

Forest Plan Monitoring Report
for the
Wayne National Forest
Land and Resource Management Plan
Fiscal Years 2002 and 2003

**Athens, Gallia, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Monroe,
Morgan, Noble, Perry, Scioto, Vinton and Washington Counties,
Ohio**

September 2004

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**Wayne National Forest
Forest Plan Monitoring Report – Fiscal Years 2002 and 2003**

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Wayne National Forest Monitoring and Evaluation Report

Fiscal Years 2002 and 2003

INTRODUCTION

This Report is being prepared to document the monitoring of the Wayne *Forest Plan* that was accomplished during fiscal years 2002 and 2003.

This report is focused on the monitoring items listed in Chapter 5 of the Wayne *Forest Plan*. The monitoring item is listed in the shaded block, showing the text listed in Chapter 5 describing the individual monitoring item (*Forest Plan* Monitoring Statement), followed by the monitoring and evaluation information for the two fiscal years covered by this report.

In addition to the monitoring documented in this report, the Wayne National Forest began revising its *Forest Plan* in fiscal year 2002. During 2002 and 2003 the forest conducted intensive evaluation on what was working in the current forest plan direction and what direction might need to be changed. Resource specialists on the Wayne National Forest prepared these analyses, with input from 13 public meetings held during this time period. The reports that resulted from this effort are known as Analysis of the Management Situation Reports. These reports were completed and made available to the public on the Forest's web site in fiscal year 2003, and announced in a newsletter sent to the forest planning mailing list. The Analysis of the Management Situation reports are still available on our web site (and in hard copy).

1. Quantitative estimate of performance comparing outputs and services with those projected by the forest plan. 36 CFR 219.12(k)(1)

Forest Plan Monitoring Plan Statement - A quantitative estimate of performance - Compare outputs/services accomplished with those projected in Forest Plan.

The units-of-measure for several outputs have changed since the *Forest Plan* was approved. Some of the new units-of-measure, do not correlate well to the units-of-measure shown in Table 4-1 of the *Forest Plan* (such as: MRVD's in the *Forest Plan* = Thousand of Recreation Visitor Days, a measure of use or projected use, does not correlate well to the current measure PAOT's = Persons at One Time, a measure of potential to handle a level of use at one point in time.)

See Tables 1 and 2 on the following pages. Table 1 is based on Table 4-1 from the *Forest Plan*. Table 2 is based on actual accomplishments reported for each of the two fiscal years.

TABLE 1

Forest Plan Upper Limit Projected Outputs (from *Forest Plan* Table 4-1)
Compared To Actual Output for Fiscal Years 2002 and 2003

		From Forest Plan Average Annual Per Decade			
Item	Unit of Measure	1986	1996	2002	2003
		1995	2005	Actual	Actual
		<u>Planned</u>	<u>Projected</u>		
<u>Recreation*</u>					
Semiprimitive, Nonmotorized ROS	MRVD's	26.7	27.9	 MRVD's Not Used. (PAOTS now)* 	 MRVD's Not Used. (PAOTS now)*
Roaded Natural Nonmotorized ROS	MRVD's	103.2	111.1		
Roaded Natural ROS	MRVD's	152.4	175.7		
Rural ROS	MRVD's	139.5	191.6		
Developed ¹	MRVD's	136.4	188.4		
Dispersed ²	MRVD's	285.4	318.0		
Hiking and Horse Trail Const./Reconst.	Miles	6.0	3.5	0	0
ORV Trail Const./ Reconst.	Miles	25.0	5.0	1.5	4.0
<u>Wildlife and Fish</u>					
Habitat Improvements (New Developments)				0	0
Openings Const. ³	Acres	70.5	70.5	0	0
Small Lakes / Ponds	Acres	1.0	1.0	0	0
Marshes /Year	Acres	1.0	1.0	0	0
<u>Range</u>					
Grazing Use	M AUM's	1	1	1.3	1.3

* Recreation can be measured in terms of actual use—MRVD (thousands of recreation visitor days), or in terms of opportunity or capacity provided—PAOT (persons at one time). Because actual visitation is often quite difficult to measure, the Forest Service decided in 1999 to begin measuring capacity provided for different types of recreation rather than actual visitation.

¹ Includes large lake fishing.

² Includes small lake fishing.

