

Monongahela National Forest

Administrative Correction 15 August 12, 2010 Changes to Management Prescription 8.2 Areas Due to New Information

Under the 2000 Planning Rule (36 CFR 219.31), the following administrative corrections and additions may be made at any time, are not plan amendments or revisions, and do not require public notice or the preparation of an environmental document under Forest Service NEPA procedures:

- (1) Corrections and updates of data and maps;
- (2) Updates to activity lists and schedules as required by § 219.30(d)(1)-(6);
- (3) Corrections of typographical errors or other non-substantive changes; and
- (4) Changes in monitoring methods other than those required in a monitoring strategy.

The following corrections are a result of new information from the USDI National Park Service about National Natural Landmarks (NNLs) on the Monongahela National Forest (MNF). During a recent visit to inspect NNLs on the MNF, Carolyn Davis of the NPS compared her list of NNLs on the Forest to the Forest Ecologist’s list, and two discrepancies were found. First, the Falls of Hills Creek area was not on the NPS list as an NNL. Second, the Germany Valley Karst Area was on the NPS list but not on the MNF list of NNLs. Therefore, the following administrative corrections are being made to NNLs, which are identified as Management Prescription 8.2 in the MNF Forest Plan. All acreage figures have been rounded off to the nearest 10 acres.

CORRECTIONS

Forest Plan Chapter III, page III-40 (originally page III-46)

MP 8.0 Special Area Table, seventh row beneath table header:

Number	Name of Area	District	Acres
8.1	Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area	Cheat-Potomac	57,200
8.2	Big Run Bog National Natural Landmark (NNL)	Cheat-Potomac	660
8.2	Shavers Mountain Spruce-Hemlock NNL	Cheat-Potomac	60
8.2, 8.4	Blister Run Swamp NNL and Botanical Area	Greenbrier	260
8.2, 8.4	Cranberry Glades NNL and Botanical Area	Gauley	780
8.2, 8.4	Fisher Spring Run Bog NNL and Botanical Area*	Cheat-Potomac	380
8.2, 8.3	Falls of Hills Creek Scenic Area and NNL	Gauley	150
8.2, 8.3	Gaudineer Scenic Area and NNL	Greenbrier	140
8.3	Dolly Sods Scenic Area	Cheat-Potomac	2,180

Change to: Delete “8.2” from the first column and “and NNL” from the second column. Move the information in this row to a new row located between “Gaudineer Scenic Area and NNL” and “Dolly Sods Scenic Area”. Add a new row between “Shavers Mountain Spruce-Hemlock NNL” and “Blister Run Swamp NNL and Botanical Area” and insert information about the Germany Valley Karst Area NNL, as seen in the new version of the table below.

Number	Name of Area	District	Acres
8.1	Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area	Cheat-Potomac	57,200
8.2	Big Run Bog National Natural Landmark (NNL)	Cheat-Potomac	660
8.2	Shavers Mountain Spruce-Hemlock NNL	Cheat-Potomac	60
8.2	Germany Valley Karst Area NNL***	Cheat-Potomac	610
8.2, 8.4	Blister Run Swamp NNL and Botanical Area	Greenbrier	260
8.2, 8.4	Cranberry Glades NNL and Botanical Area	Gauley	780
8.2, 8.4	Fisher Spring Run Bog NNL and Botanical Area*	Cheat-Potomac	380
8.2, 8.3	Gaudineer Scenic Area and NNL	Greenbrier	140
8.3	Falls of Hills Creek Scenic Area	Gauley	150
8.3	Dolly Sods Scenic Area	Cheat-Potomac	2,180

Rationale for Change: The Falls of Hills Creek Scenic Area is not an NNL but is still a Scenic Area. The Germany Valley Karst area is an NNL and is therefore added to the table as such.

MP 8.0 Special Area Table, last row: Total Acres: 78,450 (these acres were recalculated in Administrative Correction #14 due to changes in the Fisher Spring Run Bog NNL and Botanical Area, the Dolly Sods Scenic Area, and the Bear Rocks Bog Botanical Area.

	Total Acres	78,450
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Change to: 79,060 acres, as shown below.

	Total Acres	79,060
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Rationale for Change: The total acres of MP 8.0 areas have now changed due to the addition of 610 acres in the Germany Valley Karst Area.

