

Savage River State Forest

Annual Work Plan



Fiscal Year 2010

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Approved: *[Signature]* 1-12-2010
(Environmental Specialist) Date

State Forest Annual Work Plan

A. Forest Overview

Includes an over site of the forest; history, size, location, special features, etc.

B. AWP summary

Includes number of sales, total harvest acres, acres by harvest method, estimated harvest volume and other important features for the work to be performed during the next year..

C. Maintenance Projects

Includes boundary maintenance, road maintenance, building maintenance and other such projects.

D. Recreation Projects

Includes projects such as campsite improvements, hunting programs, special recreational activities, ATV and hiking trail maintenance, trail grants, signage, and other projects specific to benefiting recreational users of the forest.

E. Special Projects

Includes activities to gain or maintain third party forest certification, GIS databases, and other such activities.

F. Silvicultural Projects

Includes forest harvesting, prescribed fire programs, fertilization, reforestation, and other such projects. This section must include the following:

Final Silvicultural Activities:

1. Site Map
2. Silvicultural Prescription
3. Stand Data

Review Process:

1. Review Summary
2. Interdisciplinary Team Comments (collective)
3. Advisory Committee Comments
4. Public Comments

G. Watershed Improvement Projects

Includes special projects to enhance water quality, wetland restoration, and other such activities.

H. Ecosystem Restoration Projects

Includes projects to manage exotic invasive species, efforts to restore shale barrens or other natural habitats, and other such activities aimed at improving ecosystems.

I. Monitoring Projects

Includes CFI forest inventories, and other inventory projects being conducted on the forest, watershed monitoring, and other such projects.

J. Budget

Includes a proposed budget specific to the forest.

Savage River State Forest

Fiscal Year 2010 Annual Work Plan Proposals

A. FOREST OVERVIEW

Savage River State Forest is approximately 54,446 acres in size and is situated in the northeastern quadrant of Garrett County of Western Maryland. It is a second growth mixed hardwood forest dominated by oak species, sugar and red maple, black cherry, hickory and ash. Owing to high rainfall and certain geographic and/or topographic features, Savage River State Forest contains many excellent quality growing sites stocked with superior quality trees. The forest contains approximately 4000 acres of conifer plantations, which were established in the 1940's following state acquisition. Red pine is the dominant tree species within these plantations but other conifers include white pine, Norway spruce, larch, and Scotch pine. These plantations were established as nurse crops to rehabilitate abandoned and depleted farm fields, with the long-term goal of conversion back to native hardwoods as appropriate.

Savage River State Forest has been intensively managed for over 60 years. Forest harvest and grooming operations are undertaken to thin out overstocked stands, to effectively deal with public safety concerns, to harvest mature or diseased/dying trees, to improve habitat for certain wildlife species, to assist and provide for certain research needs, to address aesthetic concerns, and to increase the proportion of age/height diversity of forested stands. The benefits of these treatments are self-evident and are substantial – including improved wildlife habitat, abundant mast yields, and a forested landscape that is healthier, more biologically diverse, and more resistant to disease and insect attack. Gypsy Moth defoliations were heavy in 2006 and very heavy in 2007, denuding approximately 25,000 acres which is half the forest. The spray suppression program was boosted to over 30,000 acres in 2008 and a very wet spring and summer assisted via fungal infections of the caterpillars to apparently wipe this destructive insect out. In the aftermath of these defoliations, tree mortality among the preferred species is very high in those areas which were defoliated two consecutive years. The areas of heaviest tree mortality are the Middle Fork Wildland, Big Savage Wildland, Parts of Meadow Mountain, Fairview Road vicinity, and the upper slopes above Monroe Run and Poplar Lick. Salvage of dead trees will take place where practical and permissible. Much of the heaviest tree mortality has occurred in areas restricted from timber harvest administratively or in areas of steep and restrictive terrain. Accessible areas will be salvaged as markets permit. It is anticipated that fuelwood cutters will aggressively harvest dead trees which are accessible from the roadsides, and in fact this trend has already begun.

B. ANNUAL WORK PLAN SUMMARY

The FY-2010 Annual Work Plan for Savage River State Forest was formulated during the fall and winter of 2007/2008. It contains projects to be undertaken in the areas of Silviculture, Maintenance, Special Projects, and Recreation.

Savage River will harvest approximately 1.2 million board feet of hardwood sawtimber through implementation of the FY-10 Annual Work Plan. The plan involves six proposed hardwood silvicultural projects within the General Management Zone of the forest. Harvest areas range

from 25 acres to 60 acres, with the average being 38 acres. The program involves Commercial Thinnings on 74 acres, Deferment Harvests on 105 acres, and Regeneration Harvests on 50 acres.

The following requirements are pertinent to all silvicultural treatments. In effect, these are "Best Management Practices" and are taken into account when preparing a sale, supervising an ongoing operation, closing an operation or otherwise embodied within the contract itself.

- Continue to drain, revegetate, and stabilize all haul roads, skid trails and landings
- Gate or otherwise close forest access roads to public use following completion of each operation.
- Provide standard sediment control (filtration strips), such as "buffers" adjacent to streams, wetlands and other drainages and prohibit cutting within
- Restrict operations to 50% or less slope and provide wildlife corridors as appropriate.

C. MAINTENANCE PROJECTS

This category involves a complex mix of land management duties which require a considerable commitment with respect to manpower as well as equipment. Staff and budget reductions have limited maintenance work to the most critical areas such as boundary maintenance, some trail work, minimal road repair, and campsite maintenance. Additional campsites will be considered in harmony with visitor demand and environmental capabilities. It is our intention to continue the refocusing of efforts this year on forest road upgrades to include brush hogging berms and surface repair on twenty miles of roadway. Campsites will be revitalized with fire rings and new picnic tables as necessary. The gates located throughout the forest will be analyzed for sufficiency and upgrades will be made as necessary. The state forest shooting range is very popular and will be maintained in an appropriate manner. State forest trails will be addressed as resources permit. Many of these are in need of clearing due to regrowth following the ice storm of 2002. The use of herbicides will be explored to minimize mowing along roads and trails as well as in front of difficult to mow areas such as overlooks.

D. RECREATION PROJECTS

Overview

Management of recreational opportunities within the Savage River State Forest cover an extremely broad spectrum of issues related to public land management. Issues continually change and evolve as a result of new recreational forms, changing land use strategies, and changes necessitated by the changing natural world.

The lands within the Savage River State Forest continue to provide visitors with a wide variety of recreational opportunities. Camping, trail use (ORV, mountain bike, X-C skiing, hiking), and day use activities take up the bulk of our time and energies in terms of planning and routine

maintenance just to meet the current levels of use. Demand for expansion of the ORV opportunities is unprecedented but environmental concerns over even the existing level of use are significant. Other recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, bird-watching, and nature appreciation are substantial in terms of numbers of users but normally require little more than maintenance of parking areas and distribution of informational literature and appropriate signage. The following is a listing of currently planned recreational actions and programs, which will be occurring within the FY 2010 and subsequent work plan efforts. All of these projects are open for public comment through the annual work plan process. Some of the more complex projects will require extended periods and processes of environmental review, or may require regulatory changes.

For organizational purposes this section of the annual work plan is broken down into three subsections as follows:

- I. Recreation management in developed areas
- II. Recreation Management in undeveloped areas
- III. Interpretive efforts pertaining to Stewardship and Conservation.

Recreation Management in Developed Areas

Camping

Camping remains a popular activity within Savage River State Forest (55+ sites). The campsites within Savage River State Forest are primarily primitive in nature. Normally they consist of a table and fire ring set at an appropriate location. However, given evidence of resource degradation due to over use, we are beginning to develop a system of closure/rehabilitation for the more heavily used campsites. Summer weekends with good weather will see most of these sites filled. Certain hunting seasons as well as fall color peaks will also give rise to high rates of occupancy.

