

The Woodland Steward

Promoting the Wise Use of Indiana's Forest Resources

President's Letter

Overwhelming Property Management

As I sip my coffee and look out at my woods behind the house, the woods appear simple, unchanged and comforting, but I know there is work to be done. I was reminded of my personal limitations to manage my forest while reading an article titled *Introduced Species We Love to Hunt* in the February 2018 American Hunter magazine. The article posed the question "What should be here in our forests and fields, and what shouldn't?" The article discussed some native species that have expanded their historical range into new parts of North America, creating hunting opportunities, but also ecological problems. Species such as the Red Fox, Coyote and White-tailed deer fit this category for parts of the United States. Then they mentioned some introduced non-native species that some hunters like, but cause major ecological damage like wild pigs.

The author of this article mentioned a few of the ecological problems caused by the expansion and introduction of these species, but was really focused on the benefit to hunters with increased opportunities for hunting and trapping. I personally would have been more concerned with the ecological problems created, but the question of "what should be here in our forests and fields, and what shouldn't" is a good question. But it is a question that can overwhelm you to the point of doing nothing if you think about it too much. We have changed the forest landscape in Indiana and it will not go back to what it was, but we can take care of what we have and limit the problems we cause. I was encouraged by a statement sent to me from Brian MacGowan, Extension Wildlife Specialist and Editor for the Woodland Steward. "Stories (in the Woodland Steward) focus on forest management, how-to articles, wildlife management, invasive species control, insect pests and diseases, historical or human-interest pieces, forest policy, forest economics, and more. Based on a survey from 2011, 54 percent of subscribers regularly utilize information from the Woodland Steward. In addition, 51 percent have implemented at least one practice they read about in the Woodland Steward, potentially impacting an estimated 1.2 million acres of forestland."

Impacting 1.2 million acres. That is encouraging. Sometimes it can be difficult to decide on a project to tackle in your woods. My advice is to enjoy your woods, recognize that you can't fix everything in your woods at one time, or get rid of all the invasive plants, but you can make it better, keep it nice and benefit the plants and animals that call your woods home.

The Woodland Steward is mailed 3 times a year to woodland owners in Indiana. We would appreciate your support and help to pay for the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter. There is a donation envelope included with this issue of the Woodland Steward Newsletter.

Thank you for all you do to help protect and manage the forests of Indiana.

Dan Shaver

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Extension Act (RREA)

Calendar of Events

October 13

Walnut Council Indiana chapter field day
Greene County
Contact 765-583-3501 or jackson@purdue.edu.

October 16

Women Woodland Owners Learning Circle and Field Tour
9 AM-3 PM
Brown County
Contact brown@iaswcd.org or 812-988-2211.

October 20

Cunningham Forest Field Day, Tippecanoe County
1-4 PM
Contact lfarlee@purdue.edu or 765-494-2153.

October 20

Fall Forestry Field Day
Owen County
Contact Owen County SWCD at 812-829-2605
or andrea-oeding@iaswcd.org

October 20

Learn-to-Burn: Grassland Management Workshop
Vermillion County
Contact 765-492-5330 or cox119@purdue.edu.

October 27

Woodland Owners Workshop
Delphi, Carroll County
1-4 PM
Contact lfarlee@purdue.edu or 765-494-2153.

November 2-3

Annual Woodland Owner Conference
Brown County State Park
Friday field day, Saturday indoors.
See www.ifwoa.org/events for more information.

January – March 2019

Forest Management for the Private Woodland Owner
Purdue 8-week short course
Southern Indiana Purdue Ag Center, Dubois, IN.
Contact Ron Rathfon at 812-678-5049 or ronr@purdue.edu.

See www.ifwoa.org/events for the latest event information.

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The opinions expressed by the authors do not necessarily reflect those of the Woodland Steward Institute. The objectives of the newsletter are to provide general and technical natural resource information to woodland owners of Indiana, improve information distribution and build support for responsible forest resource management.

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Indiana Wildlife Federation's Sustainable Trails Program

By Aaron Stump

In 2017, IWF certified the Urban Wilderness Trail (UWT) as the first sustainable trail in our program. The UWT is the ideal flagship trail for our new initiative. A publicly accessible trail running the along Fall Creek and the White River in the heart of Indy, it provides the opportunity to experience nature in the city, do some wildlife spotting, and enjoy the many colors of Indiana native wildflowers. Since then, we have begun certification with Holliday Park, Brownsburg Parks, and the DePauw Nature Park.

The program was designed to encourage the development of trails into thriving habitat corridors that are easier to manage, offer a greater benefit to all trail users, and promote the conservation of local ecosystems through enriching human interaction with the environment. At the heart of the certification are four primary goals. First, to promote the conservation, enhancement, and restoration of wildlife habitat surrounding developed trail areas. Second, to provide the four main components needed by wildlife: food, water, shelter, and nesting space. Third, to preserve and enhance the natural diversity of Indiana's habitats. This includes removing invasive plants from the ecosystem and replacing them with a diverse selection of native plants. Finally, to create an environmentally-friendly corridor that provides access to humans without compromising the activity of wildlife.

