

Hoosier National Forest Service grants developer's access to Lake Monroe

By David Haberman, Professor of Religious Studies at Indiana University

Members of the Indiana Forest Alliance have been watching with great concern a petition by Mr. Roscoe Breedlove to Mr. Kenneth Day, Supervisor of the Hoosier National Forest, that would allow road access across national forest land and the development of forested property adjacent to Lake Monroe.

Since access to some of this land was waived when Lake Monroe was created, the Forest Supervisor is under no legal requirement to grant access. In conjunction with a nature conservancy group, officers of the national forest attempted to purchase this forested property at twice the market value and add it to the Hoosier.

Mr. Breedlove refused to sell, however, believing that it was in his best interest to develop this land. The Indiana Forest Alliance and others wrote letters to Mr. Day in strong opposition to granting road access across the national forest, which will only further fragment the forest and encourage the development of sensitive forest land that is in the Lake Monroe watershed. Nonetheless, on March 20, 2003 Mr. Day issued a decision granting Mr. Breedlove a road easement across the Hoosier National Forest to his property. The Indiana Forest Alliance regrets this decision.

Mr. Day's decision is contingent on Mr. Breedlove being able to secure permission to cross both private property and land belonging to the Morgan-Monroe State Forest. Let's hope that the managers of these lands demonstrate better judgment than the supervisor of the Hoosier National Forest.

The Old Maple

A little older,
A littler wiser,
A little weaker,
A little bigger in the trunk.

Still reaching,
Still growing,
Still loving,
Still beautiful.

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Bird Nesting Season Needs Much More Protection on the State Forest

By Donald Winslow Phd

For the past two summers Property Manager Jim Allen has scheduled Logging activity to avoid the avian breeding season in Morgan-Monroe and Yellowwood State Forest. By eliminating a potentially important source of mortality to eggs and nestlings, this increases the breeding success of forest-nesting birds and insures compliance of Division of Forestry activities with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Species showing consistent decline deserve all the help they can get.

The Cerulean Warbler is the focus of a campaign for endangered listing and is relatively abundant within Yellowwood State Forest. This species nests high in the canopy and nests could easily be destroyed by felling trees. Other species nest in understory saplings, in shrubs, and on the ground. All of these nests are susceptible to damage from equipment and falling trees.

Although Jim Allen's policy excludes logging activities from May 1st through July 15th, there is good reason to extend this exclusion through August. Some bird species continue nesting through August and into September. Such species include Neotropical migrants such as the Acadian Flycatcher and the Wood Thrush. Because predation rates are high during peak nesting, these late-season nest attempts may be critically important for productivity of Acadian Flycatchers. Wood Thrush populations have been declining for decades, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lists it as a species of conservation concern for the Central Hardwoods Region.

I hope we can avoid conflicts between logging and nesting in all the Indiana State Forests in Indiana. Please contact The DNR Deputy Director John Davis and ask him to institute a policy to schedule all logging activities outside the avian nesting season in all state forests.

John M. Davis can be reached at (317) 232-4025 or jdavis@dnr.state.in.us

Such a move would be an important step in avian conservation and may forestall legal challenges regarding the take of migratory birds.

Take Action:

Contact DNR Deputy Director: John M. Davis

Tele: 317 232-4025

E.mail: jdavis@dnrstate.in.us

Write to: Executive office

402 W. Washington Street RM W256

Indianapolis IN 46204