Forest Plan Chapter III, page III-41 (originally page III-47)

Area Descriptions, Third Paragraph (NNLs), Third and Fourth Sentences: The seven current National Natural Landmarks on the Forest are: Blister Run Swamp Botanical Area, Cranberry Glades Botanical Area, Fisher Spring Run Bog Botanical Area, Falls of Hills Creek Scenic Area, Gaudineer Scenic Area, Big Run Bog, and Shavers Mountain Spruce-Hemlock area. Together they comprise an estimated 2,460 acres.

Change to: The seven current National Natural Landmarks on the Forest are: Blister Run Swamp Botanical Area, Cranberry Glades Botanical Area, Fisher Spring Run Bog Botanical Area, Germany Valley Karst Area, Gaudineer Scenic Area, Big Run Bog, and Shavers Mountain Spruce-Hemlock area. Together they comprise an estimated 2,890 acres.

Rationale for Change: The names and total acres of NNL areas have now changed due to the addition of the Germany Valley Karst Area and deletion of the Falls of Hills Creek Scenic Area.

Forest Plan Chapter III, page III-52 (originally page III-58)

Management Prescription 8.2 – National Natural Landmarks, First Sentence: The Falls of Hills Creek and Gaudineer NNLs are addressed under Management Prescription 8.3, as they are also Scenic Areas.

Change to: The Gaudineer NNL is addressed under Management Prescription 8.3, as it is also Scenic Area.

Rationale for Change: The Falls of Hills Creek has been deleted from this sentence because it is no longer considered an NNL.

Forest Plan Chapter III, page III-53 (originally page III-59)

Management Prescription 8.2 – National Natural Landmarks. Add the following table for the Germany Valley Karst Area NNL at the end of the NNL section, just above the subtitle for Management prescription 8.3 – Scenic Areas. (This management direction is in addition to Forest-wide direction in Chapter II and Management Prescription 8.1 direction for the NRA.)

8.2 – Germany Valley Karst Area National Natural Landmark		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8240	Maintain the karst features (caves, sinkholes) for which this area was designated.
Standard	8241	Livestock grazing is permitted, as long as it does not alter or significantly impact the karst features for which this area was designated.
Standard	8242	Public motorized use is prohibited.
Standard	8243	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.

Forest Plan Chapter III, page III-54 (originally page III-59)

Management Prescription 8.3 – Scenic Areas, First Table, First Row, Title: 8.2, 8.3 – Falls of Hills Creek Scenic Area and National Natural Landmark

Change to: 8.2 - Falls of Hills Creek Scenic Area

Rationale for Change: The 8.2 MP number and the “and National Natural Landmark” have been deleted from this title because Falls of Hills Creek is no longer considered an NNL.

SUMMARY

These administrative corrections are changes in the Forest Plan that are not substantive changes in the plan components. The changes are not considered substantive because Management Prescriptions 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3 have somewhat similar management emphasis and direction. Therefore, no substantive change in Forest Plan outputs, services, and expectations are anticipated from changing one of these prescriptions to another. No new road construction, programmed timber harvest, or minerals management is expected in any of these prescriptions. The new NNL area has little if any natural gas potential. Recreation opportunities and settings are the same. Although the NNL lies within the NRA, there is little recreation occurring in the

NNL sections, and that trend is expected to continue. Livestock grazing is currently occurring in one section of the new NNL, and it will be allowed to continue as long as it does not alter or significantly impact the caves and other karst features for which this area was designated.

In addition, these corrections are responding to changes that resulted from a Forest Service error in NNL areas and acreages that was identified by the NPS, the administrator of the areas. Therefore the MNF is coordinating and cooperating with the NPS to make the needed corrections.

Corrected pages III-40, III-41, III-52, and III-53 are attached below. These pages replace the original pages III-46, III-47, III-58, and III-59 in the 2006 Forest Plan. Pages III-54 through III-60 are also included to show how they look now due to the ripple effect changes resulting from the administrative corrections on page III-53, specifically the addition of a new table for the Germany Valley Karst Area NNL.

Management Prescription 8.0 – Special Areas

Management Emphasis

This prescription emphasizes:

- The preservation of unique ecosystems or areas for scientific or recreational purposes.
- Areas to conduct research.
- The protection of special areas of national significance.

