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March 19, 2020

Wayne National Forest/Plan Revision

Athens Ranger District - Athens Unit

13700 US Highway 33

Nelsonville, OH 45764

(740) 753-0101

RE: Wayne National Forest, Forest Plan Draft Assessment

To: Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Commissioners of Lawrence County, we extend gratitude to the Wayne National Forest, WNF, for inviting the people to be a part of the Forest Plan Revision. The people are the first priority of the Board of Lawrence County Commissioners as we have been told the Forest Management as well.

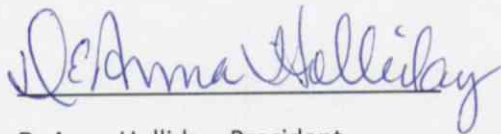
There has been a long-standing desire to connect the people of Lawrence County and tourist to the Ironton District of the WNF by creating accessible recreation, connecting trails to communities, employment opportunities, entrepreneurship, and lodging. In the past there has been a general plan and we would like to work together for an Ultimate Plan. One that supports the health and well-being of the people today and the future through recreation, tourism and economy sustainability. One that supports a clean and healthy forest. One that has an improved infrastructure such as trails, roads, bridges, and communications. An Ultimate Plan uniting the people and the forest management/staff to collaborate as never before as partners.

We work closely with many county governments, organizations, groups, and councils such as but not limited to: Southern Wayne Advocacy Council, Lawrence County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce, Ironton Lawrence County CAO, Lawrence County Port Authority, Scioto-Lawrence Solid Waste just to name a few.

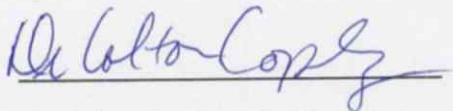
We look forward to this opportunity. Attached are some suggested changes that have been roadblocks since the 2006 Wayne National Forest Plan. Other topics such as watersheds, permits, land surveys, land leasing, wilderness area, logging, and their impacts or needs we look to discuss as well.

Please include us on the planning process, as we look forward to working with you.

Respectfully,



DeAnna Holliday, President



Dr. Colton Copley, Vice President



Freddie Hayes Jr., Member

RESOLUTION

The Lawrence County Commission wishes to showcase their upmost support for the Wayne National Forest's 2020 Revision Plan. The Commission also values the resources of the Wayne National Forest, and the significance it holds to the public. As Wayne National Forest looks to revise its plan, the Lawrence County Commission wishes to ask that the new plan provide answers to some of the concerns expressed by residents in the areas of Calendar of Operations, Motorized Vehicle Registration requirements, and Trail Widths and Finishes. To provide official request the Lawrence County Commission is forwarding the following Resolution.

WHEREAS, the Wayne National Forest has a significant impact on travel and tourism in Lawrence County. With limited recreation opportunities dates of campground closures, trail closures as well as early campground closure due to a water line break last year, concerns and complaints have been received about the closure of the campground areas as well as the annual calendar; and,

WHEREAS, the desire for Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) drivers/riders to visit and enjoy the Wayne National Forest is at times an inconvenience to OHV owners from other states, especially Kentucky. Differentiating from other states, the registration process for ATV/OHV's has caused owners not to choose the Wayne National Forest as a riding destination.; and,

WHEREAS, Trail widths for ATV/OHV's are set at 50 inches at the Wayne National Forest. With newer models of ATV/OHV's this makes the trails at Wayne National Forest impossible to use at this mark. Increasing the trail widths will open opportunities for more to ride and visit the forest; and,

WHEREAS, Finishes of many of the trails are limestone rather than open dirt as preferred by many ATV/OHV users,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Lawrence County Commission request that the dates be expanded for the Wayne National Forest developed recreation areas including campgrounds and day use areas from March 15 through November 15. This change will give the public more of an opportunity to utilize the area. If an activity arises in which the forest would be utilized in the off months, November 15th until March 15th, the Lawrence County Commission requests that the WNF Plan accommodate, with special permitting, for guide led activity (ex., horse trails with a qualified guide); and,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Lawrence County Commission request the recreational ATV, Horse and Bicycle trails be open year around to improve opportunities of accessibility and tourism for well- being and economic growth.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Lawrence County Commission requests for the permitting process for ATV's and OHV's to parallel the standard already set in place for watercrafts, which is to be in accordance with the State of residence of the user/owner, at the Wayne National Forest, and that the registration process be continually reviewed for further improvements, so as to incentivize out-of-state riders to consider Wayne National Forest as a destination to ride without the deterrent of the current permitting process in place that may be different from home state standards.; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Wayne National Forest consider the widening of the current 50-inch trail system to at least 70 inches or 2 inches smaller than the smallest auto, so as to accommodate for riders with larger vehicles, so as to allow them the opportunity to choose Wayne National Forest as a location to ride.; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Wayne National Forest Plan encourage special areas where dirt or other features would be made available for more adventurous riding without the concern of limestone surfaces,

The Lawrence County Commission values the opportunities that Wayne National Forest provides to Lawrence County, the State of Ohio, and travelers from other parts of the US and beyond. As Wayne National Forest proceeds with their Wayne National Plan for the future, it is our hope that these items can be incorporated into all Forest Plans and that the Lawrence County Commission can serve as your partner by providing for the overall enhancement of the Lawrence County experience.

Resolution Number _____,

Motion Made by Holliday Seconded by Copray and,

Passed this 25 Day of February, 2020.

Anna Holliday President

Freddie J. Hayes

Cotton Copray