Typically campers prefer to camp along streamsides and additional sites were installed during the summer of 2008 while others were closed to partially offset this demand. Unfortunately, soils and plant life in these areas are fragile, and we must actively work to educate the public as to the damage they are doing through poor or improper camping techniques. In addition the disposal of human waste as a result of camping intensity is becoming more and more problematic. Our staffs are becoming more actively involved in expounding Leave No Trace ethics to the public. It is our hope that the public will be open to the LNT message and will adapt their camping practices to better protect the area's natural resources. In this process they will also likely become more sensitive and better informed users of our natural resources. Signage, interpretive efforts and visitor handouts will provide LNT informational pieces to the public.

With the realignment of State Forests with the Forest Service, some positive changes have been made with regard to camping on Savage River State Forest. Camping fees were dropped from \$10 per night to \$5 per night. Self-registration posts were placed at five additional locations for ease of set-up for forest visitors. Registration envelopes were changed to a forest green color for

all State Forest Camping to reduce confusion. Also, high quality signs were placed at each campsite explaining changes to the policy.

Recreation Management In Undeveloped Areas

Trails

Trail usage, planning, and management will likely be a key focus for at least the next 5 to 10 years within the framework of our recreational management strategies. Currently planning exercises are underway to look at the best opportunities to incorporate existing trails into more fully functional trail systems to better meet public demand. Public interest and user trends all point to a renewed emphasis on and need for well planned and properly maintained trail systems to support a wide variety of recreational uses in a environmentally responsible manner. Additional consideration must also be given to the timing of trail usage and guidelines for maintenance so that we do not create unreasonable conflicts for wildlife populations. One of our greatest desires is to work with organized trail groups in a cooperative manner to improve our trail systems. We continue to make some headway each year, but sense that there are still untapped opportunities in this area which could greatly assist in making our trails much more attractive and useful to the public.

Off-Road/ Highway Vehicles

Off road vehicle trails continue to be a topic of discussion in terms of the proper format and facilities which will be necessary to accommodate their use. The discussion is compounded by the wide variety of vehicle types included under this category. Jeeps and large four-wheel drive trucks, snowmobiles, trail bikes, and smaller four wheel drive ATVs each form a potentially separate and distinct group of users who seek different types of riding experiences. Our greatest challenge in meeting the needs of these groups is first to educate the public as to the proper methods and conditions under which they may utilize our state forest lands. We are continuing to evaluate existing ORV trails to determine their appropriateness for continued use, as well as investigating potential new opportunities to improve offerings to these user groups. It is becoming more apparent that the forest can not withstand long term recreational activities which damage vegetation and soils, and cause excessive sources of sediment and erosion in and along local streams. We do desire to continue to provide opportunities to those individuals and groups who motor slowly and passively through the forest, utilizing hardened rocky areas to challenge themselves and their vehicles, or simply riding at a leisurely pace to enjoy scenery and wildlife.

In light of these issues and conditions we will continue in this and future work plans to implement improvement to the existing ORV trail systems utilizing approved National Recreational Trail Grant Funds as follows:

Meadow Mountain Trail - The northern section of this trail requires relocation around private property along the East Shale Road to avoid future conflicts. Long term plans are to route the trail further to the east along Meadow Mountain utilizing existing spur roads and some short new connectors to alleviate the conflict problems. Additional work along the trail will entail light

grading , placement of stone aggregate over soft areas of the trail, improved signage, improved gating, and rehabilitation of drainage structures.

Poplar Lick Trail - Evaluation of this trail will continue. The area remains an enjoyable recreational destination for a wide variety of users, however maintenance costs and evidence of resource degradation are increasing to the point where some difficult decisions are going to need to be made. The resource impacts may ultimately require foot traffic only use at some future point in time. Campsites along this section of trail have become overused and abused by illegal activity. Bridging along the trail will also need to be replaced in the next several years. To contain costs and minimize resource degradation we are considering a size limit on vehicles on this trail. This will allow us to reduce overall maintenance costs and to minimize negative resource impacts. Additionally, most of the highly damaging illegal activity is attributed to larger vehicles involved in late night/early morning use of campsites as party areas. Our goal is to utilize existing trail funds to stabilize certain sections of the trail, reconfigure the trail entrances to eliminate passenger vehicle traffic, repair bridge structures, improve educational signage, and renovate campsites.

This year saw a major work project undertaken in the Poplar Lick Valley. Eighteen degrading culverts were replaced with double-wall plastic and the stream fords and much of the lower roadway was resurfaced with stone.

Negro Mountain Trail - This section of trail has seen some major efforts over the past several years to reduce illegal riding and harden the site to minimize erosion and sediment run off. Our plan for this site is to continue these efforts, increase our control of access from adjoining private properties, and expand our educational signage. Improved gating of the area will also be pursued to reduce problems of illegal use, trash dumping, etc.. In addition, there are some opportunities to provide challenge obstacles in this area that will better meet the needs of groups using this area for authorized nature tourism programs.

Margroff Plantation Trail - Recreation trail funds have been approved to allow for improved signage of this area, closure of unauthorized accesses, and stabilization of soft areas. Given the snowmobile only designation for this trail, the area has great potential for mountain bike use (see mountain bike item below). In addition the area may be considered for possible equestrian use or limited nature tourism outings utilizing ATVs. Therefore special attention will be given trails in this tract.

Future Opportunities/ Investigations - It has been suggested that while we consider the closure of some trails, we also consider some possible alternative sites for future development for group/led passive ORV use. One suggestion is to connect the Red Dog Road on Big Savage Mountain with the forest access road that traverses Compartment 37 and 38 to provide a linear trail with challenge pull-offs that are stone and rock based obstacles. A major step in the direction of accomplishing this link was completed via a recent timber sale which extended the St. Johns Rock Roadway south to the power line, a mere .3 mile east of the terminus of the Red Dog Road. Similar opportunities may be available along certain power-line right of ways that lie on state lands. Finally, there are also some possible connections to be considered in the Negro Mountain block to connect the Margroff Plantation with the Negro Mountain Trail and Collier Place to

allow for limited activities such as Fall Color Tours and other seasonal highlight activities by nature tourism vendors.

Illegal use by ORVs will continue to be a challenge that will be addressed by strategic patrol of problem areas and educational efforts to increase public awareness and reporting of violators. We will also be involved in discussions to determine the need for requirements such as rider safety courses similar to hunter and boater safety classes, as well as the bolstering of laws to increase fines and/ or permit seizure of vehicles being used illegally on state lands.

Mountain Bike Use

Mountain bike use continues to show increasing levels of activity and demand. Many of our ORV trails and forest roads are being utilized by bikers in a relatively compatible fashion. Initiatives are being set in motion within Garrett County to expand connections between communities to allow for greater ease of cycling access between areas which will similarly increase interest toward recreational trails systems within our state forest and park boundaries. We are continuing to work with local biking groups such as GAMBO to look at improvements to existing trails via single track connections to improve the usability of the trail system. Most of the current work is focused on the Margraff Plantation. GAMBO members have been successful in obtaining recreational trail grant funds to improve educational and maintenance efforts on this site. This work will include enhanced signage, blazing of trails, gating of illegal accesses, and improved partnership with volunteers. These efforts will likely continue throughout into the FY 2009 work plan for Savage River.

Hiking

Trail inventory and assessment work will be ongoing as we continue to determine the best possible system of trails to accommodate long-distance hikers and backpackers seeking a 3-7 day outing, intermediate hikers looking for a 5-8 mile loop, and those who just want to stretch their legs for a mile or so to experience the forest. Short loop trail opportunities are in shortest supply at this point. As such, we will be looking at upgrading and utilizing existing forest road and trails in the Compartments 26 and 17. Inventory work will continue in hopes of providing a longer 3-5 day loop to augment the attractiveness of the Big Savage Trail. Cooperative activities with Outward Bound and the Sierra Club for trail maintenance and upgrading of water sources along trails will also be pursued. Owing to the 2002 ice storm as well as recent Gypsy Moth defoliations, the Big Savage Trail is in very poor condition. The Maryland Conservation Corps staff has been a huge asset in complementing our staff in keeping this trail open for the time being.

Equestrian

Equestrian use of the forest has been minimal in the past. Normally we receive only one or two requests each year as to the availability of facilities. We encourage these people to investigate areas such as the Margraff Plantation, but have received very little interest with regard to organized trail groups or the desire to work with us to improve equestrian opportunities.

