

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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\$80,000 Efroymsen Grant to Expand Forest Wildlife Inventory

(INDIANAPOLIS, IN) - A two-year, \$80,000 grant from the Efroymsen Family Fund will enable the Indiana Forest Alliance and its partners to expand an inventory of plants and animals in the older, interior forests of Indiana's public lands.

The inventory, known as the Ecoblitz, has been occurring in a 900-acre tract of Morgan-Monroe State Forest for three years running, with support from the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust. In 2017, with new support from the Efroymsen Family Fund, the Ecoblitz will expand to the Hoosier National Forest and one other state forest, to be determined.

"We are thrilled about this gift from the Efroymsen Family Fund to expand this unique effort," said Jeff Stant, executive director of the Indiana Forest Alliance. "The Ecoblitz is demonstrating more definitively the ecological value of letting more of Indiana's deep, interior forests return to the old growth condition on our public lands."

The goal of the Ecoblitz is to provide a more complete characterization of the biological diversity to aid decisions about public forest management. Results so far from this inventory of older forests are revealing that a rich diversity of native life—plants, fungi, birds, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, fish, insects, spiders, and other invertebrates—exists there, with some 1,254 species identified in the first two years and hundreds still being tallied in 2016.

The Indiana Forest Alliance conducts the Ecoblitz with the help of the Hoosier Environmental Council, many volunteers, and nine teams of herpetologists, ornithologists, mammalogists, entomologists, botanists, mycologists, dendrologists and other scientists, from 11 Indiana colleges and universities.

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About the Indiana Forest Alliance

IFA is a non-profit, statewide organization founded in 1996 and dedicated to preserving and restoring Indiana's native hardwood forest ecosystem for the enjoyment of all.

Through expert research, influential advocacy, effective organizing, powerful storytelling, and when necessary, litigation, IFA ensures that the integrity of Indiana's forest ecosystem thrives as a natural resource to benefit native wildlife, soil, air and water quality; and as the emblem of our natural heritage. By leading a coalition of citizens, organizations and decision makers, IFA establishes, protects, and restores forests for future generations.