³ New openings can be created through a variety of management activities such as oil and gas developments and timber management and direct wildlife habitat improvements.

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Forest Plan Upper Limit Projected Outputs (from *Forest Plan* Table 4-1)
Compared To Actual Output for Fiscal Years 2002 and 2003

Table 1 - Continued		From <i>Forest Plan</i> Average Annual Per Decade			
Item	Unit of Measure	1986 1995	1996 2005	2002	2003
		<u>Planned</u>	<u>Projected</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>
<u>Timber</u>					
Total Volume Offered	MMBF	7.5	11.2	0.008	0.145
Hardwood Volume	MMBF	6.5	9.7	0.008	0.145
Pine Volume	MMBF	1.0	1.5	0	0
Reforestation	M Acres	1.02	1.11	0.087	0.037
<u>Lands</u>					
Purchasing, Acquisition, and Exchange	M Acres	2.9	2.9	0.7	2.5
<u>Facilities</u>					
Permanent Rd. Const.	Miles	2.2	1.8	0	0
Permanent Rd. Reconst.	Miles	6.6	5.2	6	1.3
Total Permanent Roads	Miles	8.8	7.0	6	0
Temporary Const. ¹	Miles	1.6	2.0	0	0
Temporary Reconst. ⁴	Miles	4.8	6.0	0	0
Total Temp. Roads ¹	Miles	6.4	8.0	0	0
Roads Closed ²	Miles	78.8	13.9	1.0	2.0
<u>Cost</u>					
Total Funds (2003 dollars)	MM \$	6.019	6.019	7.716	7.976

¹ Represents miles of temporary roads estimated to be in use at one time during the decade.

² Includes county, township and old "woods" roads from Table 4-20, page 4-41 of DEIS and other permanent and temporary roads to be closed to public use.

TABLE 2

Actual Activities Funded and/or Accomplished during Fiscal Years 2002 and 2003

Description	Unit of Measure	FY 2002	FY 2003
		Accomplishment	Accomplishment
LRMP Monitoring/Evaluation	Reports	1	0
Riverine Stream R/C Unit Scl Inv	Miles	10	25
Riverine Valley Segment Scl Inv	Miles	20	25
Stream Aquatic Biota Inv	Miles	48	47
Reforestation	Acres	87	37
TSI	Acres	0	77
Volume Offered New	MBF	8	145
Volume Offered New	CCF	13	229
Volume Sold	MBF	8	145
Volume Sold	CCF	13	229
Hazardous Fuel Reduction	Acres	480	0
Land Owner Adjustment (no Exchange)	Acres	712	2,537
New Boundary Marked - Std	Miles	5	9
Special Uses Applications Processed	Permits	30	35
Special Use Pmt Administered to Standard	Permits	121	219
Special Use Pmt Administered - Total	Permits	414	254
Total Active Energy Operations	Operations	525	425
Energy Operations Administered to Standard	Operations	300	300
Energy Operations Process	Operations	35	24
Geologic Mgmt Areas Admin	Areas	1	0
Geologic Permit/Report Doc	Documents	1	0
Road Reconstruction	Miles	6	0
Roads Decommissioned	Miles	1	2
Roads Fully Maintained	Miles	27	27

Table 2 - Cont.			
Description	Unit of Measure	FY 2002	FY 2003
		Accomplishment	Accomplishment
Grazing Allotments Administered to Standard	Allotments	7	5
Grazing Allotments Administered - Total	Allotments	7	5
Grazing - Cattle & Horses	Head/month	1,308	1,300
Noxious Weed Treatment	Acres	40	32
Range Structural Improvement	Structures	1	0
Heritage Sites Interpreted	Sites	2	5
Heritage Sites Preserved/Protected	Sites	10	12
Heritage Inventory	Acres	2	11,500
Recreation Seasonal Capacity Available - Total	PAOT Days	1,001,100	1,001,100
Recreation Special Uses - Administered	Permits	4	5
Soil & Water Resource Improve	Acres	36	23
Biological Assessment/Evaluation	Tasks	99	51
Inland Fish Lakes Restored / Protected	Acres	124	29
Inland Fish Stream Restored / Protected	Miles	1	0
Threatened & Endangered Species Habitat Inventory	Acres	10,000	30,950
Threatened & Endangered Species Terrestrial Habitat Restored/Enhance	Acres	10	0
Wildlife Habitat Inventory	Acres	480	4984
Wildlife Structures	Structures	15	23
Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat Restored/Enhance	Acres	442	306
Volunteers in NF Programs	Enrollee Yrs	4	13.3

2. Document measured prescriptions/effects, including significant changes in productivity of the land. 36 CFR 219.12(k)(2)

There were no commercial timber sales sold or operated during FY 2002 and 2003 therefore there was no effect on productivity of the land from timber sales. The sale amount of timber sold shown in Tables 1 and 2 came from small personal use firewood sales.

