

2016
ANNUAL REPORT
FORESTRY & PARKS DEPARTMENT



Sherwood Lake Dam

2016

CLARK COUNTY FORESTRY & PARKS COMMITTEE

Al Bower, Chairperson

Dale Mitte, Joe Waichulis, Tom Wilcox, Dean Zank

Forestry & Parks Department Employees

Rick Dailey, Administrator	John Wendorski, Forestry Manager
Marcus Aumann, Parks & Program Manager	James Smagacz, Facilities Supervisor
Mary Olson-Back, Admin. Assistant	Luke Nigon, Forester
Daryn Horn, Maintenance Specialist	Ian Remus, Forester
Dan Bautch, Maintenance Tech.	Einar Fransen, Forestry Tech.
Kelly Kirn, Heavy Equipment Operator	Don Friemoth, Carpenter
	Tim Hagen, Parks Worker

Part-Time Office Assistant – 1 employee
Part-Time Parks Maintenance – 5 employees
Mead Lake Dam Attendants – 2 employees

Seasonal & Temporary Personnel – 30 employees
Black River Correctional Inmate Crew – 6 to 10 employees

DNR Personnel assigned to Clark County

Kelsey Egelhoff, Liaison Forester	Tim Mayer, Forester
Scott Roepke, Wildlife Biologist	Peter Carlson, Conservation Warden
Chris Schmitz, Forester	Adam Hanna, Conservation Warden

TIMBER SALES

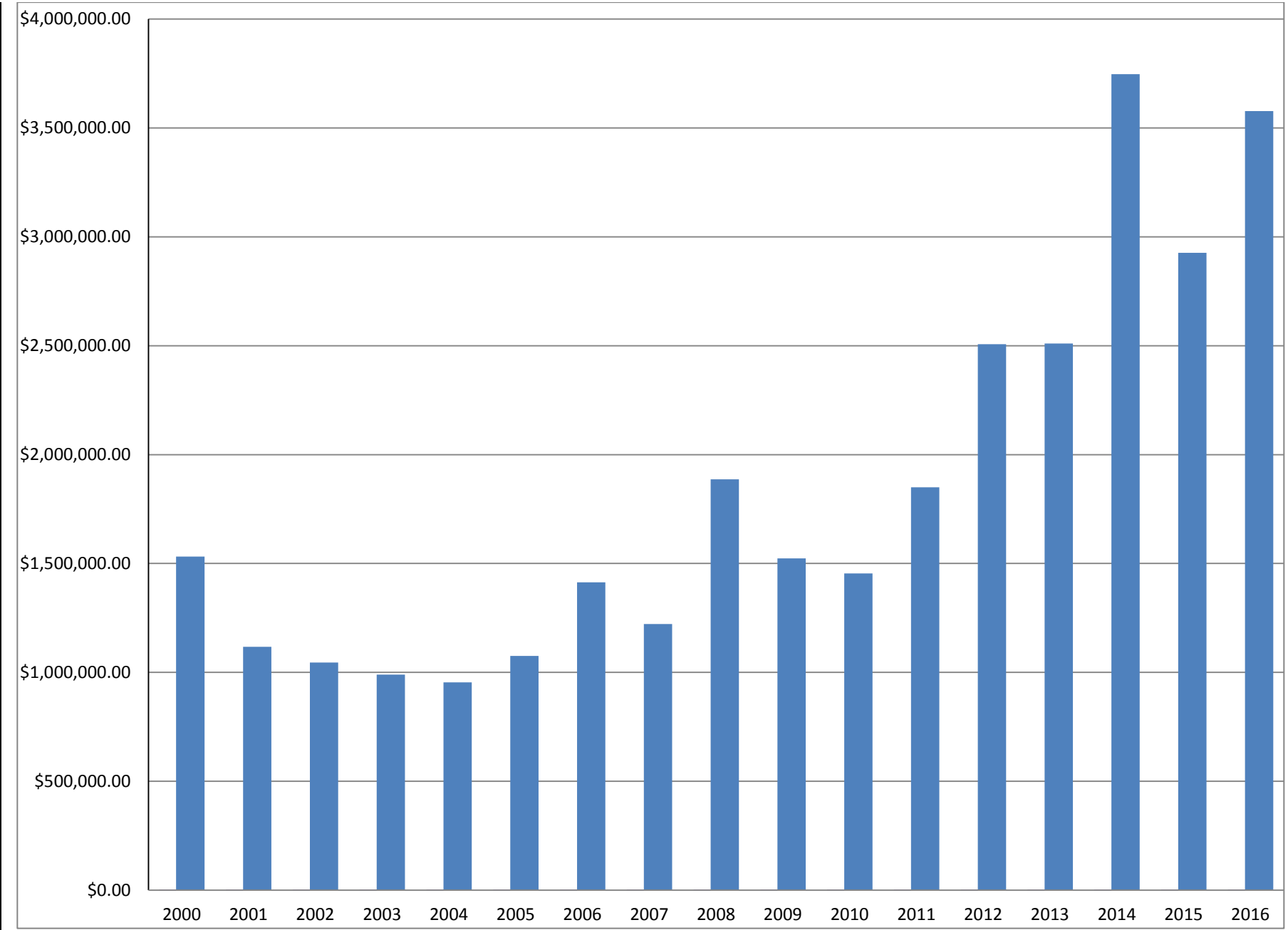
After many years of accelerated timber harvests to salvage over mature and dying aspen, Clark County Forest harvest levels became regulated (in 2005) by means of an annual allowable harvest. Annual allowable harvest levels have steadily increased to 3,325 acres in 2016. During 2016, timber sale efforts focused on catch-up of overdue oak thinning and regeneration harvests while still offering a variety of other species and products to the market place.

Total gross wood product revenue received in 2016 was \$3,577,167.00. This is an increase of \$650,481.00 over 2015 and 2016 was the second highest gross timber revenue for Clark County all-time. An additional \$2,972.00 was received from the sale of firewood. See the attached graph showing annual county forest timber revenues since 2000.

