

**2014
Division
of Forestry
Annual
Report**



www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/

TABLE OF CONTENTS (click on a box below to direct you to that section)

STATE FOREST PROPERTIES

FOREST RESOURCES INFORMATION

COMMUNITY & URBAN FORESTRY

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

GRANTS

FIRE HEADQUARTERS

TREE SEEDLING NURSERIES

COOPERATIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT

STATE FOREST PROPERTIES



Harrison-Crawford State Forest headquarters renovation



Cherry Lake Lodge at Morgan-Monroe SF



Camping Cabins at Greene-Sullivan SF



Starve Hollow Lake sediment removal project



Clark State Forest bridge replacement

Timber Sale Volume and Sale Prices The Past Twelve Years

Fiscal Year	Volume Sold (Bd. Ft.)	Sale Prices
2002-2003	3,458,199	\$1,096,378
2003-2004	3,422,287	\$897,313
2004-2005	3,599,844	\$975,388
2005-2006	7,683,400	\$1,979,460
2006-2007	10,267,384	\$2,669,179
2007-2008	11,302,104	\$2,928,707
2008-2009	12,154,436	\$2,330,511
2009-2010	10,253,981	\$2,368,521
2010-2011	14,065,864	\$2,720,629
2011-2012	14,435,135	\$2,686,672
2012-2013	11,995,721	\$1,887,726
2013-2014	17,148,568	\$4,036,782
TOTAL	119,786,923	\$26,577,267

STATE FOREST RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- The 158,300 acre State Forest system has been certified by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® and the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®-C012858) “green certification” programs since 2007. Independent third-party audits are conducted annually to assess compliance with the rigorous certification standards. Audits in 2014 were conducted by Scientific Certification Systems and NSF International Strategic Registrations (NSF-ISR) and successfully completed with high marks and no corrective actions or nonconformities noted. Forest certification allows wood products from State Forests to participate in the global market of “green certified” wood products.
- In 2014, more than 3,500 acres of forest restoration and forest improvement work was completed or contracted. The work positions these forests for continued health and productivity, providing jobs and other forest benefits for Hoosiers today and tomorrow. Primary work included tree planting and reforestation of retired agricultural fields (31 acres), control of invasive plant species (450 acres), prescribed fire (66 acres), forest and timber stand improvements (3,500-plus acres), and wildlife habitat projects (48 acres).
- Sustainable “green certified” wood products from State Forests in fiscal year 2013-2014 totaled 15.9 million board feet and 6,614 cords with gross revenues of \$4,036,782. These managed harvests were spread over 8,340 acres of the 158,300 acre State Forest system. Single-tree select cuts were the predominant harvest strategy. DNR Forestry sends 15 percent of timber sale proceeds to county governments to help support volunteer fire departments. The current annual timber harvest prescription for the State Forest system is set at 14 million board feet, which is approximately 60 percent of annual growth. Timber sold in FY 13-14 exceeded the target level due to carryover of unsold sales from the previous fiscal year.
- State Forest land acquisition added a 121-acre parcel at Morgan-Monroe State Forest. Although acquisition funds are limited, DNR Forestry will continue to entertain strategic conservation land purchases in 2015.
- Emerald Ash Borer was first confirmed in Indiana in 2004. By 2009 it had spread to the State Forest system at Salamonie River State Forest, where it killed nearly all Ash trees greater than 2 inches in diameter. EAB has continued to spread across Indiana and is now found on many DNR properties, including most State Forests. The transport of contaminated firewood is believed one of the primary vectors in the EAB spread to DNR properties. There are approximately 1.6 million Ash trees in State Forests that contain an estimated 34 million board feet. Some of this material will be used through the timber management program, but much will be lost. General information on EAB can be found at www.in.gov/dnr/entomolo/3443.htm

Indiana Bat Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Update

- Bat habitat suitability models developed by Purdue University to support the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) were completed in 2014. Results will be published in peer-

reviewed journals in early 2015; five scientific manuscripts have been submitted for review to publishers from this project. Take estimation for the Indiana bat and northern long-eared bat was completed in 2014, and DNR Forestry worked with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Bloomington Field Office to develop a mitigation program for the estimated take. With these last major portions in place, Forestry is currently working to complete the HCP (and accompanying Environmental Impact Statement), and will finish the documents after the final listing announcement for the proposed-endangered northern long-eared bat, which is expected on April 2, 2015.

Wildlife & Research

- In 2014, DNR Forestry provided direct support to 15 research projects investigating the ecological effects of forest management on State Forests. Most of the support went to researchers involved with the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (www.heeforeststudy.org/), a long-term project based at Morgan-Monroe and Yellowwood state forests.
- DNR Forestry provided support to nine graduate/post-graduate researchers in 2014 working on questions related to forest management and ecological impacts. Since 2006, DNR Forestry has provided support to 24 graduate and post-graduate researchers.
- DNR Forestry-supported researchers published eight articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals and completed three master's theses in 2014.

