

Forest Plan Revision Through Partnerships

RACHEL NEUENFELDT
PARTNERSHIP & COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST
WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST

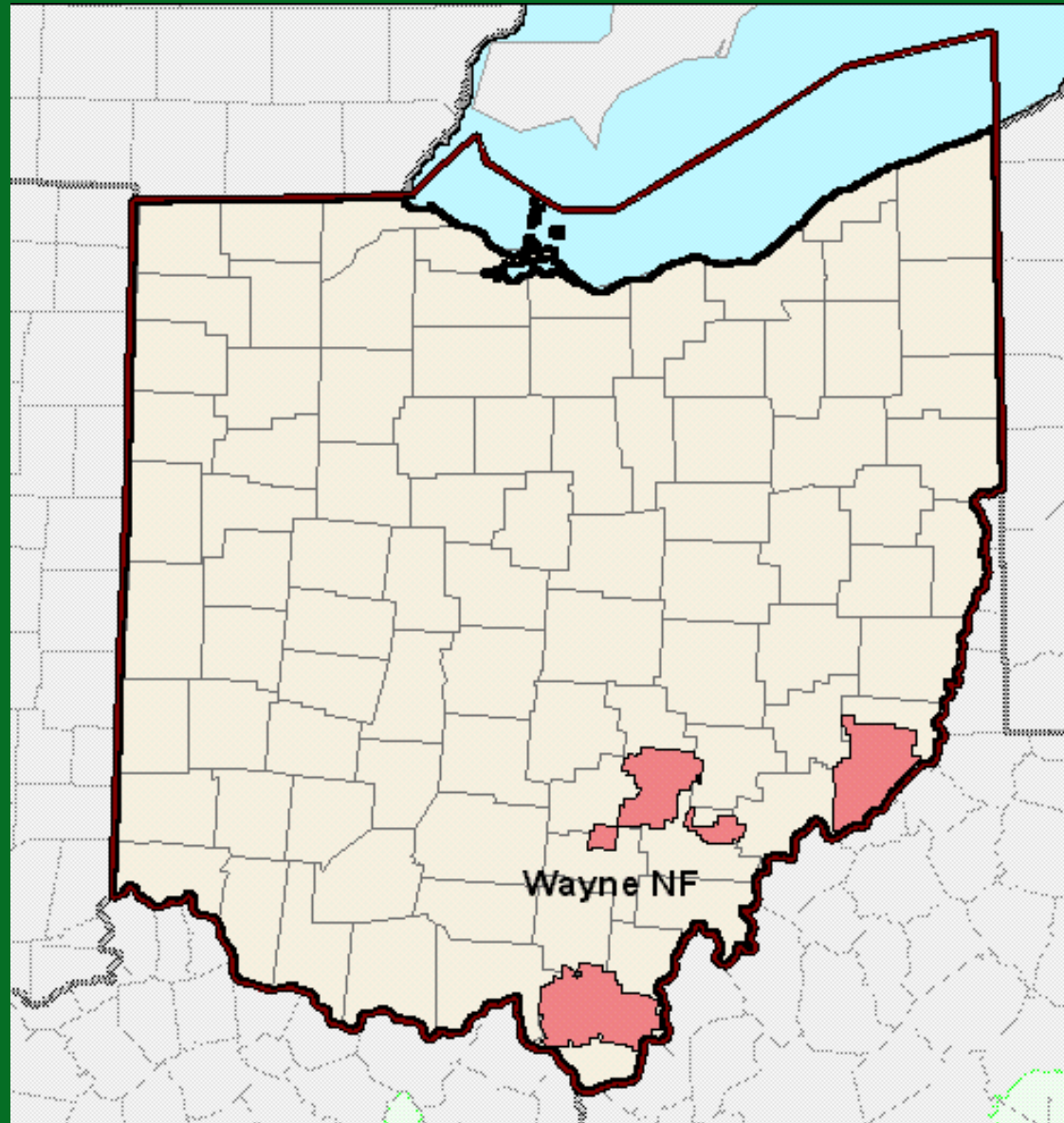


THE WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST

OHIO'S ONLY
NATIONAL FOREST

The Wayne National Forest is located in southeast Ohio. The total landownership of the national forest is about 244,000 acres, but this is divided up into two ranger districts and three distinct units, and further divided by interspersed private lands.