The total amount of open-land on the forest (approximately 3 percent) generally meets the objectives of the *Forest Plan*, which calls for 2 percent to 6 percent in the largest Management Areas. Due to a lack of recent even-aged timber management, the total amount of forestland in the 0 to 10 year age class (approximately 0.9 percent) is far below the objective of the *Forest Plan*, which calls for 8 percent to 13 percent in the largest Management Areas. There is thus a growing shortage of habitat for wildlife that requires early successional forest; this shortage is causing declining populations of the species that need this habitat condition and this shortage will translate to habitat shortages in mid-successional habitat conditions as time passes if the current trend is not changed. The forest is not providing the diversity of wildlife habitats as prescribed by the *Forest Plan*. Nor is it providing timber products as prescribed.

With respect to the management prescriptions for recreation, the dam at Lake Vesuvius continued undergoing major reconstruction in FY 2002 and 2003. This reconstruction has resulted in the closing of a major portion of the recreation sites at the Lake Vesuvius Recreation Area for both fiscal years, while not affecting productivity; it did reduce the recreation opportunities being provided on the Forest. (The Lake Vesuvius dam reconstruction was completed, the lake refilled and re-opened in fiscal year 2004.)

Five and one half (5 ½) miles of new ORV trails were constructed or designated during FY 2002 and 2003. This impacted a total of approximately 5.5 acres and while it does affect the productivity of the immediate location of the trails (as was disclosed in the project level NEPA); it is not considered a significant change in productivity of the land.

All trails are being maintained for safety, but many sections are not meeting standards for user convenience. Trails and recreation sites are being inspected annually, but repairs are prioritized and not always completed within 90 day as prescribed in the *Forest Plan*. Parking area capacity and trail density have not been meet as prescribed.

Noxious weed control efforts during 2002 and 2003 have concentrated on Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*).

No significant changes in the productivity of the land occurred due to the maintenance of forest openings. During the years of 2002 and 2003, no new wildlife openings were created by cutting trees. Existing openings designated as wildlife habitat were maintained in an early successional stage by mowing.

3. Document cost of actual management practices in relationship to estimated costs. 36 CFR 219.12(k)(3)

The *Forest Plan* projected an annual cost of 2.2 million dollars (1978 basis) to fully implement the planned program. In 1997, the Forest leadership estimated that, because of increases in the cost of forest management, full plan implementation would cost approximately 8.4 million dollars (see 1997 Wayne National Forest Monitoring Report).

Table 3

Budget Figures for Fiscal Years 2002 and 2003 (MM\$)

	2002	2003
<i>Forest Plan</i> Budget *	5.885	6.019
1997 FLT Estimate	9.589	9.808
Actual Budget	5.816	6.694
Earmarks added to Budget	1.900	1.282
TOTAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR (MM\$)	7.716	7.976

* = *Forest Plan* Budget estimates in this table were calculated using the *Forest Plan* estimate from 1978 basis and inflating it to 2002 and 2003.

4. Lands are adequately restocked as specified in the *Forest Plan*. (3rd year stocking surveys) 36 CFR 219.12(k)(5)

This monitoring item is to ensure adequate restocking after regeneration harvest methods are used on the forest. There haven't been any regeneration harvests on the Forest since 1995. We have been planting acquired openings and reclaimed strip mines.

114 acres were planted in fiscal year 1999; 43 acres were certified as adequately stocked in fiscal year 2002. The areas that were not certified have been replanted.

177 acres were planted in fiscal year 2000; 155 acres were certified in fiscal year 03 as stocked. The areas that were not certified were identified as having problem after the first year stocking survey in 2001 and have already been replanted.

