



Hoosier National Forest Highlights



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Twenty Five Years of Taking Pride In America on the Hoosier National Forest



By Cheri Stoops, Frontliner

Though there have certainly been a lot of changes, there has also been at least one constant on the Hoosier National Forest for the last 25 years. In early May, personnel from the Hoosier partner with Army Corps of Engineers, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, special interest groups, Boy Scout troops and numerous conscientious businesses and citizens for the annual Take Pride in America (TPIA) Day.

Take Pride in America®, is a nationwide partnership authorized by Congress to promote the appreciation and stewardship of our nation's public lands. This is the 25th consecutive year that the Hoosier has participated in this program.

The annual event has grown since the first one in 1987. We average an attendance of 200 volunteers, assisting in everything from picking up trash along our trails and roads, pulling out fence in recently acquired property, to building picnic tables and bird houses.

The day starts out with a general safety briefing then volunteers choose from a variety of projects. The groups then head to their project work site and get a more specific safety briefing on equipment/tool safety and learn what their job entails. At the end of the seven-hour workday, the Forest hosts a cook-out for the volunteers complete with hot-dogs and hamburgers. Every volunteer gets a T-shirt and free camping, and door prizes are available. It is always a festive time for both the volunteers and participating Forest employees.

Each volunteer gains an appreciation of the Forest Service mission of caring for the land. Many of the projects involve cleaning up trash or dumps and we recycle appropriate materials.

Volunteers literally remove tons of trash from the Forest. Participants gain a new concern for their environment and an appreciation for recycling, reusing, and reducing waste. The partnership forged by "Take Pride in America Day," accomplishes important work and instills local pride and ownership in the Hoosier National Forest.

This year the Hoosier's TPIA Day is May 14. For more information, please contact Cheri Stoops at 275-5987, castoops@fs.fed.us.



Caption to photo:

Volunteers with the bags of invasive garlic mustard they pulled at Hickory Ridge Horsecamp during the 2010 TPIA event.