The MP 8.0 Special Areas on the Forest have been categorized into similar groupings and are shown in the table below.

Number	Name of Area	District	Acres
8.1	Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area	Cheat-Potomac	57,200
8.2	Big Run Bog National Natural Landmark (NNL)	Cheat-Potomac	660
8.2	Shavers Mountain Spruce-Hemlock NNL	Cheat-Potomac	60
8.2	Germany Valley Karst Area NNL***	Cheat-Potomac	610
8.2, 8.4	Blister Run Swamp NNL and Botanical Area	Greenbrier	260
8.2, 8.4	Cranberry Glades NNL and Botanical Area	Gauley	780
8.2, 8.4	Fisher Spring Run Bog NNL and Botanical Area*	Cheat-Potomac	410
8.2, 8.3	Gaudineer Scenic Area and NNL	Greenbrier	140
8.3	Falls of Hills Creek Scenic Area	Gauley	150
8.3	Dolly Sods Scenic Area	Cheat-Potomac	2,180
8.4	Bear Rocks Bog Botanical Area*	Cheat-Potomac	10
8.4	Bickle Slope Botanical Area	Cheat-Potomac	10
8.4	Big Draft Botanical Area	Marlinton-WSS	70
8.4	Black Mountain Botanical Area	Marlinton-WSS	10
8.4	Fanny Bennett Hemlock Grove	Cheat-Potomac	70
8.4	Glade Run Swamp Botanical Area	Greenbrier	60
8.4	Meadow Creek Botanical Area	Marlinton-WSS	20
8.4	Mt. Porte Crayon Botanical Area	Cheat-Potomac	390
8.4	North Fork Mountain Red Pine Botanical Area **	Cheat-Potomac	10
8.4	Rohrbaugh Plains Botanical Area	Cheat-Potomac	140
8.4	Max Rothkugel Plantation	Greenbrier	150
8.4	Stuart Knob Botanical Area	Cheat-Potomac	350
8.4	Virgin White Pine Botanical Area	Marlinton-WSS	10
8.4	Whites Draft Botanical Area	Marlinton-WSS	70
8.4	Blue Rock Geological Area***	Cheat-Potomac	260
8.5	Pike Knob Candidate Research Natural Area (RNA)	Cheat-Potomac	1,950
8.5	Black Cherry Candidate RNA	Greenbrier	120
8.5	Red Spruce Candidate RNA	Greenbrier	60
8.5	Yellow Poplar Candidate RNA	Gauley	110
8.5	Fernow Experimental Forest (Research Area)	Cheat-Potomac	4,550
8.5	Loop Road Research Area	Greenbrier	800
8.6	Spruce Mountain Grouse Management Area	Cheat-Potomac	1,750
8.6	Brushy Mountain Grouse Management Area	Marlinton-WSS	6,830
		Total Acres	79,360

*Within Dolly Sods Wilderness

**Within Pike Knob Candidate RNA

***Within the Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks NRA

Area Descriptions

The areas included in this prescription are scattered throughout the Forest and are of varying sizes (see MP 8.0 map). Their special characteristics are recognized by various administrative designations. Some areas have more than one special designation, such as the Cranberry Glades Botanical Area, which is also a National Natural Landmark. These designations have been separated into the following categories:

8.1 – Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area

This 99,900 acre NRA is divided into two units. The Spruce Knob unit comprises 27,000 acres, including 5,800 acres of private and 21,200 acres of NFS lands, and the Seneca Rocks unit, which is 72,800 acres in size, including 36,900 acres of private and 36,000 of NFS lands. The public lands are managed to provide a variety of recreation opportunities and settings. Recreation opportunities range from a high degree of development (Seneca Rocks Discovery Center and Seneca Shadows Campground) to very low development in backcountry areas, such as North Fork Mountain.

8.2 – National Natural Landmarks

The Park Service, Department of Interior, administers the National Natural Landmarks Program. The objective of the program is to assist in the preservation of a variety of significant ecological and geological natural areas which, when considered together, will illustrate the diversity of the country's natural heritage. The seven current National Natural Landmarks on the Forest are: Blister Run Swamp Botanical Area, Cranberry Glades Botanical Area, Fisher Spring Run Bog Botanical Area, Germany Valley Karst Area, Gaudineer Scenic Area, Big Run Bog, and Shavers Mountain Spruce-Hemlock area. Together they comprise an estimated 2,920 acres.

