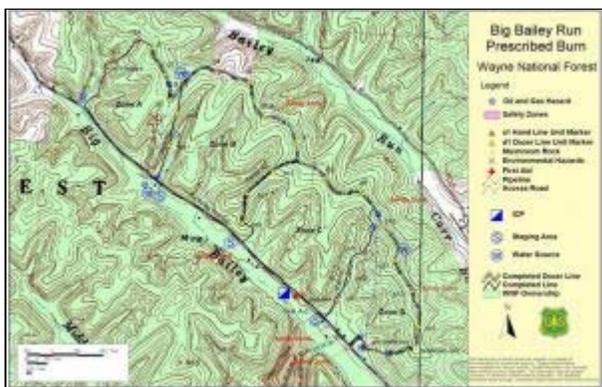




## GIS Staff Return to College

***Wayne National Forest Geographic Information System (GIS) staff help with outreach to college students.***



A sample GIS map used in talking to students about the practical applications of GIS in land management planning.

Wayne National Forest Geographic Information System (GIS) staff Aaron Burk and Sean Lowery have been busy doing outreach to college students. The two talented GIS specialists visited Miami University's GIS class to work with Dr. John Maingi's students. They then hosted a visit from Professor Ralph Moran's GIS class from Hocking College to the Wayne NF office to teach the students about various applications of GIS and Information Management on the Wayne.

"We were able to show the students in both cases direct applications for how GIS tools can map minerals and mineral operations, abandoned mine land, and the projects where these lands are being restored," said

Aaron Burk. "The students really appreciated the ability to see the mapping skills they were learning in class applied to the ground and how the mapping they might do can be woven into land management."

Burk noted he and Lowery showed the students GIS layers for fire management that showed both wild fire and prescribed burns. "There are also layers showing the ice storm damage from 2003 where we still have high fuel hazards and from the mapping students could see how we've reduced the fuel levels along roads and trails. The mapping provides a landscape level approach to land management planning."

"We'd recently completed our revised Forest Plan so we were able to explain how GIS was used in that effort and how key a role GIS now plays in any project planning," explains Burk.

Students were also shown basic digitizing methods, and how cartography and databases are managed. "They were interested in our GIS hardware and software, and of course they asked many questions about careers in our field," said Burk. "The two classes were eager and interested in what we did, which was refreshing and fun," Burk adds. "And who knows, we may well have been helping inspire our future peers in the field of GIS."

*For more information contact Teena Ligman at 812-277-3579*