

GREEN RIDGE STATE FOREST

ANNUAL WORK PLAN

FISCAL YEAR 2023

Prepared: *Jean Morgan*
(Forest Manager)

7/18/22
Date

Reviewed: *[Signature]*
(Regional Manager)

7/22/22
Date

Approved: *[Signature]*
(Environmental Specialist)

2022.08.04
Date

Forest Overview

Green Ridge State Forest is located in eastern Allegany County. It is the only State Forest located in the Ridge and Valley province. Green Ridge receives the least amount of rainfall in Maryland, averaging 36 inches annually. Consisting of 49,012 acres, Green Ridge is the largest contiguous block of forestland in Maryland within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. It accounts for about 30% of the State Forest System and approximately 12% of all DNR land in Maryland.

The general geographic boundaries of Green Ridge are Town Creek to the west and Sideling Hill Creek to the east. The northern boundary extends to the Mason-Dixon Line. The southern boundary parallels the Potomac River.

Elevations range from 500 feet above sea level on the Potomac River to 2,000 feet on Town Hill.

Three Major highways traverse the forest in an east to west direction: Route 144, Maryland Route 51, and Interstate 68.

In the early 1800's, Richard Caton and William Carroll in partnership owned much of the land that is Green Ridge State Forest today. Richard Caton was the son-in-law to Charles Carroll of Carrollton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. William Carroll was the grandson of Daniel Carroll of Rock Creek, a framer of the United States Constitution. The land was originally patented from vacant lands during the 1820-1840 period for inclusion into various timber and mining interests, primarily the Town Hill Mining, Manufacturing, and Timber Company. This business venture was financed by the estate of Charles Carroll of Carrollton. The crumbling stone structure known as the Carroll Chimney, part of the steam-powered sawmill built in 1836, is the only known surviving structure of that period.

In the 1880-1912 era, most of the remaining virgin forest was cut and a period of neglect resulted in numerous wildfires. During the early 1900's, the Mertens family of Cumberland attempted to convert the forest into apple orchards and promoted it as "The Largest Apple Orchard in the Universe."

The orchard was subdivided into 10-acre parcels and sold to individuals as investment properties. Five acres of each property parcel was cleared, burned, and planted into apple trees. The remaining five acres had the best trees cut and the poorer trees were left standing. The orchard company went into bankruptcy in 1918. The interests of the corporation were acquired by the State Department of Forestry in 1931.

The first forest management activities at Green Ridge were performed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930's. Their main focus was fire control. Other work consisted of building roads, trails, recreation enhancements, and the management of existing forest for its future timber and wildlife potential.

During World War II, the CCC camp at Fifteen Mile Creek housed German prisoners of war who were required to cut pulpwood in the forest. As the forest grew it became popular with outdoor enthusiasts, especially hunters. It also contributed more and more to the local wood products industry.

Today, Green Ridge is a diverse forest consisting primarily of a 110 year old even-aged mixed oak forest, mixed with a wide variety of age classes resulting from various silviculture activities beginning in the late 1960's.

The oak consists of a variety of species, including black oak, white oak, red oak, scarlet oak, and chestnut oak. Five native pines grow at Green Ridge: white pine, Virginia pine, pitch pine, table-mountain pine, and shortleaf pine. Flowering dogwood, redbud, and serviceberry are common understory trees.

Upland animals found in abundant numbers on the forest are white-tailed deer, fox and gray squirrel, raccoons, red fox, and cottontail rabbits. Other animals include muskrat, beaver, mink, chipmunks, mice, flying squirrels, weasels, skunks, opossums, bobcat, and black bear.

Wild turkey, ruffed grouse, and woodcock are popular game birds on Green Ridge. Other birds include the pileated woodpecker, red-tailed hawk, and the barred owl. A wide variety of neo-tropical migrants and songbirds also occur on the forest.

Wildflowers such as mayapple, coltsfoot, spring beauty, trillium, bloodroot, and spiderwort flourish at Green Ridge.

Green Ridge State Forest Fiscal Year 2023 AWP Summary

This work plan includes silviculture proposals for a total of 196 managed acres within the 20,000 acre general management zone in which area based sustainable forest management is practiced. Of these managed acres, harvests are proposed. There will be some variation between managed acres and actual harvest acres to provide for various buffers and/or retention areas. Under area based management, the annual target is 200 managed acres.

The silviculture proposals within this plan include 165 acres of variable retention harvests for an estimated 596 mbf of hardwood.

In addition to the above silviculture projects, other maintenance, recreation, ecosystem restoration, watershed improvement, monitoring, and special projects are included in this plan. Specific projects are described within the following pages.

Maintenance Projects

General Maintenance will continue such as maintaining 100 primitive campsites, hazardous tree removal, pole gate installations as needed, mowing and maintenance of handicap access hunting areas, and general maintenance of headquarters complex, shooting range, and outbuildings.

1. Identify and mark all new acquisition boundaries & re-blaze 15 miles of existing state forest boundary.
2. Continue to maintain 100 primitive campsites.
3. Continue to maintain public shooting range.
4. Continue to maintain viewsheds on 5 overlooks.
5. Continue to maintain 4 disabled hunter access roads.

Recreation Projects

- 1. Maintain approximately 62 miles of trails including 50 miles of hiking trails and 12 miles of mountain bike trail.**
- 2. Continue to enhance upland game hunting opportunities by enhancing early successional wildlife habitat at Kirk Orchard, Bull Ring Ranch, Anthony's Ridge, Town Creek, and Kasecamp Bottomlands.**
- 3. Provide 2-4 guided interpretive tours on the forest to share management principles and practices with the public.**

SPECIAL PROJECTS

A. Forest Regeneration Inventory:

A Critical part of achieving long term sustainable forestry is monitoring and measuring the outcomes or responses to the management. Since the Stand delineation and inventory project was completed in 2017, these technician resources will be available to focus on inventory of the regeneration and response to management. This work will include collecting regeneration inventory data under the Silvah protocol and all stands will be sampled 3-5 years post regeneration harvest.

B. Continue to Network with Partners:

GRSF is committed to being a “teaching forest” and strives to reconnect people to the land through providing forest management tours for the general public, hosting training sessions and forest resource-based events, service learning projects, and serving as natural laboratory for schools and universities.

1. Maintain working relationship with Allegany College of Maryland-Forestry Program.
2. Continue participation with Appalachian Forest Heritage Area (AFHA)
3. Continue partnership with the Ridge and Valley Stream Keepers (RVSK). GRSF provides meeting room and shares information in return RVSK monitor water quality in the streams within GRSF.
4. Continue partnership with The Wildlife Management Institute and RGS to work on enhancing early succession wildlife habitat on the forest.
5. Continue to support and collaborate with Volunteer groups to facilitate the spirit of service on the forest and reconnect people to the land.

**Green Ridge State Forest
Fiscal Year 2023
Silviculture Projects Summary**

| Proposal Name | Compartment | Managed Ac. | Harvest Ac. | Est (mbf) | Prescription |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| 1 David Thomas Road | 67 | 33 | 29 | 114 | VR |
| 2 Mountain Road | 46A | 47 | 44 | 152 | VR |
| 3 Oldtown Orleans Road | 63 | 75 | 54 | 201 | VR |
| 4 Manifold Road | 38B | 38 | 38 | 129 | VR |

***Total 193 165 596 mbf**

Abbreviations for prescriptions:
VR Variable Retention