

2021 WORK PLAN FOR THE ONEIDA COUNTY FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

Forest and recreational management activities scheduled for the Oneida County Forest will be accomplished with the aid of funds described below and approved for use by the Oneida County Forestry Department in 2021.

Account	Revenue			Expenses			Requested
	New	Appl. Cont. Appropriations	Total	Personnel	Other	Total	
51570 Land Purchase	\$0	\$31,200	\$31,200	\$0	\$31,200	\$31,200	\$0
55210 Parks	\$47,709	\$70,000	\$117,709	\$241,740	\$110,400	\$352,140	(\$234,431)
55212 Campground	\$8,225	\$0	\$8,225	\$0	\$2,300	\$2,300	\$5,925
55410 St. Aid Snowmobile	\$528,490	\$0	\$528,490	\$0	\$528,490	\$528,490	\$0
55412 St. Aid ATV	\$432,869	\$0	\$432,869	\$0	\$432,869	\$432,869	\$0
56110 Co. Forest	\$1,195,976	\$15,000	\$1,210,976	\$278,547	\$96,200	\$374,747	\$836,229
56111 St. Aid Roads	\$14,418	\$50,000	\$64,418	\$0	\$64,418	\$64,418	\$0
56210 Mining Impact	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
56220 Maps	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,500	\$2,500	(\$2,500)
Total	\$2,227,687	\$166,200	\$2,393,887	\$520,287	\$1,268,377	\$1,788,664	\$605,223

Annual County Forest Integrated Planning Meeting

The Annual County Forest Integrated Planning Meeting between the Oneida County Forestry Department (OCFD) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was held on September 18, 2020. The planning meeting provides a forum for both departments to jointly establish and agree on County Forest Management Goals for the upcoming year. The meeting was held remotely via telephone/video due to Covid 19 in-person meeting restrictions.

Individuals present at the 2020-21 Oneida County Forest Integrated Planning Meeting were: Oneida County Director, Paul Fiene; Oneida County Ass't Director Eric Rady, Forester 2 Jake Truitt and Forester 1 Ben Broquard; DNR Area Forestry Staff Specialist, Hillary Keller; DNR Northern Region Team Supervisor, John Gillen; DNR Wildlife Biologist, Jeremy Holtz; DNR Wildlife Technician, Eric Kroening; and DNR County Forest Liaison, Manny Oradei. The main items discussed at the meeting included: 15 Year Plan updates

and status, County Forest Time Standards, Wildlife Habitat funds, proposed timber sales and harvest acreage goals, reforestation, County Forest Roads, forest health and protection issues, forest reconnaissance, forest blocking, forest certification, and Park/Recreation matters.

FOREST MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Timber Sale Establishment

The Oneida County Forestry Department has established a target goal of approximately 1,500 acres of timber for sale in 2021. A total of 1,503 acres of timber are scheduled for harvest in Sec. 202 of WisFIRS. It is anticipated that not all of the 1,503 acres will be ready to harvest so we have identified several large aspen stands (200 acres and larger) that will be entered earlier than scheduled in order to start breaking up the stands. These early entries, along with those stands in the 1,500 acres scheduled ready to harvest, should approximately equal the target establishment goal of 1,500 acres. The sale areas will be distributed throughout the three County Forest Blocks (Enterprise, Cassian-Woodboro and Lynne-Little Rice). The established value of the 1,500 acres of timber sales is approximately \$1,100,000.

The labor required to establish the aforementioned timber sale acreage will be provided by the OCFD with assistance from DNR Forestry personnel.

Acres by Forest Cover Type Proposed for Harvest in 2021			
Forest Cover Type	Total Acres on County Forest	Acres Scheduled for Harvest in 2021	Non-Scheduled Acres Proposed For Harvest in 2021
Aspen	32,865	890	100^A
Hemlock	1,351	73	
White Spruce/Fir-Spruce	468	0	
Red Maple	1,032	97	
Northern Hardwood	13,280	272	
Red Oak	2,495	31	
Red Pine	2,116	172	
White Pine	371	15	
Black Spruce-Tamarack-Swamp Conifer	8,333	16	
Swamp Hardwood	1,542	34	
Total Acres Scheduled		1,503	
Total Non-Scheduled Acres			100
Total Acres proposed for harvest in 2021		1,500	

^A – Large Aspen stand breakup.

