



June 27, 2016

Dear Members of the Indiana General Assembly,

On behalf of the members of Indiana Farm Bureau, we write to express our support of DNR's ability to manage the state's publicly owned forests. Farm Bureau policy states in relevant part:

We support sound multi-use woodland management systems for federal and state owned forestlands. These include recreation, wildlife, timber harvest, downed timber removal, timber stands improvement, watershed protection and oil exploration.

Forest management plans should include the selective marketing of timber to help reduce property taxes. Once adopted, a forest management plan should not be subject to further appeal.

Based upon this policy and the input of our members, we have supported the ability of DNR to manage all state forest properties in a sustainable manner. DNR is conducting these efforts in a proper manner and has provided increasing value to the state's property while returning dollars to local communities.

Additionally, DNR has been managing its forests to provide environmental and natural resource benefits. All of society, including farmers, continues to deal with increased pressure regarding wildlife habitat, protection of water resources, improvements in air quality, and concerns with biodiversity. Existing public lands provide a great resource to collectively take efforts to ensure that natural resources are protected into the future. Moreover, they can provide habitat for threatened and endangered species, and species of concern, such that the pressures on business and industry in dealing with regulatory challenges are reduced.

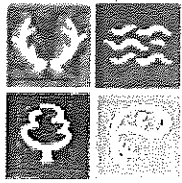
The state's properties also provide ample outdoor recreational opportunities for citizens of Indiana and others who visit our state to partake in all it has to offer. DNR's management efforts have not impeded this opportunity. Rather, their actions have increased opportunities for individuals to observe both rare and common species and enjoy nature.

Overall, we are pleased with the direction that DNR has gone in managing Indiana's public forests. They are meeting their statutory charge to implement a multipurpose forest management plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin T. Schneider'.

Justin T. Schneider



INDIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

CONSERVATION.
EDUCATION.
ADVOCACY.

July 1st, 2016

Dear Members of the Indiana General Assembly,

Promoting the conservation of wildlife by providing an abundance of quality habitat is a top priority for the Indiana Wildlife Federation. Indiana's forests support an amazing diversity of plants and wildlife enjoyed by Hoosiers across the state. Indiana forest land covers about 4.9 million acres, approximately 21 percent of our state's total land base.

Active management of our forests is essential to effectively provide young, intermediate, and old stages of growth within our forests. Active management is accomplished with the help of several sustainable management tools such as timber harvest and prescribed fires, which mimic historic disturbances and maintain structural diversity.

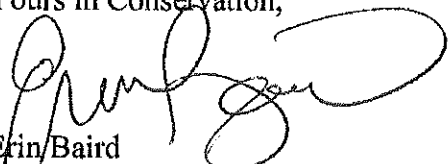
Currently, Indiana forests are comprised overwhelmingly of intermediate stage growth. Wildlife species that prefer the widespread, intermediate growth forests are doing well, while many others that require substantial areas of much younger or older growth have shown significant declines due to lack of suitable habitat. IWF supports statewide forest management strategies that will increase the amount of forest in the young (<19) and old (>100) growth age classes.

The proportion of Indiana forest land that is owned and actively managed by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry is small, at 158,300 acres. *IWF fully supports the Division of Forestry's sustainable management approach that is based on current science and implemented by their educated and experienced staff of professional foresters.* In fact, IWF would like to see this type of management strategy applied on a much broader, statewide scale.

As one of our most precious and important natural resources, it is imperative that forests are effectively managed to provide quality habitat for our wildlife and to sustain the resource for future generations.

We encourage you to support active and sustainable management of our Indiana forests.

Yours in Conservation,



Erin Baird
Executive Director

The Indiana Wildlife Federation is a statewide, science-based, conservation organization. The federation has more than 600 individual members and 25 hunting, fishing and conservation organization affiliate members committed to the sustainable use and management of Indiana's natural resources. IWF is also the state affiliate organization of the National Wildlife Federation.

PURDUE

UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

23 June 2016

Indiana General Assembly
200 West Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Senators and Representatives:

I am writing to support Division of Forestry management of Indiana state forests that is based on best available science and is committed to sustainability of forest resources for multiple uses. The Department of Forestry and Natural Resources at Purdue University offers the only accredited forestry program in Indiana. The department's mission is to develop and disseminate knowledge in forest and other natural resource sciences associated with protection, management, and sustainable use of ecosystems, the natural resources they produce, and the benefits they provide. The department's mission guides its research, Extension, and curriculum, and hence the education and training received by its students. Many of the department's alumni work in the Division of Forestry, where they manage state forests in a manner consistent with the mission that formed the basis of their education.

Most of our current Indiana forest contains a canopy with a substantial number of oaks, trees that are valuable ecologically and economically. These oaks regularly produce seedlings from their acorns. But without proper forest management, oak seedlings fail to grow into canopy trees. Current management efforts by the Division of Forestry strive to regenerate oaks and hence sustain the current oak-hickory ecosystem, consistent with the mandate of its enabling legislation (IN 14-23-4-1) "that future generations have equal opportunities of enjoyment." These management efforts create young forest, which currently is in short supply throughout the Midwest and is critical to conservation of wildlife. Young forest/shrub is the primary habitat for nearly half of the 100 bird species of greatest conservation need, and is used by over half of the 187 neotropical migrant songbird species that breed in the Midwest.

Forests are complex ecosystems, so the Division of Forestry has invested in research by several universities to understand how management affects multiple components of the forest ecosystem. Investment in scientific research is important because it allows professional foresters to make responsible decisions and adapt management of forest ecosystems as new information becomes available. Ten years ago the Division of Forestry embarked on a 100-year Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment to improve our understanding of how forests respond to management. It is extremely rare for such a long-term and large-scale experiment to be undertaken by a state forestry agency, it is tangible evidence of the importance the Indiana Division of Forestry places on science-based management, and it serves as a model for other states to emulate.