Boating

Boating and canoeing access on the Savage River Reservoir remains under the control of the Upper Potomac River Commission.

Hunting

Accommodation for recreational hunting will consist primarily of maintenance of hunter parking lots, opening and closure of roads to facilitate access, and posting of informational and regulatory signage.

If funds and resources are available, additional work will be pursued to improve offerings for handicapped hunters. Most of this work will center around evaluation of existing sites to determine their suitability and modifications necessary to enhance their use by intended populations while discouraging their improper use by others. We may need to look at various gating systems and habitat manipulation, along with improved signage.

E. SILVICULTURAL PROJECTS

OTHER SILVICULTURAL PROJECTS

WILDLIFE: Wildlife populations benefit most from habitats which most closely meet their specific requirements. In order to provide a more enhanced habitat mosaic it is important to initiate the development of a wide variety of forest age classes. Since acquisition of these lands in the 1930's this diversity has been obtained and maintained through the sale of forest products in a carefully planned and executed silvicultural program. These ongoing treatments foster plant species diversity as well as diversity among forest age classes in addition to providing diverse vertical structure among plant communities. The net result is a more enriched forest habitat regimen and the associated wider variety of inhabitants.

Additional habitat work is undertaken as time and resources permit and as opportunities become apparent. Recent accomplishments reflect this commitment. Several blocks of open land have been converted to warm season grasses in order to enhance habitat for grassland species. Apple orchards are pruned and released in areas throughout the forest to enhance fruit production. As these orchards yield heavier crops they are frequently severely damaged by bears. A red spruce stand has been developed to provide a long-absent habitat type for certain forest birds. Bird nesting boxes are installed and maintained to increase nesting options for cavity dwelling bird species. Grassland habitats benefit many species and is a habitat type that is in critical shortage on public lands. Most of the existing grassy areas are mowed to revitalize and maintain them for the long term benefits they provide. Much credit must go to staff of the MD Wildlife Service at Mt. Nebo for the hands-on work they conduct throughout Savage River State Forest. This cooperative and mutually beneficial arrangement has greatly benefited wildlife as well as those individuals who enjoy the results of sound wildlife management.

RED PINE: Several thousand acres of red pine were planted on Savage River State Forest throughout the late 1940's and 1950's. The long-term goal with this species was to rehabilitate degraded lands, to establish native hardwood species within the stands through regular silvicultural treatments, and to eventually convert the stands back to native hardwoods via a regeneration harvest. This methodology is sound and has worked very well in the past and, as resources become available, will be continued. Specific areas of work may occur along West Shale Road, Fairview Road, Westernport Road, Bowman Hill, Savage River Road, Keyser's Ridge, Fort Hill, Turkey Lodge, and Poplar Lick. In light of recent findings regarding the use of pine stands by Goshawks for nesting sites, silvicultural work in these stands will be delayed pending the receipt more information.

ORCHARD MAINTENANCE: As mentioned previously, this work involves the revitalization of fruit orchards which are original or remnants of the old original orchards established by occupants prior to state acquisition. It involves pruning and release from hardwood competition. Specific areas of work may involve West Shale Road, Fairview Road, Westernport Road, Bowman Hill, Savage River Road, Keyser's Ridge, Fort Hill, Turkey Lodge, Margroff Plantations, and Poplar Lick.

F. Watershed Improvement Projects The MD Dept. of the Environment has undertaken to enhance water quality in the Casselman River via mitigation of acid effects in a spattering of tributaries, many of which fall on Savage River State Forest. Currently, the selection of candidate tributaries is underway via sampling and mapping. Mitigation will be undertaken using limestone leach beds to raise water ph in these selected tributaries and provide all the benefits thereof throughout the watershed.

G. Ecosystem Restoration Projects. The Savage River Watershed Association, a newly formed group of volunteers, has endeavored battle the invasive Japanese Syria within the Bearpen Watershed and has been busy destroying specimens of this invasive for several years. The obvious benefits of this project will be to permit native plant species to re-colonize the areas formerly occupied by this invasive.

H. Monitoring Projects

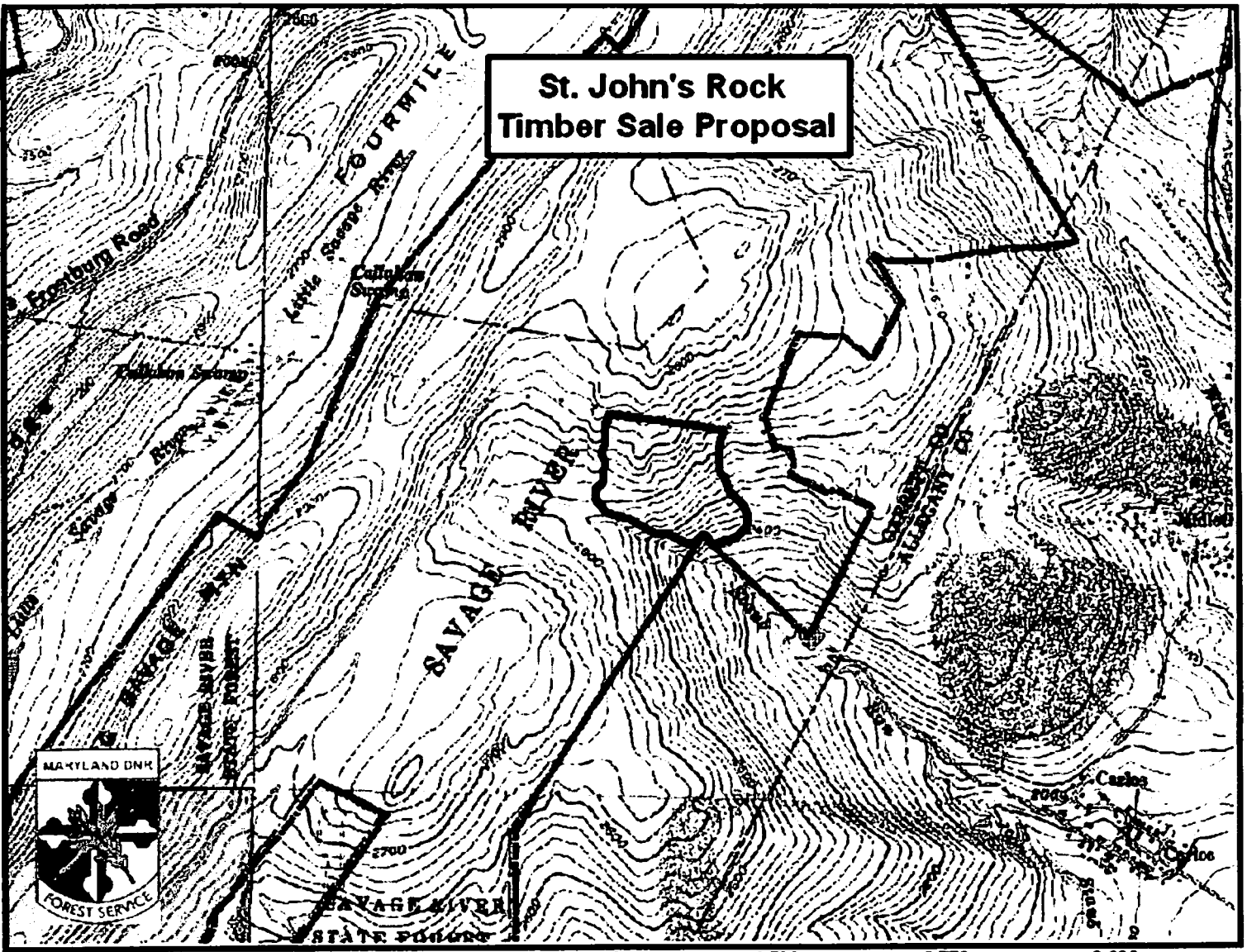
Monitoring projects involve determinations of overall forest health and productivity as well as the forests ability to provide a non-declining flow of recreational benefits. As such, various agencies and educational institutions regularly monitor the populations of forest pests, fisheries health and population dynamics, recreational degradation to the landscape, wildlife population dynamics, etc.