Approximately 25 separate timber sales will be established to address the scheduled acres to be harvested.

Due to unforeseen factors such as wind storms, insect or disease outbreaks and other acts of nature, the above scheduled acres may change.

For more detailed information regarding the acres scheduled for harvest, such as which compartments/stands are scheduled, contact the Oneida County Forestry Office at (715) 369-6140.

Timber Sale Administration

It is anticipated that between 20 and 30 timber sale contracts will be active during 2021. This contract activity will be spread throughout the year with fall and winter being the most active times. Department involvement will include contract administration, sale inspection, and fiscal record keeping. A harvest of 25,000 cord equivalents with a value of approximately \$1,150,000 is anticipated. The haul permit system will continue to be used for pulpwood, and wood scaling will be utilized for saw logs. Weekly timber sale inspections will be conducted by both County and DNR personnel when sales are active. Due to current market conditions including the closing of the Verso Mill in Wisconsin Rapids, it is anticipated that stumpage prices will remain depressed for at least the first quarter if not all of 2021. Logging activity may in turn, be less than normal.

Forest Reconnaissance

Forest Reconnaissance (recon) work scheduled for 2021 includes updating recon information that is older than 15 years as time permits. A total of approximately 3,000 - 4,000 acres of recon update is anticipated. In addition, the acres recon'd during timber sale establishment will be counted toward recon updates.

Forest Protection

Cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will be utilized to protect the forest from insects, disease, and forest fires. Cooperation from the DNR will also be sought to assist in the eradication of Glossy Buckthorn and Garlic Mustard. These two non-native invasive plant species were found in the Enterprise Block of the County Forest in 2013. A combination of chemical and mechanical treatment was performed on these non-native invasive species in 2014-2019. An LTE was hired in 2016 to do a more intensive survey of the County Forest for invasive species and to begin eradication measures on populations. This survey located numerous populations of invasive species. The LTE and OCFD personnel developed a management plan to monitor and conduct control measures on those populations deemed most threatening. The LTE continued with established control measures on the Garlic Mustard population, along with initiating control on newly located populations of Garlic Mustard, Glossy Buckthorn, Canada Thistle and Wild Parsnip. This included application of herbicides and hand pulling of plants. These efforts, along with additional monitoring of invasive species populations, will continue in 2021.

With the recent discovery of Oak Wilt in the Woodruff, Lake Nokomis and Woodboro Wildlife Area, and the Town of Lake Tomahawk, the OCFD will continue to monitor oak stands for any signs of Oak Wilt. If found, all attempts will be made to isolate the infection and prevent additional spread. The OCFD will continue to apply restrictions to all timber

sales that fall within the Oak Wilt guidelines (e.g. no harvesting until after July 15th in stands that fall within the guidelines).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), will be contracted to help control nuisance beaver damage. Isolated beaver colonies that have been identified as posing a threat to timber productivity, or causing damage to County Forest Roads, recreation trails and Trout Streams will be targeted for capture and removal.

Forest insects and diseases already in our area, and/or projected to emerge or migrate into our area were discussed. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was found in Oneida County in October of 2014. The result of this discovery is that Oneida County was quarantined against the movement of ash log/pulp products and all firewood out of the county without the proper documentation; however, in 2018 this quarantine was expanded to the entire state so the above mentioned forest products may be moved year round within the state. Numerous areas within the city are now infested with EAB. This shows EAB is spreading regardless of the quarantine. The OCFD will continue to work with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and the DNR to devise a strategy to minimize the environmental and economic impact this discovery may have on the County. The OCFD will focus more on harvesting White and Black Ash during normal timber sale establishment especially within a 15-mile radius of the EAB discoveries. EAB traps were placed around the Enterprise block of the county forest in 2018; however no EAB were captured. The County will continue to monitor the forest for signs of EAB. To date, no signs of EAB have been found within any of the forest blocks.

Reforestation and Plantation Release

Several red pine plantations have reached economic maturity and will begin losing value as the trees exceed 20" diameter on the stump. As these stands show up on the harvest schedule, it will be determined which ones may be regenerated through overstory removal and re-planting and which ones may be carried beyond the economic maturity to serve other purposes such as aesthetics. In 2020, two pine stand harvests were established with the intention of re-planting following harvest. Neither of these stands will be re-planted in 2021.

