... 138,646
- DOF complaint and compliance checks.....7,584

Chesapeake Bay

In addition to enforcing the Logging Sediment Control Act, which reduces sediment flowing into rivers and streams, the DOF supports other water quality initiatives like the West Virginia Chesapeake Bay program. The main objectives are:

1. Permanently protect 1,200 acres of priority forests each year.
2. Establish 100 acres of riparian forest buffers each year.
3. Establish urban tree canopy (UTC) goals for counties and municipalities, and help to plan tree planting events to promote these goals.

These objectives require the cooperation of many partners, including land trusts, farmland protection boards and other non-governmental organizations that protect forestland through the purchase of conservation easements. Along with the Farm Service Agency and other state and local conservation agencies, the DOF assists with tree planting in riparian buffers. The DOF also worked with Jefferson County to help them and their five municipalities establish UTC goals in 2011.

MANAGED TIMBERLAND

Program Requirements

- A parcel must be part of a tract with at least 10 contiguous acres of forest.
- The parcel must contain sufficient numbers of commercially valuable species of trees to constitute at least 40 percent normal stocking of forest trees that are well distributed over the growing site.
- All parcels must have a management plan established within two years of enrollment and be managed pursuant to the established plan.
- Parcels may not be part of any subdivision or have any deed restriction.

Program Accomplishments

- The 2010 Timber Price Report was completed as part of the annual valuation for the Tax Department.
- 160 enrolled parcels were selected and audited to check for compliance with program requirements.

2011 Managed Timberland Data

- Landowners enrolled.....2,652
- Parcels enrolled.....11,943
- Total Acres.....2,410,564

FOREST MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Rural Forestry Assistance

In FY 2011, the DOF provided professional forestry assistance to 2,465 landowners. This assistance included forest management planning, tree planting, forest road and recreational development, wildlife habitat enhancement and timber harvests.

Environment Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

Practices completed in the past through the DOF's Forest Land Enhancement Program are now funded through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). EQIP is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the DOF's landowner assistance foresters serve as technical service providers for the program. In addition, a contribution agreement between WVNRCs and the DOF enables the DOF to employ foresters who are located in NRCS offices.

Accomplishments for FY 2011 include:

- Site Preparation.....45 acres
- Forest Stand Improvement..... 2,991 acres
- Riparian Forest Buffer 388 acres
- Tree Establishment 866 acres
- Access Control 13,809 acres
- Forestland Re-established3,858 acres

Forest Stewardship Program

The Forest Stewardship program offers technical and financial assistance to private landowners interested in planning and managing their forestland for multiple-use benefits, including wood products, wildlife, recreation, aesthetics and other resource considerations. The program reimburses landowners for 75 percent of the cost to prepare a stewardship plan. These plans list the individual landowner's objectives, contain maps of the property and make forest management recommendations for a 10-year time frame. In FY 2011, 108 stewardship plans were completed for a total of 17,615 acres. Currently 208,924 acres are managed under stewardship plans.



In FY 2011, the DOF offered four stewardship training workshops to consulting foresters, natural resource professionals and other foresters from around the state. These four workshops drew 389 participants. In order to prepare forest stewardship plans, foresters are required to attend a minimum of two of these sessions annually. These workshops provide an opportunity to earn continuing education credits that are required for state and national registered forester status. Speakers from academia, experienced field practitioners and researchers provide technical presentations on subjects and issues useful to plan writers. These education workshops are extremely popular within the natural resources community.

Big Tree Program

In FY 2011, the DOF completed a yearlong effort to locate and re-measure trees listed in the Big Tree database. Natural mortality took some trees while others were replaced by newly nominated champions. A revised Big Tree register is available at www.wvcommerce.org/BigTrees.

Forest Legacy Program

The Forest Legacy program purchases conservation easements to acquire development rights on properties in order to maintain them as working forests. In working forests, management activities are conducted and timber is harvested. Working forests also provide opportunities for wildlife management, recreation, watershed protection and other traditional forest uses.

The first conservation easement of 764 acres was purchased in 2008 along the South Branch of the Potomac River in Hampshire County. In 2010, the second and third conservation easements were purchased. These included 2,500 acres in Morgan County and 144 acres in Hampshire County.

The DOF is currently in the process of protecting additional properties in Hampshire and Grant counties.

Ginseng Program

The DOF tracks, weighs and certifies all harvested ginseng before the roots are exported from the state. During the 2010-11 season, 5,634 pounds of wild ginseng were certified and 32 ginseng dealers were registered.

In 2007 with assistance of the WV Ginseng Grower's Association, the DOF established the Ginseng Growers' program. This program establishes areas (makes determinations) where individuals can grow ginseng without threatening the areas' native wild ginseng populations. Under the Ginseng Growers' program, DOF foresters have made 72 such determinations since 2007. In 2010, there were 62 registered ginseng growers in the state of West Virginia.

The Ginseng Growers' program also allows ginseng growers to export their ginseng, if, for some reason, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would ever close the season in the state.

