
“SHARE PUBLIC” INPUT/COMMENTS ON INDIANA FOREST ACTION PLAN DRAFT

Received during open comment period 1/27/20 - 3/27/20

Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2020 1:04 PM

name : Anthony Robertson

email : antlewisrob@yahoo.com

resident : Marion

comments : Indiana needs to recognize the value in the forest. Not the value within, counting trees for harvest, but the value that lies for each man and woman to reconnect with nature. The harvesting of our natural resource does not go unnoticed by those who wish to spend time in the woods. The state would benefit greatly from using the Knobstone Trail, the Techumsa Trail, and the Pioneer Trail to involve the community to trail run, bike, backpack, and hike. The small segments of state forests are great but having a 150 mile continuous trail would greatly improve the economy in the state.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2020 1:05 PM

name : Cody Roush

email : Whiteriveroutfitters2011@gmail.com

resident : Martin

comments : State needs to manage the timber like they do in Tennessee so we can ride atvs and utv on our tax payers property sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2020 2:45 PM

name : Jim McIntyre

email : cottonwoodgoldcamp@gmail.com

resident : Decatur

comments : Indiana needs to log old growth forest more aggressively to create better habit growth . Older growth and undisturbed forest areas create potential fire hazards and are suseptable to deseases and invasive plants .

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2020 7:59 PM

name : Gene Kroeschen

email : gkwizard444@gmail.com

resident : Tippecanoe

comments : I believe that urban forests are much more important than the stated Relative Importance Score. With the now known benefits of trees, urban areas need more trees for health (physical and mental), environmental, heat island, energy savings, and social (traffic, crime, etc.) benefits. With climate change, it is important to utilize available land for trees. Urban areas provide land that does not have to be taken from farming purposes.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2020 7:59 PM

name : Gene Kroeschen

email : gkwizard444@gmail.com

resident : Tippecanoe

comments : I believe that urban forests are much more important than the stated Relative Importance Score. With the now known benefits of trees, urban areas need more trees for health (physical and mental), environmental, heat island, energy savings, and social (traffic, crime, etc.) benefits. With climate change, it is important to utilize available land for trees. Urban areas provide land that does not have to be taken from farming purposes.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2020 11:36 PM

name : Todd Ontl

email : taontl@gmail.com

resident : Delaware

comments : The draft 2020 Action Plan discusses many of the threats to Indiana's forests, including changing climatic conditions. Information on impacts of climate change on forests and urban tree canopy are highlighted in the sections that reference the Indiana Assessment reports published by Purdue Universities Climate Change Research Center, however no mention of how the State plans to incorporate this information on current and future changes in climate is made in the 2020 Action Plan. Despite the recognized importance within this draft plan of the forest products industry to the State's economy, the importance of urban tree canopy for people's physical and mental health, among many other benefits forests and trees provide, this Action Plan fails to address how the State will not only maintain, but even enhance, these benefits in light of warming winters, changing precipitation patterns, extreme storm events and excessive rainfall, and more frequent summer droughts. The Plan fails to acknowledge the need for incorporating these changing conditions into strategic planning on state-owned lands and in programs that incentivize stewardship of forests on private lands. In omitting these considerations, this plan fails to recognize the importance of actions that can be taken to reduce risks to forest ecosystems and urban forests from climate change.

Similar to the acknowledgement of the risks of climate change without addressing how to incorporate this information into strategic planning, this draft Action Plan highlights the value of forests for carbon sequestration and storage, yet fails to address if or how the State will approach managing forests (on state lands as well as private landowners) for carbon. Together, these omissions amount to a recognition of a critical problem without making any attempts to provide a vision for providing solutions, resulting in a Forest Action Plan that falls well short of the needs and expectations of Hoosiers for 2020 and beyond.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 7:45 AM

name : Cody Sheets

email : csheets722@gmail.com

resident : Hendricks

comments : I would like to see continued conversation about habitat fragmentation including the loss of wildlife travel corridors. I am concerned by some of the woods clearing I see for additional agricultural ground and the removal of valuable fence rows. I know it is out of the DNR's purview but I believe if the DNR could stress the importance of compact high density housing as opposed to continued suburban sprawl it may provide the general

public with a better picture of why large lot houses are a net negative. I would also like to see the DNR provide additional education to private landowners on the importance of creating large forest systems as opposed to small woodlots. I would like to see programs where poor performing fields could be reclaimed instead of continuing to be farmed. I wish the state would provide more funding for the DNR so they can continue to employ district foresters as I believe they are a great repository of information for the general public.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 9:28 AM

name : Paul Arlinghaus

email : parlinghaus@msn.com

resident : Hamilton

comments : Indiana State Forest's Mission Statement is "The Indiana Department of Natural Resources' Division of Forestry promotes and practices good stewardship of natural, recreational and cultural resources on Indiana's public and private forest lands."

While recreation is in the Mission Statement, Recreation seems to be taking a back seat to Timber Management. Indiana needs more recreational opportunities and State Forest should be active in providing more recreation for Hoosiers.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 9:52 AM

name : Terry Mitchell

email : temitchell@pike.k12.in.us

resident : Marion

comments : I would like to see state forest land used for recreation more often. Much of the publicly owned forest land in Indiana is essentially off limits to its residents and I would like to see multi use trails developed into the forests so that more people can get outside and enjoy the beauties of the state of Indiana .

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 9:52 AM

name : Michael Wilson

email : wilsm71@gmail.com

resident : Vigo

comments : No more clear cutting switch to selective harvesting.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 9:54 AM

name : Brian Gessler

email : bgessler@gmail.com

resident : Owen County, IN

comments : While I realize managing a forest is more than solely allowing residents and visitors to the area a place for recreation, the goal of connecting people with our forests could be facilitated by additional trails.

Mountain bike trails in particular are an excellent addition to properties because they are built by volunteers to a sustainable standard, and can be used by hikers, joggers, runners. These trails can also help with access for hunters and possibly fishermen when a body of water is nearby.

There is stigma that DNR doesn't wish to deal with trails in areas that may be harvested for timber that I hope is not true. A trail, once established, will weather quite well over the years. In the event timber harvest must occur, so long as the trail isn't used as a skid trail, it can easily be touched up in short order after the loggers are gone to be useful once more to the recreating public. During the logging, trail closures are understandable as the area could be unsafe. I imagine the same holds true for hiking or horseback riding during these operations.

As a hiker and biker, I want more trails in State Forests in Indiana and I want to help build them.

Thank you for your consideration.
sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 10:02 AM

name : John D Stigall

email : johnstigall@gmail.com

resident : Monroe

comments : Trails are an important part of the mission of DNR and should be supported. User maintained bicycle trails provide mobility into the amazing forested areas that otherwise would not be accessible.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 10:10 AM

name : Ian yarbrough

email : Yarbian@gmail.com

resident : Monroe county

comments : We have the natural resources and landscapes to compete with the most popular mountain biking destinations in the country, but our trail development is being outpaced nationally. Hiking and biking tourism is a huge boon to local economies. There are many areas where timber management goes hand in hand with trail development. After a harvest, trails can be developed that help manage erosion and provide access for monitoring. There is no more enthusiastic user group when it comes to trail planning, development, and maintenance. Please take a wider view when considering the management of our state forests. They exist for all citizens, not just a few timber companies. Thank you sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 10:12 AM

name : Paul Sladinski

email : Psladinski@gmail.com

resident : Howard

comments : This state needs more outdoor recreation opportunities....I've lived here about 30yrs . I am a avid mountain biker and dirt bike rider (off road motorcycle). I have seen some great improvements for mtb trails in certain parts of the state....while other parts are still outdoor recreation deserts (Howard county). The closest natural surface multi use trail is at least 1-1 1/2hr drive one way . Even worse is the lack of public places to ride dirt bikes /atvs...the only 2 available are 3-4 hr drive one way and are sub par at best ...offering maybe 10mi of

singletrack (motorcycle only) trail and I'm being generous at that! So 99% of the time we make the 4hr drive to Michigan .. purchase a trail pass in their state where there is literally hundreds if not thousands of miles of quality singletrack to ride . I understand they have more public forest land available but there are still places in Indiana that could be utilized!! I'd be happy to discuss some options if anyone is interested? Thanks Paul Sladinski
sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 10:19 AM

name : Robert Cline

email : rm1cline@hotmail.com

resident : Marion

comments : Would like to see more trails built in the forest. Both for hikers and also mountain biking. Lets make Indiana a destination for many other states to come visit us and enjoy the outdoors
sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 10:38 AM

name : Tom Priddis

email : Tompriddis@gmail.com

resident : Hamilton

comments : Please, more mountain bike trails. Like the ones available at Brown Country and Fort Ben.

A DNR sponsored bike park, like Griffin Bike Park, in the Indianapolis area would be amazing.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 10:52 AM

name : Frank Merritt

email : fmerritt@sram.com

resident : Marion

comments : The mission to engage the public while keeping costs down should engage your volunteer users groups and friends of groups at a higher level. Confusion exists between properties with both state park and state forests. Communication is not good among separate departments. Master plans with info affecting all groups will help decision making for all departments moving forward. The state will see a large increase of children riding off road trails in 2020 with the addition of the NICA league (National Interscholastic Cycling Association) The Indiana Interscholastic Mountain Bike league (children of Jr high and High School age) will bring thousands of users to the outdoor recreation experience. I would also encourage specific forestry programs with FFA involvement when they come in every year. We appreciate the use of and take very seriously the care of our natural resources. Thanks for the opportunity to provide input and potentially increase the connectivity between people and our resources.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 11:11 AM

name : Zach rick

email : Misedyouth88@sbcglobal.net

resident : Madison

comments : Would love to see more biking and hiking trails and would love to help sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 11:33 AM

name : Derek Morgan

email : dereksmorgan@gmail.com

resident : Owen County

comments : I would like to take this opportunity to stress that there is a growing desire for increased recreation opportunities in Indiana's private and public forest lands. As the DNR's own Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan outlines the ways in which and the reasons Hoosiers are choosing to recreate outdoors has changed. The DNR needs to keep up with these changes by better managing the conflicts that arise between user groups and active forest management practices. In Owen County specifically we have (according the SCORP) only 69.9 acres of locally owned outdoor recreation space while at the same time we have 12,546.87 state/federally managed acres. So if current outdoor recreation trends hold, my fellow Owen County residents and I will continue to seek nearby outdoor recreation areas to hike, run, hunt, cycle, fish, and camp in. With the lack of available locally controlled outdoor recreation acreage we will turn to the rich resources that is our state/federally managed acreage that are available in our community. Remember that it is the public policy of Indiana to protect and conserve the timber, water resources, wildlife, and topsoil in the forests owned and operated by the division of forestry for the equal enjoyment and guaranteed use of future generations. In conclusion I would encourage the DNR to find a better balance between outdoor recreation, conservation, and forestry management by upholding the legislative intent behind the creation of the Division of Forestry so that we may all enjoy Indiana's forests equally.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 12:41 PM

name : Jordan Panich

email : Jordan.panich@gmail.com

resident : Hendricks

comments : Please provide more trails for recreational use, specifically for mountain biking and hiking.

Thank you!

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 2:03 PM

name : Michael Dylan Wickersham

email : dylan@wickspies.com

resident : Hamilton and Monroe

comments : I am resoundingly for additional recreation in our forests in the State of Indiana. Additional recreation and access will teach our children of the importance of our forests. Experiencing our forests first hand gives people a better understanding and appreciation for those forests. Hoosiers are good stewards of our state parks and public lands and will continue to be with more access.