THE WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST



THE WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST

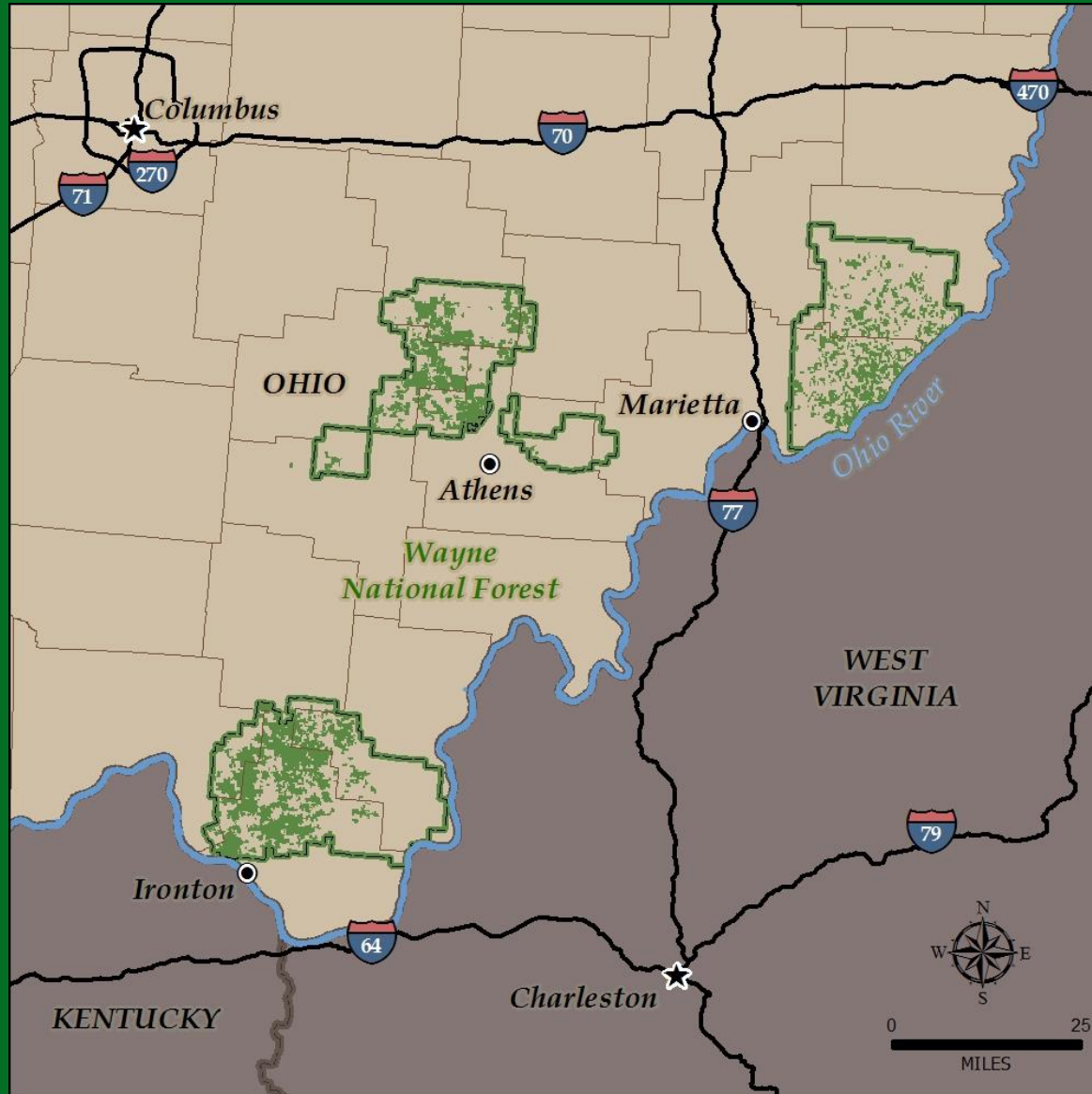
OHIO'S ONLY NATIONAL FOREST

The Wayne National Forest is located in southeast Ohio. The total landownership of the national forest is about 244,000 acres, but this is divided up into two ranger districts and three distinct units, and further divided by interspersed private lands.

The **fragmentation** caused by these interspersed private lands makes cohesive management difficult and cross-boundary partnerships necessary. The mineral land ownership under the forest is also divided, and this area of the country is experiencing increased interest in **energy development** such as natural gas.