No additional conifer planting is anticipated for 2021.

Efforts to regenerate Red Oak will be undertaken in 2021. This will include application of herbicides, soil scarification and possibly the planting of acorns. Grant funding may be applied for through the Wild Turkey Stamp Grant funds, the DNR Wildlife \$0.05/Acre Grant fund and County Conservations Aids grants to help defray costs of this treatment.

Forest Certification

The Oneida County Forest is certified under the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) programs. These certifications require periodic random audits of certified forests.

Oneida County joined the FSC Certification Program in late 2016. In order to be compliant with this program, several amendments to the 15-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan (15-Year Plan) had to be made. These changes dealt with stating Oneida County's

commitment to the FSC program along with numerous small changes dealing with High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) nomenclature, acreage of the HCVF's, along with the deletion of previously maintained day use areas that are no longer maintained. No significant change to the management of the forest is anticipated due to these 15-Year Plan amendments.

In 2020, four counties in the central part of the state were audited by both SFI and FSC. No Corrective Action Requests (CAR), Opportunities for Improvement (OFI) or Observations were identified by Wisconsin County Forest programs certified under SFI or FSC.

SFI/FSC Corrective Action Requests (CARs): NONE

SFI Opportunity for Improvement (OFI): NONE

FSC Observations: NONE

All CAR's, OFI's and Observations identified in previous audits were addressed and/or corrected by OCFD.

Wildlife Management

In cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources, wildlife management activity on the County Forest will center on forest openings maintenance and rehabilitation, habitat trail mowing, control of terrestrial invasive species through chemical application, hand-pulling and burning, and designing timber sales that incorporate wildlife habitat needs for both game and non-game wildlife species.

In addition to those projects listed above, State Aid Wildlife funds have also been budgeted in 2021 for the following wildlife habitat projects:

- 1) Control encroachment of undesirable vegetation into wildlife openings and hunter hiking trails with a combination of prescribed burns and mowing.
- 2) Seed logging roads and landing with a mixture of grass/forbe seed.
- 3) Control beaver damage to forest roads by contracting with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for removal of undesirable beaver colonies.
- 4) Promote the establishment and growth of mast producing tree species with scarification techniques that optimize soil conditions for natural seed germination.
- 5) Purchase and install interpretive/educational signs describing various forest management techniques; where, when, and why different forest management techniques are used, and how the different techniques benefit a wide range of wildlife species.

- 6) Rehabilitate existing woods and hunter hiking trails within the newly designated Bowman Road Grouse Management Area.

County Forest Roads

2021 County Forest Roads, Capital Improvement Schedule:

Replace two small (12-24 inch diameter) culverts.

Spot gravel and grade ~5.0 miles of County Forest Road located in the Enterprise block of the Oneida County Forest (Shingle Mill Road).

Develop a road improvement plan for the newly added segment of County Forest Road, John's Memorial Dr. Rehabilitation of this road began in 2019 in order to allow gravel trucks to travel on the road for an ATV/UTV trail surface project. The road had previously been in such a condition that operation of heavy trucks during non-frozen conditions would have been difficult or impossible.

Explore the possibility of opening a gravel pit along Cruiser's Road in the Town of Nokomis. This pit would be used for maintenance of Cruiser's Road and potentially for supplying material for a new ATV/UTV trail running from Co. Hwy N to Oscar Jenne Rd. The towns of Nokomis and Woodboro, along with the Oneida County Hwy Department, have expressed interest in utilizing a pit in this location if ever developed. If it is determined that opening a gravel pit in this area is feasible and needed, the process of developing the pit would begin in 2021.

In addition to the specialized projects mentioned above, annual road maintenance projects, including, but not limited to: grading, signing, wash-out repair, spot graveling, brushing, mowing and beaver flood control, will take place through the County Forest Road system in 2021.

Equipment and Facilities

Each year an amortized allotment of funds is budgeted in a non-lapsing automotive equipment line item. The funds within this line item are used to purchase and replace new and existing equipment. In 2020, no major equipment purchases were made. A replacement for a 2009 4x4 pickup truck is planned for 2021 using these budgeted funds.

PARKS

In addition to the timber and wildlife management programs mentioned above, the Oneida County Forestry Department will administer and maintain two day-use parks and one campground in 2021. Additionally, in 2018, the County acquired a new recreational area in the Town of Enterprise.

