

▪ Executive Summary

Pine Ridge Park is a 630-acre park located in Burrell Township, Indiana County. A total of 579 acres or 93% of the park consists of mature woodland and forest with the remaining acreage consisting of open fields, power lines, and utility right of ways. The primary water feature of the park is Tom's Run, a small mountain stream which begins in the nearby State Game Lands and empties into the Conemaugh River after exiting the park.

In 2005 Indiana County retained the services of David Babyak, Professional Forester to assist with preparation of this plan. The Forestry Stewardship and Management Plan is the first effort to systematically analyze and evaluate the park's forestry resources since Indiana County acquired the property in 1966.

As part of the planning process the park was divided into nine management units. Some of the units were further sub-divided for forest management purposes. An inventory of the forest resources was conducted and objectives and recommendations for each management unit were prepared.

Major findings of the plan include:

- The primary tree species in the park is tulip poplar ((50%), followed by red oak (20%), soft maple (11%) and black cherry 9%. Other individual species do not exceed 3% of the total. The park's timber resources are not diverse and a recommendation of the plan is to improve species diversity through sustainable forestry practices.
- Of the units surveyed the park contains 3991 MBF (thousands of board feet) of harvestable timber. A total of 436 acres or 69% of the park were classified as forest management acres. A ten-year sustainable harvest schedule for 341 acres is recommended for the forest management acres.
- A total of 800 MBF or 20% of the harvestable timber is recommended for removal. A total of 80% of the park's harvestable timber would remain after the ten-year cycle. Timber volumes in the park would actually increase over the ten-year period since trees routinely grow at a rate of 4-5% per year while only 2% of the timber volume is being harvested per year.
- The current estimated value of timber for all units is \$1,636,010. The timber harvest schedule would generate 26% of this amount or \$430,000 in gross revenue at current market prices over the ten-year cycle.
- A total of 143 acres or 22% of the park were classified as forest recreation acres. These areas would remain untouched, except for the removal of trees which pose a hazard or safety concern for park users.
- A portion of Unit #4 and Unit #7A are recommended for designation as a "Big Tree Area" with no harvesting recommended, except for hazard trees.