



Hoosier National Forest Highlights



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Surveying Boundaries on the Hoosier and Minimizing Boundary Issues



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With approximately 1,400 miles of property lines on the Hoosier it is inevitable that there would be boundary line issues. Our primary goal is keeping these issues to a minimum.

The Forest Service actively surveys and marks property boundary lines so the property owner and their adjacent neighbors know whose land is whose. Boundaries are surveyed and marked under the supervision of an Indiana licensed land surveyor. As a result of these surveys, trespasses across the boundary line can be easily identified.

Trespass is often due to boundary lines not being marked and adjacent landowner's reliance on an old fence as the boundary line. Old fence lines often deviate from the true property line, and were commonly constructed following the simplest possible route.

As funds are available, forest managers survey national forest land and mark boundaries to ensure forest activities, such as prescribed burning and timber harvest, does not trespass onto private land. Marked boundaries also help recreationists and hunters identify national forest land and limit trespassing on adjacent private land.

When marking boundaries we sometimes find trespassing has occurred and property rights become an issue. If the title rights are apparent, a resolution may be reached easily. Other cases may require legal expertise. The Hoosier has

authorities to resolve trespass issues, although costs may be incurred. Resolution of trespasses can be expensive if court costs and possible restitution are required. It is far better to complete a boundary survey up front and establish where the true boundary lays versus resolving a trespass later.

Where's the Forest?

A common complaint is that people don't know where the boundaries of the Forest are. Unlike a State Park which has a clear entrance point, the Hoosier sprawls across nine counties without a clear entrance or exit point. Within that area the ownership is a patchwork. Maps of the Forest ownership are available at the Hoosier National Forest office.

The Hoosier first started boundary management in the mid 1930s when the Civilian Conservation Corps searched for survey monuments set by county surveyors. With a patchwork ownership of public and private land and approximately 1,400 miles of boundary line, only 350 miles is marked to Forest Service standards. Lack of funding is the primary reason so few miles of boundary are marked. The Forest Service receives funding tied to goals and very little funds have been received for boundary management in recent years.

How we can help adjacent landowners

If a landowner plans an activity and is unsure of the property boundary location, they should contact a surveyor prior to conducting activities. The Hoosier maintains a database of land survey corner records, along with the location of marked boundaries. The Hoosier also keeps copies of its land deeds, original survey notes, and original survey plats.

Private landowners within the Hoosier NF area needing assistance with boundary information may contact the Bedford office before any activities occur. Forest staff will share information from their records. Early consultation with a surveyor or Forest personnel may prevent trespass problems.

For more information on Forest surveying contact Jake Korngable or Bob Stone at 812-275-5987 or jakorngable@fs.fed.us.

Photos:



Perry County surveyor Daniel McKim set this section corner stone in 1884 near Uniontown. The numbers on the stone pertain to the location of the stone in the township.



A section corner set by Jackson County surveyor W.H. Carr in 1856. The Forest Service also surveyed and marked the property boundary