8.3 – Scenic Areas

Scenic areas are places of outstanding beauty that require special management to preserve visual quality. There are currently three scenic areas on the Forest: Dolly Sods, Falls of Hills Creek, and Gaudineer. Together they comprise an estimated 2,470 acres.

8.4 – Ecological Areas

Ecological areas have been established to preserve rare ecosystems or areas to enhance biological diversity and provide for scientific or recreational activities. There are currently 17 Botanical Areas and one Geological Area on the Forest, comprising an estimated total of 3,080 acres.

Botanical Areas. Botanical areas contain specimens or groups of plants in plant communities that are significant because of the form, color, occurrence, habitat, location, life history, arrangement, ecology, environment, or variety.

Geological Area. The Blue Rock Geological Area is the only designated area on the Forest. This area is of special interest due to its high scenic quality, rare plant species, and cliff and talus habitats.

Management Prescription 8.2 – National Natural Landmarks

The Gaudineer NNL is addressed under Management Prescription 8.3, as it is also a Scenic Area.

8.2 – Big Run Bog National Natural Landmark		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8201	Maintain and study the bog community.
Standard	8202	Do not sign area for public or identify area on maps intended for public distribution.
Standard	8203	No facilities shall be constructed within the bog to support recreation use.
Standard	8204	Plants or plant parts may only be removed for scientific purposes and with written permission.
Standard	8205	Vegetation manipulation, planting, or introduction of non-native invasive species shall not be allowed within the bog.
Standard	8206	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.
Standard	8207	Erosion control work in areas draining into the glades shall be done promptly, using methods that will produce quick and effective control.
Standard	8208	Use of limestone gravel shall be limited or prohibited where it could adversely affect the natural pH level of the bog.

8.2 – Shavers Mountain Spruce-Hemlock Stand National Natural Landmark		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8209	Maintain old growth/mature forest ecosystem.
Standard	8210	Timber harvest is prohibited, as much of this area is in the Otter Creek Wilderness.
Standard	8211	No new facilities or roads shall be constructed.
Standard	8212	Livestock grazing is not permitted.
Standard	8213	Public motorized use is prohibited.
Standard	8214	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.

8.2, 8.4 – Blister Run Swamp National Natural Landmark and Botanical Area		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8215	Maintain and study red spruce and balsam fir characteristics.
Standard	8216	Do not sign area for public or identify area on maps intended for public distribution.
Standard	8217	No facilities or roads shall be constructed. Existing facility or road maintenance is allowed.
Standard	8218	Plants or plant parts may only be removed for scientific purposes and with written permission.
Standard	8219	Silvicultural practices are allowed to maintain vegetation types.
Standard	8220	Use of limestone gravel shall be limited or prohibited where it could adversely affect the natural pH level of the swamp.
Standard	8221	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.

8.2, 8.4 – Cranberry Glades National Natural Landmark and Botanical Area		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8222	Protect the bog ecosystem, while providing recreation and interpretive uses of the area to a level consistent with its protection.
Standard	8223	Plants or plant parts may only be removed for scientific purposes and with written permission, with one exception. The gathering of cranberries for personal use is allowed from the boardwalk.
Standard	8224	Livestock grazing is prohibited.
Standard	8225	No campgrounds or picnic areas shall be constructed within ½ mile of the area.
Standard	8226	No impoundments shall be constructed upstream from the glades.
Standard	8227	Hazard or down trees near the boardwalk may be removed for trail maintenance and public safety purposes.
Standard	8228	No timber products, including firewood, shall be removed.
Standard	8229	No timber stand improvement or reforestation is allowed.
Standard	8230	No wildlife habitat management involving vegetation manipulation is allowed.
Standard	8231	Erosion control work in areas draining into the glades shall be done promptly, using methods that will produce quick and effective control.
Standard	8232	Use of limestone gravel shall be limited or prohibited where it could adversely affect the natural pH level of the glades.
Standard	8233	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.

