



Hoosier National Forest

2011
Year in Review



Forest Vision:

The Hoosier National Forest, Indiana's premier Federal resource, provides outstanding stewardship by restoring, maintaining, and interpreting our public's cultural and natural resources. We offer high quality, resilient, and rare ecosystems that provide diverse outdoor recreational experiences.

From Melany Glossa, Forest Supervisor



Melany Glossa

My first year on the Hoosier has been one of fast-paced learning, appreciating, and sharing. On the front cover you will have seen our new Forest Vision.

Along with a new vision for the Hoosier, we set strategic goals to achieve the vision. These

goals will align the Hoosier with future expectations from national leadership, and were developed with employee engagement & ownership. They play to our strengths and position the Hoosier in the best possible place for an unknown future.

It's been an amazing experience here on the Hoosier. I've learned what our Forest's role is and how we can work with partners to best sustain the health and diversity of our Forest. I am also learning how to best meet the needs of our customers and visitors, and

looking forward to meeting the needs of future generations. It's a responsibility that I do not take lightly.

During the past year we have also looked closely at our workforce. I am co-leading the Regional Cultural Transformation Team which is looking at making the Forest Service a better place to work. We have also stepped back and reinforced that safety is our top priority, for our employees and for our Forest visitors.

As we all know, these are difficult economic times for the federal government. We appreciate the necessity to be good stewards of federal dollars, so continue to think about how our small workforce can rely more on partners and contractors to maintain the same level of excellence on your Hoosier National Forest.

Melany Glossa
Forest Supervisor

2011 Hoosier Accomplishments- From National Report

Resource Area	Goal	Accomplished	% Target
Tree planting, thinning and grape vine control	255 acres	289 acres	113%
Lands treated to reduce risk of wildfire	2,100 acres	2,131 acres	101%
Stream habitat restored or enhanced	3 miles	3 miles	100%
Lake habitat restored or enhanced	25 acres	26 acres	104%
Wildlife habitat restoration	2,682 acres	2,720 acres	101%
Recreation sites maintained to a 90% condition std	33 sites	36 sites	109%
Trails maintained to national standards	86 miles	252 miles	293%
Timber sold	626,000 cubic feet	458,980 cubic feet	73%

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Cover photos of a child at Take Pride in America Day; Forest road in fall, and blazing stars and butterflies at Maines Pond.

Protecting Ecosystems across Boundaries

Developing Pollinator Areas and Early Successional Habitat



Native flowers bloom in the Haskins Field in July, 2011.

The Hoosier has established 150 acres of native habitat for pollinators and early successional species since 2007. These projects create habitat for butterflies and native bees, as well as improve habitat for other wildlife such as quail, turkeys, songbirds, and bats.

The largest of the Native Seed Production and Pollinator Resource Areas is the 100-acre site at the Haskins Tract (est. 2007). It was previously a row-crop field, while other areas were fescue fields. These include Mifflin (2009 - 10 acres), Stillion (2010 - 30 acres), and Tincher (2011 - 10 acres). These areas also function as grassland early successional habitat (ESH) areas that benefit many wildlife species.

To increase our efforts and support the Mon-

arch Joint Venture, the Hoosier has planted other ESH project areas with native seed to provide an additional 180 acres of improved habitat for monarch butterflies and other wildlife.

The Forest maintains these areas with prescribed fire on a 2-4 year rotation, which stimulates native grasses and wildflowers. Butterfly milkweed and common milkweed, as well as other milkweed species are included in our native seed mixture. The inclusion of several other native forbs will increase plant diversity in these areas and provide nectar sources for monarch butterflies.

New ponds and vernal pools have been created at some of the project sites. Other enhancements include placement of bee habitat structures and interpretive signs.

Much of the work could not have been possible without partnerships with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources - Division of Fish & Wildlife, Quail Unlimited - Patoka Hills Chapter, Wild Turkey Federation, and local contractors and volunteers.

Mitigating Resource Damage at Dispersed Recreation Sites



Picture shows the potential spread of a dispersed site if not confined.

With \$100,000 in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Funds, the Hoosier completed an inventory of dispersed camping sites. Four people were hired and spent several weeks documenting every dispersed camping site on the Forest with GPS data, photographs, site condition, and descriptions.

Locations of illegally created roads and trails were also recorded. Where cleanup was needed, unfortunately too often the case, they did trash pickup. Invasive plant or other pest issues, were also mapped and reported.

