Spring 1988 Number 7

PROTECT OUR WOODS

P.O. Box 352, Paoli, IN 47454

NEW HOOSIER FOREST PLAN

A new management plan for the Hoosier National Forest is being prepared by the Forest Service. The new Forest Supervisor and his principal assistants have been working with representatives from a variety of public and special interest groups to outline a Forest Plan more balanced and more responsive to the needs of hoosiers than the previous plan. They have been aided in this process by a negotiating team from the Institute for Environmental Negotiations from the University of Virginia.

Among the participants in the negotiations are two menbers of PROTECT OUR WOODS: Andy Mahler, president, and Bob Klawitter, research committee chairman. Other groups represented include the timber industry, hunter groups, Indiana Farm Bureau, Purdue University, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the various groups that appealed the original plan.

Although the different groups participating in the negotiations have different objectives (see the enclosed brochure for the PROTECT OUR WOODS proposal), several goals have won broad agreement. These include increasing public participation in the forest planning process; establishing a reasonable level of timber harvest, while protecting watersheds, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities; reducing new road-construction and the use of clearcutting; returning to more traditional, site-specific forestry; protecting some areas of natural forest; and protecting the forest from off-road vehicle(ORV) abuse.

This agreement represents a major victory for those groups and individuals around the state who have worked to get a Hoosier Forest plan more in step with their interests. It will still, however, be important for interested citizens, and groups like PROTECT OUR WOODS, to participate, as planning for the Forest shifts from forest-wide goals to specific projects in different parts of the Forest. Although the Forest Service has agreed to use more single tree and group selection harvests, and to reduce the size of their clearcuts to no more than 10 acres, with the average being in the 2 to 5 acre range, local residents, and others may still wish to help determine where these harvests will take place. Watch for more information about local planning in a future newsletter.

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PROTECT OUR WOODS

PROTECT OUR WOODS has been in existence for under two and a half years. During that time we have grown from a small group of green, hard-working volunteers to an organization with 485 members in 72 different Indiana communities, from the largest cities to the remotest rural areas. We have also received support from former hoosiers in 16 different states and the District of Columbia who still care deeply about their Hoosier National Forest. Most important of all, we have been effective. We have accomplished what we set out to do. And we have done it in a way that has earned us the respect of the other groups with whom we have dealt over the past two and a half years. We have made mistakes, and we will almost certainly continue to make mistakes, but we strive to correct them, and to bring a positive and constructive approach to the problems we face.

Our organization is still all volunteer. We depend on your contributions as well as the sales of maps, tee shirts, and bumper stickers to cover our expenses. Our expenses include printing and mailing 1500 newsletters; travelling around the state, and beyond, to endless meetings; telephoning long-distance to bureaucrats, politicians and reporters, making your views known; hosting the first ever National POW-WOW, featuring two congressmen and 250 visitors and speakers from 17 different states.

If you have not contributed recently, please help us to continue. Bumper stickers are $1, or free with a $5 contribution; Hoosier Forest maps are $3, or free with a $25 contribution; and PROTECT OUR WOODS tee shirts (100% cotton) are $10, or free with a $100 contribution.

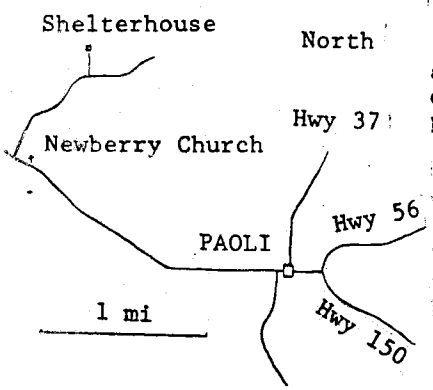
PROTECT OUR WOODS

Congressman Frank McCloskey speaking against clearcutting at the National POW-WOW.

FUTURE PLANS

PROTECT OUR WOODS will continue to monitor the management of the Hoosier National Forest. We will also seek your views on new problems and issues, in order to deal with them effectively, as they arise: such issues as the proposed Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge, the proposed resort complex for the Tillery Hill peninsula on Patoka Lake, and the proposed gas pipeline right-of-way through the southern third of the state.

We will also seek ways to improve the quality of the privately owned woodlands in the state and the prices received by those woodland owners when they decide to put timber on the market.



SPRING MEETING

We invite you to join us for our annual spring meeting 7:00pm Friday, May 13 at the Orange County Park shelterhouse for a pitch-in supper. Topics of discussion will include an update on the Hoosier National Forest, not-for-profit incorporation, and plans for the future.

THANKS

Our profound thanks to those who have contributed so much to our success over the last two and a half years. Special thanks to Bill and Marie Matthews, Dale and Mary Barnard, Marian Barclay, the Hoosier Environmental Council, the Orange County Saddle Club, Southern Signworks, Bruce and Helen Atkinson, Susan Phillips, Jack and Elaine Stephenson, Bill Hill, Rebecca Thompson, Dr and Mrs Gordon Smith, Annemarie Mahler, George Russell, Paul East, and Richard Cartwright. And to the many others who have called or written with words of encouragement, or sent along news stories of interest from their local papers, thanks. Keep those cards and letters coming.

I would like to join PROTECT OUR WOODS
I am already a member

Name_____

Street_____

Town_____

Contribution

$ _____

I cannot contribute at this time. Please keep me on the mailing list.

If we do not hear from you we may have to drop you from our mailing list.