Thank you,

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 3:23 PM

name : Jason Wise

email : Jaswise13@gmail.com

resident : Harrison

comments : Please work with the local mountain bike community to create a plan in 2020 for future mountain bike trail improvements and growth. This area is in dire need of ivory improved and additional trail. The mountain bike community does a lot of volunteer work and would like to see additional support by paid dnr staff to help make these improvements to the property.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 3:33 PM

name : Sherri Thompson

email : sherri.jane@gmail.com

resident : I love in Louisville Kentucky comments : OBannon Woods is 45 minutes from Louisville and is a beautiful park. I love to ride mountains there and visit regularly. I believe more biking trails would bring even more visitors and become a destination.

Also, it would be great to include mtb trails in the Harrison Crawford Forest that surrounds OBannon Woods

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 3:36 PM

name : Matthew Owen

email : chevy2man@twc.com

resident : Clark

comments : I would love to see more MTB trails at O'Bannon woods and some at CHARLESTOWN state park as well. I love the trails at Brown County, just wish we had more trails like that down here.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 3:45 PM

name : Eric Lewis

email : ericwlewis@comcast.net

resident : Marion

comments : Please continue to allow trail building in Yellowwood. It is OUR state forest to be used for recreation and wildlife habitat. Logging and so called "management" should be a low priority.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 4:30 PM

name : Christopher Crecelius

email : acrecelius85@gmail.com

resident : Harrison

comments : It would be great to get more mountain biking and hiking trails in O'Bannon woods.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 5:21 PM

name : Pete Kempainen

email : pete.kempainen@twc.com

resident : Floyd

comments : As a mountain biking advocate, as well as a long-time volunteer, working closely with the DNR, State Park and State Forest management teams I highly support the following parts of the Forest Action Plan.

Strategy 3: Connect people to forests, especially children and land-use decision makers, and coordinate education training and technical assistance

3.19 Increase tours of forest management areas, harvest sites, to promote recognition that forests do not disappear with management, land use does not change, they are not turned into parking lots

We've used the mountain bike trails within the Harrison-Crawford State Forest as an access trail, where an example of forest management practices can be learned about and witnessed first-hand. Brochures are available along the trail, and markers have been placed along the trail to identify different forest management practices.

3.22 Work with recreation groups to expand promotion of forest based recreational opportunities like mountain biking, photography, mushroom hunting, hiking and new or non-traditional uses like forest bathing and foraging

3.26 Provide opportunities to have positive forest experiences in communities where people live.

3.27 Promote the physical and mental health benefits of immersive forest activities

With regard to these three items, expanding the promotion of recreational opportunities would also involve expanding access to the forests. Improving access the forests via well-designed and well-maintained trail systems would enhance the experience.

In addition to having trails provide access to the "forest experience", where seeing trees and wildlife that thrives in larger forest tracts, trails that are designed to access and highlight unique geographic features would help to increase the entire "forest experience."

Again, using Harrison-Crawford State Forest as an example, horseback riders currently have access to a number of trails where they can get the "forest experience", but poorly designed horse trails are not always conducive for the enjoyment of other user groups. In many cases, shorter looping trails, interconnected would allow hikers and mountain bikers to select the level of "experience" they desire in their visit,

Forest visitors in turn may also provide a side benefit from an economic standpoint to the local community, as they spend time within an area, perhaps by camping, shopping, dining, etc.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 5:38 PM

name : Christopher Chism

email : christophertchism@gmail.com

resident : non-resident

comments : Although I'm a resident of Lagrange KY, I travel to O'Bannon Woods State Park nearly every weekend when weather allows me to get on the trails with my mountain bike. I'm a non resident season pass holder, I've donated more than 20 hours of my time doing trail work in 2019 and donated more than \$400 to the trail building efforts over the past two seasons.

I invest my time, money and efforts into the park and surrounding forests because I truly believe that we can transform this area into a destination similar to Brown County State Park or a Dupont State Forest (North Carolina).

I'm asking that you continue to move mtb trail projects forward and work with the trail team to secure the property and funding that will elevate the park and surrounding areas.

IF YOU BUILD IT THEY WILL COME!

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 6:01 PM

name : Brad Hall

email : Bradh9573@gmail.com

resident : Johnson county

comments : I would like to see more mountain bike trails and improved trails at Harrison/Crawford state forest and threw out Indiana in general. Mountain biking is a great sport for all ages.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 6:09 PM

name : Jim Wells

email : Jim@jimlwells.com

resident : No

comments : I visit O'Bannon Woods and Brown County many times a year from Louisville, KY for mountain biking and camping. I also volunteer my time to help with the trail system at O'Bannon Woods several times though out the year. I feel the Hoosier mountain bike association (HMBA) does a fantastic job of maintaining and improving the trail systems in these two parks. Please support this organization's efforts in help maintain Indiana's trail systems.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 6:54 PM

name : Laura Chism

email : laurachismphoto@gmail.com

resident : Kentucky resident

comments : Hello,

Although I am a Kentucky resident, I travel to various mountain trails in Indiana, specifically O'Bannon Woods, weekly when the weather permits. I, along with many others, are suggesting more recreational trails for

mountain biking at Harrison/Crawford State Forest. It truly is a wonderful place with plenty of room for everyone. My husband and I are volunteers and have grown to love the trail days. It's a great way to give back to the land that gives us so much.

The economic impact of mountain bike trails is hard to deny. Look at other booming areas around the country and you will see the positive energy it can bring to small towns. You will be hard pressed to find a rider who is not extremely passionate about the sport and who is willing to spread the joy it brings. There can never be too many trails that allow access to getting away from it all and experiencing the brilliance of mother nature.

Thank you for your time and consideration and for the work you do.

Regards,
Laura
sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 7:29 PM
name : Betty Gregory
email : bgregory2400@yahoo.com
resident : Harrison
comments : Would like to see horse trails better maintained and covered stalls in horse campground sharepublic :
Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 7:50 PM
name : Chuck Perkins
email : chuck50124@yahoo.com
resident : Hendricks County
comments : For close to 20 years, I've been traveling to and from Harrison / Crawford counties enjoying the forestry. Harrison-Crawford State Forest is like a second home for me.

In the past decade, I've picked up the hobby of mountain biking and once again fell in love with the area. I don't only use it, I also help upkeep it (as a volunteer).

Though the Obannon Woods / HCSF MTB group is smaller than say, Brown County, we have a great group of volunteers and an amazing liaison. We would love to see the trail system grow / improve to help attract even more riders. This is win / win for everyone involved, including the surrounding towns.

As a long-time caver, hiker, volunteer, and mountain biker, I thank you for offering the survey and for the amazing amount of support from our local DNR officials. Thank-you and I hope that the forestry officials deem the OBW / HSCF trail improvements important!

Cheers,

Chuck Perkins
sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 7:55 PM
name : Robin L Canfield
email : canfield@bluemarble.net
resident : Indiana
comments : Hello,

Windfree Estate residents have pointed out illegal hunter activities such as hunters “Discharging a firearm (including a bow and arrow) is prohibited in or within 150 yards of a developed recreation site, a residence, or any place where people are likely to be” as stated on the USDA website to Mr. Zimmer, Forest Ranger and Mr. Kidd, Law Enforcement Officer. We have yet to have any enforcement of this illegal activity which could prove to be fatal. We realize the Windfree Estates trail is not a Hoosier National Forest recognized trail but our residential subdivision trail is being used that way none the less by both hunters, open to the general public (Paynetown SRA is less than a quarter mile away) and the residence of Windfree Estates. This is creating a number of safety issues on our streets, trail and as well as in the Hoosier National Forest.

The USDA, DNR, Monroe County Government, and Indiana Government (Governor Holcomb) are aware of a un-safe access trail into the Hoosier National Forest by means of an un-sanctioned trailhead within the Windfree Estates Residential Subdivision.

Please provide any additional possible avenues of assistance in our safety concerns.

Respectfully,
Robin Canfield

Ms. Canfield,

I am contacting in response to your email to the Governor’s office regarding public safety at Windfree Estates due to a trailhead connecting to Hoosier National Forest. Since the trail is part of the Hoosier National Forest, it is a federal issue that would addressed through contacting USDA-Forest Service, which is the agency that manages this property.

DNR does not have jurisdiction regarding the signage or management of this property, and therefore, the trail guidelines of IC 14-19-1-1.5 would not apply since it is not a DNR managed property. In addition to contacting USDA-Forest Service, you could consult your homeowner’s association, if applicable, and local law enforcement for possible assistance from those organizations as well.

I hope this information provides possible avenues of assistance for addressing your concerns. Please don’t hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions or need additional information.

Thanks,

David C. Bausman
Legislative & Public Policy Director
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
402 W. Washington Street, Room W256
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
(317) 552-9087

Mr. & Mrs. Canfield: I need to reiterate that the Hoosier National Forest does not provide a sanctioned trail within the general forest area near Windfree Estates. In fact, you likely recall that when we met with you on site last time, I mentioned that the illegal foot path, where unknown people had been doing intermittent clearing of windfall trees, was not condoned by the Forest Service; also, I asked that should you see anyone or know of people doing maintenance of the path, that as a good neighbor please contact my office so we can get in touch with them to put a stop to it. I also shared that the Hoosier National Forest has no plans to develop a trail within the general forest area there.

You may also recall that during my visit with our law enforcement officer, Donald Kidd, he also mentioned you should contact your local sheriff's office when parking along the roads there by the public cause concerns for Windfree Estate residents. Although the public is allowed to make use of their public land adjacent to Windfree Estates, including for hunting during state authorized seasons, the use or restrictions on use of the roads within Windfree Estates are not within Forest Service jurisdiction. The roads there are under the jurisdiction of Monroe County.

If someone using the federal lands are violating a Forest Order or a state law while on public land and are actively threatening public safety, they should call 911.

Finally, in regard to your desire to file a complaint, we do not have a formal complaint form. If you still have concerns, simply send me a letter to: District Ranger, 248 15th Street, Tell City, IN. 47586 that clearly expresses your concerns, along with a proposed remedy if you have one.

If you prefer to write to my supervisor, you can address it to the Hoosier National Forest Supervisor at: Michael Chaveas, Forest Supervisor, 811 Constitution Avenue, Bedford, Indiana 47421-9599.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Canfield:

Under the doctrine of Federal Preemption, it is unlikely the provisions of the Monroe County Zoning Ordinance could be applied against Forest Service activities on Federal property. East Salt Creek Drive (including the unimproved segment) is a public right-of-way which may be utilized by the public to access all abutting property--including the Forest Service tract.

That being said, I have attempted to answer your questions below.

Larry

Larry J. Wilson, AICP,
Director, Monroe County Planning Department Monroe County Government Center
501 N. Morton St., Suite 224
Bloomington, IN 47404
(812) 349-2561
lwilson@co.monroe.in.us

Item #1 Monroe County zoning ordinance Chapter 802, ZONES AND PERMITTED USES table 2-1. According to Chapter 802 an open to the general public forestry recreational trail head (such as Payntown's) is not listed in the

allowable uses table for a SR zoned subdivision. See URL

<http://www.co.monroe.in.us/tsd/Government/Infrastructure/PlanningDepartment/DocumentManagerPlanning.aspx?EntryId=24704>

East Salt Creek Drive (including the unimproved segment) is a public right-of-way which may be utilized by the public to access all abutting property-- including the Forest Service tract.