Once the entire Forest was inventoried, a strategic plan was implemented to better manage these sites. According to Vicki Gullang-Harris, Recreation Program Manager, one of the most apparent problems at many sites was the expansion in the size of the areas. "Over time the packed earth

and disturbed vegetation kept extending further back into the Forest. It was apparent vehicles were being parked well off the roads and some of these areas had become quite large with extensive resource damage," noted Gullang-Harris.

To control the size of these areas, a crew of seasonal employees installed hundreds of barrier posts to confine the areas and block access to closed routes (photo below). After the posts were placed, a local contractor hauled gravel to fill mud holes, stabilize pull-offs, and repair damage.

Gullang-Harris said the Forest can now do a better job protecting Forest resources. People come to the Forest to enjoy the experience and most have no intention of destroying vegetation or causing erosion. With work done using ARRA funds, Forest maintenance costs should be reduced over the long term.



Connecting Citizens to the Land

Taking Pride in America for 25 Years!



A boy builds a bee box for pollinators on TPIA Day.

For 25 years, on a Saturday in May, the Hoosier has sponsored Take Pride in America (TPIA), a work day promoting volunteerism and “taking pride in America’s public lands”.

May 14, 2011 was the 25th year this popular volunteer event has been held and over 250 people came out to participate! A total of 18 projects were accomplished, ranging from 9 miles of trail maintenance to pulling 21 bags of garlic mustard.

The Hoosier has the longest running TPIA program in the Forest Service and received recognition in 2011 for hosting the event for 2.5 decades.

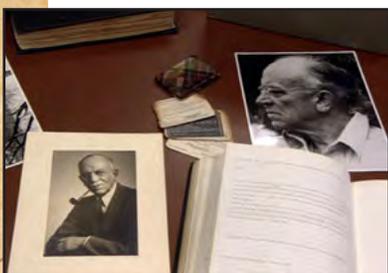
Hoosier Sponsors GreenFire

Aldo Leopold was a founder of wilderness conservation and environmental ethics. The Hoosier sponsored free showings of the first full-length, high definition documentary film ever made about this legendary conservationist’s life in Bloomington and Tell City in November 2011.

Greenfire – Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time was produced in partnership by the Aldo Leopold Foundation, the Center for Humans and Nature, and the U.S. Forest Service. The film highlights Leopold’s extraordinary career. Executive Producer of the film, Buddy Huffaker, was on hand in Bloomington to introduce the film and field questions afterward.

“The film was well received and we had great discussion at both showings,” said Forest Supervisor Melany Glossa. She said Aldo Leopold’s story resonates well with many people. The film will be showing on public TV in the coming year.

As a preview to Greenfire, an 8-minute film on the legacy of the Weeks Act and its importance to the creation of the national forests in the Eastern Region was also shown.



Holiday Trees Improve Fish Habitat

The Tell City Ranger District collects Christmas trees each year after the holiday season for habitat in Forest lakes. In 2011, the trees were put in Celina Lake. In 2010, the trees were put in Tipsaw and Saddle Lake.

According to Fish Biologist Amanda Kunzmann, these trees help improve available fish habitat. On average, about 80 trees are dropped off each year by Perry County residents and the Tell City Trash Collection Department.

Employees tie bundled trees and cinder blocks together, and then ferry the trees by boat to places in the lake where they are submerged.

Once submerged, the recycled Christmas trees offer habitat to enhance feeding and cover for a variety of fish species including largemouth bass and bluegill. Creating more underwater habitat for bass and bluegill is one way to increase the size and quantity of fish available to anglers.

A Bat Named Hope



In June, our biologists tracked a female Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) for a short time. Netting and tracking bats helps biologists better understand the kind of habitat they prefer, which help us make more informed decisions. Better habitat management will help us protect bats and possibly offset the effects of White-nose Syndrome.

In a contest to name the bat, the name Hope was chosen and data on Hope’s travels was collected and posted on the Forest website.

Walk the Talk for Sustainability

Lost River Gem Acquired by Forest

A 260-acre land acquisition was added to the Wesley Chapel Special Area in the spring of 2011. The tract was within the recently adjusted forest boundary. The boundary change was initiated to protect the unique cave and karst resources of the Lost River system. The new tract contains numerous karst features and over 1.75 miles of frontage along the Lost River. It is 1 mile west of Wesley Chapel Gulf, a National Natural Landmark.

The Lost River ecosystem is threatened by development as residential homes have been constructed across the country-side in recent years. There is no municipal sewer in this part of the county, and septic runoff is a significant threat to this karst ecosystem. Protection of the Lost River watershed is a key factor in protecting the underground

Rugged terrain on the new acquisition in Orange County.



ecosystem and associated karst features.