The certification program is very much a partnership between IWF and the certified property manager. We



offer guidance during construction or renovation of the trails and assist with the implementation of improvements. For instance, on the UWT we planted 100 swamp white oaks along the river with about 20 volunteers. IWF also brings programming to the trail, such as the monarch tagging event we host annually in the grasslands on the UWT. Later this summer, we will be hosting a campfire hike along the trail with Indiana Humanities and exploring the connection between nature and literature.

For more information on the program or to discuss certifying your public trail, contact our Habitat Programs Manager, Aaron Stump at stump@indianawildlife.org or by calling 317.875.9453.

Aaron Stump is a Habitat Programs Manager with the Indiana Wildlife Federation, www.indianawildlife.org.

Erratum

In the most recent issue of the Woodland Steward (vol. 26, no. 3), we recognized the support of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts across the state. We omitted Wayne County from the map. We apologize to the Wayne County SWCD and thank you for your many years of support!



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Invasive Species Watch – Mile-a-Minute Vine

By Ron Rathfon

Preventing the establishment of new invasive species is priority number one and the best expenditure of limited resources in an invasive species management program. Next in priority is early detection of and rapid response (EDRR) to the first report of a new invasion. Mile-a-minute vine (*Persicaria perfoliata* (L.) H. Gross) is native to East Asia. It is a member of the buckwheat family, Polygonaceae. Although its common name exaggerates its growth potential, this annual vine can grow as much as 6 inches a day and can reach heights of more than 25 feet within the growing season. It forms very dense, tangled mats, growing over shrubs, small trees and up the sides of forest edges (Fig. 1). The leaves are simple, alternate, light green and a nearly perfect triangle shape (Fig. 2). The delicately narrow, green to red-tinted stems, and the petiole (leaf stem) and midrib on the underside of the leaves are armed with small, stiff, recurved barbs (Fig. 3). Small, cup- or saucer-shaped leaf structures, called ocreae, encircle the stem at each node (Fig. 4). Clusters of small white, rather inconspicuous, flowers emerge from the ocreae. Flowers develop into clusters of deep, iridescent blue berry-like fruits, approximately 5 mm in diameter (Fig. 4), each fruit containing a single black or reddish-black hard seed, called an achene. Seeds are dispersed by birds and mammals, including chipmunks, squirrels and deer, which eat the fruit. Floodwaters facilitate long distance dispersal of seed.

Distribution: Mile-a-minute vine was found in Indiana for the first time this spring. In May 2018, a single vine was found in Monroe County and verified

by experts. No other plants have been found at this time. The nearest documented infestations to Indiana occur in southeast Ohio counties bordering the Ohio River. Because it has not yet arrived in Indiana, and because of the very real threat of its spreading down the Ohio River or being inadvertently introduced into the state by human activity, this invasive vine is listed as a high-priority species for prevention, early detection and rapid response efforts.

Impact: Mile-a-minute's rapid growth and dense infestations, along with its very early spring germination, gives this species a very substantial competitive advantage over most native plant species. It easily overwhelms, shades out and displaces many native plant herbaceous species. It can overtop, shade out, weigh down, and even break taller herbaceous plants, woody shrubs, and tree seedlings and saplings. Mile-a-minute infestations reduce plant species diversity and disrupt wildlife habitat. Where timber harvesting occurs, mile-a-minute destroys tree seedlings and saplings, resulting in forest regeneration failures.

Numerous invasive vine species with aggressive growth behavior vex forestry and natural resource professionals and landowners. Mile-a-minute vine promises to outdo all of them. Please be on the lookout for this invasive species and report it on EDDMapS (Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System) www.eddmaps.org/indiana/ or from your smart phone on the GLEDN (Great Lakes Early Detection



Figure 1 Photo Credit: USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org



Figure 2 Photo Credit: Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org



Figure 3 Photo Credit: Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org



Figure 4 Photo Credit: Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org

Network) app. If you are unsure if you are correctly identifying a very aggressive vine with characteristics that appear similar to those shown in this article, please contact a forester or other natural resource professional for confirmation or just report it in EDDMapS or the GLEDN app, along with photos, and a professional in your area will verify its identification before it actually gets posted.

For more information on mile-a-minute vine, see Purdue University Cooperative Extension publication FNR-481-W, *Invasive Plant Series, Mile-a-Minute Vine* (www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/fnr/fnr-481-w.pdf).

Ron Rathfon is an Extension Forester with Purdue University. His extension activities are directed to private landowners, professional foresters and other natural resource professionals, youth groups, educators, and the public. In addition, he manages over 600 acres of departmental forest at SIPAC where much of his research is conducted.

Report Invasive Species!

EDDMapS


Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System

www.eddmaps.org/indiana/

GLEDN smart phone app

(Great Lakes Early Detection Network)

<https://apps.bugwood.org/apps/gledn/>




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Photo Credit: Anita Howard Photography

2017 Tree Farmer of the Year

By Ken Day

Saint Meinrad Archabbey of St. Meinrad, Indiana is the 2017 Tree Farmer of the Year. The Archabbey has practiced sustainable forestry since 1948 and been in the national Tree Farm System since 1956. They were selected for their long term (70 years) stewardship of resources for timber, water, and wildlife while also providing opportunities for recreation and hunting and fishing. Father Guy Mansini accepted the award at the Tree Farm Breakfast at the Indiana Hardwood Lumberman's Association convention in Indianapolis on February 7, 2018.