8.2, 8.4 – Fisher Spring Bog National Natural Landmark and Botanical Area		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8234	Maintain the integrity of the bog and its associated flora and fauna.
Standard	8235	Do not sign area for public or identify area on maps intended for public distribution.
Standard	8236	No facilities or roads shall be constructed. Existing facility or road maintenance is allowed.
Standard	8237	Plants or plant parts may only be removed for scientific purposes and with written permission.
Standard	8238	Open campfires are prohibited.
Standard	8239	Mineral exploration and development are prohibited.

8.2 – Germany Valley Karst Area National Natural Landmark		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8240	Maintain the karst features (caves, sinkholes) for which this area was designated.
Standard	8241	Livestock grazing is permitted, as long as it does not alter or significantly impact the karst features for which this area was designated.
Standard	8242	Public motorized use is prohibited.
Standard	8243	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.

Management Prescription 8.3 – Scenic Areas

8.3 – Falls of Hills Creek Scenic Area		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8301	Emphasize recreational use of the area, while maintaining the high scenic quality.
Standard	8302	Livestock grazing is not permitted.
Standard	8303	Camping is prohibited within the area boundary. Picnicking and interpretation are allowed.
Standard	8304	Commercial timber harvest is prohibited except to address public safety concerns.
Standard	8305	Hazard trees may be removed, and vegetation may be cut to create or improve scenic overlooks.
Standard	8306	No timber stand improvement or reforestation is allowed.
Standard	8307	No wildlife openings shall be created or maintained.
Standard	8308	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.

8.2, 8.3 – Gaudineer National Natural Landmark and Scenic Area		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8309	Maintain virgin forest characteristics.
Standard	8310	Recreation development is limited to interpretation of the area's special characteristics.
Standard	8311	Trail maintenance shall conform to the level of public access and use. Favor native materials. Hazard trees or branches adjacent to or leaning over the trail may be removed.
Standard	8312	Public motorized use on trails is prohibited.
Standard	8313	No new facilities shall be constructed. Maintenance of existing facilities is allowed.
Standard	8314	No timber products, including firewood, shall be removed from the area.
Standard	8315	No timber stand improvement, intermediate harvests, or reforestation are allowed.
Standard	8316	Use of limestone gravel on the loop trail is prohibited to minimize potential effects to the plant communities in the area.
Standard	8317	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.
Standard	8318	Insect and disease control is not allowed except to protect adjacent land values or control non-native invasive pests.
Standard	8319	No wildlife openings shall be created or maintained.
Guideline	8320	Visitors should be made aware of the inherent danger in the area during high winds.

8.3 – Dolly Sods Scenic Area		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8321	Maintain the natural appearance, and the scenic, recreational, and botanical qualities of the area.
Standard	8322	Livestock grazing may only be permitted if there is no conflict with the scenic and botanical qualities of the area.
Standard	8323	Structural and non-structural range improvements are prohibited.
Standard	8324	Camping is prohibited within 300 feet of Forest Road 75.
Standard	8325	No commercially owned facilities are allowed.
Standard	8326	Public motorized transport and equipment is restricted to Forest maintained roads.
Standard	8327	Open campfires are prohibited.
Standard	8328	Pack and saddle stock may only be used on trails and areas maintained for this use.

8.3 – Dolly Sods Scenic Area		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Standard	8329	Green commercial timber sales are prohibited.
Standard	8330	Timber cutting, pesticides, or prescribed fire are allowed if used to improve scenic or botanical qualities, or for safety reasons, salvage, or insect and disease control.
Standard	8331	Personal use firewood collecting is prohibited.
Standard	8332	Use of limestone gravel shall be limited or prohibited where it could adversely affect the natural pH level of bogs or other rare communities within the area.
Standard	8333	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.
Standard	8334	No new wildlife openings, impoundments, or water holes shall be constructed.
Standard	8335	Commercial special uses that require the construction of permanent structures are not allowed.
Standard	8336	Existing roads within the area shall be maintained or improved, but no new roads shall be built for Forest management.

Management Prescription 8.4 – Botanical and Geological Areas

The Blister Run Swamp, Cranberry Glades, and Fisher Spring Run Bog Botanical Areas are addressed under Management Prescription 8.2, as they are also National Natural Landmarks.