The total volume harvested by 27 different logging contractors from 86 active timber sale contracts in 2016 was 48,115 cord equivalents. Based on the DNR's formula of 28.5 cord equivalents equals one job, 1,688 jobs were generated. Markets during this period were generally average. Pulpwood and firewood markets were fair to poor and fluctuated significantly throughout the year. Hardwood log mill prices and markets rebounded slightly and finished above average compared to historical averages. Red pine log markets remained strong. Weather conditions most of the year were unfavorably wet. Logging contractors had a very difficult time with the wet conditions and often had to halt operations or move to drier sales before completing a given contract. Rutting was a concern of the Department, but much of it was avoided by use of the timber mats that were purchased in 2013 via a sustainable forestry grant.

A total of 59 county forest timber sales with an estimated 110,975 tons and 4,302,760 board feet on 3,550 acres were established 2016. Forty-eight sales totaling 2,930 acres were sold in 2016. The total contract value of these sales is \$3,319,476.99. Of the total acreage established, 1,606 acres are thinning and 1,944 acres are regeneration harvests.

CLARK COUNTY FOREST 2000-2016 GROSS TIMBER REVENUES



Having paid off all outstanding variable acreage loans in 1994, the county now retains 90% of timber revenue generated. The remaining 10% is distributed to townships with county forest land. The table below shows how much money was distributed to each township in 2017 based on calendar year 2016 timber revenues:

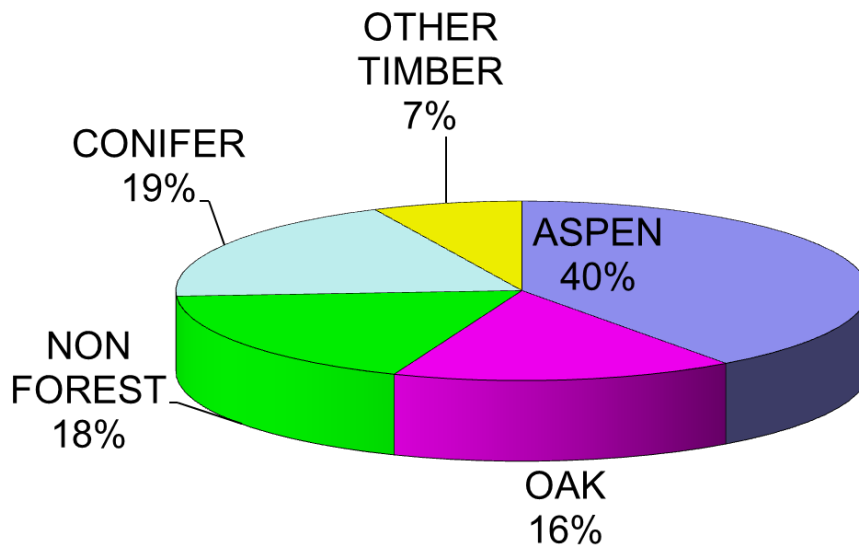
Severance Payments to Townships w/County Forest Land Based on Calendar Year 2016 Timber Revenue			
<i>Township</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Township</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Foster	\$114,100.83	Sherwood	\$20,068.63
Hewett	\$44,501.85	Mead	\$12,803.23
Dewhurst	\$36,422.29	Levis	\$12,369.20
Butler	\$36,051.43	Hixon	\$707.44
Seif	\$31,148.23	Hoard	\$429.04
Washburn	\$24,337.56	Warner	\$51.76
Mentor	\$23,942.79		
Total Distributed to Townships: \$356,934.28			

FOREST INVENTORY

The reconnaissance geodatabase was updated in mid-2011 to improve monitoring and reporting functionality. In addition to the stand information, the stand boundaries are now housed on a state-wide server and are viewable to anyone with internet access. Data security is in place to ensure only authorized individuals can edit this database. This system can instantaneously provide up-to-date annual allowable harvest figures and accomplishments as they occur.

This geodatabase is the backbone of our land management program. It provides valuable planning information and will guide many future management decisions. Keeping data current is vital for making sound management decisions. In 2016, stand reconnaissance updates were completed on 21,315 acres or 19% of the forested cover types. The following graph shows current county forest cover types.

CLARK COUNTY FOREST TIMBER TYPES - 2016 134,694 acres



REFORESTATION

The vast majority of county forest harvested acres regenerates naturally through seed, root suckers, and stump sprouts. Tree planting does occur in areas where natural regeneration fails or is insufficient to fully stock the site and where conversion to an alternate species will yield substantial increases in productivity.

Mechanical site preparation was completed for spring 2018 tree planting during the summer 2016. A total of 5 sites, covering 144 acres were power disk trenched by a contractor.

Chemical site preparation was completed for spring 2017 planting during the summer 2016. A total of 4 sites, covering 140 acres were treated via ground broadcast application by a contractor

There was a poor red oak acorn crop throughout the county forest in the fall of 2016. County equipment operators scarified 1 oak stand covering 35 acres. Scarification site was located in Butler Township. Anchor chain scarification techniques were used. The management objective for this stand is to regenerate oak by removing undesirable competition and preparing the seedbed for improved acorn germination. After advanced oak seedlings are established, the overstory will be harvested. Wet conditions limited the site operability and overall scarification production for the equipment operators.

PRESCRIBED BURNS

Prescribed fire is an important forest management tool. Controlled burns are used to rejuvenate native grass openings and prepare stands for natural oak regeneration, benefiting both wildlife and silviculture. During the spring of 2016, one oak regeneration burn covering 32 acres was completed in Butler Township.

TIMBER STAND IMPROVEMENT

Sixteen timber stand improvement projects involving 191 acres were completed in 2016. Oak release was the primary focus of our 2016 efforts. Private contractors, inmates, and county employees completed the following projects:

- Cutting undesirable competition to release oak saplings on 10 sites covering 146 acres. Hired contractors completed 90 acres, inmate labor crews completed 40 acres, and county staff completed 16 acres.
- Basal spraying of undesirable competition to release oak seedlings on 5 sites covering 32 acres (county staff and equipment).
- Cutting undesirable competition to release jack pine saplings on 1 site covering 13 acres (inmate labor).