The main reasons for the low stocking of the non-certified plantations are the heavy herbaceous cover in riparian areas, compacted soils, and heavy grass cover in the reclaimed strip-mined areas.

5. Evaluate how well management prescriptions, practices, and standards and guidelines have been applied on the ground. 36 CFR 219.12(k)

Recreation:

Motorized Trails: Standards and guidelines are being followed in designated ORV areas and on the designated ORV trails.

Non-motorized Trails: Horse trails have been improved by use of user fees. Volunteers and cooperators have helped maintain and improve some hiking trails, most notably the North Country Trail and the Buckeye Trail.

At Lake Vesuvius, a detailed map of the lake bottom was made during fiscal year 2003 while the lake was empty to aid recreational fishing.

The boat launch area at Leith Run on the Ohio River was dredged in 2002 and 2003 to maintain recreational boat access.

Unauthorized motorized use continued to be an issue in fiscal years 2002 and 2003. *Forest Plan* standards and guidelines limit the ORV trail system to vehicles 50" or less in width, tracks of vehicles over 50" in width have been found indicating unauthorized use. In addition, there are cases where clear unauthorized ORV paths can be seen leading from private lands onto the Forest. Contact with landowners has been initiated when these paths lead to specific locations. Some unauthorized trails are blocked every year based on priority setting because the forest does not have the resources to block every illegal trail found every year.

Minerals:

Oil and Gas: Monitoring oil and gas wells was accomplished as a normal part of monitoring the lease or special use permit. All permits and leases have *Forest Plan* standards and guidelines incorporated into them. As specific sites and permits have been inspected, any deficiencies were noted, the permittee contacted to rectify the deficiency and a re-inspection conducted to validate that the needed work was in fact performed. *Forest Plan* standards and guidelines have been applied on the ground in relation to minerals management.

Watershed:

Forest Plan standards and guidelines regarding water quality have been followed on projects designed to reduce acid mine drainage sites on the forest. During FY 2002, 15 sites were treated. During FY 2003, 7 sites were treated and a contract to treat an additional 42 sites in one drainage was awarded. These activities all contribute to enhancing water quality. The projects have been monitored during implementation and following implementation to ensure the project planning was adhered to and to document the short-term effectiveness of the treatments carried out.

Wildlife:

150 biological evaluations (BE's) were completed during fiscal years 2002 and 2003 to ensure the *Forest Plan* standards and guidelines were being followed on site-specific projects. Projects were also monitored to ensure that the recommendations of the BE's were followed.

Fuels Management:

Reducing the fuel hazard created by the February 2003 ice storm moved at a fast pace. All applicable *Forest Plan* standards and guidelines were used in planning the project. This project entailed entirely handwork, with no large equipment involved. Because of the large area involved and the urgency in reducing the fuels before a fire could impact private lands and property, extra mitigation and coordination with the Ohio State Historic Preservation Office was applied with relation to protection of heritage resources. The forest placed monitoring personnel with the workers doing the fuels reduction to ensure application of *Forest Plan* standards and guidelines and to have someone on-site at all times the crews were working to ensure all known and any newly identified heritage or cultural sites were protected.

Special Uses:

Monitoring of special uses was accomplished as a normal part of monitoring the special use permit. All special use permits have *Forest Plan* standards and guidelines incorporated into them. As specific special use permits have been inspected, any deficiencies were noted, the permittee contacted to rectify the deficiency and a re-inspection conducted to validate that the needed work was in fact performed and the deficiency corrected. *Forest Plan* standards and guidelines have been applied on the ground in relation to special use permits.

6. Effects of NF management on adjacent lands and effects upon NF lands by other government agencies. 36 CFR 219.7(f)

Effects of National Forest management on adjacent lands:

There have been some cases of ORV's traveling in the *Forest Plan* designated ORV areas and on designated trails, leaving the designated trails and traveling onto private property, thereby affecting those lands. The forest published a new, detailed ORV trails map in 2002, and in 2003 under took a major signing program on the ORV trails to help reduce this situation.

The Vesuvius Dam reconstruction project on the Ironton Ranger District was in full swing during fiscal years 2002 and 2003. With the water out of the lake and the improvements to the dam and associated facilities, the dam will meet the new design standards set by the State of Ohio, creating a safer condition for people and facilities located downstream from the dam.