The Forest Service property is zoned Forest Reserve (FR)-- not Suburban Residential (SR). We would consider the trail and trail head to be a "Governmental Facility" which is defined under the Monroe County Zoning Ordinance as follows:

Governmental Facility. A government owned or operated building, structure, or land used for public purpose.

A "Governmental Facility" is a permitted use in the "Forest Reserve" zone.

Item #2 Monroe County zoning ordinance CHAPTER 825-2, item B ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS OVERLAY ZONE Development Standards and Administration of the ECO Zone Forestry Activities: forestry activities will be encouraged to employ Best Management Practices described in written form by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. See URL

<http://www.co.monroe.in.us/tsd/Government/Infrastructure/PlanningDepartment/DocumentManagerPlanning.aspx?EntryId=24704>

Under the doctrine of Federal Preemption, it is unlikely the provisions of the Monroe County Zoning Ordinance could be applied against Forest Service activities you reference. Federal Preemption could also apply as to State regulations. The DNR Best Management Practices are recommended guidelines for logging activities (not regulations) and refer to logging roads and skid trails-- not recreational trails. The Zoning Ordinance "encourages" DNR logging Best Management Practices because under Indiana Code 36-7-4-1103 we are prohibited from regulating timber removal.

Item #3 According to the Forestry Best Management Practices, 2005 BMP Field Guide, under RECREATION TRAILS Designated trail systems may be necessary where recreation pressures are high. Forest access roads can serve as recreation trails. Trails should be well planned; constructed to protect user safety and minimize soil erosion; and maintained to ensure erosion control measures are functioning and safety hazards are minimized. Windfree Estates is not a forest access road this is a zoned residential subdivision. See URL
<https://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/2871.htm>

East Salt Creek Drive (including the unimproved segment) is a public right-of-way which may be utilized by the public to access all abutting property-- including the Forest Service tract.

Item #4 Indiana Trail Guidelines 2016 Public Law 67, IC 14-19-1-1.5 follow guidelines concerning recreational trails etc. Under these guidelines the first issues is: (1) Clear statement of ownership and management of each trail. Therefore in accordance with IC 14-19-1-1.5 as a resident of Windfree Estates I clearly state that Windfree Estates claims ownership and management of the trail at the end of salt creek drive for at least the last 40 years. See URL
<https://www.in.gov/dnr/outdoor/files/or-2016trailguidelines.pdf>

These are guidelines for trail signage for trail systems in Indiana They are not regulations.

If you feel you have some claim of ownership of the unimproved segment of E Salt Creek Drive or the U.S. Forest Service trail property, you should contact a private attorney.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 8:24 PM

name : James Conrad

email : Jaconrad33@gmail.com

resident : Harrison

comments : I spend a lot of time in the Obannon woods state park. I camp/hike and ride bikes there often. The more recreational trails would be much appreciated and used.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 8:50 PM

name : Zane

email : Wischmeierzane@gmail.com

resident : Bartholomew

comments : Recreation in public forests is important. More trails for the various activities such as mountain biking and providing additional, separate trails for hiking and horseback riding. Most importantly mountain biking trails and recreation areas. I use brown county state park, and surrounding yellowwood, hoosier national etc Connected trails that allow for long mountain bike rides and long hikes.

More primitive camping areas along long trails routes for backpacking would be great as well. Less logging that disrupts other sources of income sharepublic : No

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 9:03 PM

name : Ron McKim

email : thekimers@twc.com

resident : Floyd County

comments : Love to MTB and camp at O'Bannon Woods. Love the way the volunteers have built and maintained the MTB trails. O'Bannon Woods is a regional jewel. MTB folks travel from many destinations to ride the trails; some camp, but some stay in Corydon and enjoy the restaurants.

I'm retired and enjoy the Golden Pass into the State Parks, the MTB passes are very reasonable.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 10:00 PM

name : Stephen King

email : skcfi@comcast.net

resident : Hamilton

comments : Hi,

I'm a 67 year old mountain biker. I would like to see more mountain bike trails in forest property. Of course partnering with Hoosier Mountain Bike Association to build the trails.

Thanks,

Steve King
sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 11:42 PM

name : Nathan Wayman

email : nathanwayman1996@gmail.com

resident : Harrison

comments : I was introduced to mountain biking roughly 3 years ago. I have enjoyed every second I have been on a bike since. As an active volunteer at O'Bannon, I see plenty of opportunity to grow and develop recreationally as well as financially from mountain biking. O'Bannon is home to some great trails, but we need to add more to compete with Brown County. Thanks for your consideration.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2020 7:29 AM

name : Jamie Owens

email : owens2984@comcast.net

resident : Porter

comments : Please allow more biking in the Preserves . Brown county has Miles of trail . making it a destination spot .

more trail bring more people in the community and speed money locally.

thank you

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2020 8:11 AM

name : Abraham Bear

email : abraham.bear06@gmail.com

resident : Jefferson

comments : I feel the emphasis of the Forest Management plan should focus on the following topics:

Creating more young forest habitat- Either through patch clearcutting or planting, we need more young forest in the state. As the forests age, the habitat value and diversity decreases. Private landowners lack the acreage and long term management ability to create large patches of young forest.

Invasive Species control- Invasive species are becoming a larger threat to our forests each day. The Division of Forestry seems to make moderate efforts to control them, but State Parks and State Wildlife Areas do almost nothing. The plan to control invasives needs to be DNR wide to set an example for the public.

Promote Private Industry and uses of native lumber- We produce the finest hardwood in the world, but almost none of the general public realizes that or sees the value in using native lumber. From fine furniture to outdoor decks and framing, we need to be utilizing the wood we produce locally. Promote small businesses and educate the public of the values of the woods we produce.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2020 8:11 AM

name : thomas r. hodnett

email : tom.hodnett225@gmail.com

resident : bartholomew

comments : we need to harvest more trees on state and federal land to create more habitat for wildlife

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2020 9:23 AM

name : Ron Snyder

email : rsnyder@nhcs.k12.in.us

resident : Floyd

comments : I hunt in the Hoosier National Forest quite often. I have noticed that Beech trees are starting to overtake large tracts of the forest. Is there anything that can be done to reduce this phenomenon. I realize that Beech Trees are an important food source for some organisms, but it seems that it is reducing the number of small Oak trees that normally would be found growing in the forest. Any Thoughts? Thanks

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2020 10:16 AM

name : Tom Mueller

email : dtmueller1@gmail.com

resident : Vanderburgh

comments : I am interested in seeing more Recreational Trails for Mountain Biking at Harrison/Crawford State Forest. I live near there and would go there even more with additional trails.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2020 12:53 PM

name : Josh Tennen

email : joshuatennen@gmail.com

resident : KY

comments : It has been such a pleasure traveling around Indiana parks to mountain bike. Our family and extended family rents cabins, camps, shops and vacations around the mountain biking found in Indiana. We travel from Louisville. I especially love Brown Co., O'bannon, and Versailles. Keep up the good work!! We look forward to more trails in the future!

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2020 7:01 PM

name : Donald gray

email : Drgrayiii@gmail.com

resident : None

comments : I drive and pass 2 parks in Louisville KY to ride my bike at Obannon woods. OBW is the best riding with in 200 miles of Louisville KY, I would rather drive 45 minutes and camp at OBW than drive 5-10 hours for solid mountain biking. During the spring and fall I drive almost every Sunday to OBW to work on the trails. I enjoy

my time at OBW, during which I have interacted with the DNR officers and we have shared many good conversations. Hopefully the powers that be will see the opportunity to grow Corydon IN into a tourist destination.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 7:52 AM

name: Richard Solano

email : rsolano@pikelumber.com

resident : Fulton and Kosciusko

comments : I am grateful that we have professional foresters who are managing our state forest, not just for recreation, but for multiple uses. Our forest landscape is under threat, mainly from urban sprawl. Invasive species control and the public's general lack of knowledge of the benefits of forest management, including timber harvesting.

I appreciate the efforts our state forester in making efforts to harvest timber so that new younger trees can thrive. And I am hopeful our elected officials at the statehouse will allow the Department of Forestry professionals to do their job.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 3:48 PM

name :

email : Reid.haas00@gmail.com

resident : Dubois

comments : I would like to see the DNR and Harrison Crawford state forest work together with the local mountain biking group to improve the trails for hiking and biking. We visit frequently for hikes and biking trips, and have seen very little support to the local groups. Your support would be very appreciated!

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Friday, January 31, 2020 3:52 PM

name : Mark Crawford

email : Markymac20@gmail.com

resident : Harrison

comments : Please work with the local mountain biking groups to develop safer and cleaner hiking trails for everyone to enjoy.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Saturday, February 01, 2020 7:34 AM

name :

email : Jsteen873@icloud.com

resident : Vigo, Parke @ Fulton

comments : I believe the plan is well thought out. However, I fear any private land converted to state or federal control will be subject to mismanagement by bad legislation which inhibits forest management. Today there is a bill in front of the state senate environmental committee, SB 368,

“Whereas, Carbon capture is relevant to forest preservation because plants and trees absorb carbon dioxide by the process of photosynthesis, therefore capturing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. When trees are removed from a forest, the forest's capacity to capture and store carbon dioxide diminishes as a consequence”

This a false and misleading statement, perpetrated by a group that will lie and twist fact to sway public opinion to pressure legislators to make bad policy.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Saturday, February 01, 2020 12:16 PM

name : Matt Misch

email :

resident : Jasper

comments : Dear DNR,

Although I have not taken the time to read the full 50 page draft of the plan, I want to offer a comment/suggestion. I am from a farm family. As a farmer, it is beneficial to yields and to soil health to remove trees and other undesirable plants from the perimeters of fields so that they do not compete with crops. While it is challenging enough to do this with native species that are general to the area, there have been other species appearing in recent decades that makes this harder. One of these is autumn olive, which I believe you mention in your plan. Another is the mulberry tree, also known as Russian mulberry. These tree seeds are easily spread by the manure of the birds that eat the berries. Anywhere that these birds go and defecate commonly produces mulberry trees. Farmers have a hard enough time stopping these trees. A very large source of the problem is that non-farming landowners very commonly do not maintain their vegetation and let these trees grow uncontrollably. This simply allows for more spreading of seeds and leads to a never ending struggle for farmers and other landowners who do maintain their land. As such, the mulberry tree should be listed as an invasive species with the nationwide goal of eradication. I know you don't have authority in other states but you could set a fine precedent for other states to follow. This should have been done decades ago. The trees have no value and are very prolific. In summary, please take any and all actions you can to eradicate autumn olive and mulberry species from our state. Thank you and God bless.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Saturday, February 01, 2020 1:56 PM

name : Max Sibner

email : Mnscoobra@bellsouth.net

resident : Louisville KY

comments : We frequently mountain bike, especially at Obannon Park. We also camp there quite often. More mountain bike trails!!!