FOREST PROTECTION

Over the last few years, several threats to the overall forest health have emerged. Oak Wilt, Red Pine Pocket Mortality, Gypsy Moth, and exotic invasive plants have all been identified on the county forest. The impact of these threats has so far been minor.

Damage to the forest resource is minimized through active forest management. Activities such as harvesting mature trees and thinning young stands help promote a vigorous and healthy forest. The trees within these healthy stands are better able to resist attacks from forest pests.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was first found in Wisconsin in 2008. Although there are no known infestations Clark County, in August of 2015 EAB was positively identified in neighboring Jackson County. This department has been actively preparing for its arrival. Where found, EAB does devastate the ash resource. Ash timber type is not abundant on the county forest, therefore EAB impact on county forest resources will be minimal.

Oak Wilt is a lethal fungal disease affecting primarily the Red Oak family. Oak Wilt was first identified on the county forest and in Snyder County Park in 2000. Since then, a total of 59 sites have been identified, including 5 new infections in 2016. Oak Wilt spreads through root grafts between infected and healthy trees and overland by sap-feeding beetles. The majority of oak wilt is located in the south half of the county. To date approximately 24 acres of oak timber type have been lost to Oak Wilt.

Aerial surveys are conducted to detect new Oak Wilt infections and check previously treated sites. Active sites are treated by various methods during the fall and winter months. Our efforts to contain the spread of Oak Wilt appear to be working. The number of new infections has remained stable or declined each of the last several years.

The Forestry and Parks Department will continue Oak Wilt control efforts that were first initiated in 2000. With approximately 21,500 acres of oak timber type in the county forest, there is much at stake. If Oak Wilt becomes firmly established on the county forest, any hope for control will be lost.

Red Pine Pocket Mortality was first identified on the Clark County Forest in 2001. Since then more than 40 sites have been identified. Sites vary from a handful of trees to two acres in size. Pocket Mortality is caused by an interaction between a complex of insects and a root fungus, causing red pine deterioration then mortality. There is no known control although progression is slowed by harvesting infected trees. Little else is known about this syndrome. This department will continue to cooperate with DNR researchers by providing site data and research opportunities.

Annosum Root Rot prevention measures were implemented in 2011 for timber harvests occurring in red pine plantations. Similar to pocket mortality, Annosum Root Rot causes decay in the roots and butt of infected trees, ultimately leading to mortality. Unlike pocket mortality, annosum can survive in the soil for decades, prohibiting productive conifer growth on the site. Annosum Root Rot has been detected in surrounding Wood and Taylor Counties, however there currently are no known sites within Clark County. The best method of control is prevention. A simple stump fungicide application during harvest will prevent infection from occurring.

Gypsy Moth has slowly and methodically spread west from the east coast of the United States since the early 1900's. Currently, the eastern 2/3 of Wisconsin, including neighboring Jackson, Marathon and Wood Counties, are considered generally infested and under a Gypsy Moth quarantine. Clark County became quarantined in 2012.

At this time, the leading edge of the gypsy moth wave is beyond Clark County. Large outbreaks are still possible and will likely continue within the county even as the wave pushes further west. The DNR no longer sprays property within the county as part of the "Slow the Spread" program and will shift its focus further west into neighboring counties.

Exotic Invasive Plants native to Europe and Asia are beginning to show up within the County Forest. Following introduction, these aggressive perennial weeds become established quickly. Once established, they out compete and displace native flora using a variety of survival strategies. They often lack natural predators and diseases, which serve to control their populations in native environments. These plants can reduce forest productivity, damage wildlife habitat, degrade ecosystems, and impede natural and artificial regeneration.

Since 2003 Clark County has surveyed high-risk areas of the county forest for invasive plants. By the end of the 2016 growing season, 189 occurrences had been documented. Thirty-one new sites were discovered in 2016. Nearly every documented invasive occurrence is associated with human vectors and is concentrated in high use recreational areas and along ATV trails.

Herbicide treatments to control Spotted Knapweed, Leafy Spurge, Japanese Honeysuckle, and Purple Loosestrife began in 2004 and continued through 2016. These treatments have helped contain the spread of invasive species and reduced their intensity in the treated areas. Japanese Knotweed was

identified on a site in Dewhurst Township in 2013 and was mowed and treated with herbicide in 2014. The site was treated with herbicide again in 2015 and 2016. Garlic mustard was identified on the county forest for the first time in 2014. In 2016, a total of 33 different patches were treated along various sections of the ATV trail. Garlic mustard is highly invasive and extremely difficult to control. Garlic mustard exudes antifungal chemicals into the soil that disrupt associations between mycorrhizal fungi and native plants, suppressing native plant growth. The Department will be monitoring these locations closely.

Swift, deliberate action is necessary to prevent the spread and further colonization of the County Forest by exotic invasive plants. By acting now we reduce the cost of treatment, reduce the size of the area impacted by herbicide, and increase the likelihood of success.

WILDLIFE HABITAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Continued support by the WINX Club, National Wild Turkey Federation, and the Department of Natural Resources has provided significant accomplishment for the benefit of wildlife on the Clark County Forest. Habitat reclamation and maintenance remain of primary concern.

Wildlife accomplishments for 2016 include:

- ◆ Vegetation control on the recently rehabilitated earthen embankment at the Winx Flowage Migratory Bird Refuge. The Winx Club, a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of local waterfowl, mowed the top and east side of the embankment. This impoundment creates a 42 acre reservoir, and is critical habitat to over 4,000 waterfowl during their annual migration.
- ◆ Maintenance of aspen timber type through the harvest of mature and over mature aspen timber.
- ◆ Construction of timber sale access roads to facilitate harvest of scheduled forest stands.
- ◆ Enhance, maintain, and promote oak regeneration on 245 acres.
- ◆ Wildlife opening and trail maintenance. This included grant funding from the National Wild Turkey Federation to complete seeding of native grasses on 6 separate wildlife openings.
- ◆ Inventoried more than 18,730 acres for the benefit of endangered or threatened resources.