Their forest management has been guided by keeping the management plan current with revision as necessary, with

revisions in 2009, 2013, and 2014. Foresters have inspected the woodlands every 5 years and included looking for insects and diseases. Over the years they have conducted timber harvests on over 1,000 acres which removed about 2.5 million board feet of timber and over 750 thousand cords of pulpwood. Guided by professional foresters, the Archabbey used a combination of cutting methods including selection, group selection, and clearcutting.

Tree planting has been a part of their management with the first planting occurring in 1948. More recently they planted hardwoods on over 450 acres on former crop land that flooded occasionally. Some of the tree planting is part of a carbon sequestration project for the American Electric Power Company. Also, the Archabbey conducted timber stand improvement on over 750 acres to improve the quality of the timber stands.

The Archabbey has shared their forest management experiences with Lincoln Hills RC&D woodland owners and representatives of Indiana Society of American Foresters. They have utilized the expertise of Indiana Department of Natural Resources district foresters, consulting foresters, industrial foresters, and Natural Resources Conservation Service staff.

The Saint Meinrad Archabbey was established in 1854 by monks from Einsiedeln Abbey in Switzerland. It is a community of Roman Catholic Benedictine monks with about 95 monks living, praying, and working. The Benedictine motto is "Ora et labora" (pray and work). It is "ora" or "pray" that comes first.

The Tree Farmer of the Year award is sponsored by Indiana Tree Farm. Recognition of outstanding professionalism in sustainable forestry practices is one of their objectives. Education is the other objective. Awardees are selected by the Indiana Tree Farm Committee which has 31 members representing a cross section of forestry professionals in the state.

Ken Day is a retired forester and former Woodland Steward Institute board member. Prior to his retirement, he most recently served as Forest Supervisor for the USDA Forest Service, Hoosier National Forest.


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EQIP Financial Assistance for Woodland Owners

By Brian Kruse

Managing your forestland often involves implementing some type of work. Common practices in your woods may include timber harvesting, thinning, controlling invasive species, building or repairing forest trails and landings, edge feathering, and sometimes pruning and tree planting. With the exception of timber harvesting these practices are often associated with a financial cost to the landowner. Since these practices fix or prevent damage to the environment and help deliver environmental benefits, the US Department of Agriculture offers various financial assistance programs to help defer these costs.

One of the most common and successful financial assistance programs is the Environmental Quality Incentives Program or EQIP. Since 1996, the EQIP program has provided financial and technical assistance aimed at promoting production, environmental quality, and optimizing environmental benefits. The Natural Resources Conservation Service is the principal agency in charge of distributing the EQIP program.

The two main EQIP forestry practices are Brush Management used to control invasive plant species and Forest Stand Improvement used to thin out or around trees within the woods. This article is intended to help forest landowners understand these two practices within the EQIP program and guide them through the EQIP process.

Controlling Invasive Plant Species:

Indiana NRCS has targeted the following 17 woody invasive plant species to be controlled through the EQIP program on forestland: Ailanthus (Tree of Heaven), Amur Cork, Bush Honeysuckle, Autumn Olive, Burning Bush, Callery Pear, Glossy Buckthorn, Japanese Barberry, Japanese Honeysuckle, Japanese Knotweed, Kudzu, Multi-Flora Rose, Oriental Bittersweet, Paulownia, Periwinkle, Siberian Elm, and Winter Creeper.

These non-native woody species are fast-growing, prolific, hardy and widespread throughout Indiana. Previous control methods have been successful and are economically feasible for these species. For fiscal year 2018, Indiana will adopt three scenarios with the following payments.

- Light infestation (\$72/acre): Light removal of invasive woody understory is based on sites with less than 10% cover.
- Medium infestation (\$102/acre) assumes 10-50% cover.
- High infestation (\$430/acre) used on sites with 50-100% cover. This high payment rate allows for the shredding or chipping of plants with machinery like forestry mowers, fecon mulcher, hydro axe, brush cutter, etc.

Experience from Indiana's professionals indicates that repeated treatments of chemical and mechanical (mowing, cutting) or management (Prescribed Burning, Prescribed Grazing) methods are required for successful control of invasive plants. Indiana's approach to controlling invasive woody plant species relies on the following schedule:

- Pre-Treatment - Through conservation planning, identify the resource concerns caused by invasive plants, including the species present and their current infestation levels.
- Year 1 - Apply an appropriate level of mechanical or management plus chemical treatments (i.e. – heavy treatment on mature populations; lighter treatment for recently-established populations); For heavy infestations mechanical or management treatments are required in the initial year to set back mature individuals to a level that chemical treatments are more-effective, and to allow for easier access for subsequent treatments. Plus, mechanical or management treatments alone are often not sufficient to adequately control these species at a heavy infestation, so chemical treatments are also required in this initial year.
- Year 2 – Apply chemical treatment at the next-lower treatment level as a result of the initial treatment setting the population back or allowing for easier access to residual plants. In the second growing season following sufficient first-year treatment, the target species should be suppressed. The amount of labor and materials is less than the initial treatments since the large, mature individuals should no longer limit site access, and the re-sprouts and germinated seedlings are easier to treat. The cost for this treatment are significant, yet less than the initial treatment.
- Year 3 – Apply chemical treatment at the next-lower treatment level. In the third growing season, materials are less than second-year efforts since the number of re-sprouts and germinated seedlings is lower yet. At this point, the resource concerns caused by the invasive plants should be adequately treated. The cost for this treatment remain high because more labor is expended searching for residual plants, yet are less than the second-year treatment.
- Years 4 and beyond – Provide technical assistance to the producer to monitor and maintain any re-colonization of the target or other species. The expectation is that natural regeneration of favorable species will colonize the site to further limit re-infestations, but it is critical that producers monitor and are ready to treat any individual plants that

