



## **Scoping Proposal** **Cherry Run Project**

USDA Forest Service, Eastern Region 9,  
Allegheny National Forest, Bradford Ranger District  
Warren County, Pennsylvania

*Warrants: James Godfrey, Robert Falconer, Samuel Williamson, Timothy Barns, 2445, 2453, 2752, 2877, 2960; Lots: 358, 359, 366, 367, 369, 370, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, and 440, Sheffield Township.*

The Forest Service, Allegheny National Forest (ANF), proposes forest management actions within the Cherry Run project area (Vicinity map). The Cherry Run project is a planned rotational forest management project on the Bradford Ranger District. It includes a response to recent forest health issues that presently exist or are anticipated to occur within the project area. The existing vegetation condition of the project area will be moved to the desired condition as described in the ANF Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) (USDA FS 2007a). The Bradford District Ranger is the responsible official. The decision is whether to approve the proposed action or an alternative to the proposal, or to take no action at this time.

The project area is 7,578 acres and includes 5,714 acres of National Forest System (NFS) lands and 1,864 acres of private land. Within the project area, proposed actions include: improvements to forest health through tree harvesting and reforestation, treatment of non-native invasive plants, stream restoration, and fishery and wildlife habitat improvements. Transportation actions include constructing a new access road, improvements to existing roads and the removal of roadside hazard trees.

Details of the project proposals are provided below and on the attached map. The proposal is posted through the Forest Service Schedule of Proposed Actions on the ANF website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=551612>.

The proposed actions are planned within Forest Plan management areas (MA) 2.2 and MA 3.0. In summary, MA 2.2 is managed for older, late structural forests that link relatively large areas of older forests (core areas) across the landscape (Forest Plan, pages 109 to 112). Whereas, MA 3.0, managed for even-aged management, provides a mixed forest that is a mix of predominantly shade intolerant and mid-tolerant hardwood stands of various ages and associated understories, and habitat for a diversity of plant and animal species (Forest Plan, pages 113 to 116).

The Tionesta Research Natural Area (RNA), 2,111 acres (MA 8.5), and Scenic Area (a component of the RNA), 2,115 acres (MA 8.3) border the east side of the project area. These areas contain one of the largest old growth remnants in the East. The RNA is managed for preservation and protection of ecologically significant natural features, high quality representative ecosystems, and unique areas of the administratively designated area. The TSA is managed for protection and maintenance of administratively designated scenic areas on the ANF (Forest Plan, page 29).

Proposed silvicultural treatments border 214 feet of the RNA and 6,551 feet of the TSA, as well as bordering proposed stream restoration and a road reconstruction (FR 148C), respectively. The ANF recognizes the ecological value of the Tionesta RNA. Any proposed activity adjacent to or within 300 feet of the boundary will be evaluated at the project level to ensure that the proposed activity is consistent with these values (Forest Plan, page 62). In addition, some treatments bisect the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST).

Table 1 shows the known condition of forest structural stages and age classes for both private lands and NFS lands within the project area.

**Table 1. Existing age class condition within the project area private and NFS lands<sup>1</sup>.**

Forest Structural Stage	Age Class, Years	Private Land, Acres	NFS Lands, Acres	Total Acres	Percent Project Area
Early	0 to 10	0	56	56	1
	11 to 20	8	45	53	1
Young	21 to 50	436	415	851	11
Mature	51 to 80	104	348	452	6
	81 to 110	875	3604	4479	59
	111 to 150	313	973	1286	17
Late	151 to 300	0	0	0	0
Old Growth	301+	0	0	0	0
Non-Forested	-	128	272	400	5

<sup>1</sup>Private lands source: aerial photographs and historical data from the ANF Final Environmental Impact Statement (USDA FS 2007b).

Like most of the ANF, the project area presently shows little early or late structural stage habitat. About 2% of the project area is aged less than 20 years old, and none aged greater than 150 years old. Most of the project area (76%, 5,765 acres) is between 81 to 150 years old. The present condition does not meet the Forest Plan desired condition for early structural stages (Forest Plan errata).