- ◆ Continue to implement an Ecological Management Plan that will further integrate wildlife management into forest management.
- ◆ Waterfowl flowage maintenance. This included purchase of a new, secure cover for the whistle tube on Spruce Lake donated by the Winx Club.
- ◆ Invasive plant surveys and control.
- ◆ Prioritize, plan and establish other wildlife management projects.

LAND ACQUISITION

In June 2016, the purchase of 320 acres of forest land in Butler Township was finalized. The land was purchased from Meteor Timber LLC, a private, industrial land owner. Under Meteor Timber ownership, the property was in the open Managed Forest Law program.

The County applied for and received a Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant from the State of Wisconsin to purchase the property. This grant paid approximately 50% of the \$459,873.65 purchase price including associated expenses. Additional Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant funds for the purchase were secured by enrolling 120.01 acres of county land, located in South Foster Township, into the county forest program. The total out of pocket cost to the county was about \$112,479.55 or \$352.00/acre.

Altogether, over 440 acres will be enrolled into the Clark County Forest. Enrollment into the county forest program ensures that these lands will be open to the public for the foreseeable future and townships will benefit from additional severance payments.

FOREST ROADS

The department maintains 45.98 miles of roads in the county forest which meet minimum town road standards. The 2016 state maintenance funding received was \$14,460.81. State road aids remained steady compared to 2015. This \$314.50/mile annual payment does not provide sufficient funding to maintain the long-term integrity of the County Forest Road system.

Action by the Forestry & Parks and Finance Committees in 2009 established a reserved forest road maintenance fund. Five percent (5%) of annual gross county forest timber revenues are to be placed in this fund for future forest

road maintenance. Approximately 5.4 miles of the Koehler's Ford Forest Road were reconstructed in 2016 using this money.

SEPTEMBER FLOOD

On September 21, 2016 Clark County received anywhere from 5 to 8 inches of rain in less than 24 hours. As a result, Forestry and Parks forest roads, recreation trails, and Wedges Creek Dam – Snyder Lake sustained significant damage. FEMA issued a disaster declaration for Clark County on October 20, 2016. This declaration qualified flood related repairs for up to 75% federal funding reimbursement and 12.5% from the state.

Koehler's Ford and Butler Lanes Forest Roads had damage of varying severity on 15 different sites. Damage ranged from shoulder sloughing around culverts to complete road washouts including one 60" X 40' culvert crossing on South Butler Forest Road. All the forest roads affected were repaired within weeks of the damage by a combination of hired contractors and department staff/equipment. The department submitted repair and administrative costs to FEMA in the amount of \$57,954.76. Final approval by FEMA for qualifying costs will occur in 2017.

ATV and Snowmobile trails had damage of varying severity as well. Damage was documented at 56 different sites with the damage ranging from partial bridge washout to trail surface washing. Most of the damage was sustained around the Rock Dam area. All repairs that could be completed in house were done so within weeks of the flood. One snowmobile bridge site located on private land has yet to be repaired because of the scope of work and some concerns of potential pending funding coverage to fix the embankments. The department submitted repair and administrative cost to FEMA in the amount of \$70,668.14 plus mitigation costs of approximately \$5,000.00. Final approval by FEMA for qualifying costs will occur in 2017.

High water overtopped the dam and embankment at Wedges Creek Dam that creates Snyder Lake. A large gap was cut through the embankment as a result of scouring that started on the downstream side of the embankment. Luckily the concrete spillway did not sustain any damage. Estimated cost to repair the damage and to construct a cut off wall to mitigate future damage is \$65,000.00. Bid proposals to complete the work are expected to be received in the spring of 2017, with all work completed in the fall.

FAIRGROUNDS

Revenues at the Clark County Fairgrounds continue to trend upward with a significant increase expected in 2017 as a result of new lease payments from the recently constructed wireless communications facility. A considerable number of improvements to fairgrounds buildings and infrastructure occurred in 2016. Significant improvement projects include:

- Exercise option and land lease negotiated in 2015 with SBA Towers and construction of a wireless communications facility.
- Reconfigure main entrance (south) and Hwy 10 emergency exit including: move gate from south entrance to Hwy exit, widen south entrance and install blacktop.
- Replace roofs on two bathrooms.
- Two new overhead doors and one service door on the Quonset Building.
- Purchase materials for a new cooler in the Men's Club Building. Men's Club will construct cooler.
- Install new pavement from south entrance north to existing pavement.
- Painted enclosed Pleasure Horse Barn.
- Painted Pleasure Horse and Beef Barn roofs.
- Upgraded lighting in Rabbit Barn and show arena.
- New lights installed near the horse and swine wash racks and at the east gate.
- Two new furnaces installed in the Dining Hall/Show Arena.

The total number of events held at the fairgrounds increased from 29 in 2015 to 33 in 2016. Of the total events, 21 were paid events and 11 unpaid.

