



Greetings from the Black River State Forest! Spring has officially returned at the state forest and with the warmer weather birds are returning from their winter migration, animals such as black bears are coming out of their hibernation and with the melting snow spring ephemerals will soon be visible. Unfortunately the melting snows of spring also make something else visible after the long winter – the many piles of trash that can be found in the state forest.

Illegal dumping of household garbage, old furniture, and appliances unfortunately continues to be a problem for the property. Just last fall an old refrigerator, stove, and freezer were dumped off along Battlepoint Road, an otherwise highly scenic area of the state forest. Trash dumping is one of the biggest enforcement problems for the property.

Last year state forest law enforcement personnel issued four violations for illegal dumping on the property. Fines vary from \$186 to \$249 depending on the amount of material. If there is any solid waste included in the materials tickets can be as high as \$753. Many an illegal dumper has been surprised to see law enforcement show up at their door with a ticket in hand. It is much easier to track trash back to its source than most people would suspect.

Fortunately a local organization feels strongly about solving this dilemma. The Friends of the Black River are once again partnering with the state forest on an Earth Day clean up event on Saturday April 19th. The clean up will begin at 8:30 in the morning at the Castle Mound shelter where volunteers will be given supplies and a location. Dumpsters and drop off points for items such as tires and appliances will be situated throughout the property. At 12:30 the clean up will commence with a free subway lunch for all of the volunteers at the Castle Mound shelter.

This is the fourth year of the clean up. The combination of this event, increased awareness of this problem, and the large number of tickets that have been issued to offenders has made a positive difference in reducing the amount of trash being dumped on the property. However, more needs to be done to make this a thing of the past. If you would like to volunteer for this event please contact John Elliot at 715-284-1507 or 715-299-0006. Or you may send an email to info_fbr@yahoo.com.

If you have any questions about this event or the state forest, please call us at (715) 284-1406.