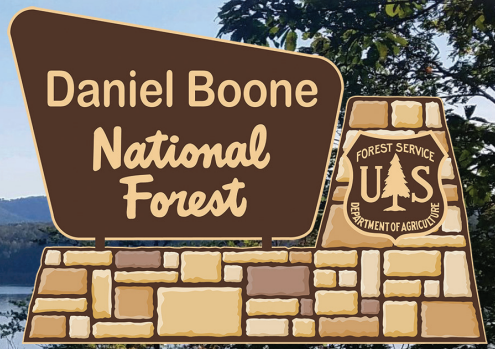


# Frontier News



## Shared Stewardship with the Daniel Boone National Forest

by Tim Eling, Staff Officer



### *A shared commitment in caring for the land*

Among the greatest threats to Kentucky's forests are wildfires, non-native insects, drought and disease; scourges that have no respect for property boundaries as they spread across the landscape. To face these challenges, land management agencies and private landowners are coming together with a new strategy – shared stewardship.

The need to work across ownership boundaries is increasingly apparent as complex ecological disturbances threaten the sustainability of our natural resources and the economic productivity of our local communities. We are now rethinking our approach to land management and setting priorities to improve forest health on a landscape-wide scale.

### *What shared stewardship means for land managers*

The 2014 Farm Bill gave the USDA Forest Service the ability to work cross-boundary through the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA). By June 2018, the agency had signed 163 GNA agreements on 59 national forests in 25 states to complete a variety of restoration activities. The 2018 Omnibus Bill further expanded the GNA and other authorities, enabling the agency to do even more work with state and private partners.

In Kentucky, the USDA Forest Service manages the two largest sections of public land, the Daniel Boone National Forest (DBNF) and the Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area, which total more than 880,000 acres. The DBNF covers 80 percent of that total with national forest lands that extend across 21 eastern counties. These lands are highly intermingled with state and private, providing multiple opportunities to work across ownership boundaries.

Shared stewardship means sharing the work among partners, but more importantly, it means sharing in the decisions to effectively meet common goals and objectives," said Forest Supervisor Dan Olsen with the Daniel Boone National Forest.

*Photos to the left: The Keno Shooting Range was reconstructed using a combination of DBNF recreation fees and a grant from the NWTF. The Pine Knot Job Corps Center and the Stearns District provided labor during the reconstruction.*

*Prescribed burning on the DBNF.*

*Log landing on the DBNF.*

*All photos courtesy: Daniel Boone National Forest*



### ***Working together for the greatest good***

The DBNF is participating in shared stewardship through a variety of collaborative initiatives and partnership agreements.

The White Oak Initiative works to ensure the long-term sustainability of America's white oak and the economic, social and conservation benefits derived from white oak dominated forests. Eastern Kentucky is among the white oak dominated forest regions of the eastern United States. As part of Kentucky's White Oak Initiative, the DBNF is identified as a primary resource area for sustainable white oak populations. White oak forests provide critical food and habitat to many wildlife species. These healthy forest ecosystems then provide for recreational activities, like hunting, that generate billions of dollars for local economies. Additionally, white oak is the most commercially important timber oak throughout much of the Southeastern United States because it is ideal for industries making forest products such as bourbon barrel staves.

The Shortleaf Pine Initiative includes a host of partners working together to restore our native pine ecosystem. Beginning in 1999, a southern pine beetle outbreak resulted in extensive loss of mature pine forest across Kentucky. Other states experienced similar epidemic infestations of such severity that southern forests, once dominated by shortleaf pine forest types, have lost more than 50 percent of their native shortleaf pine acreage. For the citizens of the 22 states where shortleaf pine was originally found, these forests represent a wide range of cultural, ecological and economic values. The DBNF is part of an extensive group of conservation minded agencies and organizations with the common goal of restoring this imperiled ecosystem.

The Rockcastle Conservation Initiative is a consortium of stakeholders from state and federal agencies, along with special interest groups, working together toward the common goal of protecting and enhancing natural resources in the Rockcastle River Basin. Part of their work seeks to improve aquatic and terrestrial habitat in the Rockcastle River corridor in order to support endangered mussel populations downstream. Other wildlife-related efforts on national forest lands are habitat improvement projects in partnership with the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

In Kentucky, shared stewardship is also practiced as an effective approach to wildland fire management under various agreements with the Kentucky Division of Forestry, The Nature Conservancy, Job Corps, and University of Kentucky.

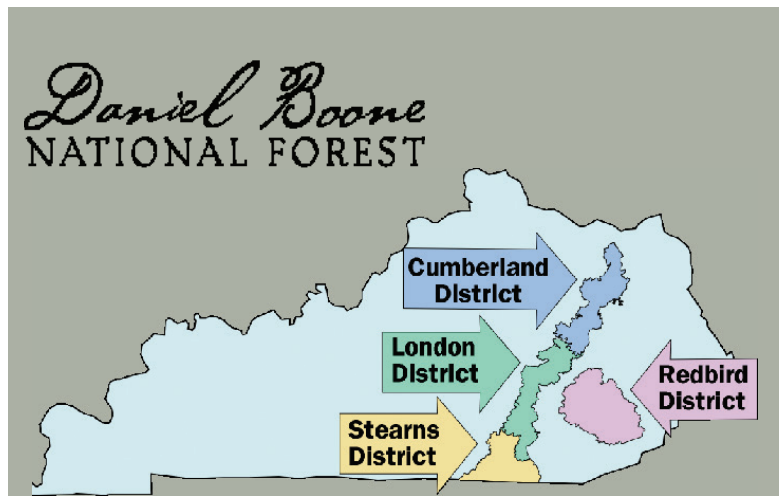
### ***Opportunities for the future***

Shared stewardship provides opportunities to protect more communities and watersheds, to produce more timber volume, and to treat more acres for hazardous fuels. With an increase in collaboration, we can reduce fire risks and improve forest conditions.



*Elk bulls fighting on the DBNF.*

*Wild turkeys foraging on the DBNF.*



### ***More about the forest:***

The Daniel Boone National Forest is among 154 national forests and 20 grasslands managed by the Forest Service under the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The agency's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. Visit the DBNF website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/dbnf/>