In summary, management of public forest lands by the Division of Forestry is conducted by professional foresters trained in science and the importance of multiple uses of the ecosystem, intended to sustain and conserve forest ecosystems and the wildlife and other resources they contain, and guided by past and ongoing research. By adhering to these tenets, the Division of Forestry is responsibly implementing the public policy of its enabling legislation.

Sincerely,



Robert K. Swihart
Professor and Head

Indiana Tree Farm Committee
2896 Centennial Road
Martinsville, IN 46151

June 15, 2016

Indiana General Assembly
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Legislators,

The purpose of this letter is to support the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry in the active management of the state forests. The state forests are composed of 158,300 acres managed for recreation, timber, wildlife, and water resources. Indiana's state forests are among the best managed in the world and as such are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI).

The 158,300 acres in state forests are only about 29% of the state-owned lands managed by the Department of Natural Resources. The other 71% state owned lands that are off-limits to timber management are managed by the Division of Fish and Wildlife, Division of Nature Preserves, and Division of State Parks and Reservoirs.

The Division of Forestry has 30 professional foresters, many with advanced degrees. This staff of highly trained individuals utilize the latest scientific research to actively manage state forests for healthy timber resources, diverse wildlife habitat, and outstanding outdoor recreation while protecting water resources. This staff has over 500 years of land management experience.

The Division of Forestry has been implementing their mission for about 90 years. In the beginning the job was to restore forests and wildlife and stabilize topsoil to protect water resources for future generations. The Division of Forestry has done an outstanding job of restoring these forests and the associated ecosystems. The way we manage these resources is important not only for today but for the future healthy environment and diverse ecosystems, and the Indiana economy.

In summary, we support the active scientific management of Indiana's state forests as being implemented by the Division of Forestry.

The Indiana Tree Farm Committee consists of 31 members. These members are active or retired representatives of Hardwood Tree Improvement Center, Purdue Department of Forestry, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Indiana Farm Bureau, Indiana Hardwood Lumbermen's Association, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Indiana Forest and Woodland Owners Association and USDA Forest Service, consulting and city foresters, or Tree Farmers from throughout the state. 900 Indiana Tree Farmers are Certified by the American Tree Farm System Standards of 2015 -2020.

Sincerely,

Robert Burke /s/
Robert Burke, Chairman
Indiana Tree Farm Committee



QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 160 • 170 Whitetail Way • Bogart, GA 30622
PHONE: 800.209.3337 • FAX: 706.353.0223 • www.QDMA.com

Date: 17 June 2016
To: Indiana General Assembly
From: Kip Adams, Director of Education and Outreach
Re: DNR Forestry Management Program

On behalf of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) I am writing to state our support for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) forestry management program. The QDMA is a national nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ensuring the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage. The QDMA has over 60,000 members nationwide and our membership includes hunters, landowners and natural resource professionals.

The DNR's Division of Forestry contains 30 degeed foresters and over 500 years of experience managing forests. The Division manages under a multiple-use forest management program, and Indiana's state forests have been certified by the Forest Stewardship Council and the Sustainable Forest Initiative. The Division of Forestry's management efforts should be celebrated, not attacked by anti-timber management activists.

The QDMA supports the DNR's successful and statutory multiple-use forest management program and we hope you do too. Please contact me if I can provide additional information on this important matter and thank you for your commitment to Indiana's natural resources.

Respectfully,

Kip Adams

Kip Adams
Director of Education and Outreach



To the Indiana General Assembly:

I oppose attempts to manage Indiana's state forests by imposing statutory limitations on forest management and timber harvesting. I believe the forest management decisions for these forest properties should be made using the most current forest management science and application techniques available. As a Consulting Forester working in Indiana for over 28 years I have full confidence in the professional foresters and other resource managers of the DNR who have collectively managed the State Forest properties lands since they have been acquired.

State Forests are being managed by professional foresters and resource specialists to demonstrate working forest concepts. A working forest is actively managed under a stewardship plan that guides its activities to accomplish the desired goals. The working forest can provide a variety of goods and services such as watershed protection, recreation, wildlife habitat, scenic beauty, wood products, and natural areas, and education. This stewardship plan is provided balance by the input of a Forest Stewardship committee whose members represent a majority of the forestry interests in Indiana.

State forest management decisions and their application are currently being monitored by a third party Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) to ensure that the highest international standards of forest sustainability are being met. Continuous forest inventory systems are used to monitor the health and condition of public forests and responsively adjust management as needed. The state forest-based Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (HEE) monitors the impacts of various forest management strategies, and HEE data is used to make adjustments to management decisions. Many of the lessons learned from the application of these forest management techniques on state forests have been shared, and are being used by professional foresters like myself on private woodlands across Indiana.

The Division of Forestry (DoF) has state forest land specifically set aside from harvesting and/or timber management based on natural resource science. These lands are held within areas designated as state forest *Nature Preserves*, *High Conservation Value Forests*, and *Backcountry Areas*. These lands serve as benchmarks, learning centers, and incubators for Indiana's forest resource. A healthy forest landscape is diverse across species composition, size classes, and age levels.

I support the DOF current management strategies which use sound forest management information, current forest management science, and properly applied techniques to properly manage our State Forests for the good of all of Indiana's citizens.

Mike Warner ACF

Mike Warner

President

Arborterra Consulting Inc.

Certified Forester #1269

Chairman Indiana Association of Consulting Foresters

PHEASANTS FOREVER

Central Indiana Chapter
"The Habitat Organization"

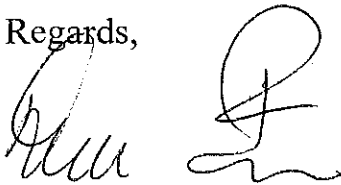
June 19, 2016.