8.4 – Botanical Areas: Bear Rocks Bog, Bickle Slope, Big Draft, Glade Run Swamp, Meadow Creek, Mt. Porte Crayon, Rohrbaugh Plains, Stuart Knob, and Whites Draft		
Type	No.	Direction Description
Goal	8401	Maintain rare plant communities for which the areas were established.
Standard	8402	Commercial timber harvest is prohibited except to address public safety concerns or to protect the special characteristics of the area.
Standard	8403	Do not sign area for public or identify area on maps intended for public distribution.
Standard	8404	No facilities or roads shall be constructed.
Standard	8405	Plants or plant parts may only be removed for scientific purposes and with written permission.
Standard	8406	Use of limestone gravel shall be limited or prohibited where it could adversely affect the natural pH level of bogs within the areas.
Standard	8407	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in these prescription areas, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy. The exception is Rohrbaugh Plains Bog in the Dolly Sods Wilderness, where mineral exploration and development is prohibited.
Standard	8408	Motorized travel is prohibited except as authorized by the District Ranger for outstanding rights, health or safety emergencies, or management of natural resources.

8.4 – Black Mountain Botanical Area		
Type	No.	Direction Description
Goal	8409	Maintain stands of Black Mountain purple rhododendron. Treat overstories to perpetuate purple rhododendron and blossom production along Forest Road 76.
Standard	8410	Do not sign area for public or identify area on maps intended for public distribution.
Standard	8411	No new facilities shall be constructed. Maintenance of existing facilities is allowed.
Standard	8412	Plants or plant parts may only be removed for scientific purposes and with written permission.
Standard	8413	Motorized travel is prohibited except as authorized by the District Ranger for outstanding

8.4 – Black Mountain Botanical Area		
Type	No.	Direction Description
		rights, health or safety emergencies, or management of natural resources.
Standard	8414	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.

8.4 – Fannie Bennett Hemlock Grove Botanical Area		
Type	No.	Direction Description
Goal	8415	Emphasize the preservation of virgin forest.
Standard	8416	No facilities or roads shall be constructed. Existing facility or road maintenance is allowed.
Standard	8417	Plants or plant parts may only be removed for scientific purposes and with written permission.
Standard	8418	Commercial timber harvest is prohibited except to address public safety concerns.
Standard	8419	Commercial special uses that require a permanent facility shall not be permitted.
Standard	8420	Motorized travel is prohibited except as authorized by the District Ranger for outstanding rights, health or safety emergencies, or management of natural resources.
Standard	8421	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.

8.4 – North Fork Mountain Red Pine Botanical Area		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8422	Emphasize the preservation of virgin forest.
Standard	8423	No facilities or roads shall be constructed. Existing facility or road maintenance is allowed.
Standard	8424	Plants or plant parts may only be removed for scientific purposes and with written permission.
Standard	8425	Commercial timber harvest is prohibited except to address public safety concerns or to help maintain the special characteristics of the area.
Standard	8426	Commercial special uses that require a permanent facility shall not be permitted.
Standard	8427	Motorized travel is prohibited except as authorized by the District Ranger for outstanding rights, health or safety emergencies, or management of natural resources.
Standard	8428	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.

8.4 – Max Rothkugel Plantation		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8429	Emphasize plantation development and protection. a) Release, thin, and display planted trees. b) Study and promote the regeneration of Norway spruce and European larch. c) Use Integrated Pest Management methods to minimize development of pest problems.
Standard	8430	Plants or plant parts may only be removed for scientific purposes and with written permission.
Standard	8431	Recreational development shall be limited to interpretive opportunities related to the area's unique characteristics. A small parking area near US Highway 250 may be provided.
Standard	8432	Trail construction and maintenance shall conform with the level of interpretive opportunities offered to facilitate public access and use. Favor the use of native materials. Obvious hazards, such as dead trees or branches near or over the trail, may be removed.
Standard	8433	Rotation age shall be defined by the age of physiological decline.
Standard	8434	Timber products, except firewood, may be removed by commercial sales.
Standard	8435	Activity fuels may be removed or treated by any means other than burning.

8.4 – Max Rothkugel Plantation		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Standard	8436	In and around the developed site, vegetation management shall normally occur between November 1 and May 1.
Standard	8437	All fires within the area shall be suppressed.
Standard	8438	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.