I. Budget

The Budget for Savage River State Forest is \$382,958. Of that amount, \$262,184 goes to fund classified salaries and benefits for four employees and \$59,264 goes to fund four contractual employees, leaving \$61,510 to operate the forest on. Savage River has for many years generated revenue that greatly exceeded its cost of operation, with the largest single yearly income approaching \$1,600,000. The majority of revenue is obtained from the sale of forest products.

Successful marketing by selling the mix of species and grades of wood products that the market most demanded contributed substantially to successful revenue generation over the years.

St. John's Rock Timber Sale Proposal



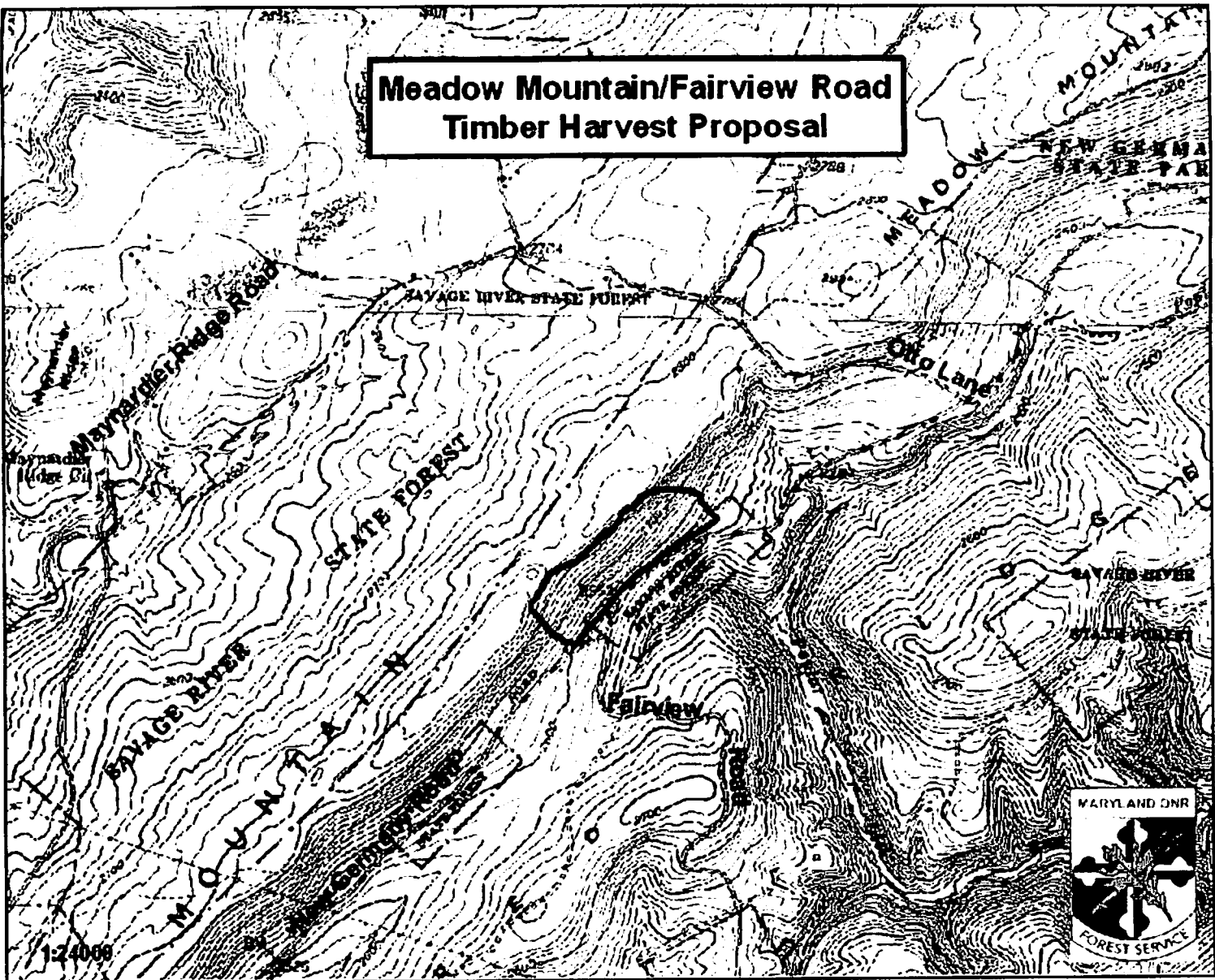
Compartment: 37
Area: 60 Acres
Age: 93
Forest Type: Mixed Oak
Trees/Acre: 143
AGS: 22 Sq. Ft./Ac
Total Basal Area: 130 Sq. Ft./Ac
Stocking: 105%
Growth Rate: 3.8%
Soil Type: Cookport and Ernest very stony silt loam
Site Index: 56-74
Composition: 53% Red Oak
23% Red Maple
12% Black Cherry

Silvicultural Description:

This proposal is located at the southern end of the St. John's Rock access road south of the I-68 Finzel exit. It is dominated by northern red oak and red maple in addition to ash and black cherry. It suffered several years of heavy gypsy moth defoliation leading to high tree mortality. This proposal involves the regeneration of about 60 acres of this area utilizing the deferment method. This treatment involves the retention of about 10-15 square feet of basal area per acre to be deferred into the next rotation.



**Meadow Mountain/Fairview Road
Timber Harvest Proposal**



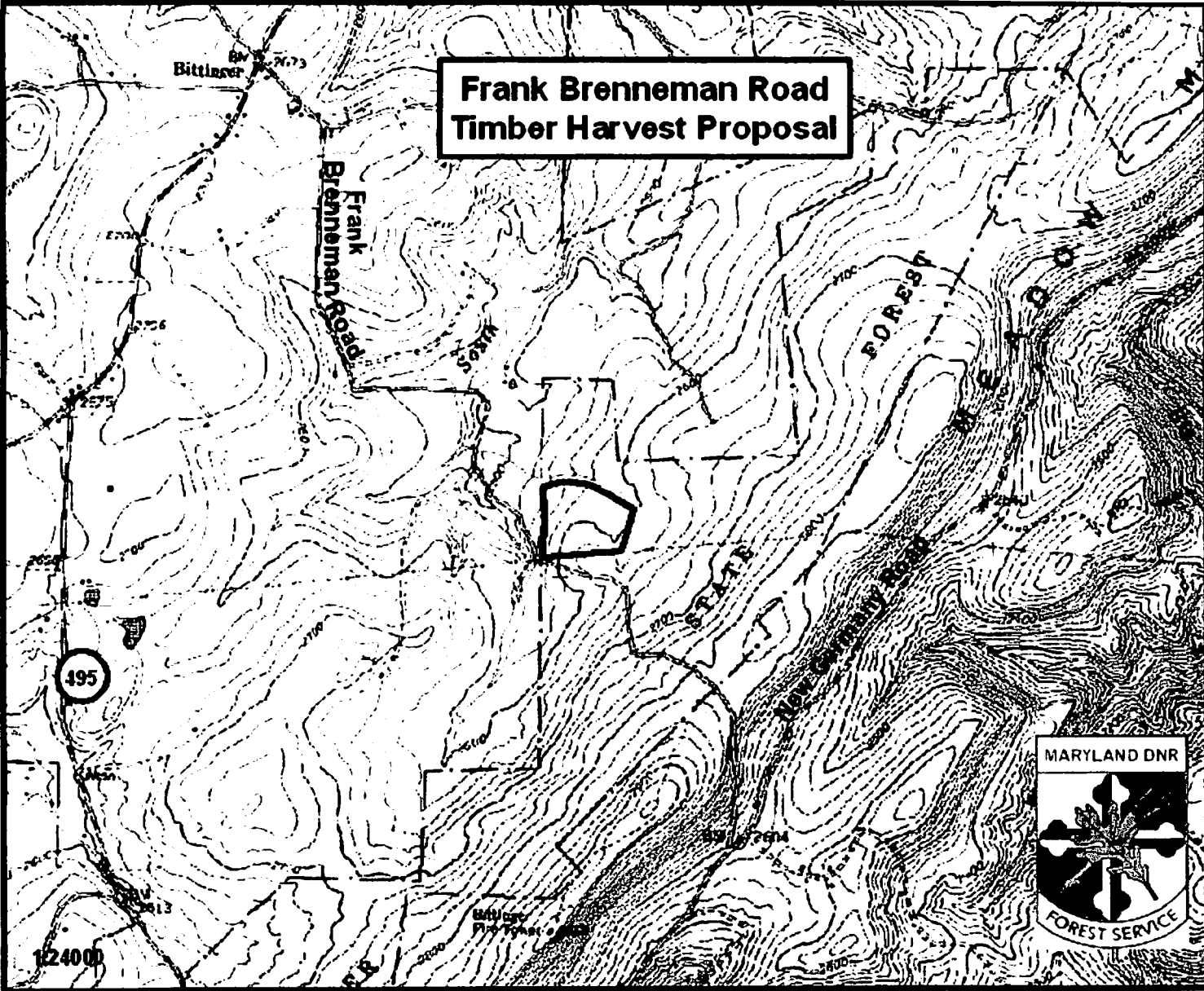
Compartment: 70
Area: 45 Acres
Age: 81
Forest Type: Mixed Oak
Trees/Acre: 114.7
AGS: 15 Sq. Ft./Ac
Total Basal Area: 98.3 Sq. Ft./Ac
Stocking: 80%
Growth Rate: 5.0%
Soil Type: Stony Land Steep
Site Index: 56-74
Composition: 53% Sugar Maple
 16% Deadwood
 12% Red Oak