Continued on page 14

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Many thanks to our readers for the continued support of the Woodland Steward Newsletter. The Institute wishes to publicly thank each of you for your contributions. In 2017, the institute received contributions from 241 Woodland enthusiasts, for a total of \$7,281.00. This money will enable the Institute to mail to an additional 4,000 woodland owners.

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Indiana Terrestrial Invasive Species Rule Update

The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) has preliminarily adopted a new rule designed to remove 44 invasive plants from trade inside Indiana. The decision only starts the deliberative rules process. It does not put a new rule into effect. This rule would make the sale, transportation, introduction or distribution of these plants illegal. According to the DNR announcement published July 17, 2018, "Indiana land managers (private and public) spend an estimated \$8.6 million dollars in managing invasive plants on an annual basis. Invasive species in Indiana regularly move into the forest. This restricts the ability of trees to regenerate as essential nutrients and sunlight are blocked and being utilized by invasive species that are able to regenerate earlier in the successional process."

The list of prohibited plant species include tree of heaven, garlic mustard, autumn olive, wintercreeper and many more. It does NOT include Callery pear or Norway maple. Callery pear and Norway maple were not included at this time because of a large negative economic impact on the nursery industry. These were removed at this time to allow the rule to continue to move forward and get the other 44 targeted plants on a do not sell list. The Indiana Invasive species Council is working to get Callery pear or Norway maple added to this list as they should be. They are considering a phase out period for these plants to mitigate the economic impact to the industry. This would allow growers to liquidate existing inventories to minimize the impact of the Rule on their businesses. The NRC is taking public comments from now until November 2018. Public hearings will take place in November 2018, final decision in January 2019, and taking effect in April 2019.

For more information about the proposed rule including the timeline, public hearing announcements and comment, visit <https://www.in.gov/nrc/2377.htm>. Information is listed at the bottom of the page under "Terrestrial Invasive Plants" rule.



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Timber Inventory ~ Resource Plans ~ Timber
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Mark your property: 'Purple Paint Law' in effect July 1

By Matt McKinney

If you see purple paint on a fence post or tree, it means don't enter the property, starting July 1.

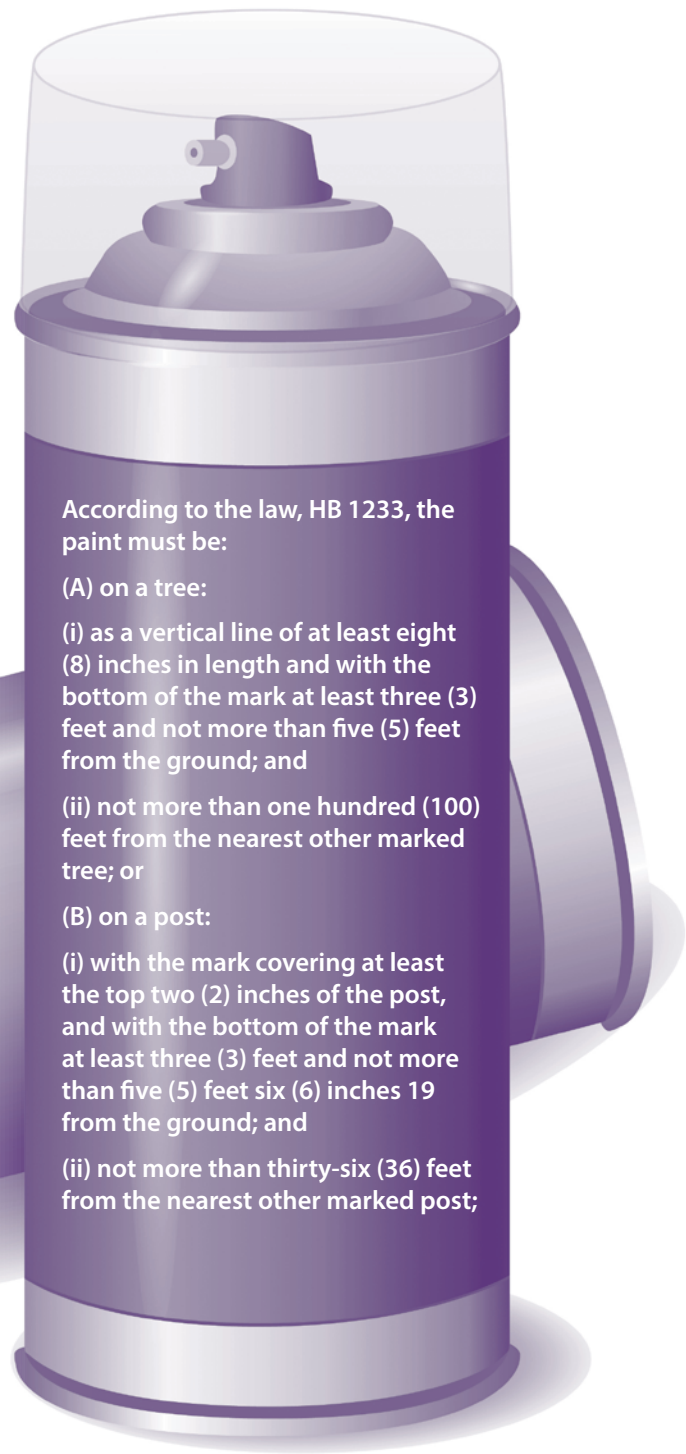
A new law will go into effect in Indiana that makes purple marks the same as a "No trespassing" sign, with a couple of caveats.

