

PROTECTING THE CO-OP FOREST: A SNAPSHOT

I. THIS IS A VALUABLE RECREATIONAL & EDUCATIONAL FOREST!

- a. Big trees keep trails 10-30 degrees COOLER in summer. Hundreds of humans are in this forest every week.
- b. This forest is full of forest life, too – in the trees, plants, soil, nursery logs, even under the ground!
- c. Together with White's Woods, it is part of one of the few 500-acre natural areas in Pennsylvania close to a town. And, for the unfortunately plummeting populations of eastern migrating forest songbirds, the bigger the better when it comes to sustaining threatened avian populations.
- d. This is a mature second-growth forest and, like White's Woods, probably eligible for enrollment in the Old Growth Forest Network. Big trees absorb carbon, mitigate air pollution, help control stormwater run-off, and (in ways quite different from smaller trees) provide homes for wildlife.

II. HAZARDOUS TREES CAN BE DIRECTLY AND SIMPLY ADDRESSED (AND REPRESENT A VERY SMALL RISK)

- a. Attending to hazardous trees is important.
- b. Certified arborists are specifically trained to assess hazardous trees. (Industrial foresters are not.)
- c. Often the hazard can be mitigated by trimming off one limb!
- d. 34 people in the U.S. were killed by falling tree branches in 2025; **8 of them were walking outdoors**, most were in cars, trailers, or houses.
- e. Also in 2025, about 40,000 people (mostly male) were killed by gunfire; 36,640 were killed in traffic fatalities, and over 3,000 women were victims of domestic homicide.
- f. **VERY FEW of the trees marked** for harvesting in the current Co-op timbering plan appear to be hazardous, according to an independent forest consultant review.

III. THE CURRENT CO-OP PLAN IS NOT GOOD FOR THE FOREST!

- a. The “vast majority” of trees marked for harvesting [were selected for “market value”](#) (or, for how much money someone can make by logging that particular tree).
- b. As many as 350 big trees are marked to be logged, including almost every big tree along the primary recreation trail and many more that are 100s of yards off the trail.
- c. After logging 100s of trees, the trail will be unsafe if not impossible for walking. With thousands of tree tops littering the ground, the remaining woods may be littered for a hundred years.
- d. Harvesting almost all of the big trees, as the current plan lays out, will create an explosion of invasive plants, significantly degrade the soil, drastically disrupt or kill wildlife, damage the underground mycelium network (which will require at least 50 years to recover), and more.
- e. For every big tree removed, 4-9 more are damaged or destroyed by heavy equipment used in the logging operation.
- f. This plan will degrade forest health and destroy “forest aesthetics.”
- g. This Co-op plan is about harvesting timber for revenue, treating the recreational co-op forest as a timber farm, instead.

IV. THERE ARE SO MANY QUESTIONS?

- a. Why would the CO-OP destroy this valuable educational and recreational forest for revenue? Who is getting this revenue and how much are they getting? Is this destruction really necessary?
- b. Why wasn't there an effort to learn about this forest before deciding to chop it down? Why is there not a native plant inventory, a wildlife inventory, and an at-risk species inventory prior to any decisions regarding forest management?
- c. Why not take serious steps to protect the forest, instead of destroy it? Control invasive plants and deer-browse. Promote native plant and tree seedling growth. **The current plan does the opposite.**
- d. **More than 99%** of eastern U.S. forests have been cut down, mostly in the last 150 years. We need forests, in part to mitigate climate change. Why NOT let this forest recover from timbering? It is not a timber farm!
- e. **Why NOT work with a certified arborist to protect human safety on the trails, along with specialists in ecological forestry who know how to protect and promote forest health? Start with the forestry experts on your faculty.**