Clements State Tree Nursery

Clements State Tree Nursery is the only state-operated tree nursery in West Virginia. It produces both hardwood and evergreen seedlings. The majority of hardwood seedlings are sold to mine land reclamation contractors in West Virginia and Ohio, and due to increased marketing efforts in 2011, sales to Ohio for cost-share programs and small mine land reclamation projects and to Soil and Water Conservation Districts has increased.

The nursery's total sales for spring 2011 were 770,000. Of these seedlings, more than 60 percent were planted in West Virginia.

Clements began to require a higher-quality seed, particularly oak seed, from vendors that has resulted in better germination and uniformity in seedbeds. This, combined with a successful herbicide program and inmate labor, has allowed the nursery to operate more efficiently.

Currently, the nursery holds agreements with the Monongahela National Forest, APHIS and DNR for seedling production and with the American Chestnut Foundation for orchard establishment.

Several capital improvement projects recently were completed that will benefit the nursery program, and in July 2011, the DOF coordinated and hosted a successful multi-state Nursery Conference in Huntington. Approximately 80 people from 35 states and Canada attended this conference.



State Forests

Program Accomplishments

- The DOF received a grant of \$13,296 for the Recreational Trail Program on Coopers Rock State Forest. In addition to three interpretive signs, this program also will develop trail-head kiosks featuring updated maps and trail information.
- Timber harvests were prescribed and the timber was sold to the highest bidder for these projects:
 - **Cabwaylingo State Forest** – Right Fork of Missouri Branch timber (347,930 board feet) sold to Jim C. Hamer Co., for \$43,975.
 - **Calvin Price State Forest** – Burr Valley timber (1,539,413 board feet) sold to Hamilton's Legacy for \$156,562.40.
 - **Camp Creek State Forest** – Neely Ridge II timber (1,394,352 board feet) sold to Collins Hardwoods for \$206,227.
 - **Kumbrabow State Forest** – Turkeybone X timber (800,773 board feet) sold to Jim C. Hamer Co., for \$340,685.37
 - **Kumbrabow State Forest** – Camp Bowers timber (703,609 board feet) sold to Inter State Hardwoods for \$204,375.
 - **TOTALS** = 4,786,077 board feet for \$951,824.77

Urban and Community Forestry

The Urban and Community Forestry Section establishes long-term tree care programs in municipalities throughout the state to protect and effectively manage the most valuable trees in West Virginia. The program also provides the necessary knowledge and tools to communities to make comprehensive urban forestry management successful.

Program Accomplishments

- Worked directly with 71 communities and county governments, thereby impacting 413,798 West Virginians.
- Conducted 18 workshops on proper tree care and accounted for 1,279 training hours.
- Provided 189 technical assists to communities to foster municipal urban forestry programs.
- Planted 3,308 new trees in communities across the state.
- Earned a competitive grant from the U.S. Forest Service in the amount of \$246,343 to fund an assessment of urban tree canopy (UTC) of selected counties within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (CBW). UTC assessments will identify high priority forestland and help develop land management strategies at county and municipal levels.
- Obtained more than \$15,291 in private donations to support public tree care efforts.

- Helped 15 municipalities receive national recognition for their urban forestry programs through the Tree City USA award. These municipalities include Bath, Bluefield, Charles Town, Elkins, Follansbee, Harpers Ferry, Hinton, Lewisburg, Moorefield, Morgantown, Parkersburg, Petersburg, Ronceverte, Summersville and Williamstown.
- Provided 3,000 trees to 24 communities and volunteer groups through the Mountaineer Treeways program. These trees were planted on public property by more than 373 volunteers who donated 1,157 hours to plant and care for these trees.
- Utilized \$4,291 in donations from Toyota Motors Manufacturing and the WV Forestry Association to fund tree planting and support the Arbor Day Poster Contest.
- Administered a \$15,000 Demonstration City grant with pass-through federal funds to promote sustained tree care in Summersville. This program generated a local match totaling \$17,506.
- Planted 151 trees around buildings, parking lots and streets in Bluefield, Elkins, Huntington, Parkersburg and Ronceverte and at Musselman High School. These trees were provided through the Cool Communities program to conserve energy. Grants consisted of \$25,842 in federal funds and resulted in a community match of \$29,469.
- Obtained \$10,257 through the Municipal Tree Restoration Program to plant utility-line compatible trees in four communities:
 - Gassaway – \$1,944 to plant 9 trees
 - Lewisburg – \$1,373 to plant 14 trees
 - Mannington – \$1,920 to plant 15 trees
 - Vienna – \$5,202 to plant 30 trees

The Municipal Tree Restoration program is a cooperative effort with Allegheny Power and Appalachian Power.

FOREST PRODUCTS UTILIZATION AND MARKETING

The Forest Products Utilization and Marketing (FPU&M) program is charged with the promotion and marketing of West Virginia forest products, including everything from green, dry kiln, pallet and flooring lumber to rustic rail fence, railroad ties, mine material and more. An added emphasis is placed on the secondary manufacturing sector, where a value-added finished product is sold directly to the consumer. Value-added products include custom cabinets and furniture, molding, paneling, flooring and other millwork.