The law allows landowners in Indiana to mark their property with purple paint to prevent trespassing and minimize liability if someone illegally enters the property and gets hurt.

The signs are typically used near land reserved for hunting, so a landowner doesn't have to keep replacing a sign that may have been vandalized or destroyed by the weather.

Gov. Eric Holcomb signed the new law on March 21, but he attended a ceremonial signing in June. Rep. Dave Wolkins (R-Warsaw) authored the measure. "This is an efficient, simple way for landowners to keep trespassers out," Wolkins said, via IndianaHouseRepublicans.com. "It will also help minimize a property owner's liability, prevent accidental trespassing and make it easier to prosecute trespassers. Because the paint cannot be easily removed, it can be effective for several years."

Matt McKinney is a digital content producer with RTV Channel 6 in Indianapolis. This story was reprinted with permission. It was published July 2, 2018 on www.theindychannel.com.



According to the law, HB 1233, the paint must be:

(A) on a tree:

(i) as a vertical line of at least eight (8) inches in length and with the bottom of the mark at least three (3) feet and not more than five (5) feet from the ground; and

(ii) not more than one hundred (100) feet from the nearest other marked tree; or

(B) on a post:

(i) with the mark covering at least the top two (2) inches of the post, and with the bottom of the mark at least three (3) feet and not more than five (5) feet six (6) inches 19 from the ground; and

(ii) not more than thirty-six (36) feet from the nearest other marked post;

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Support Forest Owners in the Farm Bill

By American Forest Foundation

When most think of the Farm Bill, they think of row crop farming and nutrition programs. But there's another piece of this bill that is vitally important to the clean water, wildlife habitat and wood supply that Americans count on - the Farm Bill's conservation and forestry programs that support family forest owners.

Families and individuals, who own and care for the largest portion of U.S. forests, want to do right by the land, but often lack technical expertise and funds to get the work done. The Farm Bill helps these landowners overcome barriers, by providing planning and technical assistance, financial support, as well as policies to help grow markets, research, education programs and more.

How is the Farm Bill Currently Supporting Forest Landowners

The last Farm Bill, passed by Congress in 2014, made improvements in a number of its conservation and forestry programs, specifically for family forest landowners. It has had a considerable impact on families' abilities to care for and improve their forestland.

In summary, Farm Bill Programs have:

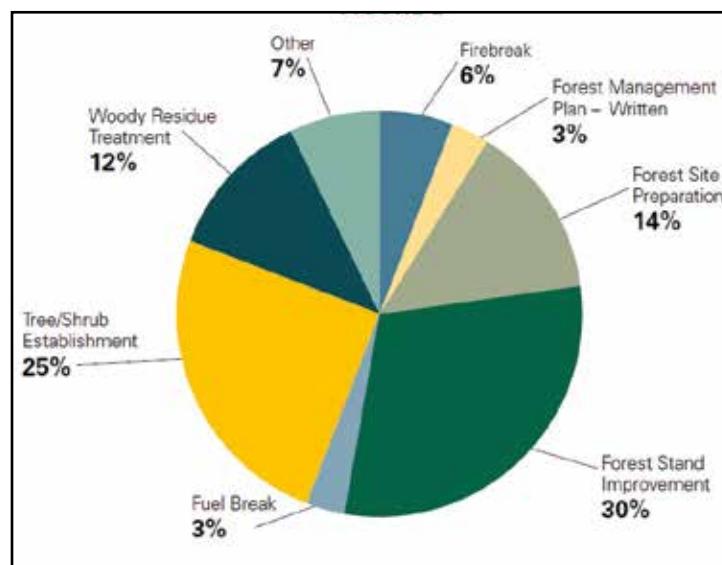
- In just the past 3 years, the Farm Bill's conservation and forestry programs helped family **woodland owners conduct conservation efforts across more than 10 million acres**. That's more than 9,000 acres of family-owned forestland improved per day.
- More than \$1.86 billion have been invested in the past 3 years through the Farm Bill to assist forest owners, a figure 3 times the amount allocated to programs for family forest owners through the annual appropriations process in the same timeframe.
- Public-private partnerships, such as the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) have better leveraged funds, connected with more willing landowners, and are working towards a greater impact on some of our biggest forest challenges. Federal funds used through these public-private partnerships are stimulating investments by the private side – **with private industry, non-profit groups, local governments, universities and more, investing nearly \$2 for every \$1 federal dollar spent in these partnerships.**

- The Farm Bill's forestry investments have not only put forests to work, but they have also put rural communities to work – we estimate upwards to 86,000 jobs were supported by Americans who helped complete forest conservation practices needed on the land.
- **The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) helped tackle wildfire risk, insects and disease, improve water quality and more across 1.7 million acres in just 3 years' time.**
 - ♦ Specifically, landowners were able to install 8,300 miles of fire breaks to help prevent catastrophic wildfires. That's 3 times longer than the length of the U.S.