8.4 – Virgin White Pine Botanical Area		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8439	Emphasize the preservation of virgin forest.
Standard	8440	Do not sign area for public or identify area on maps intended for public distribution.
Standard	8441	No facilities or roads shall be constructed. Existing facility or road maintenance is allowed.
Standard	8442	Plants or plant parts may only be removed for scientific purposes and with written permission.
Standard	8443	Commercial timber harvest is prohibited except to address public safety concerns.
Standard	8444	Firewood collecting and sales are prohibited.
Standard	8445	Hazard trees adjacent to and posing a threat to traffic on Forest Road 96 may be removed.
Standard	8446	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.

8.4 – Blue Rock Geological Area		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8447	Maintain the geological feature and associated resources for which the area was established.
Standard	8448	Commercial timber harvest is prohibited except to address public safety concerns.
Standard	8449	No new facilities or roads shall be constructed.
Standard	8450	Motorized travel is prohibited except as authorized by the District Ranger for outstanding rights, health or safety emergencies, or management of natural resources.
Standard	8451	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.

Management Prescription 8.5 – Research Areas

8.5 – Black Cherry, Red Spruce, and Yellow Poplar Candidate Research Natural Areas		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8501	Maintain designated cover types for research purposes.
Standard	8502	Commercial timber harvest is prohibited except to address public safety concerns.
Standard	8503	Do not sign area for public or identify area on maps intended for public distribution.
Standard	8504	No facilities or roads shall be constructed.
Standard	8505	Livestock grazing is not permitted.
Standard	8506	Public motorized use is prohibited.
Standard	8507	Plants or plant parts may only be removed for scientific purposes and with written permission.
Standard	8508	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.

8.5 – Pike Knob Candidate Research Natural Area		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8509	Maintain existing cover types for research purposes.
Goal	8510	Cooperate with adjacent landowner on management of red pine and other rare plants.
Standard	8511	Commercial timber harvest is prohibited except to address public safety concerns, to conduct research, or to maintain the values for which the area was created.
Standard	8512	No facilities or roads shall be constructed.
Standard	8513	Livestock grazing is not permitted.
Standard	8514	Public motorized use is prohibited.
Standard	8515	Plants or plant parts may only be removed for scientific purposes and with written permission.
Standard	8516	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.
Standard	8517	Commercial special uses that require a permanent facility shall not be permitted.
Standard	8518	Prescribed fire may be used to maintain the existing forest or as part of research efforts conducted in the area.

Because the Fernow Experimental Forest is managed under a separate mandate, different than the rest of the Forest, it has been given a separate Management Prescription section, complete with Management Emphasis, Area Description, Desired Conditions, and Management Direction.

Management Prescription 8.5 – Fernow Experimental Forest

Management Emphasis

This prescription emphasizes management of the Fernow Experimental Forest for research activities. The Fernow was formally mandated in 1934 to be made “permanently available for forest research and the demonstration of its results”. The land management goal is to facilitate scientific research of central Appalachian forest ecosystems in order to improve their management. Therefore, maintaining the ability to conduct manipulative research is a primary objective on the Fernow Experimental Forest.

Area Description

The 4,600-acre Fernow Experimental Forest is located south of Parsons, West Virginia, and is administered by the staff of RWU-NE-4353, Sustaining the Diversity and Productivity of Appalachian Forests, of the Northeastern Research Station. The Fernow encompasses most of the Elklick Run drainage basin and the Stonelick Run drainage basin. The Fernow is well-roaded, but basically undeveloped, with no access to electrical power. An estimated 58% of the Fernow area has privately owned mineral rights. The area includes Big Springs Cave, a winter hibernacula for Indiana bats, and throughout the forest, many populations of running buffalo clover. Both are federally endangered species.

The ecological land type of the Fernow Experimental Forest is referred to as the Allegheny Mountains Section of the Central Appalachian Broadleaf Forest (M221B) in the Forest Service National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units. The landtype association is designated as

Allegheny Front Side Slopes (Ba10) and vegetation is classified as mixed mesophytic. Elevations range from 1750 to 3650 feet above sea level, and slopes ranging from 20 to 50 percent cover most of the area. There are no current or planned range allotments within the area.