Recent Select Hardwood Ecological Experiment (HEE) Project Summaries:

- Indiana bats (federally endangered) and northern long-eared bats (federally proposed-endangered) were found using recently harvested areas for roosting during the summer maternity period. In 2014, an Indiana bat maternity roost was found supporting the largest number of individuals found to date on a State Forest. It was located in a recent shelterwood harvest, and the selected roost itself was a tree deadened but left standing during post-harvest timber stand improvement.
- Acoustic bat echo-location surveys determined that total activity (all species) was high along harvested opening edges, with heavier use on the opening side of the edge compared to the intact forest side.
- Recent summer breeding bird surveys indicate the most common bird species detected in HEE research areas are those that nest in mature forests, including red-eyed vireo, worm-eating warbler (Indiana species of special concern), Acadian flycatcher, scarlet tanager, and hooded warbler (Indiana species of special concern).
- The number of woodland salamanders found within even-age, uneven-age, and control research sites was 1,943, 1,235, and 1,807 individuals, respectively. Salamander species most commonly encountered include eastern red-backed, northern zig-zag, northern slimy and southern two-lined.

- Winter barred owl surveys resulted in 41 and 36 observations at Morgan-Monroe/Yellowwood state forests and Hoosier National Forest/Brown County State Park survey sites, respectively. Summer barred owl surveys resulted in 56 observations at Morgan-Monroe/Yellowwood and 30 at Hoosier NF/Brown County SP survey sites. Eastern screech owl surveys resulted in 21 observations at Morgan-Monroe/Yellowwood and 23 at Hoosier NF/Brown County SP survey sites.
- A total of 125 male cerulean warblers (State endangered in Indiana) were detected during summer surveys. Detections occurred in all study units except for one control and one uneven-age management unit. Recent nest surveys indicated nesting success was 33 percent and that caterpillars constituted 53 percent of nestling diet.
- Recent surveys of forest moths indicate species assemblages are returning to pre-harvest composition in treated stands following changes that had been detected immediately after the HEE harvesting occurred.

State Forest Recreation

- State Forest recreation facilities include three gated properties, 19 family campgrounds (650 electric and non-electric camp sites), six equestrian campgrounds (200 electric and non-electric camp sites), 37 camping cabins at three locations, two family cabins, 300 miles of hiking trails, 41 miles of bike trails, 270 miles of horse trails, more than 140 lakes, 158,300 acres of hunting and foraging opportunity, three backcountry-style trails with walk-in trail side camping, one shooting range, two archery ranges, two nature centers, three swimming beaches, 30 picnic shelters, and more.
- Campground improvements were completed at Greene-Sullivan State Forest with the addition of nine camping cabins and electric campsites. The new camping cabins can be reserved online at indianastateparks.reserveamerica.com. They are the latest addition of the popular State Forest cabins. Other cabin locations are Deam Lake and Starve Hollow State Recreation Areas.
- The sediment removal project at Starve Hollow Lake continues around the lakefront campsites and into the upper reaches of the lake. The project is removing sediment that has accumulated since the lake was built in 1938. The project continues to improve boating and fishing access. Work is concentrated during the winter months to minimize impact on summer recreation users and will continue for 2-4 more years.
- Recreation revenue was \$1.19 million in 2014, an 18 percent increase over the previous year. The increase is attributed in part to new and expanded facilities and an improving economy.
- Cherry Lake Lodge and Covered Bridge Retreat continue to be popular unique retreats offered by State Forests. Along with the camping cabins added over the last 2-3 years, these fully furnished retreat cabins have contributed significantly to the increases in State Forest recreation revenues. See more at www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/7694.htm

State Forest Community Involvement

- State Forests hosted 31 special events in 2014 with an estimated 5,850 participants. Events included Polar Bear plunges at Ferdinand State Forest and Deam Lake State Recreation Area. The Deam Lake event raised about \$70,000 for Special Olympics and is one of the most successful in Indiana. Other events included horse and mountain bike trail rides, orienteering, running events, and more.
- Annual open house and public comment events were held across the system to invite the public to view operations, meet property personnel and comment on property projects and concerns. Some events featured short hikes and talks on topics of interest, such as morel mushrooms, artifacts, and cultural resources.
- Volunteer opportunities on State Forests continue to expand, ranging from one-time projects, campground hosts, and long-term efforts and contributions by individuals and groups. The “adopt-a-trail” program at Morgan-Monroe/Yellowwood State Forests is perhaps the largest and longest running program. Additional campground host opportunities are expected in 2015.

State Forest Facilities

- More than 20 building and infrastructure projects were started or completed in 2014. Significant projects included full restoration of 10 tornado-damaged structures at Clark State Forest; replacement of Sheep’s Branch bridge/culvert at Clark State Forest; and CCC-era shelter house reconstruction started at Jackson-Washington State Forest and completed at Martin State Forest. Office renovations are underway at Harrison-Crawford State Forest with the exterior completed in 2014. Office renovations were completed at Ferdinand State Forest. Shop facilities were built at Clark State Forest and Morgan Monroe State Forest and will be fully operational in mid-2015. Construction began to expand the administrative office and visitor center at Morgan-Monroe State Forest. This project will merge offices from three locations, streamline operations, reduce costs, and provide improved visitor services.
- State Forest facility improvements and construction projects rely heavily on in-house labor, skills, and wood materials. This has kept costs down and allowed significant accomplishments to occur over the last several years. Partnerships with the Indiana Department of Correction also have been instrumental in these accomplishments.