Forest Policy Improvements AFF Would Like to See in the 2018 Farm Bill

As we look toward the 2018 Farm Bill, the American Forest Foundation (AFF) asks Congress to improve on the last iteration to further support landowners in addressing our biggest environmental issues, and continuing to provide the natural resources that Americans count on:

- Maintain funding and support for woodland owners in forestry and conservation programs of the Farm Bill



2016 EQIP forest funding allocation by forest practice. (Source: Forest in the Farm Bill: A 2017 Progress Report and Recommendations, American Forest Foundation)

Continued on page 13



Forest Inventory Programs Contribute Scientific Results About Indiana's Forests

By Joey Gallion

Continuous Forest Inventory systems, implemented on DNR State Forest Properties and private lands enrolled in the classified forest and wildlands program, in conjunction with data from the USFS Forest Inventory & Analysis program provide scientific and interesting results about Indiana forests. These productive forests provide homes and food for wildlife; clean our water and air; protect soil that would otherwise disappear due to erosion; and provide fine quality hardwood products to Hoosiers, Americans, and the world.

The full reports from all three of these programs can be found on the Division of Forestry's homepage listed under Forestry Publications and Presentations <https://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/3605.htm> by scrolling down to the forest inventory and analysis section.

Over the past six decades, the area of Indiana timberland has increased from 4 to 4.9 million acres. Over that same period, the volume of growing stock timber nearly quadrupled from 2.6 to 9.5 billion cubic feet. The vast majority, an estimated 3.6 million forested acres, are owned by family forest owners.

While Indiana is fortunate to have such productive and high quality forests, there are concerns. Average tract size continues to decrease as ownerships change hands. Our mature forests continue to age. Compared to younger trees older trees have less ability to fight off stresses caused by insects, diseases, shortages of water and nutrients. Invasive plant species, which outcompete native vegetation for sunlight and nutrients, were detected on more than 90 percent of the FIA inventory plots. Nonnative insects, such as the emerald

ash borer, also can play a major role in our native trees' abilities to survive. Regeneration of our oaks and hickories could be much better.

Many of these issues are intertwined, and some will argue that forest management is a detriment to old growth

structure. Figure 1 depicts stand age by ownership shown as a percentage of each ownership's total area. It shows that 41% of the State Forest Properties' are 91+ years old compared to 29% of the total IDNR forestland, 23% of the Hoosier National Forest and 9% of private forestland.

At the same time, this graph depicts state and private forestland each have 11% of their forestlands less than 30 years old, as compared to the Hoosier National Forest with only 2% of their forestland in these young stand ages. Most recently, State Forest Properties' have 5% of their forestlands less than 10 years old, the most of any ownership group. One can compare past forest management practices of each of these ownerships to see how these forests got to their current status.

Let's look at recent growth and mortality rates. Net growth is total growth less mortality. The combined effects of the 2012 drought, aging stands, insect and disease pressure, etc. culminated in an increase in mortality in the years following 2012. Increased mortality caused net growth to decrease as well. They converged in 2014, but are now diverging back toward more historic levels (Figure 2).

Another important factor in stand dynamics is species composition. The number of trees by species and by diameter class is depicted in Figure 3. While oaks are well represented in the larger age classes, they make up a small part of smaller trees. The future species composition will likely change as time goes by with the larger diameter trees being replaced by the smaller diameter trees. Very likely, the number of oaks

will diminish and then maple, beech, and other shade tolerant species are positioned to dominate the species composition. Tree species composition in a forest has many implications for micro-climates which in turn impacts flora, fauna, wildlife and numerous other aspects of the forest.

