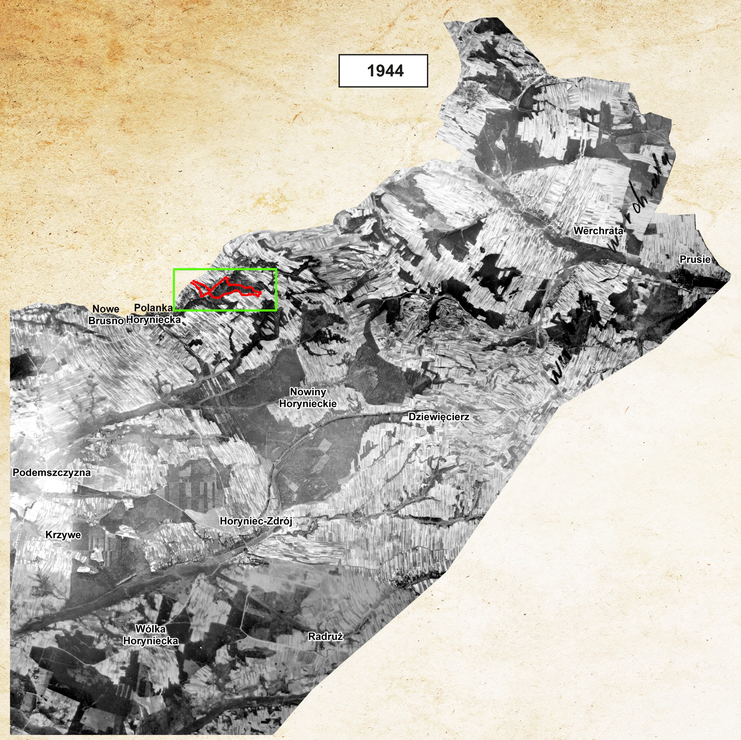
Nadleśnictwo Lubaczów

11. HISTORY OF THE FORESTS



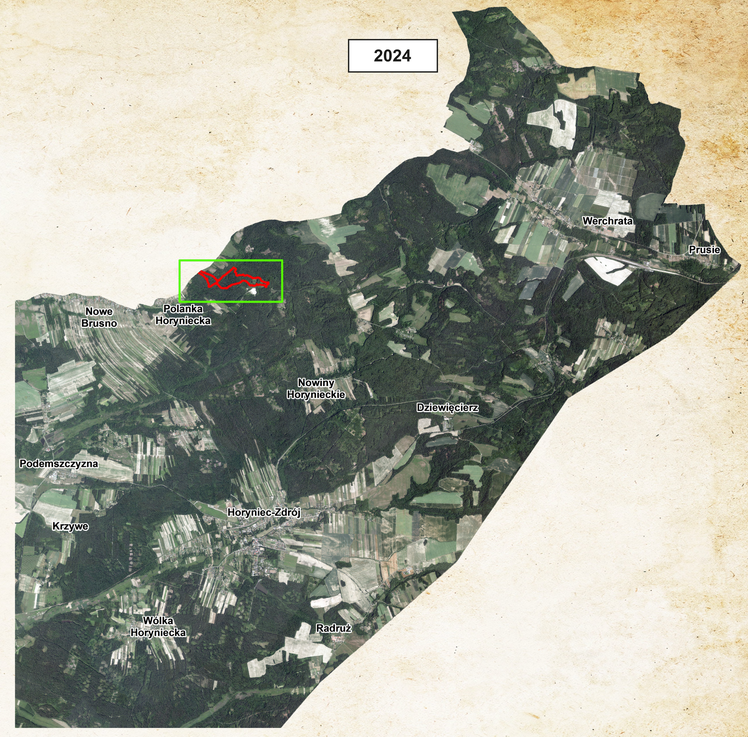
(compiled on the basis of: "Analiza stanu zagospodarowania podkarpackich lasów w latach 40. XX wieku oraz zmian ich zagospodarowania" ["Analysis of the State of Development of Podkarpackie Forests in the 1940s and Changes in Their Management"]. SmallGIS Sp. z o.o., 2024.)

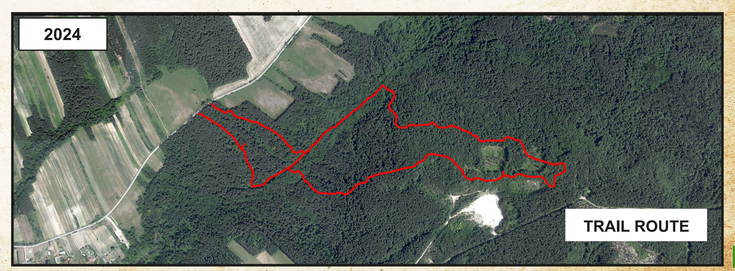
An analysis of changes in forest cover within the Lubaczów Forest District over the 80 years following World War II—based on a black-and-white aerial orthophotomap obtained by orthorectifying Luftwaffe photographs from the 1940s and the 2023 Digital Forest Map—has demonstrated a significant increase in forest area within the administrative boundaries of the Lubaczów Forest District.

Within the territory currently managed by the Lubaczów Forest District, forest coverage has increased by 44% over the last 80 years, from about 13,000 hectares to over 20,000 hectares. Some 6,845 hectares of new forests have been established on former agricultural lands, while around 600 hectares have been excluded from forest production, mostly for infrastructure such as road construction. On lands identified as forest areas in the 1940s, the average stand age has doubled, rising from 29 to 59 years. The species composition of the forests has also become richer. The share of Scots pine (Pinus sylvestris) has decreased by only 1%, from 63% to 62%. Beech (Fagus sylvatica) has appeared, now accounting for 10%, and oak (Quercus spp.) for 9%. Meanwhile, the share of birch (Betula spp.), which in the 1940s made up about 14% of the forest area, has dropped significantly.

The method of forest management has changed as well. During the pre-war period, forests were exploited using large-scale clearcutting (even over dozens of hectares). In today's landscape of the Lubaczów Forest District, such extensive clear-cuts no longer exist. Instead, generation replacement of the forest is done using more complex felling systems, in which the timber harvesting process lasts from 20 to 60 years.

The present-day Polanka forest range, which includes Mount Brusno, exemplifies the changes described above. On the provided orthophotomap, based on aerial photographs from the 1940s, it is clear that forests and stands grew only on steep slopes and gullies—land unsuitable for agricultural use. Owing to forest management practices conducted since the 1940s, forest cover in this area has increased to over 80%. Today, fir-beech-pine stands thrive there, providing habitat for wolves and lynx.





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