



In response to bills limiting timber management on state forests

Indiana Forestry & Woodland Owners Association (IFWOA) opposes any statutory limitations on forest management or harvesting on our state forests. We support existing forest management policies on Division of Forestry properties which use current forest science. IFWOA has full confidence in the professional foresters and wildlife managers of the DNR who have collectively managed Division of Forestry lands for over 100 years.

The Division not only relies on professional forester knowledge and experience but maintains continuous forest inventory systems 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 informs management decisions. Finally, the independent third party Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) annually monitors state forest management to ensure the highest international standards are met.

The Division of Forestry (DoF) already has land specifically set aside from harvesting and/or timber management based on natural resource science. These lands, currently over 4000 acres, are based on biological factors; plant and animal species of special concern, steep slopes, and water protection, among others. In fact, Indiana already has over 400,000 publicly owned forested acres off limits to forest management.

Our forests are growing older and require management to maintain resilience and ecological diversity. While we debate the need to set aside old forest, recent forest research shows that actually a shortage of young forest is negatively impacting Indiana's landscape ("Five Anthropogenic Factors That Will Radically Alter Forest Conditions and Management Needs in the Northern United States," Shifley, et. al, Forest Science, October 2014). IFWOA supports the Division's current management strategies which best create appropriate levels of all ages of forest to provide critically needed diversity and habitat.

Approved by IFWOA Board of Directors, January 2018

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