FOREST RESOURCES INFORMATION

[RETURN TO TOC](#)

- DNR Forestry provided 1,235 technical assists upon request to various customers on topics of marketing, utilization, efficiency, best management practices, and forest resource and industry data.
- Various training opportunities (log, lumber, tree grade workshops, chainsaw training, best management practices, SFI, etc.) were provided to 135 attendees for 846 contact hours.

Attendees included professional natural resources personnel and forest industry professionals.

- Two Field Day/Industry Education/Industry tours were coordinated with an attendance of more than 75 people.
- Four landowner outreach meetings were coordinated that focused on producing, marketing, and selling their lumber or timber. Attendance and response was outstanding with approximately 150 people at the four sessions.
- The Forest Resources Hardwood Economic Development Specialist continued to maintain the program's principals to support Indiana's primary (logs, lumber & veneer) and secondary (furniture, flooring, and cabinets) industries. Ongoing domestic and international programs have been to represent Indiana manufactures at international and domestic trade fairs and trade missions along with arranging/supporting international buyers on site visits. Four global trade fairs were attended in 2014 – United Arab Emirates, China, Brazil and Turkey. From these emerging markets, more than 130 hardwood leads were generated, along with recurrent leads received via email. Additionally, through our association with the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) all funding for the trips was paid with federal dollars.
- Five related seminars at industry and landowner meetings were conducted to advance the public's perception and knowledge of the role/impact that forest products play in Indiana's economy.
- Numerous international importers and manufactures were provided onsite visits generating thousands of dollars of new and long-term business for Indiana's primary manufactures.
- Indiana's first hardwood manufacturers "Export Directory" listing Indiana's primary manufacturers was developed, published and distributed at domestic and intercontinental trade shows.
- Working with the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), DNR Forestry hosted and attended a number of presentations to companies interested in establishing a manufacturing facility in Indiana.
- State employee field staff collected forest inventory data from 250 plots across the state. Collected annually, the information provides an excellent picture of the forest resource in Indiana.
- The Forest Resources Information (FRI) section concluded its seventh year (second year of re-measurements) of the Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) program this year. CFI, which closely resembles the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Inventory & Analysis program will provide an up-close view and valuable, timely, and current data regarding the forest resource on State Forest properties. Data was collected from 750 plots. Another inventory program coordinated by FRI concluded its third year of plot establishment. Field crews collected data from approximately 500 plots on randomly selected private lands enrolled in the Classified Forest & Wildlands program.

- In the 2014 timber buyer licensing year, new licenses were issued to 38 timber buyers and 114 agents, and renewals were given to 549 timber buyers and 1,076 agents for a total of 587 timber buyers and 1,190 agents.
- In 2014, 62 timber harvests were monitored on both public and private lands for compliance to accepted Indiana Forestry Best Management practices.

COMMUNITY & URBAN FORESTRY

[RETURN TO TOC](#)

Arbor Day Foundation Initiatives

In 2014, Indiana had 65 Tree City USA Communities, meaning that 39 percent of the state's population live in a Tree City USA. Nine communities expanded their urban forestry program to earn a Tree City USA Growth Award. Tree Campuses grew to nine participating universities and colleges in the state. Four Tree Utilities were maintained.

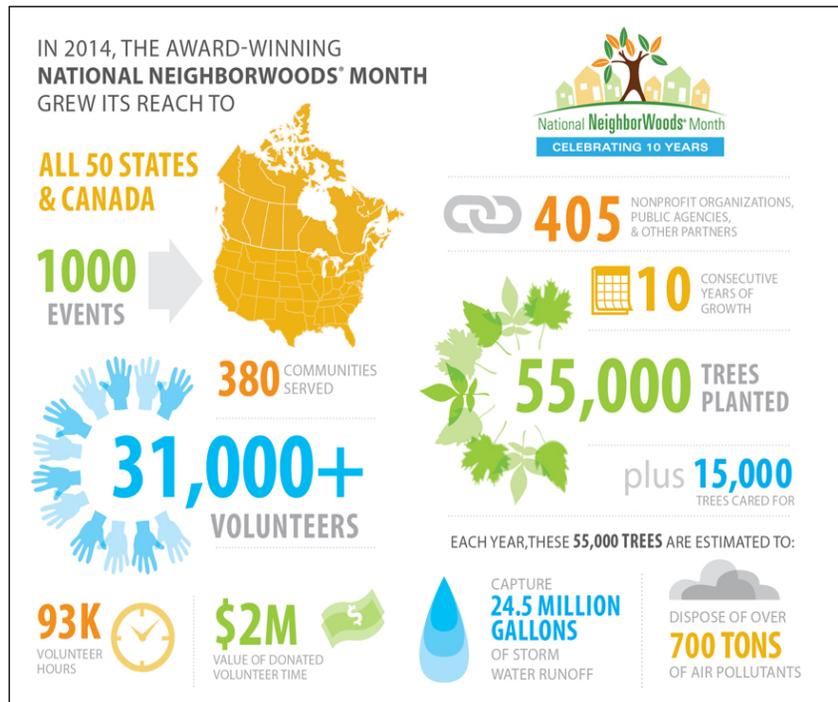
State Wide Metrics

The Community & Urban Forestry (CUF) program provided direct technical assistance or education programs in 121 cities and towns. Almost 2.3 million Hoosiers live in the communities that received technical assistance and educational programs.