Silvicultural Description:

This proposal lies on the east face of Meadow Mountain directly across from the intersection of New Germany and Fairview Roads. It is dominated by sugar maple and northern red oak and contains a significant number of ice-damaged trees as well as gypsy moth related mortality. This proposal involves regenerating the stand using the deferment method. The steeper sections within the sale area will be excluded.

Frank Brenneman Road Timber Harvest Proposal

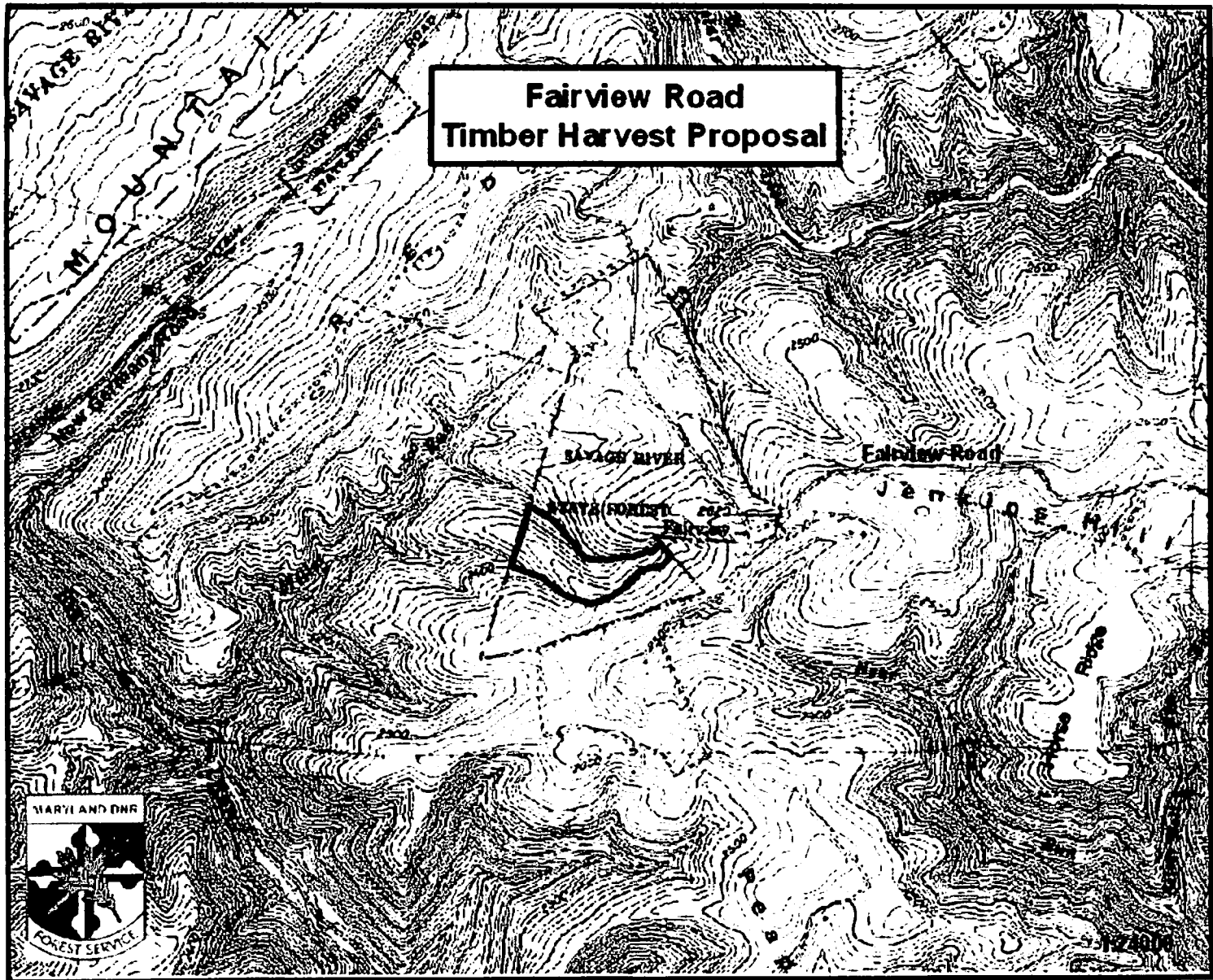


Compartment: 69
Area: 25 Acres
Age: 81
Forest Type: Mixed Oak
Trees/Acre: 133
AGS: 25.5 Sq. Ft./Ac
Total Basal Area: 80 Sq. Ft./Ac
Stocking: 70%
Growth Rate: 4.4%
Soil Type: Cookport and Ernest very stony silt loams
Site Index: 56-74
Composition: 58% Red Maple
27% Red Oak
8% Deadwood



Silvicultural Description:
This proposal is located on the east side of Frank Brenneman Road about two miles east of the intersection with Route 495 in Bittinger. The stand is dominated by red maple and northern red oak, with a large proportion of the trees considered undesirable or unacceptable growing stock. This proposal is to regenerate the stand via the removal of all overstory trees thereby initiating the regrowth of this tract.