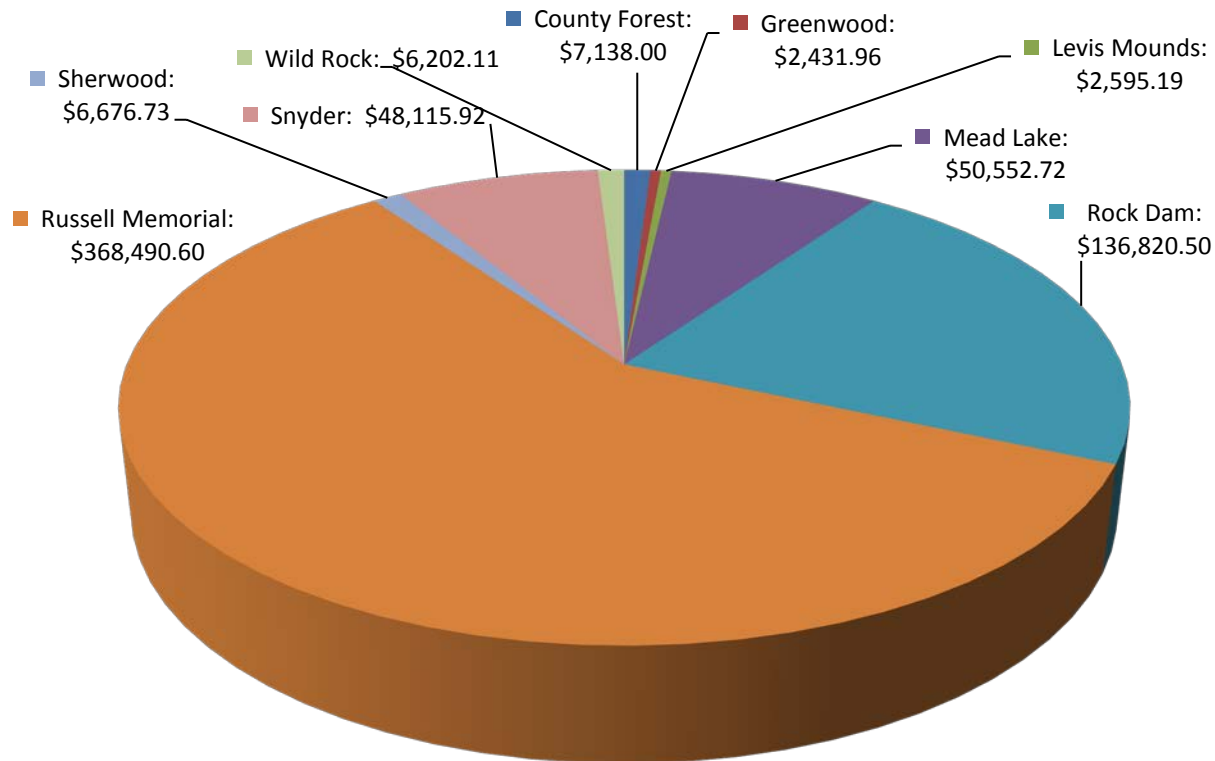
Public storage was offered again in 2016 with 46 individuals taking advantage of this opportunity to store 51 vehicles during the winter months. Storage generated \$7,000.00 in revenue for the fairgrounds budget.

After declining for several years, revenues increased for the fifth year in a row. Recent financial history for fairgrounds operating costs are as follows:

Year	Expenditures	Revenue	Net Cost of Fairgrounds
2010	\$152,390	\$23,672	(\$128,718)
2011	\$95,965	\$21,874	(\$74,091)
2012	\$98,668	\$24,796	(\$73,872)
2013	\$83,775	\$24,927	(\$58,848)
2014	\$98,044	\$25,136	(\$72,908)
2015	\$236,542	\$25,871	(\$210,671)
2016	\$202,281	\$28,553	(\$173,728)

CAMPGROUNDS AND PARKS

Revenue from camping fees totaled \$550,273.12 in 2016, an increase of \$10,922.12 or 2% from 2015. Sherwood County Park camping fees remain well below historic levels prior to the 2013 Sherwood Lake Dam breach and subsequent loss of the lake. Other park related revenues totaled \$78,750.54 in 2016. These revenues were generated from the sale of firewood, ice and convenience store items, along with laundromat and shower fees and house and shelter rentals and parks leases. All annual campground related revenues have increased by slightly more than \$100,000.00 since 2014.



2016 Combined Revenue: \$629,023.70

Maintenance of existing park grounds and facilities continues to be a priority. Maintenance items in 2016 included gravel work within the campgrounds for improved drainage capabilities during heavy precipitation events, added fall protection to the park's playground areas, hazard tree removal in all parks, Oak Wilt mitigation at various parks, improved signage throughout the campgrounds and parks, kiosk maintenance and upgrades and installation.

The following projects and policies were additional program focuses during 2016. Campground stores at Russell Memorial and Rock Dam utilized a newly implemented Point of Sale system to help track of inventory and product sales. The rental house at Rock Dam Park received a significant upgrade; new siding, windows, furnace and additional insulation were installed. Sherwood Park saw significant tree planting work, extensive beach maintenance, replacement of its boat launch, and the beginning stages to a nine hole Disc Golf course with multiple tee locations. Substantial painting projects were also completed in various campground bathrooms and shower houses. A revenue collection policy was also implemented in parks which handle substantial volumes of loose change to help ensure revenue accuracy.

A boat launch parking fee was implemented in the spring of 2016 at the four Lake Arbutus boat landings. This is currently the only place the county charges a fee for boat launch parking services. From the sales of a \$3.00 day pass and a \$25.00 season pass, \$6,689.23 of new revenue was generated.

This department currently maintains 11 county parks, including 8 campgrounds. There are currently 570 campsites available for public use. Fifteen park day-use locations are provided, together with 9 designated boat landings. Other park amenities include 17 shelter buildings, 27 vault toilet buildings, 7 shower/flush toilet buildings, 5 flush toilet buildings, 3 beaches, 2 convenience stores, 2 laundromats, parking lots, dump stations, trail access points, fishing access points, and much more.

TRAILS

Rehabilitation and maintenance projects were carried out on an extensive system of motorized and non-motorized recreational trails and associated support facilities in 2016.

ATV and snowmobile grant programs provided \$147,154.00 for rehabilitation and maintenance of trails and support facilities. The primary source of this grant funding is ATV/snowmobile registration fees and gas tax on ATV/snowmobile fuel consumption.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources unveiled its new SNARS (snowmobile automated reporting system) program. This reporting system is a new online way to report all expenses associated with the annual Snowmobile Grant Program. This reporting was previously being done by hand with paper hard copies. This system took considerable amounts of time to inform and train county club members on its use and functions. Overall this system has functioned great for Clark County and will be a valuable time saving tool in the future of the program.

Vital annual maintenance was conducted through the systems including the repair caused from the September flood. Along with these time consuming repairs we continued our ongoing project of culvert replacements, and continual shaping and grading of trails to insure user safety and enjoyment.

The Clark County ATV trail system consists of approximately 87.2 miles of funded summer trails and routes and 173.5 miles of winter trails. The Thorp, Greenwood, Loyal, Dorchester, Colby, Curtiss, and Riplinger snowmobile clubs assist on 93.4 miles of winter ATV trail maintenance.

