

2006 Indiana State Forest Open House Process

Between January and May of 2006 the Division of Forestry conducted ten (10) open houses. Each of the state forest management units participated in one of the open houses. For the attendee's convenience and to lessen the preparation effort for the properties, Jackson-Washington State Forest and Starve Hollow Beach SRA jointly participated in a single open house as did Clark State Forest and Deam Lake SRA. The purpose of the open houses was to provide information about the various programs at each state forest, create a venue for dialogue with neighbors/others and finally to receive written comments about the state forest's activities. Each open house was held on a mid-week afternoon/evening or on Saturday and they were advertised both locally and through a state-wide news release.

Each open house featured displays (stations) covering the following areas of interest: Recreation Management, Resource Management, Land Management, Community Affairs, Property Direction and Staffing/Budget/Revenues. Each attendee was asked to register at the door and received a comment sheet. The comment sheet asked for any ideas they wished to share about that particular state forest. Each open house was attended by Division of Forestry/DNR Central Office staff, but as planned much of the interaction was between the visitors and the property staff.

2006 marked the fifth year of annual open houses for Division of Forestry properties. Local Conservation Officers were invited to attend, to both provide security and to answer questions. At those state forests that serve as the office for District Foresters they were also invited to provide a display and man a station. In 2006 some open houses were held in conjunction with other agencies and organizations (Division of State Parks and Reservoirs and The Nature Conservancy). The Division of State Parks and Reservoirs and the Division of Nature Preserves also provided information at some open houses.

Attendance at the 2006 open houses varied from a low of 10 to a high of 100. A total of 383 people registered at the open houses and a total of 71 comments were received. Details on attendance and comments received can be found in the attached table.

The quality and thoroughness of the displays prepared by the properties was outstanding. The Division is convinced that providing both our local and statewide constituents current information about our activities and an opportunity to discuss them is helpful in maintaining public support. During the remainder of this year the Division will be evaluating whether there are more efficient formats than the current local open houses that we can use in future years to provide these opportunities while limiting the negative time impacts on staff resources. Notwithstanding potential changes in format, the Division will continue to provide information about scheduled forest management activities and opportunities for public input.

Prepared by Ben Hubbard, June 7, 2006

**2006 State Forest Open House
Comments Summary**
Prepared by Ben Hubbard, June 7, 2006

PROPERTY	Pro-Timber	Anti-Timber	Recreation Support	Recreation Concerns	Fish and Wildlife	General Support	General Non-support	Budget	Other Issues	Registered Attendance.	Total Comment
Clark/Deam Lake										13	0
Ferdinand / Pike	3	6	1		1	1				24	12
Greene-Sullivan		4	3	3	2	3				56	15
Jackson-Washington/Starve Hollow		1		1						100	2
Harrison-Crawford	1	5								27	6
Martin		3								11	3
Morgan-Yellowwood	3	24			1				2	24	30
Owen-Putnam		1	1							54	2
Selmier						1				10	1
Salamonie River										64	0
Totals	7	44	5	4	4	5	0	0	2	283	71

Notes:

--All of the comments received were reviewed by the Division of Forestry (Ben Hubbard) and placed into one of nine broad categories shown above. Copies of each of the original comments sheets are on file in the Division of Forestry. Some sheets contained more than one comment. Single comment sheets bearing more than one signature were counted as one comment. Comments received within 30 days of each open house are reflected in this summary. Phoned and emailed comments were counted as comment sheets.

--Comments in the "Other Issues" category included; Support invasive species control (1), Request DNR provide future harvest maps online (1) --Some property specific issues were able to be resolved during face to face discussion at the open houses

-- The 44 "anti-timber" comments were submitted by a total of 21 different adults and 5 young children. None of the other categories contained multiple comments by the same individual.