Fairview Road Timber Harvest Proposal



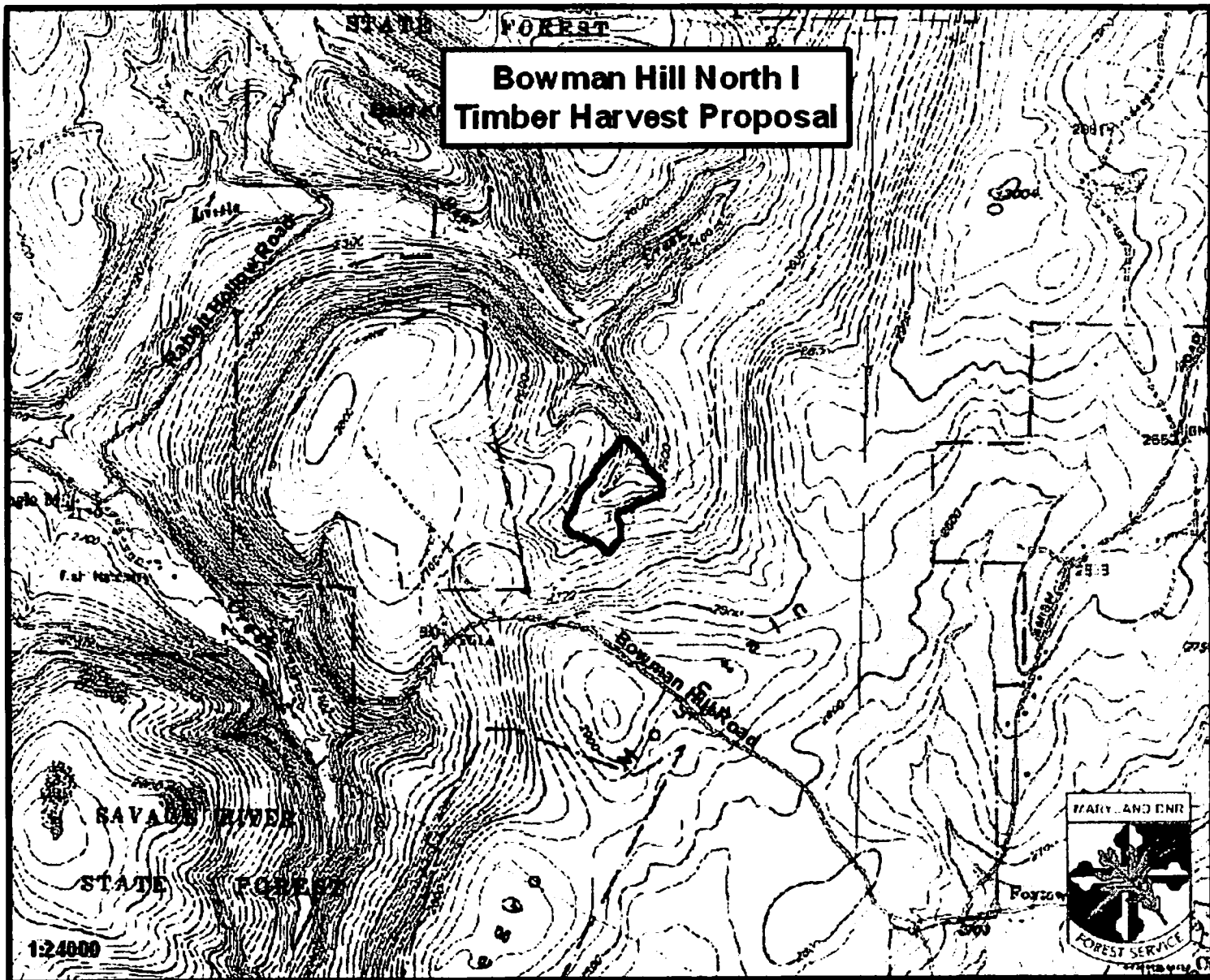
Compartment: 29A
Area: 27 Acres
Age: 94
Forest Type: Mixed Oaks
Trees/Acre: 129.5
AGS: 43.1 Sq. Ft./Ac
Total Basal Area: 101.5 Sq.Ft./Ac
Stocking: 85%
Growth Rate: 3.2%
Soil Type: Dekalb-Calvin-Lehew very stony loams
Site Index: 75+
Composition: 30% Sugar Maple
20% Red Maple
9% Red Oak

Silvicultural Description:

This proposal is located on the west side of Fairview Road about two miles south of the intersection with New Germany Road. It is dominated by sugar maple, red maple, and northern red oak. The eastern section of this proposal was thinned in 1974 and will undergo a patch regeneration harvest. The remainder of the proposal will be thinned to about 60 square feet of basal area per acre.



Bowman Hill North I Timber Harvest Proposal



Compartment: 10
Area: 25 Acres
Age: 75
Forest Type: Mixed Oak
Trees/Acre: 116.2
AGS: 56.4 Sq. Ft./Ac
Total Basal Area: 132.8 Sq. Ft./Ac
Stocking: 102%
Growth Rate: 4.7%
Soil Type: Delkalb-Calvin-Lehew very stony loams
Site Index: 75+
Composition: 24% Sugar Maple
21% Red Maple
18% Beech

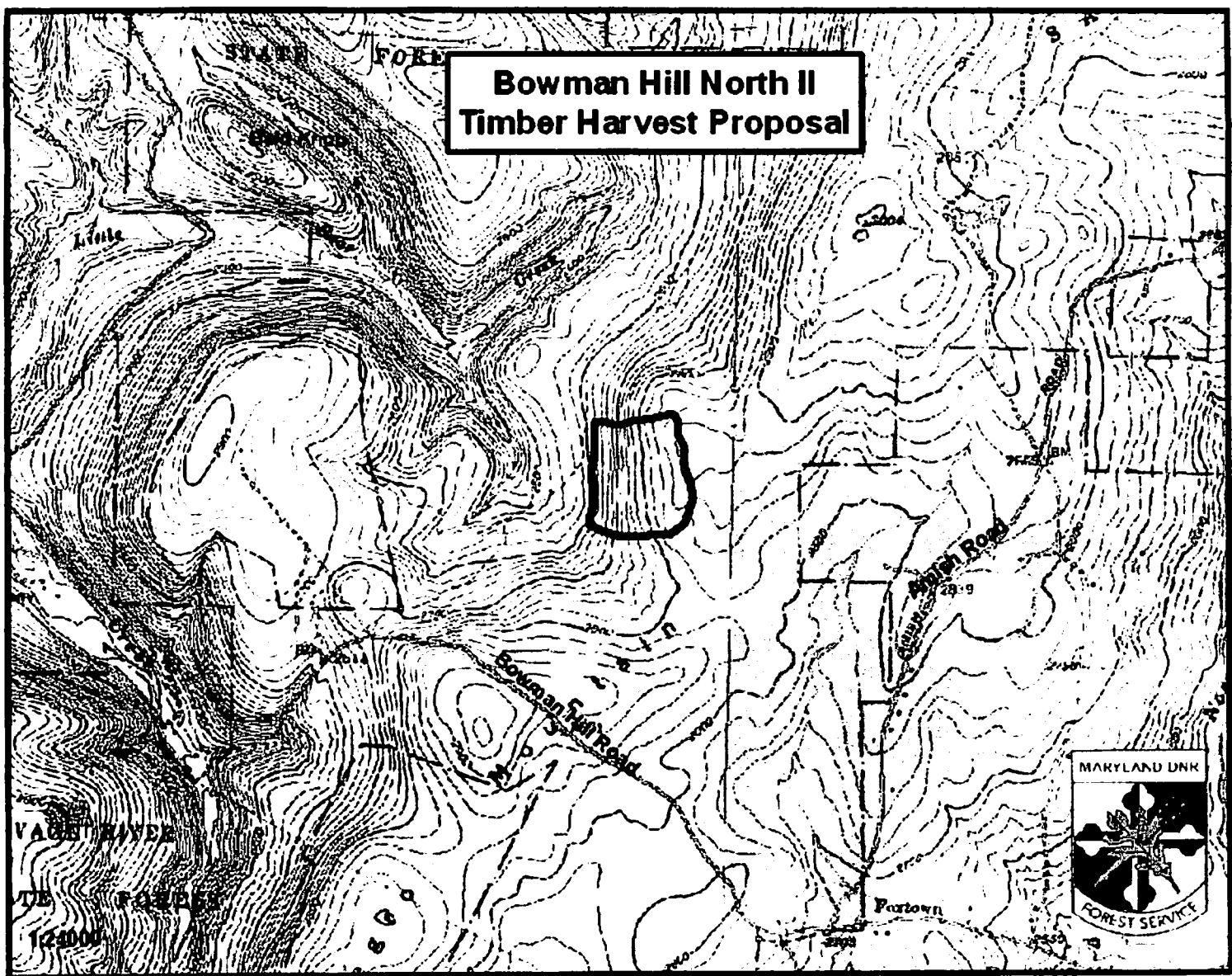
Silvicultural Description:

This proposal lies about one-third mile north of Bowman Hill Road along a State Forest access road that was utilized for multiple silvicultural operations in the past. This is a mature stand dominated by sugar maple and red maple. The proposal involves the regeneration of this stand via the removal of all overstory trees. The swale in the center of this stand will be buffered.