The Indiana General Assembly
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

The Central Chapter of Pheasants Forever fully endorses and supports the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry's sustainable timber harvesting plan. The plan is scientifically based best forestry management practices that not only creates much needed wildlife habitat, but also creates economic development in rural Indiana. We ask the General Assembly to support the Division of Forestry's initiative and forward thinking.

Related we are concerned about the lack of funding for the Division of Forestry. The Division lacks the resources (i.e., need more trained foresters) to fully manage Indiana state forests as well as provide private landowners with technical assistance. We hope the General Assembly can find dedicated conservation funding to manage all of Indiana's forests and hire more foresters.

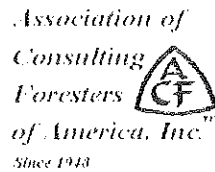
Regards,



Dean Farr
Legislative Director
7610 Old Oakland W. Dr.
Indianapolis, IN 46236

INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF CONSULTING FORESTERS

State Chapter of



To: Indiana General Assembly

Indiana Association of Consulting Forester's (IACF) position on legislative bills that limit or disallow timber management on state forests.

IACF opposes attempts to manage Indiana's state forests by imposing statutory limitations on forest management and timber harvesting. We believe the forest management decisions for these forest properties should be made using the most current forest management science and application techniques available. IACF has full confidence in the professional foresters and other resource managers of the DNR who have collectively managed the State Forest properties lands since they have been acquired.

State Forests are being managed by professional foresters and resource specialists to demonstrate working forest concepts. A working forest is actively managed under a stewardship plan that guides its activities to accomplish the desired goals. The working forest can provide a variety of goods and services such as watershed protection, recreation, wildlife habitat, scenic beauty, wood products, and natural areas, and education. This stewardship plan is provided balance by the input of a Forest Stewardship committee whose members represent a majority of the forestry interests in Indiana.

State forest management decisions and their application are currently being monitored by a third party Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) to ensure that the highest international standards of forest sustainability are being met. Continuous forest inventory systems are used to monitor the health and condition of public forests and responsively adjust management as needed. The state forest-based Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (HEE) monitors the impacts of various forest management strategies, and HEE data is used to make adjustments to management decisions. Many of the lessons learned from the application of these forest management techniques on state forests have been shared, and are being used by professional foresters on private woodlands across Indiana.

The Division of Forestry (DoF) has state forest land specifically set aside from harvesting and/or timber management based on natural resource science. These lands are held within areas designated as state forest *Nature Preserves*, *High Conservation Value Forests*, and *Backcountry Areas*. These lands serve as benchmarks, learning centers, and incubators for Indiana's forest resource. A healthy forest landscape is diverse across species composition, size classes, and age levels.

IACF supports the DOF current management strategies which use sound forest management information, current forest management science, and properly applied techniques to properly manage our State Forests for the good of all of Indiana's citizens.

John Byers
Indiana Forest Industry Council – President
6236 W. U.S. Hwy. 40
Reelsville, Indiana 46171

Indiana General Assembly
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

Dear Indiana General Assembly:

I represent the Indiana Forest Industry Council (IFIC), and am writing to express our full support for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) successful and statutory multiple-use forest management program. The DNR's management continues to provide "Certifiably Sustainable" timber while benefitting all citizens with excellent fish and wildlife habitat, broad ecosystem management, and increased recreational opportunities.

I understand that some in our state have voiced concern over the management of the State Forests by the DNR. The Indiana Forest Industry Council has a long history of opposition toward many of these preservation groups and many in our industry have suffered from damaged equipment and spiked trees. The DNR is currently doing an outstanding job of managing 158,300 acres of Indiana's State Forest's, but it is important to keep in mind that there are an additional 567,093 acres in State Parks and other lands that are off limits to timber management.

Indiana's state forests are among the best managed in the world. They are certified as sustainably managed by two leading authorities – Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI). Other states look to Indiana as a model of good forest management. IFIC urges you to not hinder the DNR's management, but to promote and be proud of the great job they are doing for us in the State of Indiana.

Sincerely,


John Byers



June 24, 2016

Indiana General Assembly
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

Dear Sirs:

Indiana Forestry & Woodland Owner's Association (IFWOA) supports the current forest management policies of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry. The Division employs forestry and wildlife professionals and engages in research to ensure a well-managed resource.

The Division not only relies on skilled experts, they monitor the condition of public forests with continuous forest inventories and responsively adjust management as needed.

Researchers from multiple universities study the impacts of forest management on the state forest-based Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (HEE) and those results inform Division decisions. In addition, the independent Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) annually monitors state forest management to ensure the highest international standards are met.

Our forests are growing older and require management to maintain resilience and ecological diversity. While some debate the need to set aside old forest, research shows that a shortage of young forest is harming our forest environment. IFWOA supports the Division's current strategies to create a balance of all ages of forest to maintain diversity and wildlife habitat.

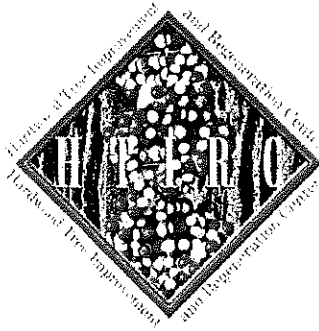
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth A. Jackson", written in a cursive style.

Elizabeth A. Jackson
Executive Director

IFWOA
1007 North 725 West
West Lafayette, IN 47906-9431
[765] 583-3501 FAX [765] 583-3512

Promoting Stewardship of Indiana's Woodlands



June 27, 2016

Indiana General Assembly
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of scientific management of the Indiana's state forests using sustainable forest management techniques and the latest forest science.

The Hardwood Tree Improvement and Regeneration Center (HTIRC) is a collaborative national research, development and technology transfer center for hardwood stewardship. Our goals include increasing knowledge and developing strategies for conservation, protection, utilization and marketing of the hardwood resource.

