

Old Business: Implementable and Collaborative Actions

Implementable Project IG in progress

We are currently working through our implementation process guide for two existing prescribed burn units within the Three Sisters Implementation Area on the Blue Ridge Ranger District. These burn units are being planned for spring 2024 entry. A notification including an Implementation Plan for these burn units will be provided as they are finalized.

Project Updates

- Mooneyham timber sale layout continues in anticipation of FY24 timber sale
- Planning continues with The Nature Conservancy for the Holly Creek Road paving project. An engineering design package is currently in progress.
- Earl's Ford Updates
 - The Wild and Scenic River Section 7 determination report is complete and in review for final determination.
 - The Forest Service completed a cultural resource survey of portions of the Lower Warwoman watershed in 2022 and compiled the findings in a report. The Georgia State Historic Preservation Office and affected Tribes were consulted on the report, and it was determined additional test excavations are necessary to fully assess the National Register eligibility of the cultural resources present. Data gathered from the test excavations will also broaden our understanding of the cultural history of this area of northeastern Georgia and mitigate against any potentially adverse effects resulting from the proposed undertaking.
 - The Heritage Program is planning a Passport in Time project for the spring of 2024 to aid in this test excavation. Passport In Time (PIT) is a volunteer program that offers opportunities for the public to assist Forest Service Heritage professionals with archaeological and historical research and management on National Forest System lands. The Heritage Program Manager has already identified a select group of public volunteers for this project.

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Implementable Project IG notifications since the last meeting

Spring Prescribe Fire in Foothills on Chattooga River and Conasauga Ranger Districts

Activity Name (should correspond w/ Table 17 of EA)	Location (i.e., HUC, Compartment Stand, and or Geographic Description)	Ranger District	Final Acres and /or miles of road/trails, etc.	Anticipated year(s) implementation would begin
Continuation of prescribed burning within existing blocks	Deadin Timber Rx Comp 62 Lower Chattooga IA	Chattooga River	910 acres	2024
	<u>Tallulah Gorge North Coop Rx</u> Comp 68 Lower Chattooga IA	Chattooga River	101 acres	2024
	<u>Lick Log Rx</u> Comp 50, 57 Warwoman – Chattooga IA	Chattooga River	782 acres	2024
	<u>Pool Creek Rx</u> Comp 46, 52 Warwoman – Chattooga IA	Chattooga River	526 acres	2024
	Bob Jones Rx Burn – Comp 719, 720	Conasauga	1191 acres	2024
	Rocky Flats Rx Burn – Comp 753, 754	Conasauga	1172 acres	2024
	East Cowpen Rx Burn – Comp 711	Conasauga	422 acres	2024
	Turkeybeard Rx Burn – Comp 714	Conasauga	435 acres	2024

2024 Road Changes on Conasauga Ranger District

Activity Name (should correspond w/ Table 17 of EA)	Location (i.e., HUC, Compartment Stand, and or Geographic Description)	Draft Acres and/or miles of road/trails, etc.	Final Acres and /or miles of road/trails, etc.	Anticipated year(s) implementation would begin
Implement changes to system road ML and/or use restrictions	FSR 218 – Muskrat Creek Road FSR 218A – Muskrat Creek Br A FSR 218B – Cohorn Branch	6.3 miles 0.9 mile 1 mile		2024

Future IA projects

- Upper Conasauga
 - District interdisciplinary team held a kick-off meeting in November.
 - District has completed vegetation field work for the IA.
- Lower Chattooga
 - District interdisciplinary team kick-off meeting being planned for first quarter of 2023 Calander year.
 - Completed inventory of approximately 4,750 acres of the implementation area.
 - Designed a timber cruise to complete common stand exams in a further 2,700 acres.
 - The district has plans to bring on additional compacity utilizing detailed positions. This will allow for increased efforts within the Foothills Landscape. These positions will begin at the end of January.

Special Presentation – Hidden Rivers

From the website: Hidden Rivers is a not-for-profit film created to inspire a deeper discussion about biodiversity and conservation needs in river ecosystems.