

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/4/2020 8:09:02 PM

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Comments:

The sustainable forest management of the Wayne national forest is crucial for many reasons. The economic contributions from the forest products produced for the ground could dramatically improve community economics in all three management units. Increased forest products production could even spark new business ventures with a flush increase of viable timber basket up for grabs. Many of the forest associated with the ground are in dire need of overstory management, lack of such manipulating has made optimal conditions for shade tolerant species like beech and maple. According of the FIA data Oak-hickory makes up over 1/3 of the forest overstory composition in southeast Ohio. While in the in the 2-inch size class it accounts of 5% or less of the total forest composition. Due to the absence of stand initiating fires that once took place on the land scape timber harvest are the optimal economically feasible response. The regeneration of oak species can be a complex matter that requires particular harvest and, in many cases, prescribed fire. Oak hickory or Oak-northern hardwoods forest types are some of the highest value overstory dominance in respective to lumber production and wildlife. Without proper timber harvest on lands such as the Wayne, southeast Ohio many no longer enjoy the economic gain this has brought to us over the next several hundred years.

Invasive plants have taken strong hold in many of our woodland ecosystems in southeast Ohio. Without the management and elimination of these plants many of the native forest vegetation cover types could be out competed and removed from the landscape over an extended period of time. Furthermore, these unwelcome plants create substandard wildlife habitat.

This increase in timber harvests will also create diverse benefits to many of our forest wildlife. As early successional habitat is on its way out (forest 5 years of age or less) many of our wildlife traveling further and further into larger home ranges. This is to merely find the necessary habitat suitable for things like reproduction, and wintering. This has created in many cases, quite the decline in wildlife populations across the board.