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Saturday, February 01, 2020 7:08 PM

name : Lucas Brown

email : lucas@brownsmithstudios.com

resident : Brown and Monroe

comments : I am a local resident, small business owner, and an avid mountain biker. I ride trails in Yellowwood State Forest, Hoosier National, and Brown County State Park on a regular basis. I am in favor of expanding the mountain biking trail network in Southern Indiana for a few reasons. First, riding the trails is a big quality of life factor for me and the people I ride with. It makes the region a much more desirable place to live, work, and recreate. Additionally, people travel long distances to ride the trails in our area. Further expansion will continue to draw people to the area where they will spend money on lodging, food, and other services. Please continue to expand the Southern Indiana trail network for biking and hiking as part of your Indiana Forest Action Plan. Thank you. Lucas Brown sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Saturday, February 01, 2020 11:38 PM

name : Tim Fuesting

email : fuesting@att.net

resident : warren and Boone

comments : The plan covers many items that need addressed in Indiana such as exchange for development areas to aid in minimizing loss and adding forest in key spots; and linking key large patches of forest. I particularly like the action stated for establishing more forest cover in riparian areas. While it think this is a very good overall strategy there are two areas that I think need much more focus:

1. Invasive species control, in particular develop biologic controls on a national level
2. harvest of Indiana state owned forest, we need to set a plan to harvest in a checkerboard pattern more acreage via clear cutting. This is vital for two reasons: a. regeneration of oak requires clear cutting, with selective cutting oak has a hard time regenerating. b. Diverse Wildlife populations have plummeted, in order to optimize wildlife diversity and achieve maximum populations we need a variety of areas that are in different stages of maturity or succession. large expanses of older growth do not support healthy populations of diverse wildlife. Song Birds, Game Birds, and Bats would stand to benefit greatly from increased clear cut on a checker board fashion. Many other species would benefit as well. Again this should be done in a checkerboard fashion to provide significant sized interspersed tracts at different stages of successional growth. The increased sales of hardwoods from state lands could be used to fund research; public education (forests and environment); and possibly hire several additional foresters as it seems the dept is understaffed. The most important items to fund with this are public environmental education and research.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2020 9:20 AM

name : Andrew Glucklich

email : Andrew.glucklich@gmail.com

resident : Hendricks

comments : I am in favor of expanding recreational opportunities within Indiana's forest lands. Building trails for mountain bike and hiking in areas that have recently been harvested would minimize impact of future timber management. Recreational use of forest lands would provide economic opportunity that Indiana currently lags behind other states. Kickapoo state lands in Illinois is an example of trails and hunting and land reclamation that work in harmony.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Sunday, February 02, 2020 6:02 PM

name : Christopher Renfro

email : scottrenfro11@hotmail.com

resident :

comments : I drove to Indiana to mountain bike 1-3 times a week practically every week in 2019. I would rather drive the hour to Obannon Woods or the hour and a half to Brown County than ride anything in the state of Kentucky. I'd love to see the money and effort put into making Obannon Woods a mtb destination spot. Corydon would benefit greatly. I could see myself retiring to the Corydon area to get closer to Obannon if got as big as Brown County.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Monday, February 03, 2020 9:45 PM

name : Dawn Sladinski

email : Drsladinski@gmail.com

resident : Howard

comments : Please more mnt bike trails, dirt bike or hiking trails!!!

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2020 8:23 AM

name : Andrew Henckel

email : henckel9@hotmail.com

resident : No, Louisville KY

comments : I live in KY but frequent the Harrison/Crawford State Forest. Love the area as a hiker backpacker, and mountain biker.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2020 3:25 PM

name : Neil Miller

email : neil@madrasmediamarketing.com

resident : Owen and Hamilton

comments : I appreciate making this plan public. My primary concern as a land owner of forest land is conservation and protection of lands and the biodiversity. I look forward to being more active as the plan unveils more.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Friday, February 14, 2020 2:22 PM

name : Mike Pittman - Plum Creek Farm LLC email : mv.pitt@hotmail.com resident : Jefferson & Switzerland

comments : The report captures and prioritizes many of the key threats to Indiana's forests. Cost of ownership is increasing rapidly as counties attempt to increase revenues through increase property taxes and the high cost fighting the invasive plants and insects attacking our forests. One area we face in southeast Indiana is the tremendous erosion of our farmland due to rain events and lack of maintenance on the banks of our creeks and streams. Small creeks and streams become significant waterways after rain events, taking valuable soil, trees, and other native plants. It would be informative to look at the increase in the size of the streams and creeks versus the decline in land acreage in areas in southeast Indiana. I've done plantings along creeks only to see them be

taken by expanding streams and creeks. Indiana County highway crews are also fighting a losing battle to maintain rural roads and bridges. Please feel free to contact me if you would like further information.
sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Monday, February 17, 2020 11:23 AM

name : Randy Hunt

email : rhunt01@ius.edu

resident : Indiana

comments : I hope that connecting people to the forest continues to include hobby gold prospecting. Current levels of this activity are sustainable and have virtually no impact relative to normal erosion processes and other human activities including logging.

Randy Hunt

Coordinator for Sustainability and Regeneration Academic Program Department of Biology Indiana University Southeast New Albany, IN 47150
sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Monday, February 24, 2020 12:40 PM

name : Daniel Lynch

email : Dlynch4@comcast.net

resident : Owen and Marion

comments : The most critical State support for my private forestland are as follows:

- 1) Classified forest property tax deferral.
- 2) Support for Federal Farm Bill Conservation programs, invasives, TSI, riparian protection.
- 3) Full funding and support of subsidized State tree nursery program.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Monday, March 23, 2020 6:58 PM

name : Gerald Long

email : longgg@sbcglobal.net

resident : Brown

comments : Overall, the forest action plan is well thought out, identifies the issues, and presents actions. However, there is a significant problem, in that the action plan is not prioritized. The action plan appears to be a laundry list, including repetitions.

Given current funding, there is no possible way that even part of the action plan can be implemented in any meaningful fashion.

Shortcomings:

- lack of prioritization in action plan.
- lack of financial background to many of the points.

Actions should be prioritized toward the biggest threats. Also, the actions focused on need more specific direction. What specifically is being suggested as an action?

Trying to 'conserve' working forest tracts (larger managed tracts), needs more financial aspects. As an example of the financial issues: I always think in terms of economic development in Brown County. I am a taxpayer here, and the tax base is relatively weak. Much of the property in Brown County is effectively off of the tax roles (public ownership or Classified Forest). Much of the forest land that is not in Classified Forest is at threat of development (since stripping the forest cover and subdividing is the highest current financial return). The county also stands to gain the most income from this activity. These financial concerns are mentioned in the plan, but nothing substantive is provided to address them.

The lack of adequate oak regeneration is outlined in the plan. However, at least some predictions should be included. For example, at current rate of harvest, without any significant actions, when will Indiana run out of marketable oak sufficient to meet demand? This should be easy to develop. Secondly, what specifically should be done? Should state more 'action' than we are going to work on it.

The plan also does not specifically address the funding of DoF and what this does to the economic issues. At least mention what can't be done given current funding. Some environmental or economic 'crisis' is needed to get more funding.

I'm assuming that all of the overall plan is needed to be able to apply for Federal funds and/or grants, and that may be a reason for including all of the possible 'actions'. However, actions should be prioritized to what is the most important, so these can be accomplished.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 2:05 PM

name : Liz Jackson

email : ifwoa1@gmail.com

resident : Tippecanoe and Greene

comments : Indiana Forestry & Woodland Owners Association (IFWOA) board of directors applaud the 2020 Indiana Statewide Forest Action Plan and agree with the identified threats to the forests of Indiana. We fully support the five strategies to address our forest threats. A few items to note that could improve the plan:

We recommend a reduction to 5-8 top action items per strategy and suggest the IN Forest Advisory Committee, who already prioritized them, work with the Division to revise and reduce the actions to ensure success. The large number of action items under each strategy is not practical, creating a plan that would be difficult to ensure success. For example, strategy #3 had 28 action items, ranging from very broad to very specific.

We recommend more emphasis in the plan to explicitly address the importance and needs of private forests and private landowners, specifically:

- Strengthen the Classified Forest & Wildlands (CFW) program and encourage active participation, including increasing staffing, funding, enrollment, and ensuring management plan goals are met
- Emphasize financial incentives to plant trees and to actively manage private woodlands
- Strategy 3 (education) should have a greater emphasis on woodland owner education, identified by the ISDA hardwood strategy as a critical factor to encourage more management

We recommend additional action and attention for invasive species, including the need for funding. Invasive species (IS) were listed as the #3 forest issue in relative importance, yet the action steps did not carry that same

level of importance. We suggest that the Invasive Species Council be consulted for guidance in improving the Invasive Species section of the document. Some ideas:

- Step 2.2 suggests the promotion of IS BMP's for timber harvest. BMP's should be advised for all activities, not just harvest.
- IS BMP pilot project from the 2010 plan should be expanded and implemented throughout the state
- Add "Secure funding for IS control on public lands and for incentive programs to assist landowners on private lands"
- Consider rapid response recovery teams
- Add education and training on IS issues. Timber harvest BMP training is important and should be required, but also education and training for landscapers and private landowners and homeowners.

We recommend the plan address the shortage of resources that may reduce success. Limited resources include:

- agency and private foresters to manage lands and assist landowners
- contractors to control invasive species and manage prescribed burns
- loggers to purchase and remove timber and deliver it to the mills
- reduction in state agency budgets
- lack of funding for invasive species
- reduction in funds from USFS State & Private Forestry

We recommend that the current economic and environmental benefits to society be explicitly stated, including the costs of not addressing threats. There was little reference to the environmental or economic justifications for addressing these threats or the impacts of no action. Creating stronger justification can encourage broader statewide support for Indiana forests and this plan. While the IN Hardwood Strategy has economic data on the current value of the industry, information on forecasted conditions would lend credence to the needs identified in the plan. For example, what is the lost value of changes in forest conditions from oak to maple/beech? Similarly, we have no current environmental values included – and should- but should also identify the environmental costs of these threats.

We recommend increased action and attention on deer herbivory. The threat of deer herbivory is leading to increasing problems with regeneration, especially oak regeneration. Consider adding two action items:

- Develop and support programs to reduce deer herbivory on forest regeneration in critical forest areas.
- Partner with the IN Division of Fish and Wildlife to determine ways to minimize the impacts of deer herbivory on forest regeneration.

We recommend adding direct references to wildlife. There are several mentions of wildlife early in the plan, but the action steps don't mention wildlife. Addressing many of the forest threats (e.g. young forest, lack of oak) would improve wildlife habitat and wildlife populations, but we recommend giving attention to neo-tropical migratory songbirds and other threatened species within the strategies and action steps.

In summary, we feel this plan does a good job of outlining the critical threats to Indiana forests, but feel there are some threats where a higher emphasis and additional action steps should be taken. Further, we recommend reducing the number of total action items to ensure a plan that may be more attainable.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment. We look forward to working with the Division of Forestry to implement the plan and improve the forests of Indiana.

Regards,
Liz Jackson

Executive Director, IFWOA
Ifwoa1@gmail.com
765-409-3272
March 2020
sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2020 1:36 PM

name : Pence Revington

email : p.revington@charter.net

resident : US White County

comments : Take or leave these comments - thanks for all the work you do!!

Regarding revenue: are there plans to increase revenue by capturing timber waste/bio mass from new construction site clearing, county road construction clearing and/or clean up along roadsides?

Consider the audience: define terms such as "Property Section", be sure that the full title of things comes before acronyms,

Consistent use of terms throughout the doc: Example: page 4 of 5, second to the last bullet (sometimes it's the word "million" and sometimes it the actual number (24,800,000)

Clarification of objective: Example: page 5 of 24, first sentence "Implement and Invasive Species BMP pilot..." is "pilot" really the intention since you already have BMP in place for invasive removal? Or is it "targeted research project to test...? (could be I'm not fully aware....)

Include data percentage: page 5, "Assist Indiana Tree Project".... What % increase in #of trees or projected increase in board feet in X years would that be?

Clarification of term: last bullet of Goal I, "possible participation in the CHCC Partnership" possible seems weak. Maybe use "potential"

Tighten up goal to be more achievable: Goal 2, page 10, last bullet. 6-15 camping cabins. That number is oddly squishy (maybe for a reason?) but if the number were tightened or the parameters explained, it would make that goal more achievable. Same section, is this whole section with Department of Corrections or not? its unclear.