An ice storm in February 2003 broke the tops out of trees and caused entire trees to fall due to the weight of the ice. The major concentration of this breakage occurred on the Ironton Ranger District of the Forest. The damaged trees resulted in a high level of fuels build up and a high fire hazard to private lands adjacent to National Forest lands where the main species affected was pine. Efforts to clean up the damage in FY 2003 were concentrated on the pine areas adjacent to private lands and residences to lower the chance of a wildfire on National Forest system lands causing damage to the adjacent private property. The fiscal year 2003 treatment was mainly cutting the fuels into small pieces to get the fuel close to the ground (thereby reducing the amount of air available to the fuel if it did burn and increasing the fuel moisture of the pieces making them more resistant to burning), and scattering the pieces so there were no more big piles of slash (so that if a fire started and suppression was need, that fire personnel could create firelines much more quickly and safely). This activity reduced the fire danger to the adjacent private lands that had resulted from this natural weather event.

Treatment of 15 acid mine drainage sites during FY 2002 and another 7 sites in FY 2003, plus putting another 46 acres with around 40 sites under contract to be treated in FY 2003, has or will some improved the water quality of streams both on the Forest and as they flow downstream across private lands.

Effects upon NF lands by other government agencies:

In fiscal year 2002, the Gallia County Engineer's office channalized two segments of streams located on the Wayne National Forest. The Forest Service worked with the County Engineer to stop this work on National Forest system lands and to evaluate the damage that had been done to the stream channels. Channelizing the stream resulted in: sediment moving downstream; riparian vegetation being removed; streambanks being reshaped; natural stream characteristics being obliterated and the stream channels being opened up to sunlight increasing the water temperature in the streams. The Forest Service reseeded the areas to get a quick ground cover re-established. The Forest is considering further stream restoration work on these two stream segments.

During fiscal years 2002 and 2003, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) continued their work on the Route 33 Bypass around Nelsonville. In 2003, ODOT reduced the number of routes they were considering for the Bypass from 8 to 2. Both of the two final routes under consideration would cross some National Forest system lands administered by the Wayne National Forest north of Nelsonville. The Wayne National Forest does not have a decision-making role in this project but is working with ODOT and the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) in analyzing effects of the proposal with respect to the National Forest system lands.

7. Population trends of the management indicator species will be monitored and relationships to habitat changes determined in cooperation with State fish and wildlife agencies. Determine how much suitable habitat is available for: eastern blue-bird; bluegill; redbelly dace; blackside darter; rainbow darter; western chorus frog; wood frog; redbelly shiner; field sparrow; white eyed verio; pine warbler; piliated woodpecker; cerulean warbler; common yellow-throat. For ruffed grouse; wood duck; Virginia rail - Population trend expected from changes in availability of suitable habitat. Sampling involves about 10 percent of Forest per year through integrated resources surveys, (including VMIS data base). 36 CFR 219.19

The *Wayne Forest Plan* identifies the MIS for the Wayne National Forest. Ten of the MIS are birds, each representing a broad habitat component (Table 4). Many other vertebrate species are represented by these indicator species and their respective habitat component (see *Forest Plan* Appendix B).

Table 4. Birds identified as Management Indicator Species in the *Forest Plan*.

MIS	Habitat
Cerulean warbler	Close-canopied, Mature/Overmature Hardwoods (40+ years old with 50+ trees/ha greater than 12" dbh and canopy closure less than 85 percent)
Common yellowthroat	Middle Succession (fields between late and early stages)
Eastern bluebird	Park-like (90+% coverage of short grass; 10-40% coverage by trees)
Field sparrow	Early Succession (grass of weedy fields with less than 10% woody cover - includes hay fields but not row crops)
Pileated woodpecker	Mature Hardwoods (2+ trees/ha greater than 20" dbh – generally 40+ years old)
Pine warbler	Conifers (30%-100% of the canopy is composed of pine)
Ruffed grouse	Early Hardwoods (forests between late succession and mature hardwoods – generally 10-40 years)
White-eyed vireo	Late Succession (50+% canopy closure, 80+% of trees less than 3" dbh)
Wood duck	Beaver Ponds, Oxbows
Virginia rail	Marshes

