

# Conservation

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## Mission

To ensure the protection, careful management, and enhancement of Indiana's natural resources.

## Summary of Activities

The **Department of Natural Resources** (DNR) is responsible for the conservation of Indiana's natural resources, including forests, water, soil, plants, fish, and wildlife. The DNR also promotes the responsible development of oil and natural gas resources and regulates the operation and reclamation of coal mines.



The DNR Division of Nature Preserves uses funds from the Indiana Heritage Trust program to acquire and dedicate as state nature preserves the best natural areas in Indiana. DNR ecologists care for 178 preserves, installing trails, monitoring rare species, conducting controlled burns, and controlling invasive species. The Division of Forestry operates two tree nurseries that annually sell four to six million seedlings to the public for timber, windbreaks, wildlife food and habitat, watershed and soil protection, reclamation, and education. The Division also provides leadership and support regarding fire management, forest health, and forest product conversion, and administers 13 state forest properties covering 150,000 acres.



The Division of Fish and Wildlife manages fishery resources on public waters and provides wildlife management services and assistance to state properties, national forests, and private landowners. The Entomology and Plant Pathology Division manages plant and apiary pests to ensure the preservation and protection of cultivated land and natural resources. Every year, the division inspects and certifies some 500 plant nurseries, 50 greenhouses, and nearly 3,500 dealers of nursery stock statewide. DNR inspectors also provide compliance certifications for state and federal quarantines of species such as the gypsy moth and pine shoot beetle.



The Division of Water assists local communities with flood hazard mitigation planning activities related to the National Flood Insurance Program. It also assists in regulating construction activities along the state's waterways, protecting lives and property from flood hazards, and ensuring access to public waters. Hydraulic engineers, geotechnical personnel, and surveyors are responsible for the inspection of over 1,200 dams, maintaining the state's floodplain mapping and waterway programs, and assisting the **State Emergency Management Agency** (SEMA) in the event of dam or levee emergencies. Division of Soil Conservation employees implement programs for lake and river enhancement, stormwater and sediment control, and agricultural conservation.

The Division of Oil and Gas works with oil and gas operators to ensure that construction plans protect the environment. The Division of Reclamation protects citizens, property, and resources from the adverse effects of coal mines. Prior to 1977, more than 100,000 acres of land in Indiana were mined and then abandoned, leaving behind exposed toxic materials. The Abandoned Mine Land program works to restore land disturbed by coal mines.

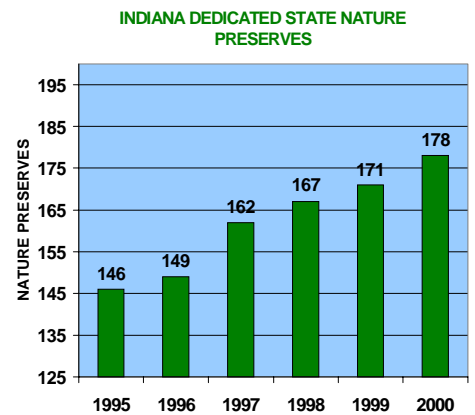
## External Factors

Indiana has a relatively small amount of publicly-owned land, creating pressure to accommodate increasing consumer demand for nature-based activities. Continued economic development creates the need for targeted, effective conservation programs that ensure the protection of natural resources. Land use changes resulting from the fragmentation or liquidation of forest resources present a challenge to sustainable forest management. Public demand for a wide diversity of native fish and wildlife species may result in new federal legislation providing funds for wildlife diversity, conservation, and education. These funds could then be utilized for conservation activities.

## Evaluation and Accomplishments

During the last four years, the state has protected more than 20,000 acres of land for parks, wetlands, trails, and nature preserves. The DNR brought back 194 river otters, an indigenous Indiana creature that had become extinct in this state. It protected peregrine falcons and bald eagles from a similar fate, nurturing nearly 200 of these birds from birth to adulthood. Over 500,000 fish were introduced to the White River after the contamination event of December 1999. The state also launched the Indiana Forest Legacy program to conserve important forests in rapidly developing areas.

Since 1990, the DNR has regulated a cumulative total of 51 counties for pine shoot beetles, five counties for gypsy moths (two additional counties are pending), and several production nurseries and greenhouses for Japanese beetle or other regulated pests. From 1997 to 1999, DNR field employees assisted 28,996 individuals with conservation planning for 61,959 acres of land and provided engineering assistance on 8,727 occasions. DNR assistance prevented about 326,400 tons of soil from eroding and polluting rivers, lakes, or streams—enough soil to fill 16,320 dump trucks—a line 77 miles long. Meanwhile, the number of nature preserves has increased by 22% over the last five years.



## Plans for the Biennium



The Forest Legacy Program will be expanded to increase the amount of acreage that can be protected. The DNR will continue to use funds from the Indiana Heritage Trust Program to acquire and dedicate the best remaining natural areas in Indiana, insuring that the full array of Indiana's wild, living heritage is protected. This includes new nature preserves in counties where there are currently none. The Division of Forestry will work to increase the use of sustainable forest management occurring on private forestlands, while the Division of Fish and Wildlife will develop and initiate a management plan to

protect and enhance wildlife diversity. Containment of gypsy moth outbreaks will be a priority, as will helping landusers adopt new technologies and methods of managing soil and water resources.

<u>Program: 0605</u>	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003
<b>Appropriation (All Funds)</b>	<b>\$73,041,977</b>	<b>\$77,015,906</b>	<b>\$77,091,333</b>	<b>\$87,053,051</b>	<b>\$87,055,650</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>\$79,614,822</b>	<b>\$83,358,410</b>	<b>\$90,988,230</b>		

**Sources of Funds  
FY 2001 (Approp)**

■ General ■ Dedicated ■ Federal ■ Other

Source	Percentage
General	39%
Dedicated	60%
Federal	1%
Other	1%

**Uses of Funds  
FY 2001 (Approp)**

■ Personal Services ■ Distributions ■ Capital ■ Other

Use	Percentage
Personal Services	56%
Distributions	4%
Capital	19%
Other	21%