NeighborWoods Month

In 2014, CUF used grant funds turned back to the state to build partnerships with the Indiana Association of Cities & Towns (IACT) and the Indiana Nursery & Landscape Association (INLA) to advertise and promote a NeighborWoods Month (October) tree giveaway.

The \$12,000 in grant money was matched by participating nurseries with donated tree stock.



The Free Tree Program was advertised through IACT and the CUF network.

Seventy-five communities participated in planting more than 262 trees in NeighborWoods Month. Communities were linked to the Alliance for Community Trees and the resources it

provides to communities in promoting tree planting, maintenance initiatives, and media resources.

Participants were asked to list their planting event on the national NeighborWoods website. They included municipal departments, local non-profit tree groups, schools, home owners associations, and individuals. All trees were planted on public property. There were more than 75 Neighborwoods events in Indiana with approximately 2,570 volunteers, 3,347 trees planted accounting for 7.5 percent of all events and 8 percent of all volunteers in the United States and Canada in 2014.



Students in the Riverside Intermediate School Ecology Club worked with members of the Plymouth Tree Committee to learn about trees and help plant three trees provided by Indiana DNR's CUF in the school's front lawn.



Madison Tree Board members and volunteers planting NeighborWoods trees in a community park. Madison also picked up and delivered trees for two neighboring communities that received trees.

Grants Programs

In 2014, CUF contracted \$128,343 in sub-grants for inventories and management planning, tree planting, and education programs with 12 communities and other groups in Indiana. In fall 2014, an additional 12 groups were awarded \$112,628 in grants for similar projects and programs. The two grant programs will lend to six inventories/inventory updates, planting 1,075 trees, educational programs, and interpretive signage.

The CUF Program applied for and was awarded \$100,000 in Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding for Emerald Ash Borer mitigation. The funds will be sub-granted to communities in the Great Lakes Watershed for tree planting.

Volunteer Training Programs

In 2014, four Indiana Community Tree Steward Training Programs trained 118 new Tree Steward Volunteers, bringing total volunteers trained since 2005 to 1,500. As of November 2014, Tree Stewards reported more than 1500 volunteer hours in Indiana communities at a value of \$22,578 of in-kind volunteer services for tree planting and maintenance, educational programs for adults and youth, serving on a community tree board, continuing education time, and a host of other urban forestry related work. CUF put on three advanced pruning days with Hamilton County Parks Working on structural pruning techniques for young trees.

Outreach and Programming

CUF sponsored the ArborMaster Training for \$4,000, allowing 12 Indiana Certified Arborists to attend the week-long professional training for \$764, a savings of \$333 per participant. The advanced training covered precision tree felling, chainsaw safety and handling, tree climbing methods, and work positioning. Continued training is critical in supporting and promoting professional certified arborists in Indiana.

CUF provided tree information talks to more than 15 new green group contacts statewide in 2014 (not including Arbor Day events). CUF also provided articles to Indiana outdoor magazines, Society of Municipal Arborists magazine, and experts for three Indiana DNR Facebook chats.

CUF developed a new display that was used at the Indiana Association of Cities & Towns fall conference. Attendance triggered 33 new community contacts looking for technical assistance and funding opportunities.

CUF helped organize and promote the collection of new nominations for the Indiana Big Tree Register. Promotions included development of an online roster of trees, an online application, and Big Tree Register for the Forestry booth at the Indiana State Fair. Once scores are confirmed, the 2015 BTR will be published via the online register and will include photos of all trees as collected by district foresters.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

[RETURN TO TOC](#)

Project Learning Tree is an educational curricular supplement used nationwide to introduce pre-K through 12 students to complex environmental issues, using the forest as a “window to the world.”

In 2014, more than 500 Indiana educators were trained in the program. The strongest area of the program continues to be the training of pre-service teachers. Ten colleges and universities either

integrated PLT into their methods courses or held workshops to prepare almost 200 teachers-in-training to use the program. Seven new facilitators were trained to conduct Project Learning Tree workshops. Volunteer facilitators donate 10-15 hours for each workshop, in addition to providing their own workshop materials. Indiana Project Learning Tree continues to explore new audiences for the program, including after-school, the Girls Collaborative Project, and STEM education.

The first Natural Resources Teacher Institute took place in June at the Forestry Training Center at Morgan-Monroe State Forest. A joint effort of DNR Forestry and Purdue University, the week-long event brought together 11 educators representing formal and non-formal sectors. They learned about Indiana's forest resources, forest products industry, and the Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment. Each educator was required to develop a lesson plan during the week that they were to take back and implement with their students.



The Cooperative Forest Management section conducted 247 outreach events that reached 14,002 people. The programs included field days, the Forest Management for Private Woodland Owners course organized by Purdue University, Master Naturalist classes, Indiana Conservation Officer Camp, and presentations to various groups.