The Loop Road Research Area is also assigned to this Management Prescription; however it is not within the boundary of the Fernow Experimental Forest. This 800-acre area on the Greenbrier Ranger District on Middle Mountain is managed by the Experimental Forest staff for conducting research studies related to the management of Appalachian timber types, specifically growth and yield studies of managed and unmanaged stands.

Desired Conditions

The Fernow Experimental Forest supports an active research program that includes both long-term and short-term experiments, and research that is manipulative as well as observational in nature. The research program addresses research needs of a wide variety of clients. Ongoing, long-term research is continued and opportunities for new research are available.

Management Direction

Forest-wide Standards and Guidelines are generally applicable to the Fernow, except where they conflict with research activities, or as described below.

Management Direction for 8.5 – Fernow Experimental Forest		
Type	Number	Direction Description
1900 - Vegetation		
Goal	8519	Manage vegetation in conjunction with ongoing and proposed research studies, while providing habitat for populations of non-game, game and threatened, endangered and sensitive species.
Guideline	8520	Silvicultural treatments, including fire, harvesting and herbicides, may be utilized in designed research studies.
Guideline	8521	Monitor and maintain populations of endangered and sensitive plants.
2310 – Recreation System Planning		
Goal	8522	Protect the integrity of research studies from uncontrolled recreational disturbance by limiting recreational use.
2350 - General Forest Environment Areas		
Standard	8523	No overnight camping or campfires are permitted on the Fernow Experimental Forest.
Standard	8524	Only ORV use approved for administrative purposes is allowed; no recreational ORV use is allowed.
2500 – Water and Soil		
Goal	8525	Maintain the integrity of water and soil resources during research manipulations.
Guideline	8526	Use West Virginia’s Best Management Practices for providing streamside zone protection, including erosion and sedimentation control.
2600 – Wildlife Management		
Goal	8527	Provide habitat for game and non-game species.
Guideline	8528	Monitor and maintain habitat for threatened, endangered, and sensitive wildlife species.
2800 – Minerals		
Standard	8529	Federal oil and gas leases may only be issued if subject to a stipulation that prohibits

Management Direction for 8.5 – Fernow Experimental Forest		
Type	Number	Direction Description
		surface occupancy.
Standard	8530	Federal coal may only be leased in those cases where it would be extracted in conjunction with adjacent private mineral development.
Guideline	8531	Extra restrictions, such as timing of operations, may be necessary in this prescription to protect ongoing research projects.
5100 – Fire		
Standard	8532	Wildfires shall typically be suppressed. Any suppression techniques, including the use of motorized and mechanical equipment, may be used.
Standard	8533	Prescribed natural fire shall not occur without an approved plan.
Guideline	8534	Prescribed fire may be used as part of ongoing research projects.
7100 - Transportation System Planning		
Standard	8535	Roads that are constructed for outstanding rights or the development of approved oil and gas and other federal mineral operations shall be built to the minimum standard needed to protect other resources, and will normally be decommissioned and rehabilitated at the conclusion of operations.

Management Prescription 8.6 – Grouse Management Areas

8.6 – Spruce Mountain and Brushy Mountain Grouse Management Areas		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8601	Emphasize the creation and maintenance of ruffed grouse habitat. Coordinate vegetation management with the habitat needs of species requiring relatively high degrees of diversity.
Standard	8602	Rotation ages may be reduced to achieve a cutting pattern desirable for habitat diversity.
Standard	8603	Consult with WVDNR biologists in the planning of project activities for this area.
Standard	8604	Construction, drilling, and development under federal gas or oil leases is not allowed during grouse hunting season.
Guideline	8605	Public motorized use should be restricted to reduce grouse disturbance and vulnerability. Work with WVDNR to provide sufficient motorized access for adequate hunter distribution during the grouse hunting season. Unlimited motorized access should be avoided.
Guideline	8606	Opening size and spacing limitations may be varied in order to increase edge effect and provide habitat diversity. Linear openings and forest clearings may be developed to provide brood habitat.
Guideline	8607	Favor non-invasive legumes when developing new wildlife openings.
Guideline	8608	Prescribed fire should be used as a tool to delay succession where possible, especially in pine-oak stands.
Guideline	8609	At least 3 drumming logs should be left per acre in regeneration areas.
Guideline	8610	Grapevine and greenbrier vines should be retained along road edges and in regeneration areas.