HOT BUTTON ISSUES

THE WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST



THE WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST

OHIO'S ONLY NATIONAL FOREST

The Wayne National Forest is located in southeast Ohio. The total landownership of the national forest is about 244,000 acres, but this is divided up into two ranger districts and three distinct units, and further divided by interspersed private lands.

The **fragmentation** caused by these interspersed private lands makes cohesive management difficult and cross-boundary partnerships necessary. The mineral land ownership under the forest is also divided, and this area of the country is experiencing increased interest in **energy development** such as natural gas.

HOT BUTTON ISSUES

SETTING THE STAGE FOR COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Due to the nature of the landscape, partnerships and working across boundaries is necessary so there is a collaborative mindset across the forest. Additionally, work in the past few years on projects such as the Inter-Agency Forestry Team and the Bailey's Trail System have showcased the potential of successful, innovative partnerships.

FOREST PLANNING AND THE 2012 PLANNING RULE

Forest Plans:

- Set the overall management direction and guidance for each national forest
- Guide management at a forest-level scale rather than focusing on individual projects

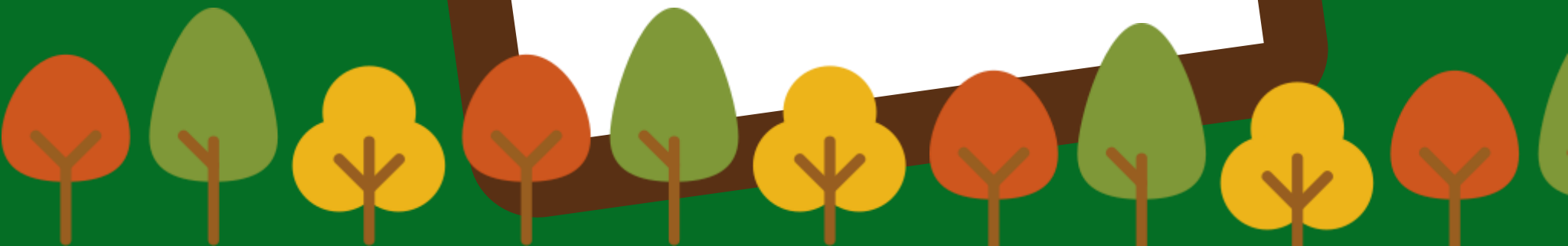
The 2012 Planning Rule:

- Establishes the process for how forest plans are developed, revised, or amended
- Provides a collaborative and science-based framework for land management planning
- Emphasizes balancing economic and social values with ecological integrity
- Recognizes the importance of working with State, local, and tribal agencies in creating plans



Forest Plan Revision Process

- Assessment
- Plan Development
 - NEPA - EIS
- Implementation and Monitoring



FOREST PLAN REVISION TEAM

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM MEMBERS

Seven-person core team comprised of planners, fire specialists, photojournalists, economists, collaboration specialists, biologists, and partnership coordinators - none have previously worked on a Forest Plan Revision

LIMITED FOREST SERVICE EXPERIENCE

The bulk of the core team has less than five years of Forest Service experience - encourages exploration of new ideas and entrepreneurial mindset with guidance from those with more experience

BUILT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Core team built through long-standing partnership to on-board Resource Assistants - all of the work we do involves other branches of the Forest Service, other agencies, and outside organizations



