

SUMMARY COMMENTS

Patoka Lake – R.A. Walton Farm, Tract 1

30 Day Comment Period Ending: 02/15/2023

Comments Received: 5

The table below is a summary of public comments received concerning the draft Resource Management Guide. The public comments received have been reviewed in their entirety and given due consideration summarized in the Division of Forestry response below.

Comment Summary	Division of Forestry Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern with possible impacts to the watershed. • Concern with possible impacts affecting climate change. • Concern that timber harvests do more harm than good. • Concern with excessive timber harvesting of public lands. • Comment supporting proposed forest management actions citing wildlife habitat, forest health, and forest resiliency. • Comment supporting forest management actions citing Indiana State Wildlife Action Plan and addressing loss of early successional forest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Division of Forestry assisted the Division of State Parks with forest inventory, analysis, and preparation of this resource management tract. The Division of Forestry has actively managed its respective properties for nearly 120 years, while additionally assisting the Division of State Parks and Division of Fish & Wildlife to properly manage forested tracts on those properties. The Division of Forestry utilizes multiple uses - multiple benefits approach which benefits include timber production, biodiversity, watershed protection, recreation, wildlife habitat, and research areas. • The Division of State Parks actively managed its lands for multiple use – multiple benefits. A portion of natural resources management is wildlife habitat enhancement. Patoka Lake is estimated to have over 10,800-acres of forested lands. To ensure a sustainable hardwood landscape for numerous forest-dwelling wildlife species, Division of State Park and Division of Forestry staff collaborate to complete forest inventories, timber harvests, timber stand improvement (TSI), tree plantings, invasive species control, and prescribed fire. These activities help sustain a diverse hardwood landscape which help ensure healthy wildlife habitat diversity and availability. Cooperation between the two divisions ensures forests remain vigorous and healthy supporting the multiple uses - multiple benefits philosophy for future generations

	<p>in perpetuity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forest management on Division of State Park lands is guided by science and implementation of sound silvicultural principles and sound wildlife habitat management principles.• Implementation of the draft RMG will utilize guidance from the US Fish & Wildlife Service and other sources to avoid take impacts to the Indiana bat and other listed species. Forest Management Guidelines for Avoiding Incidental Take of Indiana Bats within State of Indiana.• The Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (HEE) and other associated forest-wildlife management research continue to document forest impacts and indicate increased wildlife biodiversity in managed forests. http://www.heeforeststudy.org/• Best management practices (BMP) will be implemented and monitored to address the soil erosion and sedimentation concerns. BMPs are required and included in each timber sale contract on state forests/parks. Division of Forestry/Parks will respond to reported BMP departures. BMP guidance can be found at: https://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/files/BMP.pdf• BMPs are guidelines, not law. However, contractual stipulations require BMPs to be implemented and followed on all DNR lands. State Forest/Parks staff perform regular site visits during active operations and evaluate as part of their post-harvest review. Additionally, BMP monitoring is performed on each harvest for application and effectiveness. There are 58 individual BMPs measured across 5 categories: access/haul road, log yards, skid trails, stream crossings, and riparian management zones. View reports at: https://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/files/fo-BMP-
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	<p>report1996- 2021.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Assessing climate change and carbon sequestration is beyond the scope of tract level resource management guides. The following for State Forests applies to other DNR lands. https://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/files/fw-carbon_assessment.pdf
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