The new Forest property will provide additional land for a variety of dispersed recreation activities such as hiking, camping, and hunting. The property contains limestone bluffs above the Lost River that provide great views during the fall and winter seasons. Acquisition of this tract would not have been possible without the help of The Nature Conservancy.

Timber Sales and Recreation Use Prove Compatible

The German Ridge area has been a busy place in 2011. Always a popular recreation destination on the Forest, the area has 24 miles of trail open to hiking, mountain biking, and horse-back riding; a campground; swimming lake; and shelter house. In 2011, the area was also busy with logging trucks and loggers.

For several months in late 2010 and in 2011, the southern portion of the German Ridge trails were closed to protect trail visitors while timber sale operations were underway.

The eight timber sale treatments in the German Ridge area are focused on restoring native ecosystems. The 909-acres included in the sales added \$270,300 to the U.S. Treasury, and harvested 8,473 board feet of timber. In addition, jobs and secondary markets help support the local economy. More importantly, the timber sales allow us to affect the forest vegetation.

Timber sales are a tool to manage and create a healthy, sustainable forest. Much of our Forest had been farmed and cut-over prior to becoming national forest. Early efforts to stabilize the lands involved planting non-native pine trees. Those efforts narrowed the range of ages of forest on the Hoosier. Our work looks to de-

sign a resilient forest that meets the needs of our public now and in the future. Converting these stands back to native hardwoods, increases age and size diversity. Creating healthy forests happens through vegetative treatments. Our timber sale purchasers are the ones who actually do the work on the ground. Without purchasers to implement the work, the Hoosier would be unable to afford the treatments.

Despite the noise and activity of logging operations, Forest visitors took it all in-stride. Hikers managed to traverse the re-routed sections with only a few doing some minor back tracking. District Recreation Planner Nancy Myers noted hikers may notice that some corridors were widened as the trails were used to access timber, but our resilient forests will narrow the trails again in time. Although there is evidence of logging, in a few years the native hardwood stands will showcase the beauty of our Indiana forests, she added.



Riding trails/roads improved by timber sale dollars.

Revolutionizing effectiveness and efficiency

Aquatic Passages and Bridges Improved



Before and right after construction of the Hunter Creek Bridge.

Two sections of roads and bridges in the northern section of the Hoosier received upgrades this year with Forest assistance. The Hunter Creek Road received a new bridge to span Hunter Creek, replacing two culvert pipes. The new structure allows aquatic organisms to move up and down the stream

more easily. The new passage also will move water and debris better during high water. Monroe County Highway Department partnered with the Hoosier to complete the work.

The Fleetwood Branch project also received a new bridge to replace damaged and ineffective culvert pipes. This project was done in partnership with Jackson County Highway Department.



Before and during construction of the Fleetwood Branch bridge project.

Tell City Office Remodeled and Landscaped

The Tell City office received a major face-lift with a new visitor area and expanded office space in 2011. The old entrance area was small and had a 1960's look. The new, high ceiling visitor area is spacious with maps, nature store, and educational displays. The beautiful ash and oak lumber used in the flooring and ceiling came from the Hoosier and showcases the Forest's hardwood products.

Local contractors did the remodeling, which included high efficiency T8 lighting, low-flow plumbing, and new energy-efficient windows. Older fluorescent lighting was also replaced with high-efficiency lighting throughout the Tell City compound.

Work did not stop with the interior of the building; the landscaping was reworked as well. Old landscaping was removed and replaced with new landscaping featuring native plants that are beautiful, educational, and ecologically beneficial.

Two terraces were added to the front of the building transforming the building's profile. Native wildflowers planted in the terraced beds each have an identifying label. These complement the pollinator garden behind the office and other shrubbery and flowers around the office space as well.

The goal is to have a native plant garden that neighbors and visitors could envision in their own yards.



Tell City Ranger District office expanded front office from the outside (below) and the visitor desk - featuring native hardwood ceiling, counter and flooring (left).



Inmates Provide Recreation Maintenance

A partnership with Branchville Correctional Facility provides for maintenance at many Forest recreation areas. The facility provides an inmate crew that mow and trim grass and vegetation at the scattered dispersed recreation areas around the Forest.

The Forest provides the equipment and a minimal stipend for the summer months. Branchville provides 5-6 man crews and a guard. They do a wonderful job and help keep the recreation areas maintained for a nominal cost.