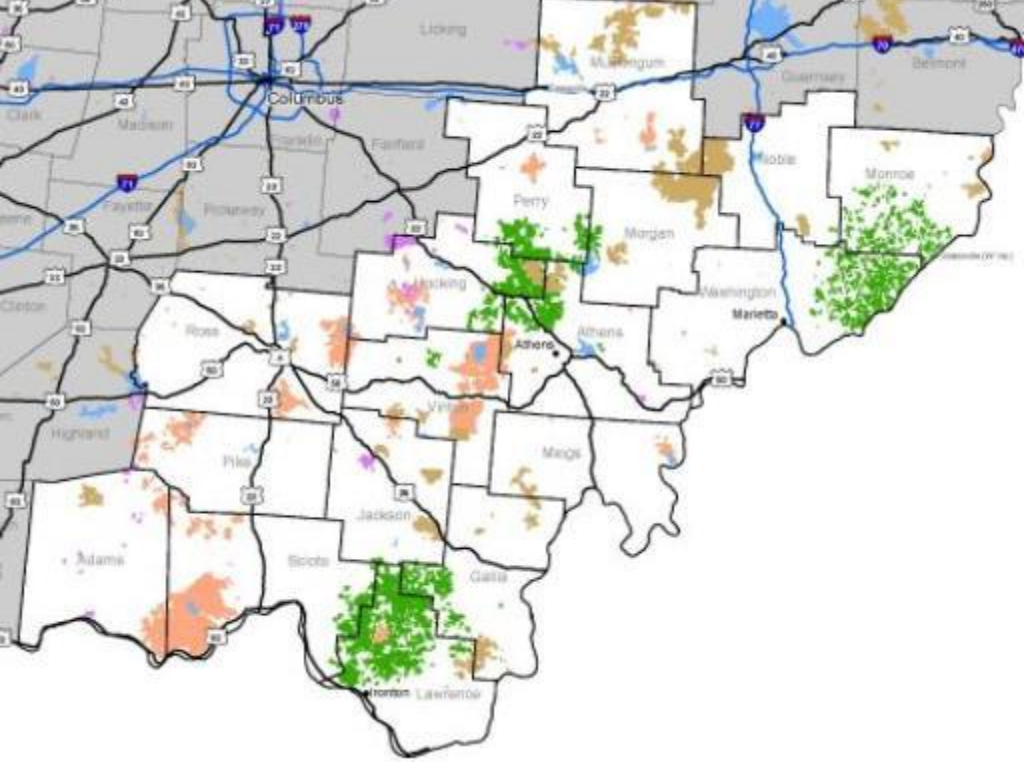
THE LIFE CYCLE OF *OUR*
PARTNERSHIPS

A close-up photograph of a caterpillar on a flower stem. The caterpillar is positioned at the top of the stem, which is covered in small, purple, fuzzy flowers. The background is a bright, out-of-focus yellow, likely the petals of a flower. The caterpillar is light-colored with some darker spots and is facing towards the right.

CATERPILLAR

VISION - Leverage the opportunity presented by the landscape of public and private lands across southeast Ohio to work collaboratively across boundaries and synchronize planning efforts with the State to accomplish this goal

FRAMEWORK - The 2012 Planning Rule provides legal and regulatory support for this approach, but the collaborative history of the forest and leadership support provided the latitude necessary to explore this opportunity



FRAMEWORK OF SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS ACROSS THE FOREST

A partnership ethic permeates from leadership to field employees and is solidified and exemplified by projects such as the Bailey's Trail System and efforts such as the Inter-Agency Forestry Team

HOW CAN WE FIND EFFICIENCIES IN THE PLANNING PROCESS WHILE INCREASING OUTREACH AND PARTNERSHIPS?

Our goal was to do something different, take risks, involve partners early and often, and put together an adaptive Forest Plan reflective of the needs and values of this area





CHRYSA LIS

Moving the vision towards action

- More in-depth conversations with the state of Ohio
- Assessment of who needed to be involved for success
 - How could we bring them on board?
- Start bringing the public into the conversation early and often
 - Open comment period, **working groups**, monthly update calls
- Building out and codifying lines of communication, timelines, and formal or informal arrangements we may need moving forward



Question:

What is the difference between partners and the public, when the public starts to engage in more formalized ways (i.e. working groups)?

Does this distinction matter, and what are the implications for the distinction?

SETTING THE STAGE

1

PLANNING

Developing plans and timelines; establishing norms; and writing contracts and agreements

2

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Actively working to meet community members, groups, etc. and gain familiarity with issues and values

3

PLANNING FOR PLANNING

Testing assumptions, gathering information, and preparing for conversations as the process moves forward



Question:

Where is the line between this set-up stage and the implementation stage when the process is planning?

Does it matter if that is clear?



Question:

This stage can be long and seem tedious, but it is necessary for success moving forward.

What sort of support systems can be built in to avoid burnout and ensure long-term commitments and success?

DIGGING DEEPER

What we've done and what we can do to move towards success

Building out partnerships

- Working groups
- Agreements and contracts

Building out our team

- Recruiting new members
- Informing current leadership and employees of anticipated needs and timelines