We partner with forest scientists and foresters across the U.S., including the Indiana Division of Forestry, to provide cutting-edge research for forest managers. This information informs multiple-use management while encouraging sustainable timber and wildlife habitat for generations.

In summary, the staff of the Indiana Division of Forestry are forest professionals with access to current science to responsibly manage Indiana's state forests for multiple uses as obligated by the Division of Forestry's enabling legislation.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Douglass F. Jacobs'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'D'.

Douglass F. Jacobs
Co-Director, HTIRC

Hardwood Tree Improvement & Regeneration Center
715 State Street
West Lafayette, Indiana 47907



C.C. COOK AND SON LUMBER CO.

• KILN DRIED INDIANA HARDWOOD GRADE LUMBER •
INDUSTRIAL PALLETS -- SKIDS AND BLOCKING



6236 WEST U.S. HIGHWAY 40
REELSVILLE, IN 46171

PHONE (765) 672-4235 FAX (765) 672-4600

Charlie Cook
C.C. Cook & Son Lumber Company, Inc. – President
6236 W. U.S. Hwy. 40
Reelsville, Indiana 46171

Indiana General Assembly
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

Dear Indiana General Assembly:

I represent C.C. Cook & Son Lumber Company (a fourth generation Indiana sawmill) and am writing to express our full support for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) successful and statutory multiple-use forest management program. The DNR's management continues to provide "Certifiably Sustainable" timber while benefitting all citizens with excellent fish and wildlife habitat, broad ecosystem management, and increased recreational opportunities.

The DNR is currently doing an outstanding job of managing 158,300 acres of Indiana's State Forest's, but it is important to keep in mind that there are an additional 567,093 acres in State Parks and other lands that are off limits to timber management.

Indiana's state forests are among the best managed in the world. They are certified as sustainably managed by two leading authorities – Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI). Other states look to Indiana as a model of good forest management. We urge you to not hinder the DNR's management, but to promote and be proud of the great job they are doing for us in the State of Indiana.

Sincerely,

Charlie Cook

Indiana Woodland Steward



June 28, 2016

Indiana House of Representatives
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

Indiana State Senate
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2785

Dear Representatives and Senators,

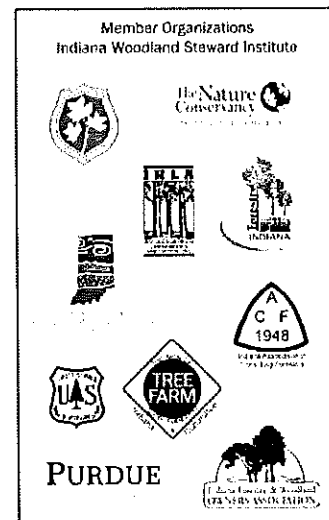
The Woodland Steward Institute (WSI) has been producing the Woodland Steward Newsletter for woodland owners in Indiana for 25 years. We send newsletters to 33,000 woodland owners each issue. The objective of our newsletter is to provide general and technical natural resource information to woodland owners of Indiana, improve information distribution and build support for responsible forest resource management.

The Indiana Division of Forestry has been practicing forest management in Indiana for over 100 years. They are certified sustainable by both the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI). By being certified they hold themselves accountable not only to the citizens of Indiana and the Division Forestry's enabling legislation (IN 14-23-4-1), but also to a private third party, whose mission is to promote environmentally sound, socially beneficial and economically prosperous management of the world's forests. The Division of Forestry holds themselves accountable to a more rigorous standard than any other Division within the IDNR that is managing public land.

The Woodland Steward Institute supports the Indiana Division of Forestry's successful and sustainable multiple use forest management program on the State Forests.

Sincerely,

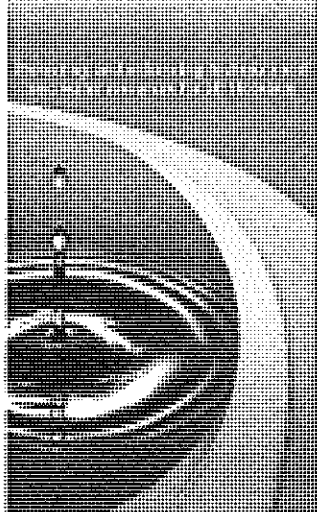
Dan Shaver
WSI President



June 29, 2016



Indiana Association of
Soil and Water
Conservation Districts



IASWCD
225 S. East Street
Suite 740
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Phone: 317.692.7325
Fax: 317.423.0756
Web: www.iaswcd.org

PRESIDENT:
Mike Starkey
Hendricks County

VICE PRESIDENT:
Jamie Scott
Kosciusko County

TREASURER:
Paula Baldwin
Marion County

SECRETARY:
Roger Wenning
Decatur County

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
Jennifer Boyle Warner
Jennifer-boyle@iaswcd.org

Indiana House of Representatives
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

Indiana State Senate
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2785

Dear Representatives and Senators:

The Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD) supports the mission of Indiana's Division of Forestry and the current forest management practices and policies they follow on the State Forests. According to the IDNR – Division of Forestry Strategic Direction, the mission on the State Forest Properties is to manage, protect, and conserve the timber, water, wildlife, soil and related forest resource for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations, and to demonstrate proper forest management to Indiana's landowners.

The Division of Forestry has a staff of professionals with degrees in natural resource management fields including forestry, wildlife management, and outdoor recreation that implement resource management practices that are science based to produce a healthy and resilient forest that is diverse and sustainable. The division continually monitors the state forests condition using forest inventory data. This data is then utilized to assess the forest health and review harvest levels in order to ensure long-term sustainability. The data indicates that current harvest levels are at 60 percent of growth which is well below sustainable levels. The data also provides information on the forest structure and age classes to ensure a diverse forest ecosystem is present. Past harvesting on State Forests predominantly used single tree selection which although appearing less destructive aesthetically, results in a less diverse, shade tolerant climax forest. Scientific evidence shows that diverse harvesting practices (including clear-cuts, group selections, and shelterwoods) are necessary to create a diverse and resilient ecosystem. The Division of Forestry is also working with various Universities on a long-term, comprehensive study (HEE – Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment) on the impacts of their forest management practices and utilizes information derived from that study and other research to adjust their management as needed. The Division of Forestry's efforts are also monitored by both the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI) to ensure the State Forests are in compliance with strict standards established by both independent international groups. These certification programs also allow timber harvested from the State Forest Properties to be sold as "Green Certified".

