

ORANGE WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY
SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
April 2016

PURPOSE: To provide information about OWASA's plans and efforts to sustainably manage about 2,600 acres of OWASA-owned forest land, most of which is in Orange County.

BACKGROUND: In accord with the Federal permit issued for the Cane Creek Reservoir, OWASA is required to implement the NC Wildlife Resources Commission's (WRC's) plan for managing the forest resources on our 490-acre Cane Creek Reservoir Mitigation Tract. The WRC prepared a forestry management plan for the tract in 2009. Our forestry management consulting expert, True North Forest Management Services, subsequently developed an approach and schedule for implementing the WRC plan, which was approved by the WRC and then by the OWASA Board on March 25, 2010.

STATUS: Active management of the forest resources on the Mitigation Tract began in the Fall of 2010. In October-November 2010, about 25 acres of that tract were clearcut, and about 25 acres of upland hardwood forest were thinned (lower quality trees were removed and the higher quality trees were left to prosper). The clearcut area was replanted in loblolly pines (on 10'x10' spacing) in February 2011. An access road and stream crossing were installed in 2013 to implement the WRC plan on the south side of the Mitigation Tract. In August-November 2014, approximately 34 acres of pine were clearcut over ten small areas the largest clearcut area was 8 acres. In addition approximately 200 acres of forest were thinned, and the highest quality trees were left standing. In 2015, contractors reseeded the logging roads and decks to prevent erosion and maintain water quality (a logging deck is a cleared area where logs are temporarily stored before they are loaded on trucks and for logging equipment to turn around). In 2016, the areas clearcut in 2014 were replanted.

Some minor management work will continue on the property as needed. For example, our contractor will perform a pre-commercial thin on the 25 acres that were clearcut in 2010 later in 2016. This will prevent crowding; the trees that are cut will be left on the ground to provide habitat, nutrients to the soil, and prevent erosion.

LINK FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

<http://www.owasa.org/whatwedo/ForestManagementPlan.aspx>