The purpose and need of the Cherry Run project proposals are provided as follows:

- Provide a diversity of vegetation patterns across the landscape that represents well distributed habitats, a range of forest age classes and vegetative stages, a variety of healthy functioning vegetation layers, moderate to well-stocked forest cover, and the variety of vegetation species or forest types necessary to achieve multiple resource objectives and sustain ecosystem health (Forest Plan, page 14);
- Continue to implement and monitor a range of silvicultural and reforestation practices in order to be responsive to emerging issues and regenerate stands to a diversity of tree seedlings of good quality, form and health (Forest Plan, page 14); and,
- Ensure a healthy, diverse, resilient, and well stocked forest is provided in light of several concurrent forest health threats (Forest Plan, pages 14, 15, and 21).
- Address non-native invasive plants (Forest Plan, page 13).
- Enhance wildlife habitat on 1,200 to 1,600 acres each year to provide desired cover and forage conditions (Forest Plan, page 20).
- Restore and enhance stream processes and aquatic habitat diversity for brook trout and other headwater stream fishes (Forest Plan, pages 14, 20, 22, 46, and 80).

- Provide a safe, efficient and economical transportation system that is responsive to public and administrative needs, while having minimal adverse effects on the natural forest ecosystem (Forest Plan, page 16).

## PROPOSED ACTION

### SILVICULTURAL TREATMENTS

Table 2 shows the 1,160 acres of silvicultural treatments (15% of the project area) by MA proposed for the Cherry Run Project. The attached map shows the compartments and stands, and site specific treatments being proposed for treatment. Descriptions of silvicultural treatments are provided in the Forest Plan, pages 64 to 69 and A-18 to A-26. Timber harvest is an outcome of implementing the stand improvements.

**Table 2. Cherry Run silvicultural treatments by management area (MA).**

MA	Treatment	Acres
2.2	Accelerate mature forest conditions.	38.6
	Group selection to restore understory mature forest conditions.	241.6
	Shelterwood/final harvest.	0.1
	Two-aged harvest.	90.1
3.0	Group selection to restore understory mature forest conditions.	0.0
	Shelterwood/final harvest.	546.0
	Site preparation/final harvest.	225.9
	Two-aged harvest.	17.8

Reforestation treatments (Table 3) are planned for all silvicultural proposals. The acres of reforestation are at the maximum and would likely be less based on the need as treatments are implemented. Descriptions of reforestation are provided in the Forest Plan, pages 70-72 and A-30-A-36.

**Table 3. Reforestation actions and acres proposed within the Cherry Run project area.**

Treatment	Acres
Site Preparation, herbicide, weed and release <sup>1</sup> , fence, and plant.	1121.4
Fertilizer	149

<sup>1</sup> manual cutting of interfering vegetation.

Regeneration treatments combined with past and previously approved and not yet implemented (106 acres) would create temporary openings in areas (blocks) that would exceed 40 acres in size (Table 4).

**Table 4. Proposed temporary openings (blocks) exceeding 40 acres.**

Block <sup>1</sup>	MA	Stands	Acres
1	2.2 and 3.0	308001 (MR <sup>2</sup> ), 308002, 308004, 308005, 308016, 308018, 308031, 308032, 309003, 309005, 309006, 309008, 309009, 309010, 309011, 309014, 309015, 309017 (MR), 309022, 309024, 309039, 309041, 309044, 310002, 310005, 310008 (MR), 310010 (MR), 310011, 310012, 310014 (MR), 310015, 310020, 310021, 310022, 310029, 310042	696
2	3.0	309029 (MR), 309037, 309034, 310031, 310025, 310028, 310034	165

**Table 4. Proposed temporary openings (blocks) exceeding 40 acres.**

Block <sup>1</sup>	MA	Stands	Acres
3	3.0	303007 (MR), 303027, 303028(MR), 303029	121
4	3.0	304002 (MR), 304003, 304005 (MR), 304008, 304035(MR)	78

<sup>1</sup>Blocks are identified as groupings of stands that combined would exceed 40 acre openings.

<sup>2</sup>MR refers to Martin Run Environmental Impact Statement (USDA FS 2005) stands that are 20 years old or less that have been implemented or would be implemented.

### NON-NATIVE INVASIVE PLANT TREATMENTS

Non-native invasive plant treatment would occur on approximately 700 acres throughout the project area using a combination of manual, mechanical, and herbicide treatments, or all three over the next 10 years. Manual treatments include pulling, digging, or hand-roughing. Mechanical treatments include brush-cutting, mowing, or removal by motorized equipment. Herbicide treatments include the use of glyphosate, sulfometuron methyl, or both, and applied in accordance with Forest Plan standards and guidelines. The treatments would occur several times during a growing season, or over a period of several years.