The IASWCD supports the Indiana Division of Forestry's successful and sustainable multiple use forest management program on the State Forests and their commitment to the conservation and multiple use management of private forestlands through the Classified Forest and Wildlands Program in Indiana.

Sincerely,

Mike Starkey
President

THE IASWCD MISSION is to enable the conservation of natural resources of Indiana.



June 30, 2016

Indiana General Assembly
200 West Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Sir / Madam:

The National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) is writing you today in response to the attack on the Department of Natural Resources from activists opposing timber management. The NWTF advocates for over 230,000 members, with nearly 6,000 of those residing in Indiana. We are stewards of wildlife, their habitat and functional ecologies and support the use of science to determine the conservation and management practices of wildlife and habitat as per the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.

The Forest Stewardship Council and the Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI) have certified the management of the 158,300 acres of state forests managed by the Division of Forestry. The Division of Forestry participates in a multiple-use forest management program and use 30 degreed foresters to accomplish their legislated goal of conserving resources for future generations.

Through their work they have been able to maintain a healthy environment, diverse wildlife and significant revenue from timber sales.

The NWTF and our members are strong supporters of active forest management which benefits wildlife and their habitat and encourage these efforts by partnering with SFI and other active forest management advocates.

Unlike those who oppose timber cutting, the Department of Natural Resources is utilizing scientific research and analysis to determine the best approach for forest management and we support their multiple-use forest management program. We commend the forest management work of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and ask that you continue to support their efforts.

Sincerely,

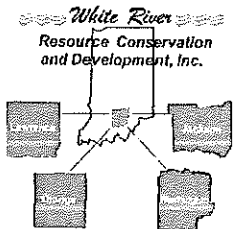
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca A. Humphries', written in a cursive style.

Rebecca A. Humphries
Chief Conservation Officer

National Wild Turkey Federation

PO Box 530 • 770 Augusta Road • Edgemoor, South Carolina 29824 • Phone: (803) 637-3106 • Fax: (803) 637-9180

www.nwtf.org



WHITE RIVER RC&D AREA Inc.
1919 Steven Avenue - Bedford Indiana 47421
Tele: (812) 279-8117 Ext. 3 Fax: (812) 279-1394
Serving Jackson, Lawrence, Orange and Washington Counties

July 13th, 2016

Indiana House of Representatives
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

Indiana State Senate
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2785

Dear Legislators,

The White River RC & D Forestry Committee, which operates in a four county region in south central Indiana is comprised of primarily natural resource professionals of all walks of life, both active and retired. Our group strives to provide a broad base of technical information and support to woodland owners of Indiana, improve information distribution., sponsor field days, all to encourage awareness of the merits of responsible forest and natural resource management.

The IDNR DoF (Indiana Division of Forestry) has been practicing sustainable forest management in Indiana for over 100 years. The DoF lands are certified sustainable by both the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI). By being certified they hold themselves accountable not only to the citizens of Indiana and the Division Forestry's enabling legislation (IN 14-23-4-1), but also to a private third party, whose mission is to promote environmentally sound, socially beneficial and economically prosperous management of the world's forests. The Division of Forestry holds themselves accountable to a more rigorous standard than any other Division within the IDNR that is managing public land.

The White River RC & D Forestry Committee supports the continued practice of sustainable forest management on Indiana's state forests. We believe this practice is important for the continued health and vigor of these woodlands and their associated wildlife populations, plus the added benefit of scientific advancement, and contribution to societies' need for wood fiber.

Sincerely,

John P. Stambaugh
Chair, WR RCD Forestry Committee



WALNUT COUNCIL

July 8, 2016

Indiana General Assembly
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

To whom it may concern:

Walnut Council supports the current forest management policies of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry. The Division employs forestry and wildlife professionals and engages in research to ensure a well-managed resource.

Researchers from multiple universities study the impacts of forest management on the state forest-based Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (HEE) and those results inform Division decisions. In addition, the independent Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) annually monitors state forest management to ensure the highest international standards are met.

The Division not only relies on skilled experts, they monitor the condition of public forests with continuous forest inventories and responsively adjust management as needed.

The Walnut Council is a science based organization that encourages research, discussion, and application of knowledge about growing hardwood trees. This international association represents nearly 800 woodland owners, foresters, forest scientists, and wood-producing industry representatives. We support the Division's current management strategies to create a balance of all ages of trees to maintain a healthy and resilient hardwood forest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fred Crouse".

Fred Crouse
President
fcrouse@centurytel.net

IHLA/DNR DOF

Resource management is a complicated issue for individuals, let alone government. Because they are dynamic, natural systems are even more complicated. Management decisions can be driven by feelings, philosophy or science. Perhaps the worst management regime would be driven by fiat from a legislative chamber populated by politicians with little or no understanding of the interconnectedness and intricacies of the ecosystem being managed.

About the beginning of the 20th century almost all of Indiana was cleared of its trees. The wonderful forests that people now love so much have returned to the land. Without site conversion to agriculture or development, trees will return when harvested. Since our forests are all more or less the same age there is an uneven distribution of age classes in our forests. We do not have a balance of the ecosystems that different aged trees drive. We lack trees less than 20 years old. If we want to have a balanced landscape, more openings need to be made to let young trees start. To do this we can drop trees and let them rot or sell them.

