



Draft National Monument Proposal

Management Plan

- The monument shall be managed by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS).
- The USFS will prepare a separate Management Plan (MP) for the monument that includes and will be guided by provisions outlined in the monument's establishing statute.
- The MP shall be developed in close consultation with:
 - Local and state governments;
 - The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources;
 - Stakeholder groups;
 - The public,
- The USFS will include in the MP a means for periodic monitoring of its effectiveness and a means for amendment in the event aspects are ineffective.
- No MP or rules specific to other national monuments or federal lands outside the Monongahela National Forest shall apply to the monument.

Management of Areas Within the Monument

- The proposed monument consists of approximately 122,320 acres within the Monongahela National Forest.
- The monument shall be established to:
 - Protect ecologically, historically and culturally significant features;
 - Provide a variety of recreational opportunities;
 - Promote restoration of historical spruce and spruce-hardwood forests, native trout streams, wetlands, and other aquatic resources.
- Establishment of the monument will not create additional wilderness designation; or change ownership or management of existing wilderness.
- In general, the monument will further existing management emphases of:
 - Designated wilderness;
 - The existing Cranberry Wilderness would not change as a result of the monument designation; the area is currently managed under statutory guidelines established by the Wilderness Act of 1964.*
 - Preservation of semi-primitive backcountry;

-Current management preserves Inventoried Roadless Areas as semi-primitive backcountry; programmed commercial timber sales are currently prohibited within these areas.

-Restoration of spruce and spruce-hardwood communities;

-Current management promotes active and passive restoration of spruce and spruce-hardwood communities, in an effort to re-establish the red spruce ecosystem. Some timber harvest and other vegetative manipulation occurs to further the management prescription's restoration goals.

-Preservation of special natural features, including those identified as National Natural Landmarks;

-These areas are generally confined to specific features including Honeycomb Rocks, Falls of Hills Creek and Cranberry Glades. Falls of Hills Creek and Cranberry Glades have been identified as National Natural Landmarks, where programmed commercial timber sales are currently prohibited.

-Establishment of the monument will not affect private lands outside the boundaries of the national monument; or create a protective perimeter or buffer zone around the monument's boundaries.

Vegetation Management

- Timber sales under contract at the time of designation shall be allowed to continue.

-In areas where current management prescriptions promote preservation of semi-primitive backcountry or features identified as National Natural Landmarks, programmed commercial timber sales will continue to be prohibited.

- Where current management prescriptions promote restoration of spruce and spruce-hardwood communities, restoration activities including timber harvest shall continue in accordance with the MP.

- In general, timber harvest and vegetation treatments shall be allowed within the monument if necessary for:

-Ecological restoration;

-Wildlife habitat improvements;

-Public safety;

- To control outbreak of insects, disease or fire;

-Eradication of invasive plants;

-Protection or enhancement of scenic resources;

-To further the purposes for which the monument was established;

-Firewood may be harvested for personal use.

-Management activities shall be designed to minimize impacts to aquatic resources or other objectives for which the monument was established.

Fish and Wildlife

- Establishment of the monument will not diminish or enlarge the role of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) with regards to fish and wildlife

management; or establishment of hunting and fishing regulations.

- Establishment of the monument will not affect collaborative management for quality hunting and fishing resources in existing Wildlife Management Areas.
- Existing wildlife openings will be maintained at the discretion of WVDNR; new management sites may be created in accordance with the MP.
- Stocking of trout shall continue under the discretion of WVDNR.
- Activities for stream restoration and acid mitigation, including application of limestone fines, may occur to meet stream restoration and enhancement objectives within the monument.

Access and Roads

- Establishment of the monument will not close any areas to activities such as:
 - hunting, or hunting with dogs;
 - fishing;
 - trapping.
- Foraging for mushrooms and wild edible plants shall be allowed within the monument.
- Mountain bicycles shall be allowed on recognized system trails within the national monument boundaries.
- Establishment of the monument will not close any motorized routes currently open to the public.
- Motorized travel off of designated routes will be prohibited, except in emergencies or for administratively designated purposes.
- The creation of new roads within the monument boundaries will be prohibited, except for public safety or to provide necessary access to further the values for which the monument was established.
- Maintenance and improvement of existing roads and structures will continue as necessary to provide continued public or administrative access, as well as to minimize environmental impacts outdated roads and structures may cause to the monument's resources.

Exploration and Development of Minerals

- All federally owned mineral rights shall be withdrawn from exploration and development within the monument.
- The monument shall be established subject to valid existing rights.
- USFS will include, as part of the MP, a plan for managing private mineral estate, to allow for reasonable exploration and development of private mineral estate consistent with monument resources.
- The USFS will attempt to acquire, from willing sellers, private subsurface minerals within the monument's boundaries.