Some MIS bird monitoring work has been accomplished on or in the vicinity of the Wayne National Forest since 1988. Forest interior bird surveys were conducted on the Wayne National Forest during 1992-1995 (Dettmers 1997), and the Ohio Division of Wildlife has conducted ruffed grouse drumming surveys in the Wayne National Forest for many years (Ohio Division of Wildlife 2002). Bird surveys were conducted on the Ironton Ranger District in early successional habitat in 2000 and in pine habitats in 2001. Seven North American Breeding Bird Survey routes are located either completely or partially within the Wayne National Forest proclamation boundary (Sauer et al. 2001): Dell (66080), Pomeroy (66082), Tick Ridge (66906), Bolin Mills (66076), Wilgus (66188), Wayne NF (66901), and Scioto Furnace (66087).

The following paragraphs summarize a MIS breeding bird survey on the Wayne National Forest that was conducted in 2003. The complete report on this survey is available upon request.

Nine of the ten MIS were observed during the survey. The Ruffed Grouse was not reported during the May 20 - June 20 survey. Ruffed Grouse populations are generally sampled during the early part of April when the males are drumming. This species is not actively drumming during the May/June period, therefore would not be expected to be heard during our survey.

For the Management Indicator Species (MIS) observed during the survey, the Common Yellowthroat had the highest relative abundance, and was distributed across the most survey routes (Tables 4 and 5). The Common Yellowthroat was documented at the most points (97), followed by the White-Eyed vireo (80), Pileated Woodpecker (56), Cerulean Warbler (57), Field Sparrow (27), Eastern Bluebird (14), Pine Warbler (13), Wood Duck (10), and Virginia Rail (1).

Percent habitat composition of the 100 m² area around each point was calculated, and then summarized for each point where an MIS was documented. Summarizing the habitat composition of points where MIS were documented provides an indication of the variability of habitats where these species are found. There were very few points where one habitat component comprised the entire 100 m² sampling area. Most points contained a certain degree of edge, where one or more habitat types joined together.

For example, the Cerulean Warbler is considered a forest species, and this is reflected in the fact that forest habitat (all types) comprised a mean of almost 92% in the sampling areas where it was located. This is a species typically associated with interior forest habitats, yet it was often located in areas near roads, and in some cases near agricultural land and openland (shrubland). The survey indicated that the Cerulean Warbler used areas with edge, but it did not indicate the reproductive success of individuals in such areas. Instances of habitat edge in sampling areas were similarly observed for the other MIS.

Information on Ruffed Grouse populations in the Wayne National Forest is obtained from the Ohio Division of Wildlife annually. The Division conducts four drumming survey routes through the Wayne National Forest. The ruffed grouse population in Ohio has continued to decline since the 1980s. Ohio Division of Wildlife drumming counts were 64% below the long-term average in 2003.

Four grouse drumming count survey routes are located within the Wayne National Forest proclamation boundary. Ohio Division of Wildlife data are available for these four routes only for the 1998-2003 time period. These data indicate drumming males are more abundant along the Monroe County route, and least abundant along the Lawrence County route. When compared to all Ohio counties where drumming counts are conducted, Wayne National Forest routes tend to have similar or higher numbers of grouse heard per 100 stops.

Grouse are associated with natural cyclical trends in abundance, although cycles in the central hardwoods region are not as great as those in the Great Lakes region. Studies in the Appalachian part of its range showed that grouse exhibit a cyclical trend in populations, although slight, that is related to mast cycles. Mast production fluctuates year-to-year, but white oak generally exhibits a five-year cycle in the Appalachian region cycles. Ruffed grouse can, however, be locally abundant in this region where quality habitats exist. A detailed evaluation of range-wide and region-wide ruffed grouse habitat and population trends can be reviewed in the Ruffed Grouse Species Viability Evaluation report, completed in 2003 as part of the *Forest Plan* revision process.

Early successional hardwood forest habitats have declined on the Wayne National Forest since 1985. Shrubs/saplings (0-9 years old) and early forest habitat (10-19 years old) have declined by a combined 6.9% since 1985. On the other hand, the forest has matured and mast producing stands have increased by 7.7%. More information on habitat trends can be found in the Analysis of the Management Situation report for Wildlife and Fisheries Resources, completed in 2003 as part of the *Forest Plan* revision process.