Indiana has about 4,500,000 acres of woodlands. Of that about 9% is in "no cut" management. As woodland ownership continues to be more fragmented into smaller tracts there will be less harvesting of timber since the overhead required for a timber sale will not be able to be met. We will have to wait for the no cut areas to become "old growth".

The land my family has stewardship over is getting ready for its 3rd timber harvest since European culture arrived in the area.

Raoul Moore
Moore Family Tree Farm LLC, est. 1956
1791N 175E
Crawfordsville IN



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July 27th, 2016

Indiana General Assembly
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Senators and Representatives:

I am writing to provide support for the Indiana Department of Natural Resource's multi-use forest management practices on behalf of the Ruffed Grouse Society and American Woodcock Society (RGS/AWS) and our members in Indiana and throughout North America.

Established in 1961, RGS/AWS are North America's foremost conservation organizations dedicated to healthy forest habitat for wildlife and the preservation of upland sporting traditions. We strongly support science-based sustainable forest management that promotes all forest age classes. **In order to sustain the full array of forest wildlife, we need to sustain the full array of forest wildlife habitats, young, mature, and all ages in between.** We are committed to maintaining habitat for ruffed grouse, American woodcock and wildlife that require young forests. To that end, we employ 6 full-time wildlife biologists with advanced degrees (24% of our entire staff) who specialize in the study and restoration of young forest habitat and the suite of wildlife that depend on it.

RGS/AWS support the Indiana Department of Natural Resource's third party certified multi-use forest management practices. This statement would not have been possible in the recent past. The long term neglect and mismanagement of Indiana's state forests has created on-the-ground conditions that are drastically impacting forest communities and the wildlife that depend on them. In some cases species are being pushed to the brink of extirpation from the state. *The recent increase in active forest management on state lands is a reasonable and sensible approach that is essential for maintaining an entire suite of young forest wildlife. In fact, our support would be even greater if there was more cutting taking place.* Since timber harvest rates were near zero for an extended period of time young forest species will require a sustained period of active management across ownerships and the forested landscape at a rate even higher than what is currently being practiced.

Indiana's Young Forest Wildlife are in Trouble

Data collected by the U.S. Geological Survey North American Breeding Bird Survey from 1966 until 2013 across private and public lands in Indiana help paint the picture. In Indiana, mature forest bird species are faring considerably better than young forest species which are

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dependent on disturbance, such as even-aged timber management (e.g., clearcuts, shelterwood cuts, seed tree cuts), to create maximum sunlight conditions on the forest floor resulting in the natural regeneration of thick dense habitat. Here are the data for 1966 to 2013:

Woodland (Mature forest) breeding species in Indiana:

Species with significant positive trend estimates 38%
Species with significant negative trend estimates 16%

Successional or scrub (Young forest) species in Indiana:

Species with significant positive trend estimates 11%
Species with significant negative trend estimates 42%

The American woodcock is another young forest dependent bird. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service woodcock singing-ground counts for Indiana in 2015 surveyed 18 routes and found a 6.8% decrease in the number of singing males as compared to 2014. This number is worse than the overall annual decrease of 4.2% since 1968. This is by far the highest annual rate of decline of any state in the American Woodcock Central Management Region (second is Ohio with a 1.3% annual decline).

While many young forest species benefit from active forest management many mature forest species benefit as well. Recent research in Ohio and Pennsylvania found that numerous migratory song birds that nest in mature forests will relocate to thick young forests after the breeding season. Additional research has indicated that early successional habitat is vital to migrating songbirds, including mature growth nesting species, as they move from their breeding areas to their wintering grounds.

Ruffed Grouse in Indiana

Ruffed grouse were once very common and widespread in Indiana but are a recent addition to the State's list of Endangered and Special Concern Species. They are currently listed as State Special Concern but we believe there is enough evidence to list them as State Endangered. All metrics, including grouse drumming surveys, used to monitor the population of this bird in Indiana have clearly and unquestionably shown an exponential decline approaching extirpation from the state. The formerly robust population of ruffed grouse has been reduced roughly 99% in the past 25 years. Drumming surveys have found zero displaying males the past four years (see graph below).

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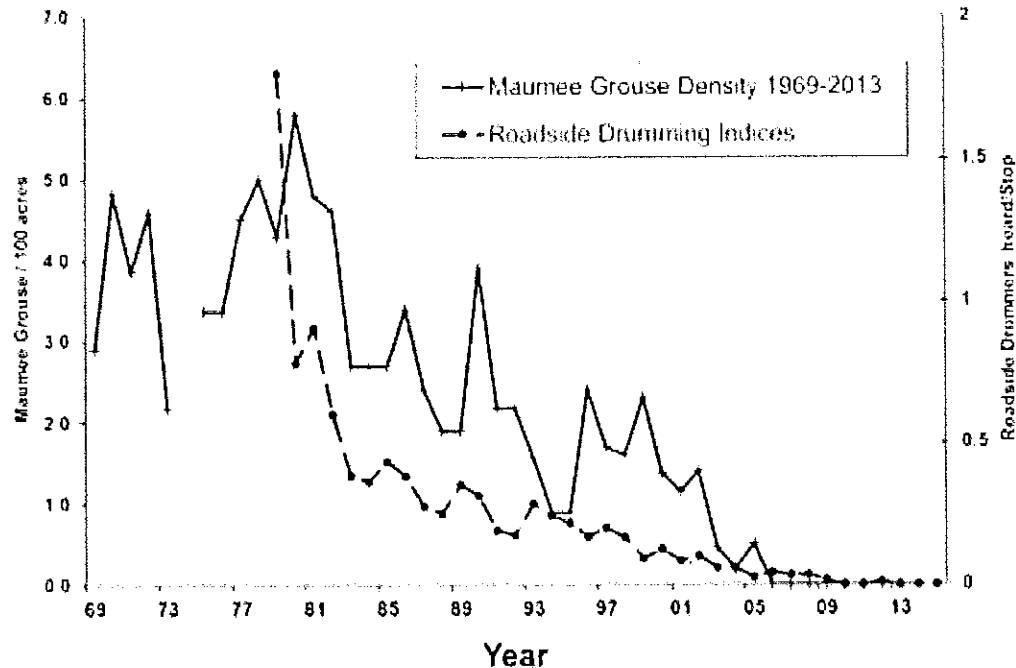
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Figure 1. Indiana Grouse Population Trends



Efforts to recover a sustainable population of ruffed grouse in Indiana are directly threatened by any legislation that aims to curtail the following:

1. Sustainable forest management as currently practiced by the IDNR.
2. Herbicide use to control invasive species, especially in oak/hickory stands.
3. The ability to conduct prescribed fire on public lands, a practice conducted by humans in Indiana for centuries that has shaped the forests we have today.
4. Vehicle access to areas to conduct prescribed burns, invasives species control, and forest management.