At 160 acres in size, Almon Park is the largest and most popular day use park maintained by the Forestry Department. Some of the more popular features offered at Almon Park include a large swimming beach, 18-hole disc golf course, picnic shelters and several miles of picturesque hiking trails.

Perch Lake Park is open year round and offers a heated shelter building, lakeshore picnic facilities, an ADA compliant fishing pier, and serves as the main trail head for the Washburn Silent Trail System.

The Enterprise Forest campground features 11 oversized campsites, two bathroom buildings, onsite firewood, potable water, and connects directly to the Oneida County ATV/UTV Trail System.

The recently acquired Gillette/Wickham property, consists of 230 acres surrounding Gillette and Wickham Lakes in the Town of Enterprise. Facilities currently planned for this property include: upgrading the access road, creating a parking lot for 5 – 6 vehicles, installing an ADA compliant fishing/boat launching pier and an ADA compliant access path from the parking lot to the pier.

2020 Park Capital Improvement Project Accomplishments:

- There weren't any new Park Capital Improvement projects undertaken in 2020. All park work activities were focused strictly on maintaining existing park facilities.

2021 Park Capital Improvement Project Schedule:

- Replace two small shelters located adjacent to the Almon Park swimming Beach. ADA compliant access paths to both shelters are included with this project.
- Repair and lengthen an existing wetland boardwalk located at Almon Park.
- Develop an ADA compliant access trail from the parking area at the Gillette/Wickham property to an ADA compliant boat/fishing pier on Wickham Lake.

Funding for the shelter replacement project and the pier/path project will come from either the Parks Capital Improvement budget line item or through grants from the Oneida County Economic Development Corporation and County Conservation Aids.

Recreational Trails

Miscellaneous recreational opportunities provided by the Oneida County Forestry Department in 2021 will include: 35 miles of cross country ski trail, 25 miles of hiking trail, 12 miles of mountain bike trail, 10 miles of snowshoe trail, 6 miles of Fat tire bike trail, 428 miles of state funded snowmobile trail, and 43 miles of off road ATV/UTV trail and 39 miles of ATV/UTV road routes. In addition to those trail systems mentioned above, the Oneida County Forest offers hundreds of miles of unimproved woodland trails open and available to the public for recreational use. All county forest roads not previously opened to ATV/UTV use were opened for such uses in 2020.

2020 Capital Improvement Project Accomplishments:

- Re-routed ~1/2 mile of ATV/UTV trail to eliminate road route on Bowman Rd.
- Re-surfaced and corrected erosion issues on ~5 miles of ATV/UTV trail in the Enterprise trail system.

2021 Capital Improvement Project Accomplishments:

- Begin process of developing the “Forest County Connector” ATV/UTV trail, which will run from Monico to the Forest County line adjacent to US Hwy 8.
- Begin process of replacing the Gilmore Creek snowmobile bridge in the town of Woodruff. Design specification to be drawn up and application for grant funding to be made. Construction to likely take place in 2021.
- Complete Woodboro Wildlife Area Trail 8 culvert project in the Town of Woodboro. Project includes installing several large diameter culverts and fill along the existing trail surface. Project will likely be completed in January 2021.
- Develop Cruisers Road ATV Trail in conjunction with WDNR and Nokomis ATV Club

Land Acquisition

It is a policy of Oneida County to consider the acquisition of parcels of land located within the formal boundaries of our existing county forest blocks, as said parcels become available for purchase. The rationale for this policy is largely rooted in the concept that land management becomes more efficient with the elimination or reduction of privately owned inholdings.

2020 Land Acquisition Accomplishments:

- No land was purchased in 2020; however, a landowner approached the County regarding the purchase of 32 acres he owned in the Town of Little Rice. This parcel is within the county forest acquisition boundary and is bounded on two sides by county forest. The Forestry, Land and Recreation Committee made the decision to pursue this purchase and began the process by applying for Knowles-Nelson Stewardship funding to pay for 50% of the purchase costs. It is anticipated the purchase will be finalized in 2021 pending approval of Knowles-Nelson funding.

2021 Proposed Land Acquisitions:

- The 32-acre parcel in the Town of Little Rice mentioned above, will be pursued for purchase in 2021.