Snowmobile trail funded maintenance mileage is approximately 376.4 miles. Of the total mileage, nine cooperating clubs maintain 312.52 miles of trail in Clark County.

Knobby Ridge Motorcycle Trail: Located in Hewett and Seif Townships, Knobby Ridge currently consists of 16 miles of off road motorcycle trail with four interconnecting loops and a youth loop. The trail system was closed in 2011 due to excessive erosion and rutting of the trail surface.

Mid-West Off Road Trail Riders, a Knobby Ridge Trail system sponsoring club, with assistance from this department completed trail rehabilitation projects in 2013 and 2014. The off-road motorcycle trail system west of Bachelor's Avenue reopened in 2015 and has remained open without any further maintenance issues. Trail user fees totaled \$2,678.80 in 2016.

Work planning discussions occurred with Mid-West Off Road Trail Riders in 2016 and it was mutually agreed that rehabilitation work would begin next on

the East Loop, east of Bachelor's Avenue, with the hopes of opening this section in the future.

Horse Trails: Wild Rock Campground and Park is the main trailhead for the Wild Rock Horse Trail system located in Seif and South Foster Townships. Wild Rock offers 41 miles of trail with seven interconnecting loops. Trail user fees in 2016 totaled \$1,813.05.

The Neillsville Saddle Tramps, a Wild Rock Horse Trail system sponsoring club, was consulted regarding future projects they would like to see on the trails moving forward to ensure rider enjoyment and safety. Several projects were discussed and budgeted for the coming year to ensure the county is providing users with the best experience possible.

The warming shelter located at Wild Rock Park was also removed from the trail head. A new warming shelter will be constructed by enclosing and remodeling 1/3 of the existing park shelter.

Levis/Trow Mound Recreation Area: Located in the Town of Dewhurst, this trail system offers hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. There are 15 miles of cross-country ski trails and 22.5 miles of single-track mountain bike trails available.

Levis Mound has provided increased access for year-round fat-tire biking. All trail use fees for 2016 totaled \$24,620.57.

The shelter located at Levis Mound Recreation Area was completely lost to a fire that occurred in the spring of 2016. The shelter planning process was started in the summer of 2016 with new construction to begin in 2017. Neillsville Area Trail Association, a Levis Mound Trail system sponsoring club, raised funds to pay for additional enhancements to the building which will include a vaulted ceiling and two showers.

Recreational Patrol Officer / Enforcement: The Recreation Officer position started trail enforcement efforts in Clark County during the summer of 2001. The position is an important link within Clark County for the protection and enhancement of the trail systems, natural resources, townships, residents and recreational enthusiasts.

The Recreation Officer contributes to the enforcement, education and safety of all trail systems in Clark County. The goal is to reduce off trail riding,

resource damage and township and resident complaints. The Recreation Officer is also involved in enforcement of forest and park related ordinances.

In 2016, Jesus Ibarra was assigned to the Recreational Patrol Officer position. Reserve deputies continue to perform periodic patrol of the ATV and Snowmobile trail systems in the absence of the full time Recreational Officer.

Trail Partners: The Clark County Forestry and Parks Department recognizes and appreciates the concerted efforts of our partners for success of Clark County trail systems:

- GWR (Greenwood-Willard-Rock Dam) Riders
- Loyal Sno Angels
- Colby Trailblazers
- Thorp Sno Raiders
- Riplinger Rip Riders
- Hatfield Road Runners
- Spencer Swampstompers
- Boomtown Sno Chasers
- Dorchester Midnight Riders
- Neillsville/Granton Trail Busters
- Hatfield ATV Riders
- Quad County ATV Club
- Rock Dam ATV Riders
- Northern Clark County ATV Riders
- Neillsville Area Trail Association
- Neillsville Saddle Tramps
- Mid-West Off Road Trail Riders
- Clark County Sheriff's Department
- Volunteers for the Snowmobile Council

BRUCE MOUND

Calendar Year 2016: Net (after sales tax) revenues for the year totaled \$211,933.00. Total revenues were up \$37,683.00 or 22% over 2015. Recent financial history for Bruce Mound operating costs are as follows:

- 2016 expenditures exceeded revenues by \$43,202.00
- 2015 expenditures exceeded revenues by \$47,187.00
- 2014 expenditures exceeded revenues by \$59,164.00
- 2013 expenditures exceeded revenues by \$53,710.00

2016 – 2017 Season: After a strong start to the season, abnormally warm weather resulted in an abbreviated ski season. Bruce Mound opened on Friday, December 23, one week later than scheduled but with virtually all runs open. Attendance through the holidays was solid. Bruce Mound closed one week earlier than planned on March 4th, due to deteriorating snow conditions. Excellent snow conditions occurred between opening and closing dates.

In an effort to reduce wait times and improve customer service, a second window was added for ticket sales and the point of sale system was streamlined through the use of scanners. Both improvements were well received by Bruce Mound staff and customers.

Many non-profit groups and organizations scheduled weekend visits to Bruce Mound during the season. Area organizations such as 4-H, FFA, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and numerous church and school groups were provided with reduced fee opportunities for wholesome outdoor winter recreation.

During the 2016 - 2017 season, 27 school groups were booked at Bruce Mound serving 3,070 students. New in 2016, a \$10.00 gift certificate was provided to each school group child that visited the facility. This free ticket opportunity was taken advantage of by 170 families on return visits throughout the season. All school groups received free ski and snowboard instruction.

Promotional efforts continued to shift from a focus on radio and print media to more social media, billboards and direct school mailings. A large amount of our promotional efforts were directed to our Bruce Mound Facebook page which has continued to display strong interaction between the department and Bruce Mound users. We continued the weekly "Trivia Challenge" about

various Bruce Mound and winter sports fun facts. We also continue to promote using radio in the local area.