Limiting these activities on more public land in Indiana will further push a portion of Indiana's natural heritage to the brink of extirpation. It will further degrade habitat for wildlife that require young forests and shrubby habitat sometime during their life cycle such as ruffed grouse but also white-tailed deer, wild turkey, five-lined skink, rough green snake, eastern massasauga, bobcat, eastern box turtle, timber rattlesnake, and a host of migratory songbirds to name a few.

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We hope the management efforts needed will be implemented at the scale required for ruffed grouse and other wildlife to benefit. This will take time as the current habitat is in very poor shape and grouse do not begin extensively utilizing stands until roughly 10 years post-harvest. The fragmented remnant grouse populations are in isolated pockets of suitable habitat making repopulation more difficult and exposing female grouse expanding their territories through open understory mature woodlands to higher predation by avian predators (by far the main predators of ruffed grouse). **Large scale active forest management across the landscape will be required for the restoration of grouse populations.**

It should be noted that there are many unsubstantiated opinions on the decline of ruffed grouse in Indiana without scientific merit. This includes excess predation from coyotes and foxes, competition and nest predation from Wild Turkey, lack of response by grouse to logging, a low point in the normal ten-year population cycles (grouse do not cycle in Indiana), and climate change. Translocating birds from other states is also not feasible as there are no states with the ability to provide birds adapted to Indiana and there is extremely limited habitat to place them in.

Aging and Changing Forests

The preponderance of data and research indicate that the primary driver for the decline of young forest wildlife species in Indiana is the aging of Indiana's forests due to lack of disturbance and active forest management.

According to 2014 data, the Indiana DNR manages roughly 323,000 acres of forested land in the State Forests, State Parks, Nature Preserves, and Fish and Wildlife lands. Of these forested lands only 127,000 acres are open to active forest management. **Thus, nearly 61% of state land is already set aside in a hands-off management system that primarily benefits mature forest wildlife species. Additional land set aside as mature forest is not needed or helpful.**

Data for Indiana from public and private land collected under the U.S. Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis National Program (FIA) show that 0-19 year old forest stands have declined from roughly 874,000 acres in 1986 to only 251,000 acres in 2014. During that same period the amount of forested land in the state increased from roughly 4.4 million acres to 4.9 million acres and forest stands 100 years or older increased from roughly 214,000 acres to 327,000 acres.

At the same time, the condition of the oak-hickory forests in Indiana has shifted towards older stands with limited regeneration. This forest type is vital to the timber industry but also wildlife that use the acorns and nuts produced in these stands. Oaks also host the greatest diversity

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and numbers of moths and butterflies whose caterpillars are the primary food source for nearly all young songbirds, ruffed grouse, and wild turkeys. Oak-hickory saplings do not regenerate in shaded conditions under mature forests, they require disturbance such as fire, cutting, or wind events to get the sunlight they need. The following table illustrates the decline and lack of regeneration of oak-hickory stands in Indiana using FIA data:

Indiana oak-hickory stands under 20 years old:

1986: 380,000 acres
2014: 143,000 acres

Indiana oak-hickory stands 79+ years old:

1986: 424,000 acres
2014: 898,000 acres

The current SFI (Sustainable Forestry Initiative) and FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) third party certified management of Indiana's State Forests is helping shift the balance of forest age classes back to where they need to be to support young forest wildlife and the regeneration of Indiana's oak-hickory resource.

In summary, science-based active forest management conducted by degreed foresters and biologists can mimic natural forest disturbance and provide habitat for all wildlife, opportunities for outdoor recreationists and an economic boost to rural communities and the Indiana economy. Indiana has made a choice to support an enormous amount of mature forest habitat, but this choice is coming at the expense of young forest species. A piece of the natural history of the state may be lost because of this decision.

"The autumn landscape in the north woods is the land, plus a red maple, plus a ruffed grouse. In terms of conventional physics, the grouse represents only a millionth of either the mass or the energy of an acre yet subtract the grouse and the whole thing is dead."
Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac.

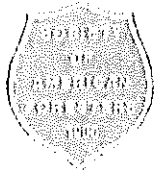
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best Regards

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SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS

INDIANA SOCIETY

6/27/16

Indiana General Assembly
Indianapolis, IN 46204

RE: Management of Indiana State Forests

The Indiana Society of American Foresters is writing to express its support of the Indiana DNR Division of Forestry's management of its State Forests under its current strategic plan. State Forests are just one part of the larger DNR land ownership and natural resource conservation matrix of Divisions. Each has a unique mission yet is unified in the overall mission to conserve Indiana's forests and natural areas for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of current and future generations.

DNR conservation strategies include ownership and stewardship of natural resource lands, "Green Certification" of its State Forest management programs, the landowner Classified Forest & Wildlands program, and the identification and dedication of Nature Preserves (the most widely distributed system of protected lands in the state). Like lands conserved by partner agencies and NGOs, a significant part of DNR holdings is left for natural processes where only limited management may occur. In total, DNR owns or has interest in more than 315,000 acres of forestland, with nearly one-third of it left to natural processes where only limited management may occur.