Monitoring Recommendation: In fiscal year 2002 and 2003, as part of the process for revising the Wayne National Forest's *Forest Plan*, Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS) Reports were prepared. Based on the AMS report for Wildlife and Fisheries Resources, completed in 2003, and the Species Viability Evaluation reports also completed in 2003, changes are recommended for some of the Management Indicator Species for the Wayne National Forest. These reports have been posted on the Forest's website and available to the public since late 2003.

8. Habitat determined to be critical for threatened and endangered species shall be identified, and measures shall be prescribed to prevent the destruction or adverse modification of such habitat. 36 CFR 219.19

In 2001 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service completed a Biological Opinion on the continued implementation of the Wayne National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The Biological Opinion issued by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any critical habitat for any listed species on the Wayne National Forest.

A *Forest Plan* amendment based on the Biological Opinion was completed during fiscal years 2002 and 2003. The decision on the *Forest Plan* Amendment (Amendment # 13) was issued on

May 22, 2003. This decision was appealed. The appeal was denied, and the May 22nd decision upheld.

The environmental analysis conducted for this of this did not find any information that would change the Fish and Wildlife Service's finding on critical habitat for listed species. Several habitat features have been identified during the BO and *Forest Plan* Amendment process where special measures have been prescribed to prevent destruction or adverse modification of the habitat. Amendment 13 has added these protection measures to the *Forest Plan*.

In February 2003 a winter bat census was conducted on the one Indiana bat hibernaculum that has been found on the Wayne National Forest. The winter population of Indiana bats has increased from approximately 150 in 1999 to 208 in 2003. The bat-friendly gate that was installed at this location in 2002 was intact with no evidence of any attempts at unauthorized entry.

9. Land Adjustment: Progress toward land consolidation that meets objectives; Changes in total acres and percent by county.

In fiscal year 2002, the Wayne acquired 712 acres of surface ownership. These acquisitions were located in Athens, Hocking, Lawrence, Monroe and Washington counties. In addition, the forest acquired 9,926 acres of minerals only rights, most in Lawrence County and some in Athens County. This minerals only acquisition was under land where the Wayne already owned the surface. The forest was offered additional mineral rights under privately owned surface but decided not to acquire these subsurface rights due to the private surface ownership.

In fiscal year 2003 the forest acquired another 2,537 acres of surface ownership and an additional 80 acres of minerals only rights. The surface acquisitions were located in Gallia, Hocking, Lawrence, and Washington counties and the minerals acquisition was in Lawrence County. A land exchange in fiscal year 2003 reduced the acreage of Forest Service systems lands in Perry County and increased the ownership in Hocking County.

By September 30, 2003, the Wayne National Forest had acquired 236,175 acres, or approximately 28.3 percent of the area within its modified Proclamation Boundary, which encompasses 833,990 acres. In 2002 and 2003, the following totals were reported for each county (See Table 5):

Table 5 – Wayne National Forest Acreage by Counties, Fiscal Years 2002 and 2003

County	Start of Fiscal Year 2002 (Oct. 1, 2003) WNF Acres	End of Fiscal Year 2002 (Sept. 30, 2002) WNF Acres	End of Fiscal Year 2003 (Sept. 30, 2003) WNF Acres	Proclamation Acres	Total Acres in County	FS as % of County as of September 30, 2003
Athens	18,365	18,581	18,581	81,213	322,560	5.8 %
Gallia	16,954	16,954	17,049	106,017	286,075	6.0 %
Hocking	24,151	24,259	25,912	59,174	269,440	9.6 %
Jackson	1,701	1,701	1,701	7,440	265,792	0.6 %
Lawrence	68,843	68,925	69,762	157,766	291,520	23.9 %
Monroe	24,137	24,225	24,225	142,854	291,200	8.3 %
Morgan	3,328	3,328	3,328	7,637	269,440	1.2 %
Noble	694	694	694	5,531	254,976	0.3 %
Perry	22,257	22,257	22,151	79,798	262,080	8.5 %
Scioto	11,625	11,625	11,625	32,438	391,040	3.0 %
Vinton	1,869	1,869	1,869	27,239	263,040	0.7 %
Washington	39,002	39,220	39,278	126,883	410,240	9.6%
Total	232,926	233,638	236,175	833,990	3,577,403	6.6 %

10. Vegetative Management

a. Verify research conclusions which use various silvicultural systems to achieve multiple use objectives.