In April 2013, the Division of Forestry initiated a Facebook page. The page currently has more than 1,600 "likes." Status updates are done several times a week to make sure our followers have new information about Indiana's rural and urban forests. A few of the more popular posts during 2014 have been the tree of the week, updates on the emerald ash borer, and a video on how tree seedlings are handled at the Indiana State Tree Nursery in Vallonia.

GRANTS

[RETURN TO TOC](#)

In 2014, DNR Forestry continued to implement a number of federally funded grant projects. The abstracts provided below represent a handful of the important working forest conservation initiatives made possible through the support and assistance of federal and other partners.

Parcel Level Strategies

This project will revolutionize the future delivery of forestry and natural resource conservation services in Indiana. It will develop and implement a spatially explicit and forest attribute informed landowner communication system that will dramatically enhance the ability of professionals to respond quickly to invasive plants, fire, insect and disease threats where time is of the essence to protect forests.

Increased efficiency and receptivity of programs delivered to private landowners, like the Indiana Classified Forest & Wildlands Program, will improve overall efforts to conserve and manage working forests while enhancing their benefits.

The project also will allow professional organizations to better coordinate effective delivery of conservation services as the system embraces digital communications. Forest health professionals and invasives species early detection and rapid response teams will be able to instantly communicate with parcels adjoining an outbreak. Fire Headquarters will be able to alert landowners in scattered and isolated drought pockets where information is most needed. Timber Stand Improvement field days can be advertised in the nearest townships. Perhaps most importantly, it will help bridge the awareness gap that exists for many landowners of the varied and successful forest conservation and stewardship programs available to them.

Invasive Species BMP Pilot Project

The two-year project implements the recommendation of Indiana Invasive Species Council to assess and refine the Invasive Plant Advisory Committee's Invasive Species Best Management Practices and provides funding for demonstration and public outreach to encourage private landowner adoption.

The project directly addresses a main strategy of the 2010 Indiana Forest Action Plan. It will be coordinated across 148,000 acres and engage 22 professional foresters in invasive species monitoring, mapping, planning, treatment, inspection, education, documentation and other activities.

Public marketing of finalized product will include demonstrations and reach an additional 58 professional and 35 public foresters, 99 Soil & Water Conservation Districts and Resource Conservation & Development councils, approximately 14,000 Classified Forest & Wildlands owners, and 50 member organizations of the Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee that represent thousands of individuals interested in the management of Indiana's forests.

Large Block Outreach & Enrollment

Classified Forest & Wildlands (CFW) Program expansion continues to be a goal in statewide conservation initiatives, including the 2010 Indiana Forest Action Plan. Legislated requirements,

changes in state tax policy, and limited resources to hire additional Cooperative Forest Management (CFM) staff create challenges in targeting outreach and new enrollments to large tracts in priority areas.

The project provides funding for outreach and for foresters to enroll targeted forestland according to a prioritized parcel list developed from (Parcel Level Strategies project) a geospatial forest landowner contact information database. The largest privately owned parcels of existing forestland within Forest Action Plan target areas will be contacted and receive information about the CFW Program, federal programs, and other conservation options. Follow up and detailed records will be kept of landowner responses, conservation intent and program enrollments.

Next Steps in Early Detection, Rapid Response

This project specifically addresses Forest Action Plan, Strategy 3 component to “develop statewide Early Detection Rapid Response Program (EDRR) for forest invasive plants” and other action steps. It creates a robust bulwark against establishment of new invasive plants in Indiana's Target Forest Areas using a “Strike Team” to coordinate education and awareness, and to conduct control efforts for EDRR species.

The project builds on an established and successful U.S. Forest Service Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry funded project in southern Illinois. DNR Forestry coordinates the project in concert with Southern Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management (SICM), the oldest and largest CWMA in Indiana. DNR Forestry and SICIM have an established track record of working with a broad base of partners to facilitate EDRR.

Invasive plants are a significant problem throughout Indiana. A conservative estimate by the Indiana Invasive Species Council (IISC) showed that property owners and taxpayers spent \$5.85 million in 2012 controlling invasive plants. State agencies spent about \$3 million controlling plant species. Control of invasive plants ranked among the top three forest issues in the 2010 Indiana Statewide Forest Assessment. Left unchecked, invasive plants are a direct threat to forest regeneration and sustainability.

The project implements the full spectrum of EDRR activities, from education and awareness to reporting and control. It significantly enhances local-level capabilities while leveraging the Strike Team to make strides in EDRR species control.

The project leverages partner involvement, including Indiana DNR, IISC, Midwest Invasive Plant Network (MIPN) and others. It expands invasive plant EDRR efforts from a small group of well-informed partners to a coordinated regional network that acts, responds and interacts at local and regional levels to address one of the greatest threats to Indiana's working forest landscapes.

Sustainable Forestry Television Series and YouTube video series

This project will explore in depth 13 topics on sustainable forest management in half-hour segments, and develop 35 “how-to” instructional videos that build on DNR Forestry capacities to deliver training and information to private landowners in a reliable, on-demand format.