State Forests make up almost 150,000 of that total, of which 9,000 acres are designated as Backcountry Areas in four State Forests. While active forest management has always been a component of the Backcountry Area plan, it is allowed only in a more select and less frequent application than other areas of State Forests.

In 1901, the Indiana legislature made its intentions clear on how State Forests are to be managed. Indiana Code 14-23-4-1 reads: *"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. However, by the employment of good husbandry, timber that has a substantial commercial value may be removed in a manner that benefits the growth of saplings and other trees by thinnings, improvement cuttings, and harvest processes and at the same time provides a source of revenue to the state and counties and provides local markets with a further source of building material."*

"Good husbandry" is what still guides timber management practices on State Forest lands, while other forested lands in the DNR inventory are managed differently. DNR State Parks are free of commercial logging activities and generally left to passive recreation. So are DNR Fish &

Wildlife Areas. And there are 262 state-designated Nature Preserves totaling 46,000 combined acres where commercial logging is prohibited.

Any legislative efforts to prohibit active forest management on State Forest lands that are currently under multiple use management will be counter to the long, successful history of the Division of Forestry's resource management, protection, and conservation efforts. As professional foresters, we contend that placing legislative prescriptions on these efforts would negatively impact both the economic and wildlife habitat values of this land. For example:

- It would block trained professional foresters from continuing activities designed to ensure broad ecological considerations and long-term sustainability of these forest resources.
- The economic benefit brought by DNR's management practices profits all Hoosiers: from the taxpayer, to the timber cutter, to the lumber truck driver, to the sawyer, and to the owners of the businesses employing these individuals.
- Aside from the responsibilities given DNR in IC 14-23-4-1, there are clear conservation benefits of professional timber management, a nationally accepted reality. It would cause substantial loss of habitat suitable for native wildlife species, including many that are listed as either state or federally endangered. Ongoing research shows that managed timber harvesting is the most effective and economical tool for maintaining or restoring suitable habitat for many species of conservation concern while maximizing overall habitat and species diversity, productivity, and community resiliency.

A significant example of this last point is the federally endangered Indiana bat. The DNR Division of Forestry has worked closely with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) to develop a 20-year Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for the Indiana bat and other bat species that become federally listed due to the disease white-nose-syndrome.

Indiana State University and Ball State University researchers studied what effect DNR's timber management program would have on Indiana bat habitat relative to a number of other scenarios, including a "No Timber Harvesting" alternative. Their work will be published in a series of peer-reviewed scientific journals early this year. They found:

- "No Timber Harvesting" resulted in the lowest amount of suitable Indiana bat habitat on State Forests
- The Division of Forestry's current management program provided the highest amount of suitable habitat

As a result, active forest management, and timber harvesting in particular, is expected to play an important role in the State Forest HCP in order to maintain or improve Indiana bat habitat conditions in compliance with USFWS directives.

Legislation that prohibits active forest management on additional portions of DNR lands likely would eliminate more remaining habitat in Indiana for other wildlife species of conservation concern:

- Ruffed grouse, once a popular game bird in Indiana, rely on early successional forest patches within larger blocks of contiguous forest. Due to the cessation of timber harvesting in much of their range, ruffed grouse have experienced one of the most dramatic declines of any bird species in Indiana (Breeding Bird Atlas Explorer 2014, Backs & Castrale 2010).
- Cerulean warblers, a state-endangered species, have been studied extensively at Morgan-Monroe and Yellowwood State Forests, where research indicates DNR forest management techniques “are compatible with cerulean warbler breeding habitat needs” (Register & Islam, 2008).
- Researchers with the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (HEE), a long-term, landscape-scale study at Morgan-Monroe and Yellowwood, are finding after nearly a decade of study that species using mature forests prior to timber harvesting remain post-harvest while recording substantial increases in native species using recently harvested sites, including many species of conservation concern taking advantage of unique habitat created by timber harvesting. And as reported in a recent HEE extension publication, “forests with higher levels of habitat diversity are likely to have higher levels of animal, plant and insect biodiversity”. (Meier, 2015).

The consensus among researchers after 30-plus years of extensive study is that timber harvesting does not cause “fragmentation effects” on forest bird communities. In their seminal review of the scientific literature, five well-respected authors on the subject concluded: “*We are aware of no evidence in eastern forests that fragmentation of mature forest by young forest creates the type of negative fragmentation effects that fragmentation by agricultural or developed land uses do*” (Thompson et al, 2002).

Further discounting claims of habitat “fragmentation” by some is the fact the overwhelming majority of State Forest harvests use single-tree selection, which creates only small gaps in the forest canopy. These relatively low-impact harvests mimic the periodic, small-scale natural disturbance events that historically shaped every Midwestern forest and the ecological communities within them.

Prohibiting timber harvests in those areas would severely limit the productivity and quality of forage and game alike, which would result in far fewer and less rewarding public-land hunting opportunities for State Forest visitors.

The DNR is currently stewarding hundreds of thousands of acres that are restricted in the same manner that past legislative efforts have proposed. Acreage continues to be added to the public domain through the Indiana Bicentennial Heritage Trust Fund, much of which will not be held by the Division of Forestry and thus not subject to the type of forest management that past legislative efforts would have prohibited.

For reasons set out above, based on our professional training and experiences, the Indiana Society of American Foresters urges you to continue to support the DNR’s successful and statutory multiple-use forest management program that has benefitted the citizens of Indiana for over 100 years.

Sincerely,


William F. Minter
Policy Chair, Indiana Society of American Foresters

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The mission of the Society of American Foresters is to advance the science, education, technology and practice of forestry; to enhance the competency of its members; to establish standards of professional excellence; and to use the knowledge, skills and conservation ethic of the profession to ensure the continued health and use of forest ecosystems and the present and future availability of forest resources to benefit society.