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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOREST ADVOCATES RESPOND TO TIMBER SALE

INDIANAPOLIS – More than 200 protesters gathered this morning to oppose the Department of Natural Resources' timber sale at Yellowwood State Forest, arguing that the oldest tracts within Yellowwood State Forest, particularly in the backcountry areas, should be set aside from logging. The oldest tree in the forest is a 238-year-old American beech.

Less than an hour before the sale, a representative of the owner of Castlewood Inc., a lumber products company in Tell City, Indiana, delivered an offer to John Seifert, head of the Indiana Division of Forestry. Castlewood (not a registered timber buyer) offered \$150,000 to the state to preserve the woods. But the planned sale went through, with Hamilton Logging, Inc. winning the bid to cut 1,733 trees for \$108,000. The state had expected a winning bid of about \$150,000.

"These trees have been sold for 24 cents per board foot -- that's what is normally paid for low-quality timber," said Jeff Stant, executive director of the Indiana Forest Alliance. "The trees that are to be cut are not only dead and diseased ones; they plan to cut [healthy trees, young and old](#)."

"The debate about our state forests is about politics," he continued. "It's about quality of life in Indiana, the conservation of our heritage, and public input in a democracy. These are public forests that we all own."

"The crusade to ensure our state forests are healthy and protected will continue. The advocates here today, and the many thousands who support a sensible forest management policy, will continue to step up and speak out. I encourage them to redouble these efforts on behalf of all Hoosiers and the irreplaceable natural heritage that is in our collective trust. We need to hold the politicians accountable here, including Governor Holcomb, who refused to intervene despite sustained public outcry."

Last week, Gov. Holcomb received [a letter signed by 228 scientists](#), asking him to "conserve major portions of our state forests and allow them to return to old-growth conditions." The author of the letter, Leslie Bishop, Ph.D. a biologist from Earlham College, read the letter aloud at the protest.

RESIDENTS WON'T ALLOW ACCESS

Also this morning, residents living near the area to be logged announced their refusal to allow logging traffic on what is considered a private road. Dave Shoopman, president of Possum Trot Acres Association, read a letter stating: "We ask that you inform bidders that there will not be logging access to the state forest through the north portion of Possum Trot Road." This road is one of several access points into Yellowwood State Forest, but is the most direct route to the sale area."

ADVOCATES TO CONTINUE EFFORTS

Stant, Bishop, Shoopman and other advocates have pledged to continue calls for a balanced management policy for state forests that includes conservation zones protected from logging. The Indiana Forest Alliance is leading the campaign.

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.