



Stewardship Contracting on the Wayne

The Wayne has shown success in two stewardship contract projects related to the US Highway 33 Nelsonville Bypass project.



Shown here is the Hocking College logging class which did the felling and logging operation for one of the US 33

Bypass Stewardship Contracts.

The Wayne is aggressively making use of a new tool available to the Forest Service called stewardship contracting. There are two such contracts in place related to the US Highway 33 Nelsonville Bypass project.

The goal of stewardship contracting is to assist in enhancing and restoring landscapes, with the focus on leaving behind a healthy forest. The Wayne can use this program to achieve land management goals that have been developed in collaboration with local communities. In lieu of income from contracts, services are provided at the local level allowing the Wayne to implement objectives including restoring or maintaining water quality; improving fish and wildlife habitat; and reducing hazardous fuels.

Initially a small 13-acre harvesting contract was granted to Hocking College to clear the new highway right-of-way (ROW). Hocking College's chainsaw class cut 13 acres and in return for the value of the timber planted trees in an old bottomland hayfield and worked on Forest roads.

The second portion of the ROW clearing was for harvesting 243 acres. This stewardship contract, also with Hocking College, provided service work including: dam, road, wildlife opening, and boundary line maintenance; crop tree release; native plant rescue and establishment; closing illegal ORV trails; fire line construction; and constructing large bat houses.

Cooperation from several agencies was required to implement stewardship contracts but each of the partners agrees the benefits make it a worthwhile endeavor. Those involved in these contracts include USDA Forest Service, US Federal Highway Administration, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Ohio Department of Transportation, Hocking and Athens Counties, and the City of Nelsonville.

The total value of timber to be removed in the two Bypass stewardship contracts is over \$200,000. District Ranger DeVela Clark said, "Retaining these receipts gives us the flexibility to fund a wide variety of maintenance projects on our forest. Partnering with Hocking College and utilizing local sub-contractors will also provide many training and job opportunities locally."

For more information contact Jason Reed at 740-373-9055