

SLOVAKIA

Biodiversity restoration, preservation & enhancement

Location

Stiavnik

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P4 – Ecosystems
management

Measure

M8 – Investments in forest
areas

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 628 670.70
EAFRD 471 503.02
National/Region. 157 167.68

Project duration

2016 – 2016

Project promoter

Lesne spolocenstvo Stiavnik,
s.r.o.

Contact

gulan@lesspol.sk
chrenkova@lesspol.sk

Website

www.lesspol.sk

Restoration of a deteriorating forest road and construction of a wooden lookout tower in order to protect 1500 ha of forest from forest fires.

Summary

Forest fires are a significant problem in Slovakia. In 2017, 162 forest fires broke out affecting a total area of 297.66ha. The most common causes of forest fires include careless open fires, illegal burning of waste outside landfills and uncontrolled burning of grass and dry matter.



The community Stiavnik in the district of Bytca in north-western Slovakia, decided to restore a forest road of strategic importance against forest fires. The road had been built in the 1970s and had significantly deteriorated over the years. They also constructed a watch tower to oversee almost 70% of the area's forest.

Results

Reconstruction of the 3.7km long forest fire road and building of a new 8m high forest fire wooden lookout tower. Both works contribute to effective forest management and maintenance of an area of ca 1 500 ha of forest.

Improved access to the forest will increase the forest owners competitiveness. Thanks to this investment they expect to increase revenues by 5% and create another job.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ It is important to plan projects carefully with expert support. The forest is a dynamic living entity and any possible mistakes may have a major impact on the area.

Context

In 2017, 162 forest fires broke out in Slovakia affecting a total area of 297.66ha. This resulted in 410 330 EUR of financial damage, according to the Report on the Forest Sector of the Slovak Republic 2017 – Green Report. The most common causes of forest fires are careless open fires, illegal burning of waste around landfill and uncontrolled burning of grass and dry matter. Preventive measures need to be implemented by forest owners and forest managing enterprises, particularly at times of increased risk of fire, as requested by Act No. 314/2001 Coll. on protection against fire.

The existing forest road was built in the 1970s as a road of strategic importance – it connects the area with the location of Kasarne (ski centre) and Velke Karlovice (Czech Republic). After 50 years of permanent use this infrastructure was in poor condition. The road surface had deteriorated and access to the surrounding forests was very limited.

The road also passed through ‘Matusov Grun’ which is used as a monitoring point by firefighters. At that spot, almost 70% of forest land managed by the forest community Stiavnik is visible. However, there was no forest fire lookout tower at that spot which made it difficult to get a clear line of sight.

Objectives

The objectives of the project were:

- to implement preventive measures against fire including improving access for fire-fighting vehicles and emergency cars to the forest and building a forest fire lookout tower.
- to protect forest vegetation and prevent the spreading of pests.
- to improve access to the forest for forest owners, residents from surrounding municipalities and tourists.
- to create better conditions for forestry by reducing fuel consumption and wearing out of forestry machinery.
- to prevent off-road driving in the forest and thus preserve the forest’s ecosystem.

Activities

The lateral and longitudinal drainage of the road had to be repaired first. Then, the road ditches and pipe culverts were cleaned. The existing road was extended to include turnouts and parking areas.

New drainage was built and the road was covered with

crushed stones. A safety fence was installed along the road, as were two ramps. In the final phase, the reconstructed road was paved with asphalt.

In Matusov Grun, an eight metre high forest fire wooden lookout tower was built. The tower stands at an altitude of 843m on a ridge connecting the ridge of the hill Hricovec (1059m) with the elevation of Kycera (775m). It is located only three km from the centre of Kasarne (ski resort) and two km from the crossroad Butorky (952m) on the southern, Slovak side of the Javorniky mountains. The tower was designed with a 4.4m square base. The lookout platform is also square with its sides five metres long. The staircase has 28 steps and handles and a full railing were fitted on the viewing platform.

The project was developed jointly with the employees from the Kysuce Protected Landscape Area and the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic. Seven people from the forest community Stiavnik worked together with the firm on the project.



Main Results

Reconstruction of the 3.7km long forest fire road and building of a new eight metre high forest fire wooden lookout tower. Both works contribute to the effective forest management and maintenance of an area of ca 1 500 ha of forest.

Improved access to the forest will increase the forest owners competitiveness. Thanks to this investment they expect to increase their revenue by 5% and create another job.

Protection against fire was improved significantly.

Even though it was not planned, the project contributed to the tourism development of the area. The reconstructed forest road and lookout tower very quickly became an attraction for tourists from both Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

Key lessons

It is important to plan projects very carefully with expert support. The forest is a dynamic living entity and any possible mistakes may have a major impact on the area.