It follows the success of “Indiana Expeditions: Forests At Work,” an hour-long TV feature first broadcast in April, 2012 (also streaming online) and builds on a partnership with Metropolitan Indianapolis Public Broadcasting, Inc. (WFYI).

Advances in mobile devices, changing consumer behavior, and efficiencies in audio-visual productions have bumped demand for accessible, relevant and concise video to provide information on woodland stewardship to private landowners who are increasingly connected to digital media and less connected with managing their forests. Both efforts increase landowner-forest connections and get folks outdoors exploring and trying new things.

FIRE HEADQUARTERS

[RETURN TO TOC](#)

The year brought many challenges to DNR Fire Headquarters, but each program produced positive results that were either directly or indirectly related to response to the 2014 summer/fall fire season.

With staffing changes and budget challenges, Fire Headquarters evolved and adapted to maximize the performance of each program.

The year consisted of a wet spring followed by a short fall prescribed burning period. The summer fire season prompted Indiana to aid in fire suppression activities in Idaho and Oregon.

With prescribed fire operations reduced, Fire Headquarters was able to spend more time on other facets of the fire program in Indiana. Significant



strides were made in other program areas, including federal excess property to fire departments, training for fire personnel, volunteer fire assistance grant management, and fire prevention throughout the state.

Fire Operations

The year was dominated by the well-above average rainfall that lowered the fire risk and also reduced the number of prescribed fires performed. Brief 2- to 3-day dry periods provided enough time to dry the 1-hour fuels and allow some wildfire activity as well as prescribed burning.

Fire Suppression Operations:

- 4 fires burning 50 acres
- Numerous technical/tactical assists (estimated at 80-plus)
- No personnel injuries or losses of equipment
- Largest fire of the season was 27 acres at Morgan-Monroe State Forest

Prescribed Fire Management:

- 8 prescribed fires managing 725 acres
- Short of the established goal due to significant amounts of moisture during the spring/fall fire season
- Fire Headquarters mobilized two 20-person hand crews (one to Idaho and one to Oregon) and 12 single resources

Federal Excess Property Program

The Federal Excess Property Program (FEPP) enables DNR Forestry to screen and acquire excess federal property for distribution and service. While this particular program provides rural departments four-wheel drive vehicles typically used as brush rigs, many other items essential to rural fire protection (i.e., generators, tankers, pumps, etc.) are also available.

- Acquisition value in excess of \$900,000 in non-consumable items were documented and put into service by rural fire departments across the state.
- A large quantity of consumable items, including small tools,



disposable (“one-time-use”) items, and miscellaneous equipment also was acquired and distributed to the rural fire service.

Training and Personnel Management

Fire Headquarters staff presently track the training, experience and qualifications for 1,771 wildland fire qualified personnel in Indiana within in the Incident Qualification System. In 2014, staff conducted 13 classes ranging from one to five days that provided a combined 180 hours of instruction to 462 students. Most students were with volunteer fire department or affiliated with the Department of Natural Resources.



Volunteer Fire Assistance Grants

The Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Program (formerly called the Rural Community Fire Protection program) is a federally funded matching grant program. VFA is a cooperative program between Indiana DNR Forestry, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, and state and private forestry partners.

VFA is a matching grant program created to assist in organizing, training and equipping rural and volunteer fire departments. Grants are matched 50:50 up to a maximum of \$5,000 (\$5,000 grant plus \$5,000 department). Due to 2014 program guideline changes, no single piece of equipment may cost more than \$4,999.

Rural departments and city departments with a population base of less than 10,000 may apply for VFA grants. Interested departments must complete an application and return it by March 1 each year. Applications received after March 1 will be considered for the following year’s grant program. Certain restrictions apply to the grant funds.

In Fiscal Year 2014, 45 rural and volunteer fire departments in Indiana had projects approved to fulfill a total funding request of \$428,378.



Nomex Shirt, Pants, Gloves



Backpack Pump with Sprayer



Wildland Fire Drip Torch

Fire Prevention

The need to heighten public awareness about wildland fire has led DNR Forestry to adopt innovative methods to keep citizens and the fire response community educated and informed. Through webinars and podcasts, precisely targeted fire prevention, safety or informational topics can be distributed quickly and accurately. DNR Forestry continues to be “community strong” by presenting the Smokey Wildfire Prevention message to local schools, county fairs, safety fairs, youth groups, Indiana State Fair, Riley Children’s Hospital and more.

The program’s success is largely due to partnerships with other agencies and units of government, both public and private. One of the goals is providing cooperators, fire departments, and DNR properties with educational and support materials and getting Smokey Bear visible through as many venues as possible.

Our Smokey Bear image comes in many forms. There is the standard Smokey costume; inflatable walk-about (where an individual gets inside the costume and controls the movements); stand-alone 13-foot by 8-foot inflatables; and the Smokey robot, a remote-controlled miniature Smokey in a fire truck with red light, sirens, and squirting water. This unit is complete with fire prevention theme music. Having these resources to enhance and reinforce the fire prevention theme has been instrumental in educating tens of thousands of Hoosier children on wildfire safety.