Throughout: the use of "coordinate" vs "collaborate" has important economic and political impact. Check throughout to be sure these terms say what you mean in each instance.

Structure Goal #3: in the intro you put security first, and fiscal second. check to see that you use the same ordering throughout this section. Example: last bullet has it in the opposite order.

Communication and Administration: Goal 1: fourth bullet refers to a "survey through 2018". Should this be a date at least 2020?

Clarity: Page 13 Goal #1 define "working forests", define "current level"

Goal #3 Protecting....Forest Resource Awareness: Suggestion: training for tax preparers (like HR Block, private accountants, etc)

Suggestion re forestry assistance: expand "boots on the ground" - awareness of landscapers, construction people who can provide unskilled help with guidance.

Neighbors informing neighbors tools?

Crazy thoughts: patent development of a tool that would Vacuum invasive lespedeza seeds right when they're ready to drop?

Take or leave these comments. Thanks for all the work you do.
sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2020 9:57 PM

name : Jerome Delbridge

email : jerome@tree-centric.com

resident : Marion

comments : Note: A formatted version of these comments can be found at:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1D_cfaB-EHmIB7IPz7F4NWtTIZ2BiSaRO/view?usp=sharing

A group of Indiana urban forestry professionals worked together to develop unified comments and recommendations to be integrated in the final Indiana Forest Action Plan (IFAP) 2020. These comments and recommendations illustrate a commitment from the urban forest community to support an ambitious and attainable forest action plan. We hope the IFAP will reflect our urban forest community's ability to support the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Division of Forestry objectives, our ability to contribute leadership and expertise to benefit Indiana cities and towns, and a commitment by the IDNR to urban forests across the state.

It is the desire of this Indiana urban forestry working group to support and advise the IDNR Division of Forestry. We can best fulfill this by having more urban forestry representatives on the Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee. We recommend committee members include urban forestry representatives from the following sectors: Indiana Arborist Association, municipal foresters, non-profit tree organizations, universities, and private tree service corporations. We also recommend that an urban forestry subcommittee of the Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee be created to address specific urban forestry IFAP action items and issues relating to urban forestry in more depth.

An urban forestry subcommittee, with working groups of urban forestry professionals and tree stewards, could help identify effective strategies to better manage and increase urban tree canopy and work to conserve and increase canopy as well. A prioritized urban forest area model could be developed to best regulate stormwater; support wildlife habitat; provide opportunities for recreation, especially for youth and vulnerable populations; improve mental and physical health; ameliorate extreme heat; and improve urban air quality, and capture and store carbon dioxide.

We encourage many initiatives set forth in the draft action plan and would like to support the Division of Forestry in their successful implementation using our experience working knowledge within our local governments and

among planners and developers to promote retention and expansion of urban green infrastructure, our Indiana urban forests (Action step 1.2. Page 37).

This group includes researchers and professionals in the field of urban forestry who have experience working to develop detailed land use studies and evaluate the threat of forest conversion to non-forest use and are eager to collaborate on these projects (Action step 1.12. Page 38).

Urban Forest Priorities

Three top priority areas for urban forests include: public policy (zoning, urban planning and tree ordinances), mapping and assessment, and urban tree canopy. These focus areas are reflected in our working groups' recommendations for the IFAP urban tree canopy (Strategy 5) Action Steps (section below). These three priority areas are most important because they address the greatest needs and the greatest opportunities to foster healthy, productive urban forests.

Public Policy: As more cities and towns begin to focus on better management of their municipal trees and urban forests, education for managers and local lawmakers is important to effectively update and create urban planning policies including zoning and tree ordinances. Creating strategies to help cities and towns address the removal and replacement of dead and dying ash trees (and future invasive pest problems) is also an important component of this priority.

Mapping and Analysis: A major initiative of IDNR Division of Forestry, Community Urban Forestry Program is to assess and analyze existing urban tree canopy and urban forest patches in cities, suburbs and towns in order to inform management strategies of the urban forest asset.

A statewide initiative to share municipal tree inventories is underway. An updated statewide canopy assessment and analysis with an education component for municipal forest managers on how the data/results should be used to better manage their tree canopy is critical for effective management. Additionally, an analysis of standing dead trees (largely ash) is important in order to make plans for removal of these public hazards.

We believe through existing statewide LiDAR data, and current post-processing technology and methods, an array of forest data can be available to many user groups. Statewide survey information relating to stand age is identified as a need (Page 22). High resolution land cover and other forest data has been extracted using available GIS data in Indianapolis (<https://pg-cloud.com/KIB/>). A similar statewide assessment could be created benefiting many users from cities, towns, suburbs, state forest managers, Natural Resources Conservation Service, land trusts and others. Future coordination with the Indiana Geographic Information Office to classify vegetation when LiDAR data is acquired would be valuable.

Urban Tree Canopy: In order for the Division of Forestry to achieve their ambitious urban tree canopy goals, a broad and comprehensive array of strategies to achieve these goals must be implemented quickly. The draft plan offers many excellent strategies, but additional strategies with specific action items need specified.

Urban forests are vital assets to the infrastructure of cities, suburbs and towns across Indiana. They improve the physical, mental and social health of the people who live, work and recreate in these communities. The majority (72%) of Indiana residents live in urban areas (2010 U.S. Census Data) and populations in metropolitan areas are expected to continue to increase 15% between 2015 and 2050 (Kinghorn 2018). Urban and community trees are valuable resources to climate change mitigation and adaptation (Reynolds 2019). Environmental resilience in the State of Indiana requires a thoughtful strategy of investment in this critical natural resource.

Threats

Population growth, wetter springs, hotter and drier summers, invasive pests, and other human and weather pressures will likely cause city trees to be more vulnerable to stress, pests and disease. Utilization of trees as an environmental resilience tool will require careful management. Increased resources to managers of urban forests and better trained tree professionals will be required to meet an increased demand. Added support to the Division of Forestry's Community Urban Forestry Program will be necessary in order to accomplish added urban and community forestry council coordination responsibilities.

Action Steps

Strategy 5

Significantly increase the size of Indiana's urban forest canopy by developing community assistance programs and tools focusing on local governments partnering with stakeholders which include citizen scientists, volunteers, universities, and nonprofit organizations and private enterprise to preserve and grow the urban canopy by policy implementation, low-impact development, maintaining existing trees, and planting new trees.

Action Steps

5.1 Provide community assistance with analyzing and interpreting Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) land cover data in order to better understand what is present, develop better informed forest canopy goals, strategize opportunities, create and implement action plans, and monitor improvement.

Acquire a high-resolution land use assessment in order to inventory urban canopy cover across the state.

The current best case would be to use current and past LiDAR data that has been collected along with aerial photography.

Comparison of tree canopy coverage accessed from 2013 LiDAR compared to 2019 LiDAR would be valuable to show trends.

Create a use-case detailing benefits of vegetation classification and submit it to the Indiana Geographic Information Office. This should document past and future uses and benefits.

An important initiative of the Division of Forestry's Community and Urban Forestry program and the highest priority of the 2010 and 2020 IFAP is forest fragmentation and conversion to other land uses. In order to understand this and work to conserve forests, an inventory is critical.

Review specifications and compare United States Forest Service (USFS), University of Vermont, and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) specifications.

Establish a working group charged with investigating funding opportunities to implement the acquisition of high resolution land use and vegetation derived from LiDAR and ortho photography (currently available data) and assessing canopy change and current canopy. A focus on recurring funding should be considered to align with the Statewide Orthoimagery/LiDAR program.

Until a statewide Urban Tree Canopy assessment is attainable, work with communities to estimate urban canopy coverage using other tools such as i-Tree Canopy or i-Tree Landscape as a benchmark of canopy coverage.

Acquire statewide tree inventories.

Indiana University's Environmental Resilience Institute (ERI), Davey Resource Group, Indiana Geologic and Water Survey is working to compile a centralized spatial database of public tree inventories. The IFAP should include ways to encourage continued sharing.

Make data sharing a requirement of future state-funded inventories.

Work with cities and towns to share tree inventories and make generalized data available for planning and research purposes.

Provides the benefit of a secure backup of data.

Allows the Division of Forestry to create an urban forestry strategy to improve the health of the urban forest.

Allows assessment of the need to mitigate the risk of hazardous trees (including ash trees).

Develop a way of standardizing data collection across all contributors.

Ensure data will be compatible with future versions of Indiana Map.

Provide incentives to communities for improved canopy cover goals Assist with plan coordination and implementation to achieve canopy cover goals Coordinate with local academia/researchers, federal/state/local agencies, established nonprofits organizations, and private enterprises to assist with canopy coverage goal setting, opportunity strategizing, action planning measure progress of canopy changes quantify and articulate community canopy-benefits benchmarks and changes from plan implementation Seek private sector participation/partnership in urban canopy preservation and growth to leverage additional funding and resources.

5.2 Increase awareness of effective resources, policies and ordinances which protect existing street trees and other greenspaces within local governments to prevent loss of urban tree canopy. This awareness should be targeted to a wide range of audiences including tree care professionals, homeowners and youth.

5.4 Improve the resilience of urban forests by incentivizing policy improvements and funding projects that preserve, retain, and enhance existing urban tree canopy, including urban woodlots, which focus on plant diversity, limiting invasive plant species and combating heat island effects through nature-based solutions of stormwater management, CO2 sequestration and decreased energy demands.

5.5 Support local governments in urban tree management. Facilitate training and technical support to local government officials in the importance of tree maintenance (inventory, planting, plant health care, pruning, removal, etc.) as other infrastructure maintenance encouraging inclusion of urban forestry programs in local government budgets to maximize the functional benefits of urban trees using the best practices and proactive management of urban forests.

5.7 Increase financial support and staffing of the IDNR Division of Forestry's Community and Urban Forestry program to improve capabilities for providing communities access to professional technical assistance in arboriculture and urban forestry best management practices and promote awareness of current and emerging issues affecting Indiana urban tree canopy.

5.9 Increase financial support to expand the Indiana Community Tree Steward Program to include advanced topics, such as community leadership for volunteers in efforts to increase the number of urban forestry advocates available to local governments for understanding the importance of urban forests, public funding and tree boards.

5.6 Create and maintain an urban forestry advisory council, and a Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee urban forestry subcommittee, with working groups of urban forestry professionals and tree stewards, to bring together a wide variety of interests in the health and future of Indiana's urban forests for providing input to the IFAP.

5.10 Supplement workforce development through community programs that incentivize the unemployed, underemployed, and young people to participate in tree planting, care and maintenance skills that foster an interest in a forestry career path. Support the development of tree worker pre-apprenticeship programs. Encourage professional certification and facilitate professional development opportunities for tree workers and cultivate a professional network of arboriculture professionals through training and volunteer opportunities with organizations such as the Indiana Arborist Association and Saluting Branches.

5.8 Recognize certified arborists and arboriculture as a skilled trade, improving safety, enhancing prosperity of green industry careers and improving the Indiana economy.

5.14 Promote the human mental and physical health benefits of increased tree canopy cover by organizing and encouraging hikes and outings in public forests.

5.16 Promote the benefits of native large canopy tree planting in meeting community tree canopy goals and supporting wildlife.