Putting together initial evaluation metrics

- Stakeholder analysis (internal and external)
- Anticipated timelines

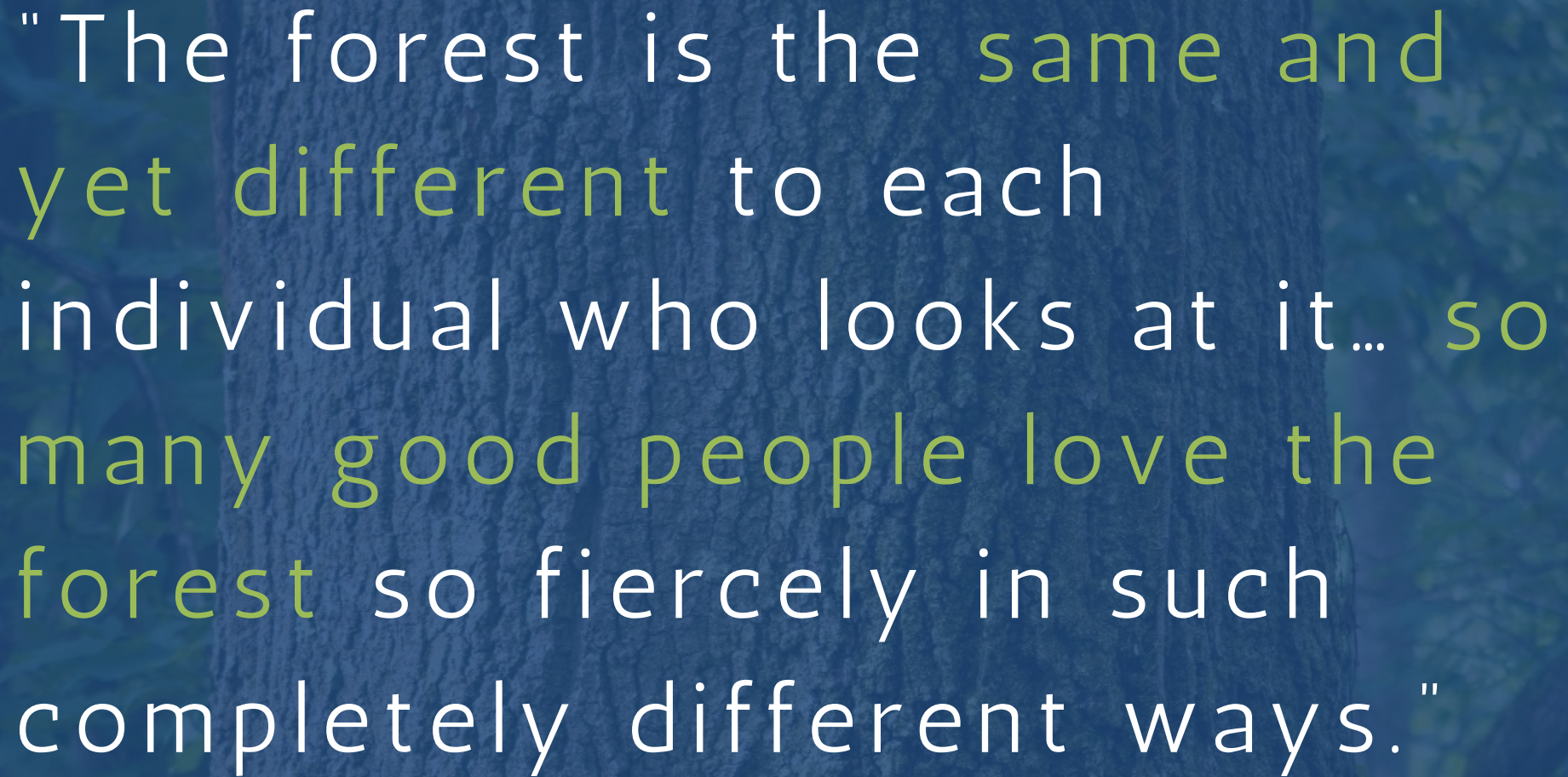


BUTTERFLY

- Difficult to see this transition when the process is planning, but will likely come with the move into the plan development phase of plan revision
- This will involve more active engagement with partners in building the plan together rather than just discussing data and information
- Plan (and hope!) is that the basis built during earlier stages will propel this stage to success

HOW DO YOU
KNOW WHEN
YOU'RE READY TO
MOVE FROM
SETTING THE STAGE
TO ACTIVE WORK?

Some transitions are legally mandated, but how can we assure ourselves and our partners that we are prepared to move into the next phase?



"The forest is the same and yet different to each individual who looks at it... so many good people love the forest so fiercely in such completely different ways."

WILLIAM DIETRICH

THE FINAL FOREST



THANK YOU!

RACHEL NEUENFELDT
PARTNERSHIP & COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST
WAYNE NATIONAL FOREST