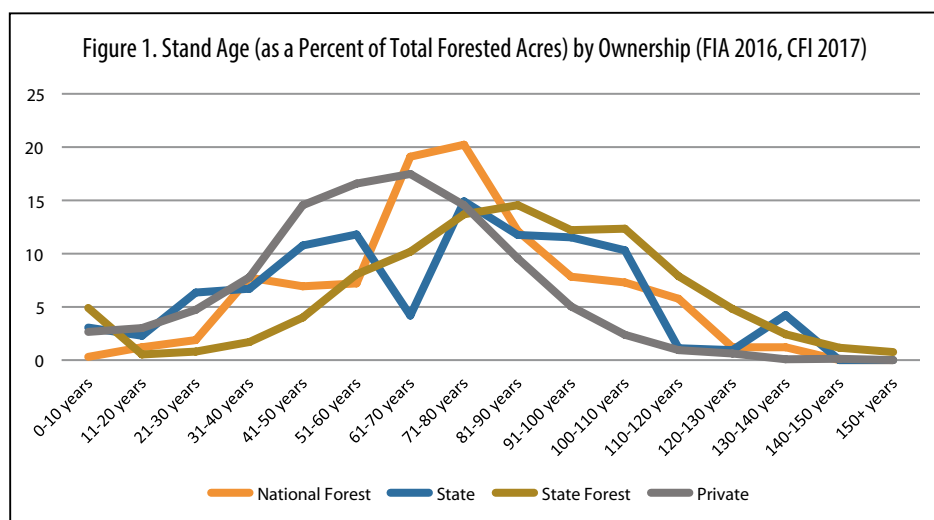
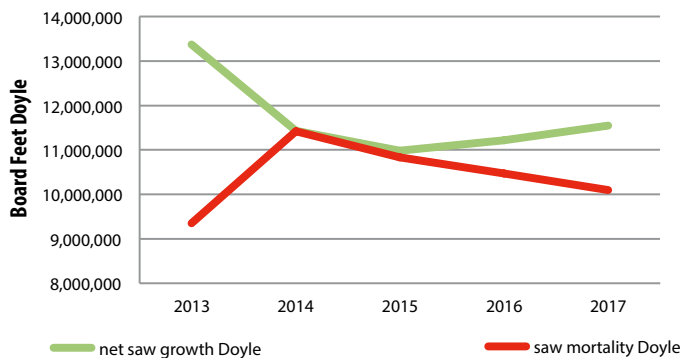


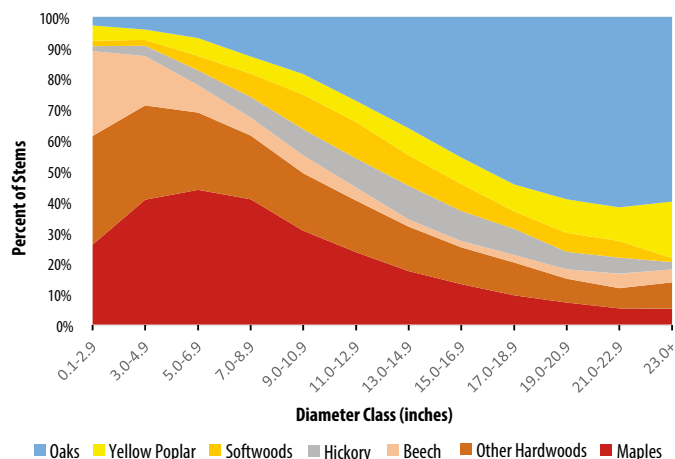
Figure 2. State Forest Property Data Average Annual Net Growth and Mortality of Saw log Trees (Doyle/yr)



All of these issues need to be monitored, and future management decisions may need to be altered to address these concerns as they each play a role in the current trajectory away from dominance by oaks. This long, slow change has implications for biodiversity, wildlife, recreation, and the forest products industry. For these and other reasons, the Division of Forestry is aggressively managing their lands for both ends of the stand age spectrum to promote both aging and young forests as well as diversity in species composition and oak retention.

Joey Gallion is a Forest Inventory Program Manager with the Indiana DNR, Division of Forestry.

Figure 3. Oak Regeneration (or lack thereof)



Farm Bill

Continued from page 11

- Improve technical assistance and program implementation for forest landowners
- Support cross-boundary, landscape scale efforts to tackle forestry issues, especially wildfire
- Provide support and regulatory assurance for landowners who help at-risk wildlife
- Support a strong, diverse forest products industry, including legislation like the Timber Innovation Act and new tools to help grow markets, such as the Community Wood Energy Program

Forests in the Farm Bill Coalition

In addition to being the voice of family forest owners in Washington, D.C., AFF co-leads the Forests in the Farm Bill Coalition, a coalition of organizations that works to build broad forest and conservation support for forest policy priorities in the Farm Bill.

The Coalition, which has been in existence for more than 15 years, includes more than 90 forest and conservation groups representing all aspects of the forest sector, including forest owners, conservationists, hunters, anglers, forest industry and natural resource professionals. It is co-chaired by the American Forest Foundation, National Association of State Foresters, National Wild Turkey Federation, and The Nature Conservancy.

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EQIP

Continued from page 7

establish themselves while they are still young and easier to control. The costs for monitoring and maintenance at this point are real, but typically manageable by most producers.

The planner (often a DNR District Forester, NRCS staff, or a NRCS Technical Service Provider) will determine which scenario is appropriate in years 1, 2 or 3 as necessary, based on a site visit. For example, a heavily infested area of bush honeysuckle might be planned for High in year 1, Medium in year 2 and Light in year 3. This approach would achieve the best control in terms of ensuring that most plants are killed and that re-sprout or re-seeding is also controlled.

Forest Stand Improvement:

Forest Stand Improvement (also called Timber Stand Improvement) is one of the most commonly prescribed practices to implement in your woods. This practice involves the manipulation of species composition, stand structure, and stocking by cutting or killing selected trees and or understory vegetation. The purpose of this practice is to help meet landowner's objectives while improving forest products, forest health, wildlife habitat, and a variety of other resources. For the purposes of the EQIP program, this practice is generally non-commercial and should be kept as separate as possible from commercial harvests.