Meetings were held during 2002 and 2003 with researchers from the Forest Service Delaware (Ohio) Lab; the Nature Conservancy; the State of Ohio, Department of Natural Resources and the Ohio State University, School of Forestry, as a part of the *Forest Plan* revision effort. These meetings have been to discuss appropriate silvicultural systems to achieve certain objectives or results. Scientists from these various organizations have provided input on the current state-of-the art thinking, research, and publications on which silvicultural techniques are appropriate to achieve what objectives.

Since no commercial timber harvesting took place on the Wayne in fiscal years 2002 and 2003, this item was not monitored.

b. Determine public reaction to vegetative management.

During fiscal years 2002 and 2003 a total of 13 public meetings were held regarding revising the Wayne *Forest Plan*. Content analysis of the input received during these meetings and other written input received indicates a continuing split in the public regarding vegetative management. Some individuals and groups are strongly opposed to doing vegetative management by timber sales on the Forest, while other individuals and groups are strongly supportive of doing vegetative management using timber sales. There was also a portion of the input that stated they support “multiple-use management” but did not specifically refer to timber sales.

c. Determine if significant soil damage or loss occurs as a result of vegetative management.

The only vegetative management activities during fiscal years 2002 and 2003 were treatment of non-native invasive species, maintaining existing wildlife openings, and clean up of damage caused to vegetation by a major ice storm in February 2003. Both the non-native invasive species project and the ice storm clean-up were done by hand. The wildlife openings were maintained by mowing or other mechanized means. There was no significant soil damage or loss that resulted from vegetative management during fiscal years 2002 and 2003.

d. Determine effects of vegetative management on water quality.

There were no commercial timber sales during FY 2002 or 2003, and no previously sold sales were operating. The noxious weeds treatment in 2002 and 2003 were done by hand pulling of plants thereby minimizing the possible impacts to water quality.

The 2003 Ice storm created an excessive amount of down woody material in some riparian corridors on the Ironton Ranger District. In these riparian areas, the clean-up of the debris from the storm was guided by input from wildlife biologists, fisheries biologist and the Forest Hydrologist to ensure riparian and aquatic resource need were incorporated into the project.

11. Off-Road Vehicle Use: ORV use in Management Areas 2.3 and 3.2

a. Determine ORV effects on other recreation uses in the 2.3 and 3.2 management areas.

Most effects of unauthorized ORV use on other recreation uses are the same as projected in the FEIS. At public meetings held in FY 2002, the forest heard comments about hikers not liking the noise of ORVs. The FEIS displayed that on the 15% of the Forest allocated to ORV use there would be sights and sounds of motorized use; 85% of the forest is available for hiking without the sights and sounds of legal ORV use.

Mountain biking users during fiscal years 2002 and 2003 have expressed the desire to have trails other than the ORV trails on the Athens and the Ironton units. Their concerns are safety and the quality of their riding experience.

The designated motorized trails in the ORV areas allow access for hunters and for game retrieval. During the public meetings in 2002, we heard that having legal ORV use was an important accessibility issue to some persons with disabilities.

b. Determine if ORV use significantly effects silt volume in streams or drainages in 2.3 and 3.2 management areas.

Visual monitoring during 2002 and 2003 concluded that erosion from the designated ORV trails has been kept to a minimum through continuous monitoring, maintenance, and occasional re-routing of trails.

Unauthorized, user developed ORV trails have caused an increase in erosion in a number of areas, especially at unauthorized stream crossings. Increased law enforcement and rider education have both been used in trying to curb this situation. Where the erosion has been found to be particularly bad, these sites have been fixed and/or the unauthorized ORV trail blocked depending on the resources available.

c. Determine if ORV use significantly effects hunted and nonhunted wildlife populations. (Compare similar) 2.2 and 2.3, and 3.1 and 3.2 areas.)

No specific monitoring protocols have been set up to consider this question. Breeding bird survey routes were set up across the forest in fiscal year 2003, including two routes in ORV areas. At this point, data from this survey can only document presence or absence of species. Survey data has not been collected over a long enough period to draw any conclusions on population trends. Wildlife in the designated ORV areas have been exposed to ORV use on designated trails since 1988.