N



**Bowman Hill North II
Timber Harvest Proposal**



Compartment: 9
Area: 47 Acres
Age: 77
Forest Type: Mixed Oak
Trees/Acre: 166.8
AGS: 66.7 Sq.Ft./Ac
Total Basal Area: 135.0 Sq.Ft./Ac
Stocking: 110%
Growth Rate: 5.3%
Soil Type: Cookport and Ernest very stony silt loams
Site Index: 56-74
Composition: 42% Red Oak
 42% Red Maple
 5% Sugar Maple



Silvicultural Description:

This proposal is located on the north side of Bowman Hill Road along a State Forest access road which has served both recreational and silvicultural endeavors for many years. This stand is dominated by northern red oak and red maple. It involves approximately 50 acres of commercial thinning by which the stand will be thinned to approximately 65 squarefeet of basal area per acre. This will be accomplished with the removal of mature and defective trees in addition to general thinning to improve tree spacing and quality.

FOREST HARVEST SUMMARIES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

COMPARTMENT # 37, ST. JOHNS ROCK

- A 60 acre regeneration harvest in an area which was defoliated heavily by Gypsy Moth, resulting in substantial tree mortality.

ID TEAM: This site was not visited but a later Heritage Dept. review suggested the removal of the larger rock bars as well as any areas of exposed water.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Comply with all applicable BMP's

PUBLIC INPUT: No specific comments

FINAL PROPOSAL: Proceed as proposed taking special consideration for adequate sediment control and other aesthetic and recreational considerations and incorporate all needed BMP's. Remove all areas of substantial rock bars as well as any standing water from the sale area.

COMPARTMENT #70, MEADOW MOUNTAIN :

- A 45 acre regeneration harvest in a mixed stand of mature and defective hardwoods using the deferment method.

ID TEAM: Be especially cautious of seepage areas as well as aesthetic considerations

ADVISORY COMMITTEE: no specific comments were offered short of complying with BMP's at this and all harvests.

PUBLIC INPUT: No specific comments.

FINAL PROPOSAL: Proceed as planned utilizing all applicable BMP's and stabilization techniques for the access road and apply extra cautions along the Roadside buffer area but the removal of hazardous trees within this area will be undertaken.

COMPARTMENT #69, FRANK BRENNEMAN ROAD:

- A 25 acre regeneration harvest in a stand of mixed mature hardwoods
- **ID TEAM:** Several sites within this proposal were identified as having significant habitat for rare and protected small mammals and should be removed from the proposal.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Be considerate of the areas of special concern and properly buffer and seepage areas appropriately.

PUBLIC INPUT: No specific comments.

FINAL PROPOSAL: Sufficient concern was focused on this area with regard to special habitats that the proposal will be removed from consideration at this time.

COMPARTMENT # 29A, FAIRVIEW ROAD

- A 27 acre area proposed for patch regeneration harvest as well as commercial thinning in a mixed hardwood stand located off Fairview Road.

ID TEAM: Buffer the stream in the bottom by at least 50 feet plus 4 feet per percent of slope.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE: no specific comments.

PUBLIC INPUT: No specific comments.

FINAL PROPOSAL: Proceed as proposed being sure to apply all acceptable BMP's and keep the operation off any excessively steep slopes and buffer the stream appropriately.

COMPARTMENT #9, BOWMAN HILL NORTH II:

- A 47-acre area of commercial thinning along the Bowman Hill access road.

ID TEAM: Regenerate a half acre area of Aspen along the northern edge in conjunction with this proposal for wildlife habitat enhancement.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE: No specific comments.

PUBLIC INPUT: No specific comments.

FINAL PROPOSAL: Proceed as proposed incorporating all appropriate BMP's. and regenerating the area of aspen as requested.

COMPARTMENT #10, BOWMAN HILL NORTH I:

- A 25 acre regeneration harvest in a mixed stand of mature hardwoods.

ID TEAM: Concerns were expressed over the proximity of this proposal to the nearby ESA as well as the fact that the drain area was not buffered on the map.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE: No specific comments.

PUBLIC INPUT: No specific comments.

FINAL PROPOSAL: This proposal is removed from this AWP and will be resubmitter at a later time incorporating appropriate buffers and respect to the nearby ESA.

Savage River State Forest
Fiscal Year 2010 Annual Work Plan Review
August 21, 2008

In Attendance:

Larry Maxim, Savage River State Forest
Scott Campbell, Savage River State Forest
Bob Webster, Forest Service, Western Region
Kenneth Jolly, Forest Service, Annapolis
Alan Klotz, Fisheries Service, Western Region
Jim Mullan, Wildlife Service, Western Region
Dan Feller, Heritage Service, Western Region
Wade Dorsey, Forest Service, Garrett County
Rick Latshaw, Wildlife Service, Western Region
Jim Kahl, Department of the Environment
Jack Perdue, Forest Service, Annapolis
John Wilson (absent), Land Acquisition & Planning
Emily Wilson, DNR

Notes:

ATVs – Larry Maxim has received requests from the public to expand the ATV trail network. They've asked for "play" areas at the beginning and end of the existing trails. Wildlife has received a Recreational Trail Grant to do an assessment within one year. It will include a set of recommendations.

Poplar Lick gets much ATV use and has a study been completed by Fisheries Alan Heft. It showed that ATV activity here was leading to environmental degradation. Some private groups are considering ATV parks. The question was asked if there were economic grants to fund these private enterprises. We currently have 86 miles of ORV trails on State Forests. There are already some private alternatives available.

Frank Sgaggero owns property where a B-52 plane crashed in 1962. He wants to put an interpretive sign designating the event on state land near Pine Swamp Road near the Savage River Hiking Trail. He has agreed to maintain the site of the sign. But the Savage River Trail may be closed.

The Savage River Trail is 17 miles and has been difficult to maintain. An ice storm in 2002 and recent gypsy moth mortality has made the trail unattractive to hikers and difficult to keep open to hikers. The question is, "Should we keep it open considering the reduced staffs and budgets and program alternatives? Rec Trail Grants may be available but is this a good use of these funds? The decision whether to keep the trail open will be made by the Forest Service, but is looking for support and opinions from the ID Team.

John Wilson stated that the trail should not be closed without first considering Rec Trail Grants, or assistance from local hiking groups to help maintain the trail. The MD Forest

Service must make a public announcement if the trail is to be closed, if that is the decision.

Disabled Hunters: The question was raised, "Do disabled hunters have to hunt from a "stopped" vehicle? The answer was that the gun cannot be loaded if the vehicle is moving. Can they hunt from any DNR road? Yes, they don't have to hunt only from a designated "handicapped hunter" site but can from any area not off limits to hunting.

Stop #1: Meadow Mt. / Fairview Rd

Dan Feller (Heritage) stated that this area has had many problems with seeps causing sedimentation problems. Larry Maxim stated that Savage River SF has adopted a policy to close harvest sites from mid-February through April. Last year was the first year for this policy and it seemed to work well. Much of the sale is generated from dead timber due to ice storm and gypsy moth mortality. Jim Mullan asked about the buffer along the road. Larry Maxim said some of the trees along the road will be harvested due to road safety issues and experience from other harvests along this road. No other concerns or issues were posed for this proposal.

Stop #2: Fairview Road

Water course will be buffered with a 50 foot plus 4 feet per percent slope and will be a no-cut buffer. The landing to be used will be same established for the previous harvest. A portion of this area was thinned in 1974. This will be a regeneration harvest with a portion to be thinned. All other aspects of the proposal were accepted as submitted.

Aside: It has been reported that Dave Wilt has supposedly been cutting firewood beyond what his firewood permit allows (only personal domestic use). He has been cited by DNR Police many times. The question was posed, "How do we stop this from happening, and at what expense?" No actions for proposed.

Stop #3: Frank Brenneman Road

This will be a salvage harvest caused by gypsy moth defoliation and mortality. The Heritage staff has located some sites within the proposed harvest area that could potentially be habitat for rare protected small mammals. These species require a forest canopy for their survival. They will do some test trapping to learn if these species are present at these sites. If they are, the necessary protective buffer will greatly reduce the harvestable area.

Heritage will contact the Forest Service regarding the results of their findings from the trapping tests as soon as possible.

The harvest area will also need to buffer the wetland on the site.

A comment from Larry Maxim was that the mortality from trees defoliated by gypsy moth is greater than the SRSF staff's ability to salvage these areas. He may request that larger areas be approved by the ID Team to expedite salvage efforts.

