

Frequently Asked Questions About the Donation of the 476-Acre Property to DuPont State Recreational Forest

The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and DuPont have completed the company's donation of 476 acres inside DuPont State Recreational Forest to the state. The 476-acre site remains from the former manufacturing plant owned and operated by DuPont Corporation. The plant, which began operations in 1956, was taken out of production in 2002. Demolition of the plant was completed in 2006. This property is surrounded by the 10,473-acre DuPont State Recreational Forest in Transylvania County. Over time there has been consistent local support – including from the DuPont Advisory Committee, the Friends of DuPont, and local elected officials – in obtaining the property.

Below are some frequently asked questions and answers regarding the donation of this property to the state. For additional information contact Brian R. Haines, public information officer with the N.C. Forest Service, at 919-857-4828.

FAQs:

Will DuPont Corporation's remediation activities in the 476-acres site affect use of other areas of the forest?

No major impacts on other areas of DuPont State Recreational Forest are anticipated at this time. However, visitors to the forest may notice increased activity, including equipment and trucks in the area, while remediation is occurring.

How much did the state pay for this 476 acres?

The state did not buy the property; the DuPont Corporation donated it.

How much will remediation cost?

That is a question for the DuPont Corporation, which is responsible for paying for the remediation.

How did the Department of Public Safety and the N.C. National Guard get involved?

The Department of Public Safety and the National Guard have been interested in having an improved presence in the western part of the state for many years. The N.C. Forest Service has worked and trained with DPS staff for a long time on emergency response efforts, in particular at DuPont State Recreational Forest. Additionally, the DPS and the Guard have worked on a number of projects on the forest, including the construction of a road that has helped to alleviate some of the parking issues at the visitor center parking lot. With these factors in mind, it made sense to invite the department and the Guard to the table when discussions about the 476 acres began. Their presence in the western part of the state will not only help the forest to advance its goals, but will be beneficial to those living in the region as well, especially in regards to response time during emergencies.

How involved will the DPS and the NCNG be with the 476-acre site?

Details are still being worked out, but they may have some shared office space and will conduct low-impact training on the forest. Any training will be coordinated and be under permit with the N.C. Forest Service to ensure it is conducted in accordance with the forest's goals, protection of sensitive ecosystems, and to minimize impact to public use of the property. It is also likely that the presence of

the Department of Public Safety and the Guard will allow for involvement with other improvement projects on the forest as they arise, thereby reducing the financial burden to the state and taxpayers.

The N.C. Guard's training area would be used in a similar way as the Guard uses its two N.C. training areas: Camp Butner and Snow Camp. The Guard has an excellent track record of negligible environmental impacts at both locations, and DuPont Forest would be no different. Camp Butner operations benefit the surrounding communities and are available to the public for events such as the Boy Scouts, corporate leadership/team-building obstacle course, orienteering/hiking clubs, and high school and college ROTC programs.

What are the long-term plans for the DPS and NCNG?

Any use or proposed expansion by the DPS and the Guard would need to be approved by the N.C. Forest Service and be done in accordance with the forest's goals, protection of sensitive ecosystems, and to minimize impacts to public use of the property. Any future plans would need to be consistent with the finalized remedial plan, developed by the DuPont Corporation and approved by the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality. Additionally, any changes would be made in consultation with the DuPont State Recreational Forest Advisory Committee.

What type of operations will they be performing?

They may have some shared office space and will conduct low-impact training on the site and in other areas of the forest. Examples of training include on- and off-trail patrolling and hiking, land navigation, mountain terrain familiarization, obstacle course, small unit base operations (soldier tents, communications tents), Horizontal and Vertical Engineers Training, Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Training, vehicle training (load/unload/hook up equipment, drivers course) and a motorcycle safety course.

Will there be full-time NCNG personnel on site?

That is yet to be determined. Since the DPS and the Guard's primary goal will be training, they may only be on the forest during those times or when emergency response is needed in the area. However, that is a better question to ask NCNG Public Affairs, ng.nc.ncarng.mbx.pao@mail.mil or 984-664-6242.

Will the NCNG be paying the NCDACS to lease the property?