The Friday night promotion featured a Fabulous Friday Nights Season Pass. 71 students, children and parents purchased a reduced price season pass good for all Friday nights, and Saturdays and Sundays in March, with 35 individuals also participating in a discounted Fabulous Friday Nights Ski and Snowboard rental package program. Free introductory ski lessons were provided.

Ski and snowboard instruction was again offered at Bruce Mound. The target group is 6th grade classes from around the area, although many diverse populations were served. During the 2016 – 2017 season, 93 lessons were provided to paying customers, and an additional 43 memberships were purchased for a lessons-based Friday night ski and snowboard club. Hundreds of school group children received free instruction.

Bruce Mound Ski Patrol Program remains an effective way of providing and administering first aid and improving on the overall mission at Bruce Mound. Special event and season pass opportunities have further complimented this mission of providing dependable winter recreation for the many families of Clark County.

Bruce Mound Future: The Forestry and Parks Committee continues to analyze challenges and opportunities at Bruce Mound with a goal of no net annual operating cost to the county. Improved expenditure reporting procedures have been implemented to improve transparency and support the decision making process. The implementation of a “flex” schedule for employees has allowed management to significantly reduce Bruce Mound overtime costs and has freed up staff members for other projects, who previously were fully dedicated to working at Bruce Mound. The ability to use skilled seasonal employees and others for snow making will help continue to narrow the financial gap at Bruce Mound.

The Committee has been assessing long term operating costs at Bruce Mound. Maintenance and upgrades to existing infrastructure and equipment remains a priority. The tube tow power unit was replaced in 2015. The 1960's diesel engine that serviced the tube tow for over 30 years was replaced with an electric motor. The Piston Bully, a key piece of snow grooming equipment will need to be replaced in coming years.

COUNTY DAMS

Sherwood Lake Dam: On February 23, 2014 the auxiliary spillway at Sherwood Lake Dam failed, causing a significant drawdown of the lake. A few days later, Department of Natural Resources Dam Safety Engineers ordered a complete drawdown of the lake.

Efforts to secure a Municipal Dam Grant to help support repairs to the primary spillway and replace the auxiliary spillway in January 2014 were unsuccessful. The full cost to repair the dam was then included in the 2015 budget. The Forestry and Parks Committee agreed to delay repairing the dam until 2016 to provide a growing number of dedicated citizens the opportunity to raise money to dredge the lakebed. This also allowed this department an opportunity to submit another grant application in early 2016. This grant application was successful and plans were developed by Tiry Engineering of Chippewa Falls to reconstruct the dam.

In 2014 The Friends of Sherwood Lake (FOSL) were formed and spearheaded a true grassroots fundraising effort. FOSL began fundraising efforts for lake dredging with a goal to raise enough money to remove 47,000 cubic yards of material from the lakebed. This effort has resulted in a unique partnership between this department and FOSL for the benefit of Sherwood Lake, a locally treasured Clark County recreational and ecological resource.

The dredging permit was issued by the WIDNR in early 2015. Bids were solicited for the project and a contract awarded to Opelt Sand and Gravel in November of 2015.

In January of 2016 dredging began. The warm winter created considerable challenges for the dredging crew including lack of frost on the lakebed to carry equipment. After considerable struggles to freeze down haul roads, unseasonably warm weather in mid-February began to deteriorate these same roads. The project was completed in late February just as the roads were breaking apart. A special thanks to FOSL and Opelt Sand and Gravel for their extraordinary efforts to make this project a success.



Sherwood Lake Dredging – January 2016

Terra Construction of Madison was awarded the contract to reconstruct the dam. Work began in the spring of 2016 and the project was substantially complete by November. Significant project work involved removing and replacing both headwalls, removal of the auxiliary spillway and replacing the void, construction of a new embankment parallel to the park entrance road, construction of a safety shelf, new safety railing, new stop log removal system, raise embankment to grade and concrete resurfacing.

The stop logs were installed in November and the lake filled up shortly thereafter. Some work remains on the stop log removal system before the project is complete. Plans are in place to begin restoring the fishery in 2017. Sherwood Lake Dam is fully operational and ready to be enjoyed for many years to come.

Mead Lake Dam: Repair of tainter gate skins was completed during the fall of 2016. Progress was also made toward the completion of a dam failure analysis for Mead Lake Dam.

Wedges Creek Dam – Snyder Lake: The September 2016 flood event resulted in a breach of Wedges Creek Dam. Immediately following the breach the DNR ordered a drawdown of 20 acre Snyder Lake, the impoundment created by the dam. The county was also required to submit plans to either repair or remove the dam. As part of the FEMA grant process, preliminary plans were submitted by Flambeau Engineering to repair the dam. The plans included repairs to the damaged earthen embankment and construction of a 55 foot extension to the existing concrete cut-off wall to mitigate future damage. Construction is expected to begin in early summer of 2016 and be complete before the end of the year.

Wildlife Flowages: Repair directives have been issued on several county forest flowage dams. Per DNR Dam Safety orders, these dams will need to be repaired or abandoned in the near future. The Forestry and Parks Department continues to prioritize needs and associated costs, in an effort to determine which dams will be abandoned and which will receive functional repairs.

OTHER DEPARTMENT NEWS/ACTIVITIES

Revenue/Expense Alternatives: The Forestry and Parks Committee continues to study ways and means of increasing departmental revenues and reducing long range expenses. A comprehensive expenditure and revenue tracking structure was implemented beginning January 1, 2011.

Additional revenue and expenditure accounts and subaccounts have been added and continue to be added to the department financial statement to improve functionality and transparency. Much has been learned about program costs and revenues. This will help create a clearer financial picture moving forward and help inform future decisions.

