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## **GOVERNOR SILENT ON OFFER OF \$150,000 TO PRESERVE 299 ACRES OF YELLOWWOOD FOREST**

A week has passed since Bobby Bartlett, owner of Castlewood Corporation, offered the state \$150,000 to preserve 299 acres of the 2,700-acre Brown County Yellowwood State Forest Back Country Area, slated to be logged. The rights to log the area were sold to Hamilton Logging last week for \$108,785.

Bartlett's company, based in Tell City, Indiana, produces high-end wood flooring. "Mr. Bartlett made this offer because he believes that some of the oldest stands in our state forests such as this one should be set aside for the general welfare and enjoyment of the people," said Jenny E.K. Riddle, Castlewood spokesperson.

"We urge the Governor to meet in person with Mr. Bartlett, and with Dr. Leslie Bishop--the scientist who authored the letter signed by 228 Indiana scientists advocating for the conservation of some older growth forest--to discuss Yellowwood," said Jeff Stant, executive director of the Indiana Forest Alliance.

To date, the Governor's staff has not responded to requests to meet with forest advocates.

The tracts to be logged are some of the oldest tracts in the Indiana state forest system, having not been logged for 90-140 years, according to tree ages measured by forest scientists last summer. These tracts in Yellowwood resemble the forest wilderness found all over Indiana, more than a century ago.

"Via the Indiana Natural Resources Foundation, the Governor could accept the \$150,000 offer, and this portion of the Yellowwood Back Country Area could be preserved, which, given the public outcry in favor of the forest, is the overwhelming preference of Hoosiers," said Stant.

Passions to save the forest have run so high that, according to a report from WFHB <<http://wfhb.org/tag/earth-first/>> in Bloomington, a group illegally tagged several hundred additional trees in Yellowwood in an apparent effort to confuse the logging process.

"The Indiana Forest Alliance and our allies are deeply disturbed by this illegal act," said Stant. "This regrettable move does nothing to advance our goal: entering into science-based dialogue with elected officials based on public concern over the fate of Yellowwood and the management of our state forests in general."

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**About 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.