



Wayne National Forest Update

Change in Forest Planning Direction

January 27, 2021—The Wayne National Forest is currently involved in work that considers diverse public views, values, and desires. In the past few years, the Wayne National Forest embarked on several new ventures that focus on delivering quality services to the public: shared stewardship alignment with the Ohio Interagency Forestry Team, the Baileys Trail System and community partnerships, promoting oak ecosystems across boundaries, and most recently, opportunities for improved recreation infrastructure through the Great American Outdoors Act.

In 2018, the Forest Service also began an assessment to determine whether to revise the Wayne National Forest 2006 Land and Resource Management Plan, also referred to as forest plan. The assessment was undertaken in part to align with the State of Ohio's Forest Action Plan update. With the assessment completed last summer and the State Forest Action Plan nearing public release, I have decided to not revise the forest plan at this time and instead focus on ongoing priorities that best serve the public. Upon review of the assessment and current priorities on the forest, I determined that the current plan can still effectively meet public desires and Forest Service goals in many areas, such as recreation opportunities, access to public lands, conservation of native plant and wildlife communities, and promotion of local economic benefits.

The work completed for the assessment has been a worthwhile investment, furthering our understanding of current and changing conditions across the national forest and the southeastern Ohio landscape. Information from the assessment will continue to be used to inform projects and initiatives across the forest. This may include, for example, adjusting management to better reflect the new science in the Terrestrial Ecosystems Supplemental Report or strategies for flexibility around recreation access and opportunities.

Collaboration with our partners and local communities and engaging the public on our efforts moving forward will continue to be a priority for the Wayne National Forest. The assessment provided an opportunity to better understand your interests, values, and desires for management of the national forest. I look forward to continuing to work with you to address priorities and pressing issues that are important to you within the guidance of the current plan.

Please join me on February 3 for our regularly scheduled public update call if you would like clarification about this decision or additional information. As always, we will send out an email reminder with the meeting information, but please note that the Forest Service is transitioning away from the current WebEx system and we may need to use an alternate platform for this call. Information will be included in the reminder email.

Thank you for your continued interest in the Wayne National Forest.

Carrie Gilbert
Forest Supervisor