Employee sharing with Highway Department: The Forestry and Parks and Highway Departments began employee sharing in January 2014. During the winter months, one full time Forestry and Parks employee is reassigned from Bruce Mound to Highway for winter road maintenance. The Bruce Mound position is backfilled using skilled seasonal labor.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

January 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016

Fund 330 – Forestry and Parks General Account:

- Total revenues \$5,108,054.00
- Total expenditures-includes fund transfers \$5,443,093.00
- Fund transfers include:
 - Forestry to general fund for levy reduction \$850,000.00
 - Forestry to general fund for emergency communication system \$1,319,932.00
- Not including transfers from the forestry budget to the general fund, year-end 2016 budget closed in the positive by \$1,834,893.00

Fund 330 Fund Balance Summary:

- Year-end 2006 Balance \$1,598,547.84
- Year-end 2007 Balance \$1,071,661.32
- Year-end 2008 Balance \$1,306,043.75
- Year-end 2009 Balance \$1,098,524.44
- Year-end 2010 Balance \$ 856,948.38
- Year-end 2011 Balance \$ 794,160.52
- Year-end 2012 Balance \$1,616,267.86
- Year-end 2013 Balance \$2,331,387.36
- Year-end 2014 Balance \$3,672,389.03
- Year-end 2015 Balance \$4,544,341.89
- Year-end 2016 Balance \$4,209,302.66*

*Year-end 2016 unreserved/non-earmarked portion of the fund balance stands at \$3,225,222.41. Of this total, \$1.1 million has been earmarked to the unrestricted/assigned capital infrastructure account in 2017.

Fairgrounds:

- 2016 Fairgrounds expenditures exceed revenues by \$173,728.00.
- Fairgrounds budget is a general fund budget and is supported by levy dollars.

Financial Summary:

Forestry & Parks 2016 year-end budget summary is attached.

2016 Year-End Budget Summary – Forestry and Parks 330 Budget

APRIL 2017

<u>2016 EXPENDITURES</u>		<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual Expenditures</u>
<u>Program 1</u>	Wages & Benefits	\$389,120.00	\$374,461.92
	General Budget	\$835,000.00	\$848,559.83
<u>Program 2</u>	Wages & Benefits	\$926,300.00	\$839,943.45
	General Budget	\$807,936.00	\$1,019,041.04
	<u>Equipment and Shop</u>	\$244,400.00	\$191,155.00
	<u>Capital Infrastructure Draw</u>	\$1,319,932.00	\$1,319,932.00
	<u>Levy Reduction</u>	<u>\$850,000.00</u>	<u>\$850,000.00</u>
	TOTAL	\$5,372,688.00	\$5,443,093.24

YEAR END 2016 EXPENDITURES WERE OVER BUDGET BY \$70,405.24

<u>2016 REVENUE</u>		<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual Revenue</u>
<u>Program 1</u>	Timber Revenue	\$1,900,000.00	\$3,220,232.84
	State Aid Forestry	\$426,784.00	\$477,132.89
	Other Revenue	\$26,920.00	\$31,891.63
<u>Program 2</u>	Campground Revenue	\$585,700.00	\$635,712.89
	Bruce Mound	\$207,200.00	\$211,933.44
	State Aid Trails	\$197,000.00	\$209,237.78
	Fairground Reimbursement	\$72,000.00	\$70,135.26
	Trail Fees	\$18,200.00	\$29,112.42
	Other Revenue	\$102,600.00	\$215,308.92
	<u>Fund Balance Budgeted</u>	\$516,352.00	\$0.00
	<u>Contingency Fund</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$7,355.94</u>
	TOTAL	\$4,052,756.00	\$5,108,054.01

YEAR END 2016 REVENUES EXCEEDED BUDGET BY \$1,055,298.01

	<u>Total Revenue</u>	<u>Total Expenditures per Budget</u>
Program 1 (Forestry, Wildlife and Forest Roads)	\$3,729,257.36	\$1,223,021.75
Program 2 (Recreation – Parks, Trails, Dams, Bruce Mound)	\$1,371,440.71	\$1,858,984.49

2016 budget highlights

- Net timber revenues exceeded budget by \$1,320,233.00 or 69%.
- Sherwood Dam repair project went over budget but overruns will be partially offset by additional grant money when complete in 2017.
- Due to favorable December weather, Bruce Mound revenues met budget for first time in several years.
- First year boat launch fees exceeded expectations and budget by \$4,200.00.
- Trail fees exceeded budget by \$11,000.00. Much of the additional revenue is the result increased popularity of fat tire biking at Levis Mound.
- All campground revenues exceeded budget by over \$50,000.00 and are up over \$106,000.00 from 2014.
- Forest Road and trail damage resulting from fall flood event impacted expenditure budget in the amount of approximately \$150,000.00.
- Sherwood Lake dredging project expenses in the amount of \$107,000.00 not included in budget. Project expenses offset by donations.
- Received Friends of Sherwood Lake donations in the amount of \$65,000.00 in 2016. Received donation in December 2015 from central WI Outdoor Federation in the amount of \$42,000.00 for Sherwood Lake project.
- Improved budget tracking procedures have improved expenditure and revenue reporting within various budget lines and for individual programs.

EXCLUDING FUND TRANSFERS, REVENUES EXCEEDED EXPENDITURES BY	\$1,834,893.00
FUND BALANCE DRAW WAS BUDGETED AT \$516,352.00, ACTUAL DRAW	\$0
YEAR END FUND BALANCE IS	\$4,209,303.00
UNRESTRICTED/ASSIGNED PORTION OF FUND BALANCE	
• Dam Improvement	\$0.00
• Capital Equipment	\$150,000.00

• Forest Road Maintenance	\$144,715.00
• Forest Regeneration	\$200,000.00
• Land Acquisition	\$59,297.00
• Capital Infrastructure	<u>\$430,068.00</u>
	\$984,080.00

YEAR END UNRESERVED PORTION OF FUND BALANCE \$3,225,222.00*

*1.1 million of the unreserved fund balance has been committed to the Capital Infrastructure account in 2017 by the Forestry and Parks and Finance Committees.

BUDGETED FUND BALANCE DRAW AND CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITMENTS FOR 2017

• Capital Infrastructure Draw	\$293,314.00
• Fund Balance Draw - Operations	<u>\$556,319.00</u>
	\$849,633.00

2017 BUDGETED TRANSFER TO GENERAL FUND \$850,000.00

PROJECTED YEAR END 2017 UNRESERVED PORTION OF FUND BALANCE \$1,568,903.00