5.17 Work with Indiana Association of Counties, Indiana Chapter of the American Planning Association, Accelerate Indiana Municipalities (AIM), Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), Indiana Silver Jackets, Indiana Arborist Association, Indiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (INASLA), Soil & Water Conservation Districts, and the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission in achieving these and other action steps

5.18 Promote/ Partner with the National Arbor Day Foundation and its affiliated recognition programs Tree Cities of the World, Tree City USA, Tree Campus USA, Tree Line USA, Tree Campus k-12, Tree Campus Healthcare, and facilitate connections of these programs within communities where potential coexists

Respectfully submitted,

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sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 1:11 PM
name : Bowden Quinn, director, Sierra Club Hoosier Chapter email : bowden.quinn@sierraclub.org resident :
Marion comments : Sierra Club Hoosier Chapter Comments on 2020 Forest Action Plan

The Sierra Club Hoosier Chapter submits the following comments on the proposed action steps in the draft Indiana Forest Action Plan 2020 Update. The chapter represents about 10,000 Sierra Club members around the state and has a long history of involvement in state forest issues.

While the chapter supports many of the action steps listed at the end of the plan, we find that there is too little attention paid to the expected impacts on the forests from climate change. In many cases the plan continues to adhere to outdated forest management theories and lacks vision about how these theories need to change.

Listed below are the five strategies and action steps listed at the end of the plan, with our comments.

Strategy 1: Conserve, manage and protect existing forests, especially large forest patches, with increased emphasis on oak regeneration

Sierra Club comment: While we support conserving and protecting our existing forests, especially large forest patches, we are often at odds with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) definition of forest "management," and we consider the emphasis on oak regeneration needs to be revisited in view of expected changes in forest composition as a result of climate change.

Action Steps 1.1 Increase funding for and promotion of programs that provide financial incentives for forest conservation.

- Increase State Division of Forestry funding to administer programs, especially increase district forester staff levels
- Increase funding for forestry management activities under federal cost share program (CRP, EQIP, etc.)
- Give preferential access to cost share incentives for CFW enrolled lands

Sierra Club comment: We support increasing funding for forestry programs and staff. We believe that such funding should come from the state general fund and new fees. Funding from logging activities in state forests should end. A state agency shouldn't depend on a special interest group for its funding.

1.2 Work with counties, cities, planners and developers to promote retention of working forests and encourage development in areas that are already developed/incentivize density in development and the use of existing infrastructure corridors. This includes the use of forests as urban green infrastructure.

Sierra Club comment: We support the goal. Not-for-profit groups interested in conservation issues should be added to the list of stakeholders that DNR plans to work with.

1.3 Promote working forest conservation easements and cooperate with and or leverage any farmland preservation efforts where interests align, consider expanding or adopting practices used in Harrison County Land Conservation Program (<https://harrisoncounty.IN.gov/index.php/residents/environment/harrison-county-indiana-landconservation-program>). Collaborate with land trust community to conserve forestland with working forest conservation agreements.

Sierra Club comment: We support this goal.

1.4 Increase use of disturbance on the forest landscape in conjunction with other efforts to facilitate oak regeneration and recruitment

Sierra Club comment: Again, the DNR's adherence to "oak regeneration and recruitment" is based on outdated theories of the benefits of oak forests and fails to take into account the predicted changes in forest composition due to climate change. We oppose increased use of man-made disturbances in state forests.

- Increase use of fire in forest management o Develop cooperative prescribed fire groups (Indiana Prescribed Fire Councils) for private landowners
Sierra Club comment: We are unconvinced of the necessity for fire to maintain a thriving forest.
- Increase the use of shelter-wood harvest, group selection openings and clear cuts where possible
Sierra Club comment: We oppose these logging methods in state forests.
- Supplement natural regeneration with plantings of bare root seedlings and use deer protection where possible
Sierra Club comment: We support this goal.
- Increase coordination with The White Oak Initiative <https://www.whiteoakinitiative.org/>
Sierra Club comment: This appears to be a logging industry advocacy group whose recommendations don't reflect an unbiased assessment of the best uses of forests for the greatest number of people.

1.5 Increase young forests and early successional habitat across landscape • Expand and develop Southern Indiana Young Forest Initiative • Partner more closely with other regional Young Forest Initiatives
Sierra Club comment: This goal should be balanced by a greater commitment to developing and protecting old-growth forests.

1.6 Maintain rigorous and vigilant survey and monitoring efforts as well as slow the spread and awareness campaigns to protect trees from insect and disease outbreaks including: gypsy moth, oak wilt, Beech Bark Disease, Beech Leaf Disease, Laurel Wilt, Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, Asian long horned beetle, spotted lanternfly, thousand cankers disease, sudden oak death and others • Increase use of artificial intelligence and remote sensing where possible to leverage technological advances in early detection and rapid response • Continue the Gypsy Moth Slow the Spread Program • Increase the capacity of Indiana Division of Forestry's Forest Health Section to provide information, education, survey, and management assistance to the public and private sectors
Sierra Club comment: We agree.

1.7 Develop, modify and promote programs that use property tax incentives to discourage parcelization of forests

- Strengthen requirements for Classified Forests & Wildlands Program (CFW) enrollments to follow management plan
- Reevaluate the financial penalty for withdrawal or carve outs from CFW
- Incentivize CFW enrollments to more permanently protect their working forestlands by creating working forest conservation easements

Sierra Club comment: We agree.

1.8 Increase ability to pass forests to next generation without parcelization by providing successional planning information, training and resources to landowners to facilitate a smooth and sustainable transition of property to the next generation

Sierra Club comment: We agree.

1.9 Develop effective and efficient techniques to support and assist small acreage landowners (<10 acres of forest)

Sierra Club comment: We agree.

1.10 Increase the percentage of forests in the age classes of <19 and >100 years old

- For <19 year old age class, follow action steps above for young forests and early successional habitat across landscape
- For >100 years old, increase recognition of public lands where forests are unmanaged or managed for their late successional, climax forest attributes, such as nature preserves and in State parks and encourage private sector to develop recognition program for old forests on private forestlands

Sierra Club comment: We agree, except that increasing the percentage of >100 years old forests should include our state forests.

1.11 Secure permanent and significant annual funding to an Indiana Woodland Restoration program and Forest Restoration Fund. Funds should provide cash incentives for timber stand improvement, afforestation/reforestation, forest erosion control and best management practices (BMPs) including invasive plant control and other forest restoration activities.

Sierra Club comment: We agree.

1.12 Engage university to develop detailed Indiana land use study in that highlights forests most under threat for conversion to another land use and provides guidance and methods to ensure their conservation and an increase of working forests on the landscape

Sierra Club comment: We are curious about the singular use of “university.” Are we to assume this means Purdue? How about engaging with all Indiana universities, many of which may be less in thrall to the logging industry than Purdue is.

Strategy 2: Restore, expand and connect forests, especially in riparian areas

Sierra Club comment: We support this goal.

Action Steps 2.1 Increase forest cover as a land use by 1,000,000 acres over the next 10 years

- Encourage counties to set local targets for expanding forest cover, increase 20% by 2030

Sierra Club comment: We would like to see the percentage increased to 30%, which could be promoted by the catchy phrase “30X30”.

- o Provide county planners, local level economic development offices and other resources and tools to assist in identifying, retaining and expanding working forests
- o Develop recognition programs for county success

- Increase forest land in public ownership
- o Develop and promote programs that encourage and or provide incentives for private landowners to beneficiary deed ownership to public agencies, especially for adjacent landowners or in-holdings
- o Expand funding from the general assembly for the President Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust and or support efforts that create new sources of funding through governments that are dedicated to spending on and investing in conservation
- o Increase efforts that provide a third party (oftentimes a land trust) funding and eventual transfer to public ownership

Sierra Club comment: We totally agree.

- Provide increased targeted incentives to convert marginal or unproductive farm ground to forest cover Sierra Club comment: We agree.

- Provide incentives for landowners to convert mowed areas to planted trees, especially species that do not successfully establish through natural succession (i.e. plant bottom land oaks, not sycamore and cottonwood) • Increase number of trees available through the State Nursery System o Develop and effectuate plan to ensure acquisition of required amount of local seed even in years where seed production is affected by regional disturbance such as a late frost with efforts to ensure that seed sources are of the highest quality or improved selections. Make effort to provide seedlings for every prospective sale and not sell out of species early in order season o Develop smaller count bundles (with appropriate pricing) for sale at State Tree Nursery and to target tree planting in residential and urban areas Sierra Club comment: We strongly agree.

- Actively develop and increase private sector participation/partnership

2.2 Reduce the impact and spread of invasive species • Increase coordination of invasive species efforts at the state level among DNR divisions, Board of Animal Health, Indiana Department of Transportation and other agencies to ensure that control practices are prioritized, targeted and effective • Ensure coordination between State-level (above), Invasive Species Council, Federal and other partners involved in invasive species regulation, management and funding • Develop or expand promotional campaigns on the negative consequences of those invasive species in the nursery trade (like Callery Pear and Burning Bush) that did not make the Terrestrial Plant Rule (312 IAC 18-3-25) because of their importance as a revenue source to the nursery trade and or modify or increase the rule to include those species.

- Promote and expand efforts to develop county-level invasives groups (CISMAs – Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas) that are self-sustaining, locally led • Increase the use of Invasive Species BMPs prior to and in conjunction with timber harvest o Add the Invasive Species BMPs to future printings of the Forestry BMP field guides Sierra Club comment: We strongly agree.

2.3 Support, develop and increase efforts to restore species historically more abundant in Indiana forests like American chestnut, butternut and ash • Begin immediate propagation program through grafting of lingering ash trees • Partner with SUNY ESF American Chestnut Project to introduce plantings of their blighttolerant American chestnut trees • Support efforts at the Hardwood Tree Improvement & Regeneration Center to develop propagation strategies for these and other important species to the Central Hardwoods Region • Increase work in Ash species resistance/tolerance to Emerald Ash Borer through location of Lingering Ash trees, develop in tree improvement program, conduct progeny test of resistant/tolerant species, collect seed from lingering ash trees, develop seed orchards, treat forest ash trees to maintain a seed source in state parks, state forests, and nature preserves with goal to develop resistant/tolerant ash species for rural and urban forest restoration Sierra Club comment: We agree.

2.4 Advocate for reduced deer populations Sierra Club comment: We agree, as long as the controls are humane.

2.5 Develop a new program or cooperative effort with DNR Fish & Wildlife to ensure that forest landowners (especially those with detailed forest management plan) seeking to restore oaks in their forest understory or open plantings are able to protect plantings and young seedlings from deer with lethal force and without undue processes for approval Sierra Club comment: We are uncomfortable with this recommendation, particularly with its emphasis on regenerating oaks. We would want to see broad public participation in the development of such a new program or “cooperative effort.”

2.6 Targeting watersheds that drain excess agricultural nutrients, create special and permanent incentives to buffer riparian corridors with forests to filter agricultural chemicals, nutrients and sediment before entering river systems Sierra Club comment: We agree.

2.7 Encourage farmers to use install and maintain native hedgerows along field margins, including through hedgerow practices in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program Sierra Club comment: We agree, particularly with the requirement that the hedgerows consist of native plants.

2.9 Increase promotion of federal programs for planting trees in agricultural areas that frequently flood while also promoting tree species for planting projects that do not readily establish themselves (as mentioned in other action steps) Sierra Club comment: Again, we agree as long as the trees are native and suitable for flooding conditions.

2.10 Discourage the planting of species that readily establish themselves in federal funded and private sector tree planting programs Sierra Club comment: We agree.