Another successful educational program on fire safety and burn prevention is through a partnership with McAxe & The Fire Crew and special guest Kasey the Fire & Life Safety Dog. The group comprises professional firefighters who use an energetic blend of music and comedy to help children bond with Kasey and the Crew to learn fire and burn safety messages and fire prevention tips inside and outside of the home.

Their approach to audiences of school-age children is unique, innovative and effective. Children and adults alike enjoy music to such classics as “Johnny Be Good” (“Johnny B. Goode”) and “Lighters and Matches” (“Run



Around Sue”). The combination of firefighters, a performing animal, and music brings the fire prevention message to children in a way that helps them remember the message and pass these tips along to parents and other students.

TREE SEEDLING NURSERIES

[RETURN TO TOC](#)

Seedling sales held steady compared to previous years despite a lack of government-funded programs, favorable crop prices, and an uncertain general economy. In 2014, DNR Forestry nurseries sold 2.6 million seedlings of 50-plus species to generate \$860,000 in revenue.

Annually, about 28 acres of seedbed area are sown to produce the yearly sales inventory. Seedbed areas have irrigation capabilities in case of drought conditions. Seed was abundant in 2014 for most species, enabling DNR nurseries to reach seed quotas on many species. Roughly 19 percent (~2,100,000) of seed needed to produce the inventory came from our own seed orchards. Seed orchard establishment is still a high priority in order to decrease reliance on outside seed vendors. Having our own seed orchards also ensures seed is collected from climates that will perform well throughout Indiana.

Arbor Day celebrations in April continue to be well received as nearly 45,000 seedlings were provided to several hundred Indiana schools. All 3rd-grade students at participating schools are given a tree seedling to take home and plant in honor of this day.

Work began with the American Chestnut Foundation to grow American Chestnut seedlings to help restore this threatened tree species. An ongoing relationship with the foundation and plans to grow the project are expected. Several thousand plants were produced in the project’s first

year. Assistance with seed collection was given to an Indiana company, Arvin Sanyo, in a seedling/beautification project that is continuing within the company. Many different seeds of various species were collected to assist with the project.

Several seedlings propagated from the parent tree (a horse chestnut in Amsterdam, Netherlands) that was written about in the “Diary of Anne Frank” were put in DNR’s care. The seedlings were the only ones in existence in the United States due to mortality at other facilities. The nursery was contacted by the Anne Frank Foundation center in New York to attend a celebration in Anne’s honor and plant one (*see photo on right*) of the historic seedlings on the Capitol grounds in Washington D.C. The seedling project was to commemorate Anne Frank’s pursuit of peace and tolerance during her time through the Holocaust during World War II.



DNR Forestry’s partnership with the Indiana Department of Correction continues to be of high importance to ensure customer needs are met, seedling prices remain low and quality plants are made available to Indiana citizens. With increased budget challenges, more emphasis is directed toward this group as our labor force. The working experience is helping provide these individuals with knowledge that may help them in the future.

The installation of culverts and low water crossings around the seedbed areas (*see photo on right*) helped improve field drainage issues. This will ensure good access to fields under various conditions.



Firewood was cut from unwanted pieces left in log yards and supplied as campfire wood for a recreation property. The wood comes from sections discarded in logging operations that would otherwise be left to decay in the forests.

This has turned out to be an extra source of revenue for DNR Forestry.

Space was provided in low lying open areas for lake dirt from the Starve Hollow Lake dredging project. The area could become a more productive site for future uses.

COOPERATIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT

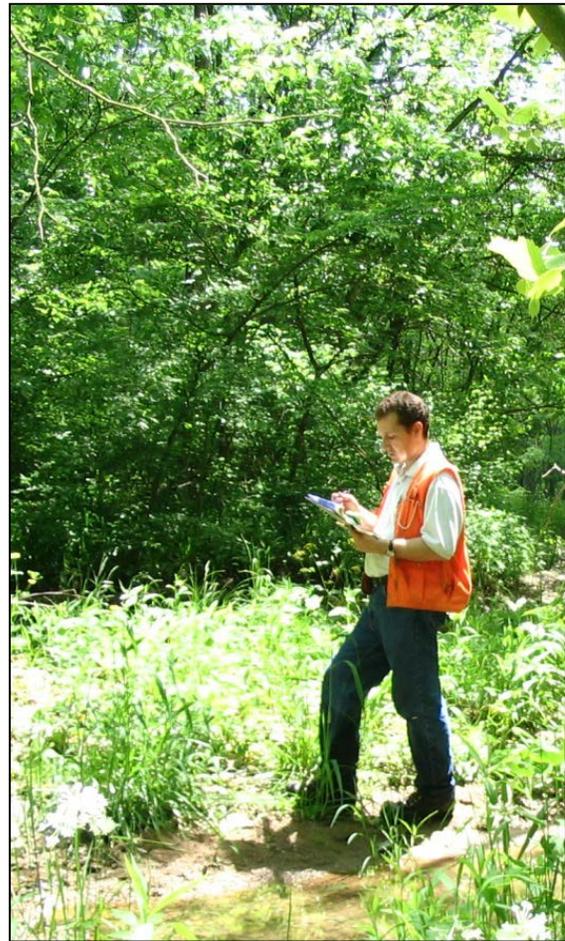
The state is divided into 20 districts. Each district includes between two and 10 counties. District sizes are based on the amount of forested acreage in each county and the number of tracts in each county enrolled in the Classified Forest & Wildlands Program (CFW).