Being an Employer of Choice

Bringing in new Employees to the Hoosier NF

The Student Career Experience Program (SCEP), is a Forest Service program which provides a planned and progressive educational path offering many advantages to college students. The program combines academic studies with on-the-job experience, and helps students gain the experience they need to obtain a job with the federal government.

In 2011, the Hoosier converted one SCEP student to full time status (Emily Engstrom). A former SCEP student who has worked for the Hoosier for several years (Stacy Duke) was promoted. We also welcomed a former SCEP (Chalonda Jasper), and a new SCEP student (Jake Korngable).

Emily Engstrom

Emily came to the Hoosier in October as a Geographic Information Services (GIS) Specialist. Originally from Minnesota, she received a bachelor's degree in Natural Resources Management from the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point in 2007. She then went on to earn a graduate certificate in GIS in 2010 and a Master's in Geography in 2011 from the University of Wisconsin.

During her college career, she worked for other agencies but applied for the SCEP and was accepted in 2006. She spent 2 years

on the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest in Wisconsin. The next 3 years she continued in the program under the Regional GIS coordinator in the Regional Office before receiving the position on the Hoosier.

Stacy Duke

Stacy came to the Hoosier in 2003 as a student working as a summer interpreter. She was converted under the SCEP program the second season as she received her Bachelor's of Science Degree in Outdoor Recreation and Resource Management. She began working toward a Masters

Degree in Recreation Management that same year. Both degrees were from Indiana University. After 1.5 years as a SCEP student, she was converted to full-time status as a Recreation Specialist responsible for the Forest conservation education program. During the last 5 years she developed an impressive array of programming in conservation education.

In 2011, Stacy received a promotion to Brownstown District Recreation Manager.

Chalonda Jasper

Chalonda grew up in Louisiana where she got involved with FFA. After high school, she attended the Southern University's BAYOU (Beginning Agricultural Youth Opportunity Unlimited) Program, became interested in soils and was recruited into their program. She received her BS degree in Agricultural Sciences in 2005. During that time, she completed several internships, the last as a SCEP on the Cherokee NF in Tennessee.

Chalonda then received a MS degree at Florida A&M in Soils Science in 2008. Once she graduated, she was converted to a Soil Scientist position with the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas where she worked prior to coming to the Hoosier.

Jake Korngable

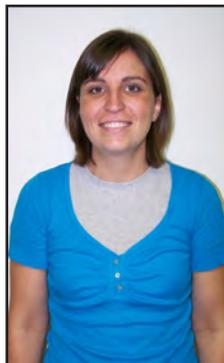
Jake started work on the Hoosier in June and worked through the summer of 2011 as a SCEP Land Surveyor Student Trainee. Originally from Cambridge, Ohio, he is currently a student at University of Akron working on his Bachelor's Degree in Land Surveying and Mapping Services. He plans to graduate in May 2014, but will be back to the Hoosier for two more work periods prior to his graduation. Jake's work on the Forest has focused on establishing and maintaining boundary lines on the Hoosier.



Emily Engstrom



Chalonda Jasper



Stacy Duke



Jake Korngable

2011 Payments to Counties

In 2011, Indiana counties received \$2.22/acre for national forest land. Although national forests do not pay property taxes, funds are paid in lieu of taxes to compensate local governments for the land taken off the tax rolls. The chart below shows payment in lieu of taxes and monies from the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act.

The Hoosier also provides funds for road projects, cooperative law enforcement, and volunteer fire department support.

County	Acres	Total \$
Brown	18,451	47,720
Crawford	24,362	51,944
Dubois	412	1,291
Jackson	23,277	51,071
Lawrence	16,439	28,856
Martin	9,549	15,127
Monroe	19,085	53,328
Orange	31,732	72,582
Perry	59,562	127,743
Total	202,869	449,661

Spring Spent With Storm Cleanup

The spring of 2011 was warm, exceptionally wet, and stormy. March through May of 2011 brought record or near record rainfall, storm events, and several tornadoes. Patoka Lake and Lost River set record crest heights.

Forest employees spent weeks removing trees that fell over trails, roads, and campgrounds. As soon as an area was cleared, another storm would come through and more trees would come down.

"Our crews revisited the same areas repeatedly clearing trees," noted Recreation Program Manager Vicki Gullang-Harris. "We worked hard to keep the areas open and safe for our visitors." She appreciated the public's patience with mud and downed trees.

Volunteer Hours and Value of Service Hoosier National Forest - 2011

<i>Both Bedford and Tell City offices</i>	<i>Vol. Hours</i>	<i>Value of Svc</i>
Total	4,995	\$106,685



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