Strategy 3: Connect people to forests, especially children and land-use decision makers, and coordinate education training and technical assistance Sierra Club comment: In general we agree, but we have noticed that DNR and Purdue are using classroom lesson plans to advance their preferred “forest management” theories. Education about forests in our schools should be developed by professional educators who recognize the importance that all legitimate viewpoints be given equal access, not just those favored by the current political administration.

Action Steps 3.1 Increase enrollment and expand the Indiana Natural Resources Teacher Institute Program Sierra Club comment: We don’t know enough about this program to comment.

3.2 Promote the creation of and use of outdoor labs at schools throughout Indiana Sierra Club comment: We agree.

3.3 Develop student or school tree identification initiatives and provide awards and recognitions for school accomplishments on getting past the “green wall”, a term that means all plant life looks the same and is recognized as similarly beneficial or without unique attributes Sierra Club comment: We tend to agree but need more information about what is intended.

3.4 Develop program that gets professional foresters into Indiana elementary and high school programs to deliver engaging program and includes outdoor experiences with trees around school grounds without the need for bussing/field trip Sierra Club comment: Again, the intent here seems to be to promote a single viewpoint in our schools. Classroom programs should be aimed at developing informed and objective thinking skills in our students, not programming them to accept a certain train of thought.

3.5 Develop specific outreach programs about forestry and forest management for birders Sierra Club comment: We hope that birders are independent enough that they would not be swayed to a point of view about the benefits of a particular theory of forest management without question and reflection.

3.6 Expand the use of Project Learning Tree in Indiana schools, provide dedicated full time employee to concentrate solely on this effort Sierra Club comment: We don’t know enough about this project to comment.

3.7 Partner directly or through other partners with the Indianapolis Zoo, Ag education programs and National FFA Organization to engage students and teachers Sierra Club comment: Again, the goal should be education, not brainwashing.

3.8 Improve access to forestry knowledge and technical information by continuing to utilize an expanded series of “demonstration forests” in cooperation with private landowners, conservation organizations, community forests and others to serve as examples of good forest management.

Sierra Club comment: Again, there are differences of opinion about what constitutes “good forest management.” Any government-supported effort should be open to all viewpoints.

3.9 Continue to support the publication of the Woodland Steward magazine, expanding its distribution and improving its web accessibility Sierra Club comment: We aren’t familiar with this publication.

3.10 Develop or expand programs that encourage forest natural resources education tied to state curricula that occur outdoors on forests at State DNR properties or partner properties. Consider pilot program with at least 1 full time school bus with dedicated educator that can be reserved by schools at no cost that can serve Indianapolis and doughnut county region.

Sierra Club comment: Based on what we have seen, (e.g. “The Great Clearcut Controversy”, being promoted by the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment), neither DNR nor the Purdue University Department of Forestry and Natural Resources can be trusted to develop objective programs whose goal is education rather than propaganda.

3.11 Use effective and proven tools to conduct landowner outreach, like TELE – Tools for Engaging Landowners Effectively Sierra Club comment: We are unfamiliar with this outreach tool.

3.12 Expand and promote Educational grant program at Indiana Forestry Educational Foundation, seek pass through funding from national public and private sector sources Sierra Club comment: We support increased funding for education.

3.13 Develop an Indiana Center for Agroforestry to promote, develop and leverage agroforestry solutions for Indiana farmers and landowners, use University of Missouri’s center as a model Sierra Club comment: We are unfamiliar with the Missouri model so cannot comment.

3.14 Make special effort to develop corporate and business partnerships in the implementation of these strategies and action steps but especially in this strategy, connecting people to forests, consider programs like Walmart Acres for America and approach Indiana based manufacturers for support Sierra Club comment: We support recruiting businesses to connect more people with forests.

3.15 Provide incentives or free logger education for Cutter Training all levels and Indiana Forestry BMPs Sierra Club comment: We support efforts to increase logger education about climate change and the role of forests in mitigating that threat.

3.16 Continue to support the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (<https://www.heeforeststudy.org/>)

Sierra Club comment: Based on the lesson plan cited above, we are uncertain whether this is an objective scientific effort or a propaganda mechanism to promote the current administration’s theory of forest management.

3.17 Make special effort to engage women and minorities in Forest Action Plan strategies and to develop more diversity among natural resource professionals in Indiana, especially seek to encourage connection to forests and trees among the most urban aspects of Indiana society Sierra Club comment: We would wholeheartedly support such an effort as long as it is done objectively.

3.18 Coordinate with Invasive Species Council on management of forest related species management and awareness Sierra Club comment: We support increased efforts to control invasive species in our forests.

3.19 Increase tours of forest management areas, harvest sites, to promote recognition that forests do not disappear with management, land use does not change, they are not turned into parking lots Sierra Club comment: Again, this sounds like a propaganda exercise.

3.20 Complete Knobstone Trail and establish sustainable, long-term support for the resource as a national-class trail and hiking destination that fosters strong connections to all forest age classes and the diverse forest types in Southern Indiana Sierra Club comment: We fully support completion of the Knobstone Trail.

3.21 Support the creation of “food forests” in Indiana, especially those that use primarily native species and connect large numbers of people to trees and forests. A food forest is defined by Wikipedia as “a low-maintenance, sustainable, plant-based food production and agroforestry system based on woodland ecosystems” Sierra Club comment: We support this goal.

3.22 Work with recreation groups to expand promotion of forest based recreational opportunities like mountain biking, photography, mushroom hunting, hiking and new or non-traditional uses like forest bathing and foraging Sierra Club comment: In general we would support such an effort as long as mechanisms are in place to resolve disagreements over competing uses.

3.23 Encourage foresters to participate in the Project Learning Tree and Society of American Foresters online short course – Teaching Youth and Communities About Forests – to help strengthen outreach and education efforts to youth and adults Sierra Club comment: We are unfamiliar with this course so cannot comment.

3.24 Connect communities and young people to forests and sustainable forestry through mobile educational unit that can visit schools, festivals and other community events (also see “Wood Bus” action step) Sierra Club comment: We support efforts to connect communities and young people with forests as long as they are open to discussions about what constitutes “sustainable forestry.”

3.25 Promote the National Arbor Day Foundation’s Tree Campus USA for colleges and universities and Tree Campus K-12 programs Sierra Club comment: We agree.

3.26 Provide opportunities to have positive forest experiences in communities where people live Sierra Club comment: We agree.

3.27 Promote the physical and mental health benefits of immersive forest activities Sierra Club comment: We agree.

3.28 Promote playgrounds made with hardwoods or natural products over products made from nonrenewable resources (nature play spaces) Sierra Club comment: This is an issue that needs further discussion, such as

whether hardwoods or other natural products are chemically treated to make them weather resistant and, if so, whether that presents a health threat to users.

Strategy 4: Maintain and expand markets for Indiana hardwoods, with special focus on secondary processors and promoting the environmental benefits of wood products to local communities and school groups

Action Steps 4.1 Develop and implement an Indiana “Wood Bus” similar to the Pennsylvania WoodMobile https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Business_Industry/HardwoodDevelopmentCouncil/Woodmobile/Pages/default.aspx that is a traveling exhibit providing information on the Indiana’s forest resource and the state’s forest products industry as well as educational materials on forest management and sustainability Sierra Club comment: Again, we question whether this effort would be for objective education or to increase support for a particular view of forest management and sustainability.

4.2 Support and promote bringing the “Forests Forever” museum exhibit to the Indiana State Fair Sierra Club comment: We are unfamiliar with this exhibit so cannot comment.

4.3 Highlight the vibrant forest products Industry and sustainable forestry and logging community in Indiana by hosting a Wood Pro Expo or some similar event in Indiana biannually, developing on ideas and lessons learned at the 2019 Hoosier Hardwood Expo in Cloverdale Sierra Club comment: We aren’t opposed to the forest products industry. However, we would like to see the DNR engage the public in a fuller discussion about the various benefits derived from forests, many of which would require leaving the trees alone.

4.4 Provide increased programs on marketing hardwood logs and trees for landowners, work in cooperation with Indiana Tree Farm and primary industry groups to provide information on forest management and log utilization, pricing, etc.
Sierra Club comment: See comment above.

4.5 Ensure secondary processors are provided with a robust supply of local raw materials by connecting landowners and primary wood processors with secondary processors using online tools, database and mapping applications Sierra Club comment: We support assisting local businesses.

4.6 Promote Indiana hardwoods at domestic trade shows, actively recruit companies to locate in Indiana and tout Indiana hardwoods as the “green material” of the 21st century, healthy for homes, etc.
Sierra Club comment: We think the phrase “green material of the 21st century” is going too far.

4.7 Consider developing state-level certification scheme similar to Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) in France that provides certainty of a wood product’s legality and sustainability Sierra Club comment: We don’t know enough about the PEFC to comment.

4.8 Increase the development of new products from hardwoods and their by-products and promote new uses of hardwoods like in cross laminated timber applications and through thermal modification Sierra Club comment: We are uncertain about the overall value of cross-laminated timber applications.

4.9 Promote the use of Indiana hardwood with local architects and builders Sierra Club comment: We support the use of local products when sustainable in an environmentally sound way.

4.10 Encourage the public institutions and State government of Indiana and the organizations to which it provides funding to use Indiana hardwoods wherever possible in renovations or new construction, Indiana hardwoods should be given increased credit in competitive projects due to their environmental sustainability over fossil fuel based products.

Sierra Club comment: See comment above.

4.11 Promote and implement the Indiana Hardwood Strategy Sierra Club comment: We don't know enough about this strategy to comment.

4.12 Engage Indiana's forest products industry to take a more active role in forest land conservation efforts Sierra Club comment: We would agree, as long as the forest products industry is informed about the challenges of climate change and the role of forests in mitigating those challenges.

4.13 Provide sufficient funding for phytosanitary inspections in the forest products industry so that invasive pests and diseases are not spread through soil or other contaminants Sierra Club comment: We agree.

4.14 Encourage the "tall wood buildings" movement and encourage the construction of demonstration in Indiana using cross laminated timber (CLT) and or hardwood cross laminated timber HCLT Sierra Club comment: We think this effort needs more discussion about its value in mitigating climate change.

4.15 Seek out or develop new markets for mill residues (primarily chips) as less paper is being used worldwide Sierra Club comment: We oppose using biofuels as a substitute for fossil fuels. We prefer solar and wind energy.

4.16 Develop programs and initiatives to foster employee recruitment and retention in the forestry and wood products industry Sierra Club comment: We would support this effort as long as it includes educating employees about climate change and the value of forests for carbon sequestration.

Strategy 5: Double the size of Indiana's urban forest canopy with a focus on native species diversity and community and youth stewardship Sierra Club comment: We fully support this effort.

Action Steps 5.1 Provide assistance to communities to accurately analyze and interpret their forest Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) Cover data, develop and implement increased forest canopy goals • Provide incentives for communities to set canopy cover goals and coordinated plans to achieve those goals • Coordinate with local universities, established non-profits to o predict outcomes of specific goal setting steps o measure progress based on community efforts o quantify community benefits based on canopy efforts that are applicable across municipal management and planning programs • Increase private sector participation/partnership in urban canopy retention/growth Sierra Club comment: We fully support this effort.

5.2 Develop community programs that engage young people in tree planting, care and maintenance Sierra Club comment: We agree.

5.3 Incentivize urban tree plantings that reduce areas of mowed turf grass and replace with appropriate native tree species Sierra Club comment: We agree.

5.4 Incentivize projects that preserve/ retain/ enhance existing urban tree cover and urban woodlots. Sierra Club comment: We agree.

5.5 Facilitate training programs for municipalities to increase awareness of benefits, changes in practice and overall management of their urban forests Sierra Club comment: We agree.

