



ANF Awareness Day

We are beginning to plan an ANF-wide event this spring: "ANF Community Awareness Day". A forester-guided tour will be held in each of the four ANF host counties to inform municipal and county leaders, school teachers and administrators, legislators and others on ANF forest management conditions.

Watch for more details as they become available. If you would like to help organize this event, contact our Executive Director.

SRS History

As you may be aware, Secure Rural Schools funding was re-authorized by Congress in May 2018. SRS has had a tumultuous history. If you are interested in reading a details of that history, check out the following article. (It was last updated June of 2017.)

https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/R41303.html#_Ref372295935

Supervisor Tune Retires

After 4 years serving as Forest Supervisor on the ANF and 40 years with the USFS, Sherry Tune is retiring and returning to her home state of Arizona.

During Tune's tenure, progress has been made in both sustainable management of the ANF and the building of partnerships with both agencies and organizations. The two most notable examples being the signing of the Good Neighbor Agreement with Pennsylvania and the creation of the Allegheny Forest Health Collaborative. The AFA is a supporter of both initiatives and participates in the Collaborative. Supervisor Tune also worked with AHUG identifying and addressing issues relating to timber management.

Supervisor Tune was also a supporter of recreation development on the ANF, working with local and regional organizations to improve recreation opportunities.

Sherry's retirement takes effect January 3rd. The AFA wishes her well and looks forward to establishing a relationship with her replacement.

Winter 2019

Board of Directors

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Amanda Hetrick—Pres.
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Becky Lucia—Secretary
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For a full list of AFA Board Members, please visit our ["About" page](#).

Executive Director:

Julia McCray
afaexec@gmail.com

Next Meeting:

May 28, 2019 - 3 pm
East Forest School

U.S. National Forests Cutting More to Reach Management Goals

Good news! USFS management policies increasingly favor landscape-scale restoration and improvement projects. Annual timber sale volume nationwide fell from 12.7 billion board feet in 1987 to a low of 1.7 billion in 2002. In 2018, it jumped to 3.4 billion and the target for 2019 is 3.7 billion board feet.

ANF Acting Ecosystem Management Staff Officer Andrea Hille tells us that there has been a steady, consistent increase in offer on the ANF since 2008. The volume sold hasn't always equaled the Management Plan's target volume, nor the volume offered, but 2017 came within 345,000 board feet of offer, and 2018 exceeded the offer by 490,000 board feet. We asked Ms. Hille how much of the cuts would fall into the

"stewardship sales" category, which do not result in revenues for local schools and municipalities. She says they expect stewardship timber contracts to comprise about 20% of the ANF's overall offer. The expected 2019 offer is 46 MMBF—up from a planned offer of 44 MMBF. This is still below the Plan goal, but far better than the 19+ MMBF offered in 2008!

The reality-check is that, while the offered volumes and sale totals have doubled since 2008, the ANF is still severely behind on its management plan. Combined with pests and diseases, the forest health is in trouble and future harvests are at risk, so the AFA continues to advocate for the ANF to meet its Management Plan annual goal—for both forest and community health.



Asian Long Horned Tick Invading PA

This new invader has been spotted in Arkansas, Connecticut, Maryland, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. This tick tends to infest host animals in clusters and may be able to survive PA winters.

The tick can carry several tick-borne pathogens that could infect a wide variety of livestock, wildlife, pets and people. However, as of October 2018, no illnesses have been reported in the U.S. and ticks found in PA do not (so far) carry any infectious diseases. It was first found in PA on a wild deer in Centre County.

A severe cluster infestation can kill the host animal through blood loss. Remove any tick as quickly as possible and save it in a jar or rubbing alcohol or a zip-lock bag, then contact the health department, a veterinarian or local agricultural extension office.



Longhorn Tick after feeding.

Timber Harvests are the Responsible Way

Some would argue that public lands should not be monetized and to harvest timber is doing so. However, timber on national forests is not just a “cash crop.” It is a responsible way to pay for sustainable management and support host communities with funding for:

- Local schools and roads by (SRS Title I funding and 25% Fund)
- Grants for environmental and recreation projects on or affecting the national forest (SRS Title II funding)
- Local Wildfire Protection Plans and emergency services on federal land (SRS Title III funding)

Timber receipt revenues come back to our communities via the “25% payments” and (in Forest County) Secure Rural Schools & Community Self-Determination Act (SRS) payments.

National Parks rely on only tourism, drain the land and create hazards with lack of forest management. The attitude that protecting the forest means not touching it is short-sighted.

National Forests help support themselves AND their host communities. A sustainably managed forest results in a healthy community and sustainable future—for everyone.

Legislation to Watch...

Below is a list of bills introduced in the 116th Congress with the potential to impact the ANF. Topping the list, of course, is the Farm Bill ([H.R. 265](#)), which passed the House and is (at the time of this publication) now before the Senate. We urge you to review these and express your support and/or concerns to our Congressman and Senators.

[H.R. 245](#) Cooperative Management of Mineral Rights Act of 2019 (introduced by Congressman Glenn Thompson).

[H.R. 691](#) Proven Wildfire Reduction Techniques Act of 2019—expands use of 2014 Farm Bill’s 3,000-acre insect and disease Categorical Exclusion on BLM lands and allows use on all federal forests experiencing declining forest health.

[H.R. 179](#) Acre In, Acre Out Act—no net gain on federal public land purchases.

[S. 47](#) Natural Resources Management Act—Management & conservation on fed. Lands.

[H.R. 243](#) Combustion Avoidance along Rural Roads Act (CARR).

ANF Project Comment Opportunities: January–March, 2019

We encourage you to keep informed of and comment on proposed projects on the ANF.

Use the link below to view the current Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) Report for the ANF. <https://www.fs.fed.us/sopa/forest-level.php?110919>

As we publish this newsletter quarterly, we suggest that you check the SOPA link frequently for any updates between issues. We will list critical projects and AFA comment actions here.

[Tracy Ridge Shared Use Trails & Plan Amendment Project EA \(ON HOLD\)](#); McKean, Warren; Forest Plan amendment to allow mountain biking on 12.5 miles of hiking trails; **Secondary comment period to be announced.**

[Pine Bear Supplemental EA \(updated\)](#); Forest Products, Vegetation Management, Road Management; **Decision Notice expected March 2019.**

[Hoover Project EA \(updated\)](#); Warren; Forest products, forest health issues, early successional habitat objectives,

non-native invasive plants, fishery stream habitat, transportation systems, improved recreation opportunities; **Draft Decision Notice issued 12/4/18.**

[Otter EA](#); Elk; Recreation Management, Wildlife, Fish, Rare Plants, Forest Products, Watershed Management; **Estimated Decision Notice: Sept. 2019.**

Please add your voice to that of the AFA to balance the scales in public comment opportunities!