Stop #4: Bowman Hill North I

This silvicultural proposal is near the proposed Environmentally Significant Area (ESA). The stream drainage will be buffered. Jim Kahl (MDE) stated that the stream (where we were standing) probably wouldn't need waterway permits. This site is characterized by large diameter black cherry, poplar, and sugar maple. Larry Maxim stated that this proposal will probably be dropped from the annual work plan due to the amount of silviculture that has occurred in this area.

Bowman Hill North II (no stop)

Rick Latshaw (Wildlife) recommended that the half acre of aspen be harvested so that species and habitat can be regenerated. No other concerns or issues were posed for this proposal.

Stop #5: Big Run Camp Sites

Eight new camp sites were established along Big Run Road and apparently were not completely reviewed by the ID Team review process. Some of these new sites are in the 100-year flood plain. One issue is the likelihood of human excrement in and near the stream. It was stated that these additional sites may not be necessary since camping sites here aren't completely filled other than possibly one day per year. Woody debris is important to the health of a stream and certain semi-aquatic mammals. The concern is that this material will be removed from the streams, taken by campers as firewood. At one site, this activity was apparent.

The recommendation is that the three new sites which are close to the stream be closed, the gravel placed there be removed, and that red spruce seedlings be planted in the newly cleared areas. The gravel should be removed for fear that it may be washed into the stream with heavy rains. It was also recommended that any new camp sites be first reviewed by the ID Team. These types of activities are reviewed for other DNR lands. It was also suggested that John Cook (MDE) first review the sites for sediment and erosion control compliance. The question was raised whether the gravel should be removed or left in place. It was decided that only by removing it will it ensure that it will not be flushed into the stream bed.

There are currently 14 older sites (about 10 years) and 8 new sites (2008).

Conclusion: three of the new sites will have to be closed and the gravel removed and the sites will be planted with red spruce this fall.

St. John's Rock (no stop, but discussion)

The question was whether to connect two currently disconnected roads. These two roads both abut a power line corridor. If connected, this will benefit recreational opportunities. It was recommended not to connect these roads. There are seeps at St. John's Rock which will need to be buffered. Dan Feller will visit the site independently but has no specific issues, just wanting to gain general knowledge.

Savage River State Forest - Citizens Advisory Board (CAB)

MEETING MINUTES

Regular (semi-annual) Spring Meeting - Held at 6PM on September 24, 2008
Savage River State Forest Headquarters

Attendees:

DNR: Larry Maxim (host),

CAB: Kevin Dodge (Wildlife Professional), Mike Driesbach (Hunter), Steve Hinton (Timber), Chuck Hoffeditz (Forestry Industry), Anita Simmons (Industry), Marshall Stacy (Economic), Dan Fiscus (Frostburg State University) – Absent: Mark Diehl (Conservation)

1. Welcome Attendees; Review of Fall 2007 SRSF CAB Meeting Minutes

- Larry welcomed all, and reviewed Advisory Committee Membership and pointed out that these meetings were determined to be pre-decisional in nature and are therefore not “public” meetings.
- Minutes from the Spring (April 9th), 2008 CAB meeting were reviewed and approved as submitted

2. Annual Work Plan Process-- FY-10

- The FY-10 Annual Work Plan was highlighted and otherwise reviewed. ID Team comments and concerns were discussed. Specific proposals were debated and of particular review were the new campsites constructed along Big Run Road.
- The new BMP of spring closure seems to be working well and has reduced the stress load in a huge way.
- The Economy is doing poorly and the demand for timber is understandably down as well. It appears that economic conditions for the timber Industry continue to falter with some mill closings being reported.
- Marshall reported that he received Forest Service Director Steve Koehn's approval to attend the ID Team Review of Savage Rivers AWP next year as an Observer.

3. Timber Harvest & Related Issues

- A lengthy discussion regarding the Timber market situation was held. The FY-08 timber harvest involved three large sales and several smaller salvage operations to address gypsy moth mortality along Fairview Road. The harvest was just slightly over one million BF and brought \$545,810 in revenue.
- A great deal of gypsy moth mortality exists in a number of locations and salvage treatments will be proposed and will be submitted for a supplemental review.
- The seasonal restriction prohibiting spring timber harvest operations appears to be working well. Operators are scheduling harvest to coincide with the closure/open periods.
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4. Gypsy Moths

- The wet weather of this past summer was very conducive to fungal growth and the gypsy moths were dealt a severe blow. Mortality within the gypsy moth population county wide is nearly 100 percent.
- It was pointed out that firewood and biomass will be issues of the future in the wake of gypsy moth and its impacts .

5. Recreation Issues

- A proposal is in existence to extend the Meadow Mountain Trail through the 4-H Property, the Bloch property and beyond as a Hike/bike trail and this issue was discussed and maps were reviewed.
- Handicapped hunter roads moved the West Shale & Brenneman roads due to the obvious benefit of a more level topography
- Shooting range receiving much more mixed use (public and private) nowadays. Efforts are underway to restrict LEO use of the range during the peak hunting season sight in times.

6. Poplar Lick ORV / ATV Trail – Future Challenges

- The project to replace 18 culverts and resurface about half of this roadway using Recreational Trail Grant Funds is now completed.
- Poplar Lick is one of the areas under study as to its viability as an ATV Trail, given its proximity to a native trout stream and past violations of riparian zones here.

4. Savage River Lodge (SRL) – Issues and Solutions

- The gate placed by DNR at the hilltop on Jesse Green property is now operational. A light was installed at that site also to illuminate the gate area.
- The Lodge has now passed its 60,000th hiker day and use continues to expand.
- The theft of sign posts and several benches has occurred along the nearby trails. NRP has been notified and is investigating.
- Geo-caching is really taking off (on SRL property and across the forest in general). Additional caches (four) will soon be placed on nearby State Forest property
- So far this year visitor activity at SRL has been up in a huge way, with this year exceeding the past three years for the same time period, with a numerical increase in usage of 22%.

7. Big Savage Mtn. Hiking Trail

- Trail condition is considered poor due to tree mortality and general decline. This condition and its resultant increased light cause thick vegetative growth to hamper trail use.
- State Forest crew hiked thru and blazed from Swamp Road to the dam on the southern end. Much of the problem was due to tree death and loss of bark which was painted with white trail markings.

- Trail will likely become very difficult to maintain in near future due to potential large-scale mortality of mature canopy trees from gypsy moth/ice storms. Dense undergrowth will likely continue to result from this predicted over-story loss (typical after a disturbance).
- MCC will work the stretch of the trail that has been newly blazed.
- Dan's Forest Science Class has been studying the feasibility of keeping this trail open. The results of the three groups engaged in the study will be available soon. There is a possibility this class may adopt or assist in maintaining some section of this trail.

8. New Research Proposal

- Jesse Bellemare, a PhD Student at Cornell Univ. has proposed a temporary planting of Umbrella-leaf(a plant related to mayapple) in plots off Big Run Road in attempt to see if normally southern species can now survive in more northern climates due to climate warming.
- The group reviewed his proposal and the issue was discussed.
- The proposal has been approved via Environmental Review and implementation will commence soon.

9. Savage River Reservoir

- Owing to a problem with one of the steel gates, the reservoir has been drawn down very low over the past year in attempt to study the situation.
- There is a high likelihood that the problem can be corrected only by complete drainage of the impoundment. The remaining hurdle to repair is funding.
- Draining the dam completely will destroy the fishery, which has been developing and improving there for many years.

10. Miscellaneous Issues

- Texas Eastern Corp. has completed improvements to their wells in the gas field above Accident and no further interruptions of recreational activities should occur.
- Natural Gas Mania has spread across the county with lease companies willing to pay considerable sums for leases in this area.
- Several Bald Eagles have been spotted at the Savage Reservoir, and there may be nest sites nearby.
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12 Scheduling of Next CAB Meeting

- Next CAB meeting to occur in 2009, on the Third Wednesday of April (the 15th) at 6PM.
- A field tour was scheduled for Thursday, October 16, 2008, to review several sites of concern in the AWP.
- There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at ~10:30PM.