The forest products utilization and marketing specialist meets with owners, managers and employees, to discuss procurement, production, marketing, sales and other assistance the DOF offers the state's forest products industry.

In 2011, the program's specialist visited more than 75 sites in 17 counties. The DOF aided with sawdust recovery and bark utilization as dry kiln boiler fuel, resource procurement, new client introductions, arranging financial assistance meetings, developing employee training workshops and product marketing.

The FPU&M program works with the Hardwood Alliance Zone, Appalachian Hardwood Center at WVU, West Virginia Wood Technology Center in Elkins, Wood Education Resource Center in Princeton and economic development organizations throughout the state. Cooperative efforts among these groups create a network of industry, research, training and economic personnel to develop plans to advance the forest products industry in West Virginia. The FPU&M program also assists the U.S. Forest Service with the Forest Inventory Assessment project that monitors the volume, value and health of West Virginia's forestland.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The DOF educates the public about forestry issues through its Fire Protection, Landowner Assistance and Water Quality programs, as well as through national programs like Project

Learning Tree (PLT). In FY 2011, DOF personnel assisted with PLT training for close to 200 teachers, including members of the West Virginia State Science Teachers Association and pre-service teachers at Shepherd University in Jefferson County. In addition to teaching these teachers, the workshops trained eight new PLT facilitators in PreK-8 and early childhood modules. These facilitators will go on to work with thousands of students and teachers throughout the state.

DOF personnel also worked with several national competitions, including Envirothon, National 4-H Forestry Invitational and Future Farmers of America. Personnel also dedicated time to 4-H, scouting, and state residential camp programs. The agency also continues to partner with the West Virginia Environmental Educators Association and West Virginia Conservation Education Council to forward education efforts throughout the state.

Work with the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac Highlands Cooperative Weed and Pest Management programs, predominantly located in the eight Eastern Panhandle counties, led to 25 workshops and 11 school assemblies and tree-planting demonstrations. In conjunction with local Conservation Districts, the DOF worked with the Hands-On Ag Day program in Marshall and Marion counties that reached 700 students. Finally, the DOF and WVU Extension coordinated a Water Wise Workshop to increase water quality awareness in more than 160 students in five Potomac Highland counties.

DIVISION OF FORESTRY

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Clements State Tree Nursery

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Region 1

Serving the counties of Barbour, Berkeley, Brooke, Grant, Hampshire, Hancock, Hardy, Harrison, Jefferson, Marion, Marshall, Mineral, Monongalia, Morgan, Ohio, Pendleton, Preston, Taylor, Tucker and Wetzel.

Region 1 Headquarters

Farmington Office
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Region 1

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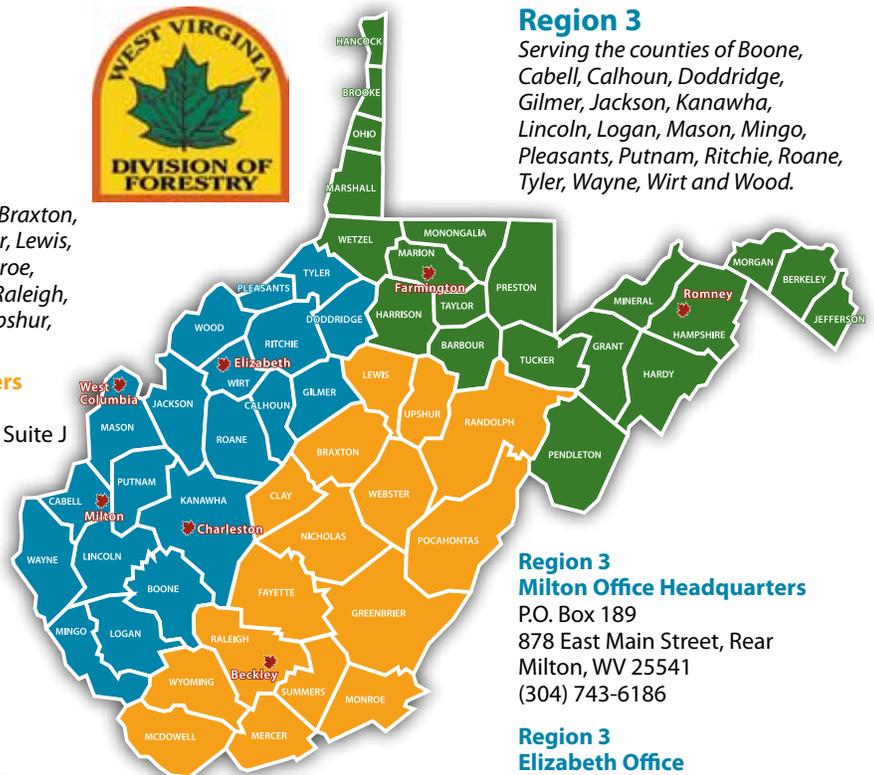
Region 2

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Region 2 Headquarters

Beckley Office

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Region 3

Milton Office Headquarters

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Region 3

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