

GEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The geological resources on the state forests can be placed in several categories. Minerals, oil and natural gas have potential economic value to local economies and the State. Rock, as aggregates, can have value for construction and building. Rock formations, such as karst or cliffs, can have scenic or recreational value, but can also create rare ecological communities. And the type of rock and how it lays can result in hydrology that creates water resources such as springs and seeps. These have value for the water resource, and for the rare communities it may support.

Minerals, Oil, Natural Gas, and Rock/Aggregate Extraction

Some places on the state forests have a history of extraction. Examples include coal in the vicinity of Greene-Sullivan, Pike, and Ferdinand State Forests; oil/gas extraction in the vicinity of Pike and Ferdinand State Forests; gypsum mining at Martin State Forest; and rock quarries in the vicinity of Harrison-Crawford State Forest. Recently interest has been heightened in some areas for renewed natural gas exploration. Properties may be approached by commercial concerns regarding commercial extraction. All such inquiries should be directed to the Property Program Director.

Any such future operations will be conducted to meet with applicable standards and to cause minimal disruption to property operations and programs.

There is some recreational extraction that occurs on properties. Examples include gold panning or rock collecting. This is covered in more detail in the section **FOREST PRODUCTS**.

Rock Formations and Features

State forest properties have many rock features such as caves and cliffs that attract enthusiasts who seek such physical challenges. Unfortunately such areas may also contain rare and/sensitive biological resources that could be damaged by activity. The Department Cave and Karst Policy and Property Regulations provide constraints, controls, and management guidelines for these features. In general, property operations will be managed to have minimal disturbance to sensitive sites. Prohibitive devices, such as fences, will only be used when determined to be necessary in order to retain the open forest atmosphere.

Spring and Seeps

Springs and seeps often occur when geologic formations channel water to the surface.

Major springs and seeps may often provide rare habitat. In addition, by nature the soils in the vicinity of such features may be very soft and vulnerable to traffic and impacts. In general, property operations will be managed to have minimal disturbance to sensitive sites.

Section Bullet Summary

- Extraction of geologic resources is coordinated through the Property Program Director.
- Department policies and regulations govern geologic formation/feature use and protection.
- Operations will be managed to avoid unintended impacts to major springs and seeps.