

Indiana Department of Natural Resources—Division of Forestry

**Indiana Residents' Perceptions of Woodland Management:
"Indiana Woodland Monitor 2009 (IWM-09)"**

A Final Report to:

Jack Seifert & the IN Division of Forestry

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In cooperation with:



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Executive Summary

In August 2009, scientists at Purdue University, with the aid of consultants from D.J. Case, constructed a telephone survey intended to assess the opinions of Indiana residents regarding woodland management in the state. The survey, hereafter referred to as “Indiana Woodland Monitor 2009,” was administered to Indiana residents in October. A total of 1,402 Indiana adults, 18 years and older completed the survey.

Some highlights in opinions revealed by the survey include the following:

- Forty-eight percent said they were “very concerned” about the long-term health and productivity of Indiana’s woodlands, and 45%, “somewhat concerned.”
- Half (50%) said they were “very interested” in Indiana’s fish, forests, wildlife, and the out-of-doors, and 40% indicated they were “somewhat interested.”
- At least 78% of respondents indicated that they or someone in the household participates in select outdoor activities with the most common activities being “visiting an Indiana state forest” (78%), “fishing or hunting in Indiana woodlands” (72%), and “gathering mushrooms, nuts, or berries from woodlands” (51%).
- Fifteen percent indicated they were “very familiar” with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, with most others (54%) saying they were “somewhat familiar” with the DNR.
- Many Hoosiers (58%) said they were “not familiar” with the Division of Forestry within the DNR. However, a relatively small group (6%) that said they were “very familiar” with the Division of Forestry, a large majority (74%) of the small group who said they were very familiar rated the Division’s performance as “excellent” or “good.”
- A plurality of Indianans (47%) thought most of the state’s woodlands are held in about equal ownership by “private-corporate owners” and “government,” and 26% thought most woodlands are “government” owned (in fact, roughly 85% of the state’s forestlands are privately owned).
- When informed that “Indiana’s State Forest System makes up about 3% of Indiana’s woodlands,” a majority (55%) thought that the amount was “not enough,” and 39%, “about right.”
- Majority approval was given to:
 - Removing some trees to protect Indiana woodlands from spread of disease and wildfire (95%),
 - Harvesting Indiana trees for woodland management if overseen by professional foresters (85%),
 - Harvesting Indiana trees to improve places for wildlife to live (82%),
 - Advising Indiana private landowners on how many and what kinds of trees they might harvest and sell (70%), and
 - Harvesting Indiana trees to make lumber or other wood products that we use (61%).
- Majority agreement was given to the statements:

- “Indiana woodlands should be managed for a balance of wood products that we use, and other benefits like recreation, wildlife, and good water quality” (88%),
 - “If I hear an Indiana forest is being managed as a certified green forest, I get the idea it’s being wisely managed for future generations” (76%).
- Nearly three-quarters (72%) agreed with the statement, “The amount of forested land in Indiana is shrinking.” Respondents identified “urban sprawl” as the highest-ranking threat to today’s Indiana woodlands.