5.6 Support partnerships and innovative ideas that lead to enhanced urban forest management Sierra Club comment: We agree.

5.7 Increase support for the DNR Community and Urban Forestry Program to provide communities with access to professional urban forestry technical assistance and promote awareness of urban forestry issues Sierra Club comment: We agree.

5.8 Support professional and volunteer education and engagement activities to improve practice and safety in urban forest management.
Sierra Club comment: We agree.

5.9 Expand the Indianan Community Tree Steward training program for volunteers Sierra Club comment: We agree.

5.10 Support professional development of commercial arborists and arboriculture as a skilled trade Sierra Club comment: We agree.

5.11 Promote species diversity in urban canopies to reduce susceptibility to forest pests and increase climate change and overall urban forest resilience Sierra Club comment: We agree.

5.13 (sic) Promote the use of trees and urban forests in reducing carbon dioxide emissions, mitigating existing Co₂, and meeting Co₂/air quality goals where municipalities have set them Sierra Club comment: We strongly agree.

5.14 Promote the human mental and physical health benefits of increased tree canopy cover Sierra Club comment: It's not clear how the DNR proposes to do this, but we agree with the concept.

5.15 Promote the importance of post-planting care and maintenance in growing healthy urban forest canopies Sierra Club comment: We agree.

5.16 Promote the benefits of native large canopy tree planting in meeting community tree canopy cover goals and supporting wildlife Sierra Club comment: We agree.

5.17 Work with Indiana Association of Counties, Indiana Chapter of the American Planning Association, Indiana Association of Cities and Towns (AIM), INDOT, Indiana Silver Jackets, Indiana Arborist Association, Soil & Water Conservation Districts, and the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission in achieving these and other action steps Sierra Club comment: We agree.

5.18 Promote/ Partner with the National Arbor Day Foundation and its affiliated recognition programs Tree City, USA Tree Campus USA, Tree Line USA Tree Campus k-12 and Tree Campus Healthcare programs in promoting tree planting and urban forest management in communities Sierra Club comment: We agree.

sharepublic : Yes

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 4:01 PM

name : Reverend Michael E. Bean

email : revbean@sbcglobal.net

resident : Johnson County

comments : The draft Indiana Forest Action Plan 2020 does a good job describing the conditions and trends of our Indiana forest lands both private and public. I agree with the stated strategic goals of preservation, conservation and expansion of forest acreage and age class diversity. I believe that equal attention must be paid to increasing old growth conditions as is afforded to increasing early succession younger forest conditions. I am absolutely in favor of expanding and restoring forest conditions in riparian areas. We must also increase the volume of trees and canopies in our urban forests. I am encouraged to find statements that indicate the need to expand climate change and carbon sequestration factors in the strategic design of landscape level management decisions. Increased forest age, canopy coverage and expanded tree volume can mitigate carbon, provide clean air and water, and increase biodiversity and wildlife in our forests. I would like to see more data on RTE species being collected and employed in RMG decisions. The draft Action Plan pages 21-22 indicate that "biologic diversity is perhaps the most important overall measure of ecosystem health and well being" and states that data is lacking and this need may be addressed with "technological advances in the area of forestry remote sensing". I would hope to see action steps and strategies in the final Action Plan directed to this need, perhaps expanded biodiversity inventories compiled for each State Forest property. I also agree with the draft assessment that conversion and fragmentation of forest land based on economic value of timber or land alone is a grave threat. I would like to see action steps that promote the economic value of ecosystem services like forest buffers for clean drinking water, carbon sequestration, outdoor recreation, and preservation of wildlife habitat. I am in favor of increased education and public involvement with forest issues as they may well be the key to ensuring a healthy forest for future generations. I would like to acknowledge the improvements in BMP training for invasive control, biodiversity preservation, soil and water conservation, especially for the private CFW program as well as the public forests. Please continue to seek dual certification, SFI & FSC, as they highlight the Division of Forestry commitment to sustainability and preservation of our native Indiana hardwood forest. In closing, I offer the following words of A.A. Lindsey... "many forestry technicians are not aware that nature preservation and timber production are also incompatible land uses. Proper planning involves deciding between the two; far more land will always be devoted to commercial wood production, but recognizing outstanding old-growth forests and recommending them for preservation are professional responsibilities that all foresters should accept". Please nominate and designate additional old growth forest tracts as High Conservation Value forests statewide. Thank you.

sharepublic : Yes

From: Tim Maloney [mailto:tmaloney@hecweb.org]

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 11:58 PM

Here are comments of the Hoosier Environmental Council on the draft Indiana Forest Action Plan 2020 Update.

1. Strategic Goals (page 3)

The first bullet -conserve, manage and protect existing forests -- includes "increased emphasis on oak regeneration." Details should be provided for this goal, given that oak regeneration is already an emphasis for state forest management. Are current state forest management practices, in place since 2005, effective in promoting oak regeneration? Will this be applied to private forests, in the form of recommending increased even-aged management to woodland owners?

2. National Priorities Section (page 10)

a) We recommend that the amount of federal funding support received for the various forestry programs from NRCS, USFS, or other sources, be itemized and quantified in order to compare how this financial assistance has changed since 2010.

b) National Priority 2 (page 11)

Are there any case studies or success stories that demonstrate what programs or approaches are proving most effective in controlling or eliminating invasive plant species?

3. Priority Areas, Forest Conditions, Trends, Threats and Priority Landscape Areas by Issue (page 13)

The statement that "...the free ranging of millions of hogs" was formative for Indiana's forests today has not previously been identified in Division of Forestry reports or information to our knowledge. What information or evidence supports this? "Widespread burning" as another factor requires elaboration as well. While Native Americans were known to use fire to clear fields or open up forests near their villages, what record exists that it was widespread to the point of determining our current forest conditions?

4. Fragmentation (Page 16)

We recommend more elaboration in paragraph 4 related to "conservation efforts to protect against fragmentation should generally be directed to areas with low risk for fragmentation." There will be circumstances where higher risk areas warrant conservation efforts because of their biological and/or recreational value, even if conservation efforts in this case come at a higher cost.

5. Soil and Water (page 20)

Any forest management activities in Classified Forest and Wildlands areas should be required to fully implement BMPs.

6. Biodiversity (page 25)

We agree that oak forests represent a very important element of biodiversity in the central hardwood forests, and that the complete loss of oak-hickory stands would greatly reduce our forests' diversity. But do the current forest inventory data support the view that without intensive management all oak and hickory forests will be lost, as implied in this section? Hardwood forest succession occurs over long periods of time, and many factors influence forest conditions over these long periods besides disturbance. This is not to argue for no management, but rather to put this concern in context -- that the data presented is not sufficient to make the broad prediction that Indiana, or the hardwood forests of the midwest, are on a certain path to lose their oak and hickory component.

7. Recreation/Wood Products (page 27, 28 and 29)

The potential for outdoor recreation to play a key role in boosting public interest and awareness about forests, forest management and the threats to private and public forests should receive greater emphasis in the Forest Action Plan. While the forest products industry is a highly valuable economic sector for Indiana, so is the outdoor recreation industry. Outdoor recreation in Indiana generates nearly \$16 billion a year in consumer spending, and creates 143,000 direct jobs (Outdoor Industry Association, 2017) -- both outputs that exceed those of the forest products industry in Indiana.

With respect to America's national forest lands, the U.S. Forest Service reports that "recreation, hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing activities together account for more jobs than any other activity on the national forest system." (FY 2014 Budget Justification, USDA Forest Service)

8. High cost of forest ownership and low incentives to retain (page 30)

We disagree with the final paragraph in this section which criticizes local regulation of forest management on private lands. Local governments have many responsibilities to their citizens, including protecting public health and welfare and regulating land use so that the activities of one landowner don't harm the rights of other landowners. Given that forest management practices on private lands are not regulated by the state, local officials should have the authority to adopt reasonable forestry safeguards if they deem it necessary. Are there instances where local regulations have deterred forest restoration actions?

9. Urban forests (Page 30-32)

We support the attention to urban forests and their many ecological and economic benefits.

10. Climate Change (page 32)

We recommend expanding this section with more in-depth assessment of how community efforts to improve their climate resilience can be encouraged and enhanced by the many forestry programs described in the Forest Action Plan; and how Indiana can more fully benefit from forests' carbon sequestration functions.

11. Continued public disconnect from forests and forestry (page 32)

a) We agree that many people are disconnected from forests and how they benefit our environment and economy. But the statement in this section that public concerns about forest management are just a result of this disconnect greatly oversimplifies the issue. There are legitimate concerns expressed about types and intensity of forest management by many people who are not disconnected from forests, including scientists well versed in forest ecology and management. As long as forest managers dismiss contrary views as simply the opinions of the disconnected public, they will continue to struggle to find a constituency broad enough to achieve the many consensus goals that forest managers and forest advocates share.

b) One of the areas of consensus is the concern about declining funding for natural resource agencies as mentioned in this section. Besides describing the decline in the Division of Forestry's budget, this section should also describe the levels of funding needed for a fully staffed Division, as well as for the new or expanded programs recommended in the Forest Action Plan.

12. Long-term strategies

a) strategy 1.10 (page 38) Expand this section: for increasing the percentage of forests greater than 100 years old, go beyond "increase the recognition of" to describing actions to achieve the desired percentage of old forest that will continue to develop into old growth, and the process for ensuring protection of this old forest component -- whether through nature preserve designation, high conservation value forest designation, or backcountry designation. Recognize the ecological value of old forests and their contribution to the overall biodiversity of Indiana's forests.

b) strategy 2.1 (page 38)

We wholly support this goal to increase forest cover in Indiana by 1 million acres and the accompanying action steps.

c) strategy 2.2

We support the actions described to reduce the impact and spread of invasive species.

d)strategy 2 generally

We urge that Indiana's public and private water utilities be enlisted in riparian forest restoration and expansion, given that many river floodplains in Indiana are recharge zones for the underlying aquifers that supply many public and private drinking water wells.

e) strategy 3.14

In developing corporate and business partnerships, seek their financial support for forest conservation and restoration efforts including tree planting as well as their commitment to reforest their own lands.

f) strategy 4.15

Exercise great caution in this action so that any new markets for mill residues/chips do not outpace the supply and as a result encourage forest management for low grade wood products.

g)strategies 5.4 & 5.5

Are there model ordinances that communities could use to achieve these actions?

13. Coordination with other groups and plans

a) (page 44) For the 3rd paragraph from top, this paragraph would benefit from a more detailed description of how the State Wildlife Action Plan interacts with the Forest Action Plan.

b) Was any consideration given to benchmarking the Indiana Forest Action Plan to other states' forest action plans? Successful programs in other states could be used to guide actions in our Forest Action Plan.

14. Other comments

a) There are many recommendations for improved or new forestry programs in the Plan, as well as mention of existing programs. It would be helpful to include a spreadsheet or table of these programs, so that they can easily be compared and contrasted to determine which ones -- new or existing -- may be duplicative of other programs. This could lead to streamlining or eliminating some programs. Given that competition for funding for new programs is likely, knowledge of how a new program relates to existing programs is always helpful to making the case for program funding.

HEC appreciates the time and effort that went into producing the draft Indiana Forest Action Plan 2020 Update, and the valuable information and recommendations it contains. We also appreciate the effort to engage stakeholders and the public in this process. We hope that the final plan reflects the broad range of interest in Indiana's forests and serves as a vehicle for continuing constructive dialogue and action.

Tim Maloney

