

Consideration of the dedication of Wildwood Nature Preserve, Kosciusko County

The proposed nature preserve is a 93.8-acre property located about 3 miles east of the town of Silver Lake in Kosciusko County.

This tract consists of a high quality stand of oak-hickory forest on rolling topography, with dry, well-drained uplands and poorly drained swamp forests in the depressions. There are numerous large specimens of white oak, chinquapin oak, swamp white oak, shagbark hickory, and black walnut. Several rare species occur on the site, including the State-listed Blanding's turtle.

The nature preserve is part of a 238 acre tract that served as a conservation farm and outdoor education area for school children in north-central Indiana. For decades, its owners, Bob and Alice Frantz hosted thousands of school children and scout groups on field trips. They planted acres of prairie grass, restored wetlands, planted trees, and managed wildlife habitat.

In 2002, the Frantz Family sold their land to the ACRES Land Trust, with the assistance of the Indiana Heritage Trust. The tract is owned and is under the administration of ACRES Land Trust.

The Division of Nature Preserves recommends dedication of this site as a State Nature Preserve.

Attached is Nature Preserves Exhibit A: map indicating the location and boundaries of Wildwood Nature Preserve.