In lieu of paying for use of the site and DuPont State Recreational Forest, the DPS and the N.C. Forest Service will work as partners for the achievement of their respective missions. Both agencies will benefit from this partnership, as will the public.

Who will be the public's point of contact for the NCNG activities on the site?

The N.C. Forest Service will remain the main point of contact for all activities on the forest. However, when the Guard is training or conducting emergency response efforts, we will provide a contact. Otherwise, questions specifically related to DPS and the Guard can be addressed by their public affairs office in Raleigh at ng.nc.ncarng.mbx.pao@mail.mil or 984-664-6242.

Will military aircraft be used on the site?

Any aircraft using the forest for landing or low-altitude operations will be required to obtain a permit from the N.C. Forest Service and fly a military training route approved by the Federal Aviation

Administration. Aircraft that fly over the forest are operating in designated airspace and are not in the jurisdiction of the N.C. Forest Service. An example of future aircraft training would be the N.C. HART trainings (Helicopter and Aquatic Rescue Team) that have been conducted on the forest in the past.

Will hunting be allowed?

As a partner in the N.C. Wildlife Resource Commission's Game Lands Program, hunting is already a permitted activity on the forest. It is expected that hunting will be a permitted use of the 476-acre site, but the exact locations for hunting have not been determined and will be dependent on restrictions approved by the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality.

Will there be a shooting range on the 476 acres?

No.

When will the site be open to the public?

Public use could be a few years away. The site will not be open to the public until the N.C. Forest Service has had time to develop a long-range plan for the property and assess and improve trails.

How will you protect visitors from exposure to contaminants?

The purpose of the remediation plan is to remove contaminants in certain areas and mitigate exposure pathways to ensure that current and future users of the site are protected from any remnant contamination. Potential measures DuPont may take to accomplish these goals may include excavation, capping and restoration of portions of the site. In addition, land use restrictions may be enacted on certain areas of the site to protect human health and the environment. The N.C. Department of Environmental Quality will work with DuPont to ensure the cleanup is completed in an efficient and comprehensive manner.

Can the area be used for parking?

Not right away. The N.C. Forest Service will explore available parking options in the future.

Why did DuPont not remove all of the contaminants?

The remedial action plan is the result of discussion between the DuPont Corporation and the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality to ensure the cleanup is completed in an efficient and comprehensive manner. When the remedial action plan is implemented, actions will be taken to eliminate the risk that any contamination could pose to human health and the environment. The state Department of Environmental Quality will work with DuPont to ensure that contamination is removed or exposure pathways are eliminated for users of the site.

What are the land use restrictions?

These can be found in the finalized remediation plan. Restrictions will vary depending on possible pathways to exposure for workers or forest visitors.

What will the trail system look like?

As funding is identified, DuPont State Recreational Forest will develop a Master Plan for the forest trail and road system. The Master Plan for trails would encompass this new acreage as well. It would be similar to the existing trail system.

Is Lake DERA safe for fishing and swimming?

The final remedial action plan and associated land use restrictions approved by the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality will be needed to make that determination.

Will Lake DERA be available for public use?

The finalized RAP and associated land use restrictions approved by the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality will be needed to make that determination. The N.C. Forest Service will plan Lake DERA's use accordingly. Funding will be needed for infrastructure improvements prior to allowing public access.

What about sensitive plants and natural communities? Are there plans to protect them?

DuPont State Recreational Forest would amend its Land and Resource Management Plan to include the 476-acre property. Resource protection and preservation would be a primary concern for any areas identified to have significant natural values, such as rare plants or unique habitats.

Will the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service be a partner going forward?

Resource protection and preservation measures can be accomplished by the N.C. Forest Service through existing relationships and agreements with partner agencies, including the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Plant Protection Program, N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Do the Advisory Committee and the Friends of DuPont Forest support the acquisition?

Yes, both the Advisory Committee and the Friends of DuPont Forest, along with local elected officials, support the acquisition of the property.

What future buildings are planned?

Any building plans for the property are only preliminary until DuPont Corporation actually deeds the property to the state. Once that occurs, the N.C. Forest Service and the National Guard are considering a combined office space, an obstacle course, primitive camping, some military lodging and other improvements. Any buildings on the site will have to go through the normal permitting process.