Full staffing includes 20 district foresters and two assistant district foresters. In 2014, one district forest position was vacant, one district was staffed with an intermittent forester, and one district shared with two other full time employees.

District foresters enjoy working with landowners and are perceived by the public as an unbiased provider of forestry information. Their hard work and dedication to Hoosier landowners is appreciated.

The CFM program performs the following duties related to private lands forest management:

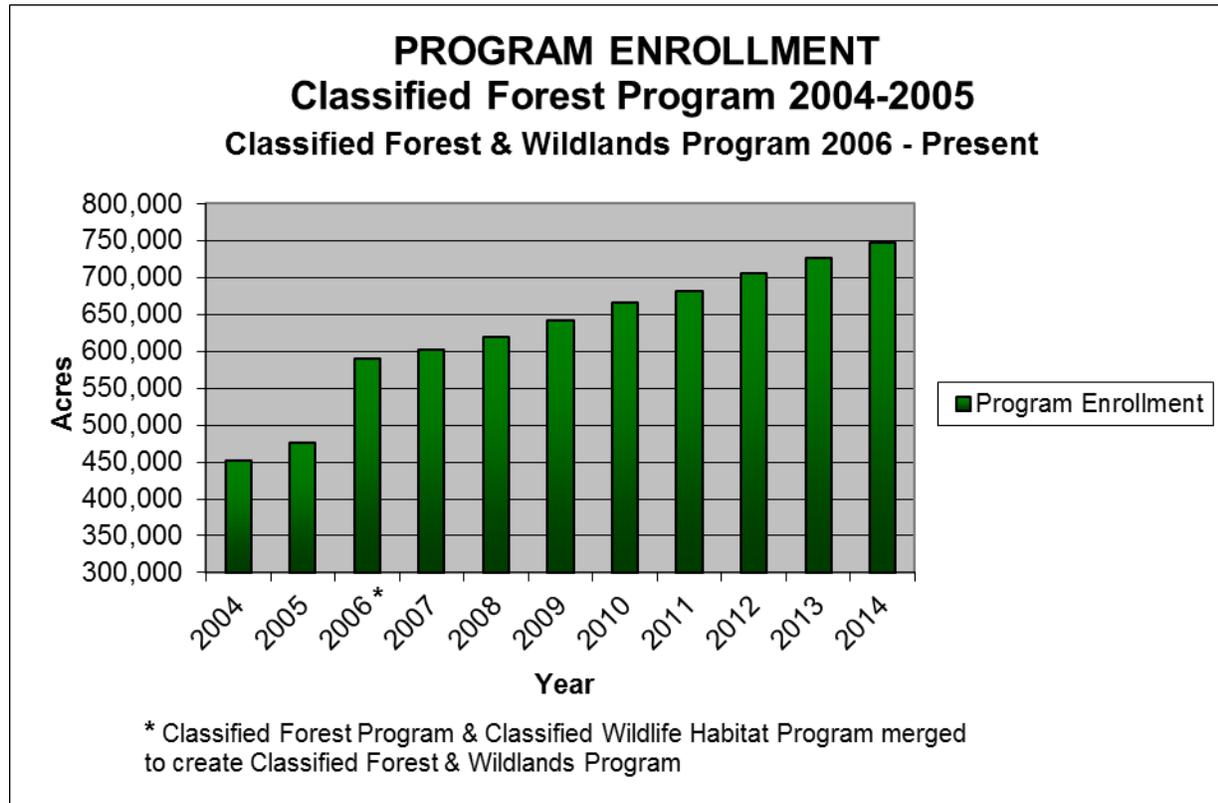
- Provide technical forestry assistance to private forest land owners
- Administer the CFW Program, which includes:
 - Preparing stewardship plans for people interested in enrolling acreage in CFW
 - Enrolling acreage in CFW
 - Performing re-inspections on CFW parcels as required by law
 - Performing all necessary duties required by Forest Stewardship Council (FSC-C071226) third-party certification
 - Withdrawing property from the program as required
- Serve as a technical service provider to the Natural Resources Conservation Service concerning the management of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Provide forestry education opportunities to landowners and other interested parties on a wide variety of forestry activities.



District forester Jayson Waterman conducts spring CFW re-inspection.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Enrollments in the Classified Forest & Wildlands Program: 387 tracts totaling 20,209 acres
- Withdrawals from the Classified Forest & Wildlands Program: 79 tracts totaling 2,713 acres
- Re-inspections of Classified Forest & Wildland tracts: 2,701 tracts totaling 143,856 acres
- Forest Stewardship Council harvest consultations, including pre-harvest, active harvest, and post-harvest conferences: 487. No acreage figures are kept.



- Technical Assists: 3,487 landowner technical assists totaling 184,697 acres
- Referrals to consultant foresters: 1,677
- Incidental Assists (e-mail, phone calls, etc.): 4,388. No acreage figures are kept.