### WILDLIFE AND FISHERY HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS

Table 5 provides the wildlife habitat improvements being proposed in the Cherry Run project area.

**Table 5. Wildlife habitat improvements.**

Treatment	Compartment/Stand	Acres
In existing openings: mow strips, plant shrubs, fruit trees, and conifer groups, add individual fences and crib fences, replace damaged fences and plantings where needed, prune fruit trees.	302/5, 7; 309/45; 310/37; and 304/46.	29
Within proposed silvicultural treatment stands: Under plant 10% of stands with shrubs (serviceberry, elderberry) and groups of white pine within fenced stands.	302/37; 303/13, 21, 29, 36; 304/26, 29, 34; 308/16, 31, 39; and 310/21, 25	42

185 trees per mile would be felled into streams and onto floodplains to improve floodplain connectivity, ground water infiltration, discharge rates, and low flow rates (Table 6).

**Table 6. Stream and fishery habitat proposed treatments.**

Treatment	Stream Miles
Level 1: fell trees into the streams and move into place by grip hoist or winch.	25.6
Level 2: uproot trees by grip hoist/other equipment to place in the stream.	0.1

About 284 linear feet (0.1 acre) of the South Branch Tionesta Creek streambank would be stabilized by constructing large wood complexes. Currently, the stream is migrating into the NCNST with soil erosion.

### TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Table 7 provides the transportation actions being proposed in the project area.

**Table 7. Transportation proposed actions within the Cherry Run project area.**

Road Activity	Miles/no.	Forest Road Number		
Road construction - new corridor.	0.4 mi.	446H <sup>1</sup>		
Add existing non-system corridor to national forest transportation system (which may involve road reconstruction, construction, and/or realignment) <sup>1</sup> .	4.5 mi.	148A, 148B, 148C, 162 Ext., 413BA, 446F, 446G, 446H, 446JA.		
High quality road surfacing - within 300 feet of a stream.	5.2 mi.	103, 148, 148A, 148C, 162, 413, 446-1, 600.		
Maintenance on potential haul roads <sup>2</sup> .	14 mi.	Various Forest Roads		
Existing ≥100 acre watershed culverts/stream crossings - the following forest roads include ≥100 acre drainage areas and aquatic organism passages (AOP). Existing undersized culverts in good condition unless noted.	4 culverts and 1 bridge	Road Number	Stream Name Crossing.	Road Milepost
		FR 148	SB Tionesta Creek (bridge).	0.171
			Rock Run.	1.888
		FR 162	West Fork Run (due for replacement – AOP.	0.617
		FR 413	Unnamed tributary to Tionesta Creek.	0.039
		FR 446-1	Cherry Run (due for replacement – AOP.	0.013

<sup>1</sup> New road number. <sup>2</sup> Approval is not needed for road maintenance but is included for tracking.

Trees that pose as a road hazard (diseased, dead, dying, or excessively leaning trees) would be felled and merchantable hazard trees would be harvested along roads of the project area (Table 8). Equipment would remain on improved road surfaces. Hazard trees not accessible from roads would be cut and left on the site.

**Table 8. Proposed roadside hazard tree salvage/sanitation.**

Treatment	Miles/acres	Location
Salvage/sanitation/safety felling of hazard trees within 100 feet on either side of the edge of the road.	22 miles/ 532 acres	Various forest roads.

Proposed actions are designed to minimize potential effects by meeting Forest Plan standards and guidelines. Additional mitigation measures may be developed during the project design to provide further protection to water resources; sensitive soils; threatened, endangered and sensitive species and their habitats; cultural resources, scenery, and recreation sites, as needed. Reserved and outstanding mineral rights would be maintained.

## REFERENCES

- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2014. *Allegheny National Forest FY 2008 – FY 2013 Monitoring and Evaluation Report*. Warren, PA.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2007a. *Allegheny National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision*. Warren, PA.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2007b. *Allegheny National Forest Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Land and Resource Management Plan*. Warren, PA.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2005. *Martin Run Environmental Impact Statement*. Allegheny National Forest, Bradford, PA.

*In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.*

*Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.*

*To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).*

*USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.*