



Hoosier National Forest Highlights



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Recovery Act Projects on the Hoosier National Forest

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September 30, 2010 marks the end for spending Stimulus Funds given to the Hoosier National Forest. In July of 2009 the Hoosier was give authority to spend 1.7 million in Recovery Act Funds to accomplish a number of meaningful projects. The emphasis was to stimulate the economy during these economically challenged times in counties with the highest unemployment by creating new jobs or retaining existing threatened jobs. The economy was stimulated through the expenditures such as contracts, material purchases, and temporary hires.

Projects ranged from road and trail improvements to a fuels reduction project. Work was accomplished in eight of the nine counties containing Hoosier lands. Positive impacts from these Recovery Act Projects were felt by contractors, previously unemployed workers, visitors to the Hoosier, and state and local governments.

The Hoosier hired 16 STEP (Student Temporary Employment Program) students over the course of 17 months. A STEP employee must be a student seeking a degree. Students selected for the positions were from the following counties: Lawrence, Orange, Monroe, Owen, Brown, Perry, and Johnson. These students were used to accomplish the following projects:

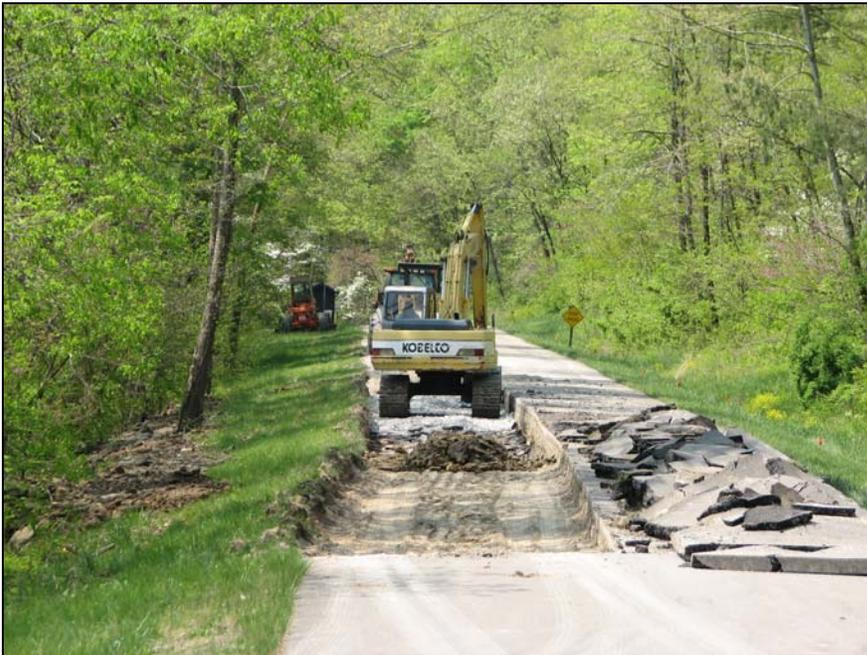
- Replace regulatory road signs on all Forest Service roads
- Replace regulatory road signs on many County roads with a designation of Forest Highway
- Installed signs and painted gates on 250 plus road gates on Forest Service System Roads
- Created a GIS database to track all gates on the Forest
- Inventoried dispersed recreation sites
- Installed 590 barrier posts on designated dispersed recreation sites throughout the Forest
- Installed over 500 road numbers on Forest Service System Roads

The Hoosier awarded 18 road reconstruction/improvement projects in Perry and Crawford Counties stimulating local contractors to add 5 new employees to their force. These roads were in need of repair due to lack of adequate maintenance funds over the years along with upgrades needed to address increased activities on the roads. The road project costs totaled just over \$1.3 million dollars and improved approximately 21 miles of road. Road improvement included repairs to the sub-grade beneath asphalt roads, asphalt paving, culvert replacement, road relocation, brushing, gravel surfacing, ditch work, etc.

Reconstruction work was also done to trails Forest-wide on the Hoosier. Much of the work was accomplished using local high school students as part of our YCC (Youth Conservation Corp) Program. These students maintained and reconstructed a number of miles of trail on the Brownstown Ranger District. Other trails were maintained using local contractors. In total the Forest accomplished 54 miles of trail improvement for just under \$200,000.

The last project included in the Recovery Act Funding is a hazardous fuels reduction contract. This contract has been awarded and should be complete by spring 2011. The project will construct 75 miles of fuel breaks in Crawford and Perry Counties in areas of heavy storm damage and wind throw to reduce the potentially devastating impacts from wildfire. The cost for this project is approximately \$28,000.

Many of the above mentioned projects have been completed; however, a number of them will continue into 2011. For more information on projects related to the Recovery Act contact Brad Lidell at blidell@fs.fed.us or 812-276-4756.



A contractor reconstructs the Tipsaw Lake Road with Recover Act Funding in June 2010.



Group of students hired in the summer of 2010 to work on Hoosier Recovery Act projects behind a gate they installed and signed.



Youth Conservation Corps enrollees pose in the process of working on a trail rehabilitation project. They built up a side slope trail with rocks and wire to provide better slope for hikers and horseback riders and drainage for run-off.