For fiscal year 2018, Indiana has two main Forest Stand Improvement scenarios throughout the State (Light FSI and Temporary Forest Openings). A few other rates are available in select locations in southern Indiana.

- **Light Forest Stand Improvement** (\$92.31/acre) will reduce basal area by at least 10 square feet per acre. This can also be described as cutting and/or killing at least 100 trees per acre, or releasing at least 10 crop trees per acre and/or killing any vines growing on crop trees.
- **Temporary Forest Opening** (\$155.63/acre) often called group openings, are essentially small clear-cuts created in a forest in order to provide early successional forest habitat for wildlife or to regenerate the forest stand. Temporary openings provide sunlight to the forest floor



An example of a severe infestation of Japanese Honeysuckle in a southern Indiana woodlot.

resulting in a tremendous amount of sprouts, shrubs, grass, and herbaceous vegetation. The resulting thicket provides high quality food and cover for a large number of wildlife species, especially neotropical songbirds, wild turkey, ruffed grouse and whitetail deer. In addition, foresters often use group openings to help regenerate shade-intolerant trees such as oaks. Temporary forest openings are created with a chainsaw or small machines by cutting and dropping all trees and brush in an area one-fourth of an acre to 10 acres in size, primarily in large blocks of forest.

EQIP Process:

- **Planning:** To get started with NRCS, we recommend you stop by your local NRCS field office. We'll discuss your vision for your land. NRCS provides landowners with free technical assistance, or advice, for their land. Often a professional forester is utilized for writing a Forest Management plan and site inspections. These plans may be a Forest Stewardship plan written by a DNR District Forester, a plan funded through the EQIP written by a NRCS Technical Service Provider, or another plan meeting specific requirements by a private professional forester. EQIP policy requires a forest plan be written when forest related conservation practices are implemented on forestland. Both Forest Stand Improvement practice and the

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Brush Management practice will first need a forest plan in order to be eligible for EQIP and to plan out the practice details.

- **Application:** NRCS will walk you through the application process and help you fill out the necessary forms. The main application form for all NRCS programs is the CPA-1200 Conservation Program Application form. Applications for EQIP are accepted on a continuous basis, but they're processed and considered only once a year. Be sure to ask your local NRCS district conservationist about the deadline for the ranking period to ensure you turn in your application in time.
- **Eligibility:** As part of the application process, NRCS will check to see if you are eligible. To do this, you'll need to bring: An official tax ID (Social Security number or an employer ID) a property deed or lease agreement to show you have control of the property; and a farm and tract number. A farm and tract number, can be obtained from USDA's Farm Service Agency. Typically, the local FSA office is located in the same building as the local NRCS office.
- **Evaluation of your application:** Once your application has been filed and both you and your land are determined to be eligible for EQIP, the local NRCS conservation planner will have a one-on-one consultation with you to review your forest management plan and the practice(s) you are interested in applying for. The NRCS conservation planner may even present you with other a conservation practices or systems to help address your concerns or management goals.

Once you have chosen the practices to apply to your land, your application will be evaluated in the national, state, or local funding pool in which you have applied. Funding pools allows NRCS to target funding to specific natural resource concerns, locations or operations.
- **Ranking:** NRCS will take a look at the applications and rank them according to local resource concerns, the amount of conservation benefits the work will provide and the needs of applicants. Applications for conservation practices and systems that will result in greater environmental benefits for national, state, and/or local natural resource priorities will receive a higher score and higher priority to receive an offer for a financial assistance contract.
- **Implementation:** If you're selected, you can choose whether to sign the contract for the work to be done. Once you sign the contract, you'll be provided standards and specifications for completing the practice or practices, with



EQIP can help pay for control of invasive species (foliar herbicide application in this case). Private and public land managers spend an estimated \$8.6 million annually on invasive species management.

a specified amount of time to implement. All work must meet NRCS standards and specifications. Once the work is implemented and meets inspection, you'll be paid the rate of compensation for the work.

The participant is responsible for see that the work gets done. Participant can do the work themselves or hire it out. Keep in mind using a chainsaw and restricted use herbicides can make this difficult for the majority of landowners. NRCS does not keep a list of contractors however many SWCD or District Foresters can help direct you to contractors.

- **Payment:** You will not be paid more than the amount in your EQIP contract. After the work is completed, the payment typically goes directly to you. If you are not doing the work yourself you can arrange for the payment to go directly to the contractor. It is up to you to contact a contractor and makes arrangements for the services to be provided, payments, and schedule for completion. In addition, it is your responsibility to negotiate the bill, as well as establishing when and how the payment will be made to the contractor.

For more information about the EQIP process contact your local NRCS office. Office locations and phone number can be found on the Indiana NRCS website at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/in/> and clicking on "Contact Us" on the top of the page. Or at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/in/contact/local/>.

Brian Kruse is the state forester for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in Indiana.



Days Gone By

Bucking crew with a "virgin" beech log estimated over 200 years old. Location in Jefferson County, north of Dupont, IN circa 1931.

(Photo by Roy C. Brundage)

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