

SUMMARY COMMENTS

Morgan Monroe-Yellowwood State Forest Compartment 9 Tract 1 30 Day Comment Period Ending: 6/12/2013 Comments Received: 7

The table below is a summary of public comments received concerning the draft Resource Management Guide. The public comments received have been reviewed in their entirety and given due consideration summarized in the Division of Forestry response below.

Comment Summary	Response
Generally opposes timber harvests in Back Country Area and/or that harvesting conflicts with the specified purpose of the backcountry designation. Requests moratorium on back country harvests.	The backcountry area designation specifically allows for the selective harvest of timber and other uses. It is not a wilderness designation. The prescribed harvest will utilize single tree selection and assesses the merits of each tree during the selection process. The prescribed harvest will retain a primarily closed canopy and large diameter trees throughout the managed area.
Opposes increased harvest levels at Morgan Monroe State forest from environmental, recreation and tax payer standpoints. Management does not replace natural processes. No management needed to create the preferred forest conditions or benefit the associated wildlife.	State Forest natural resource management follows a comprehensive forest certification standards approved by the Forest Stewardship Council and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. Management is audited annually to for adherence to these standards of good management which address a broad array of ecological principles. State Forest harvests remove only a portion of the annual tree growth- meaning the forest continues to see a net gain in tree volume year in and year out. These management standards can be found at https://us.fsc.org/download.fsc-us-forest-management-standard-v1-0.95.htm
Concerned about soil impacts, erosion and logging on steeper slopes.	Best management practices will be implemented and monitored to address the soil erosion concerns. These guidelines include slope considerations.
Concern for potential cultural sites and that management guide specifies that 'if found cultural resources will be protected', but does not disclose if any were identified on this tract.	For the protection of cultural resources the presence or absence of these resources is not disclosed in public documents. A cultural site review is part of the project review process.
Feels that public notice of proposed management is lacking.	Public notice of the proposed management actions were included in State Forest open houses and posted on public web pages. Interest groups also communicated the proposed actions to their membership and in public forums.
Concerned that management progression does not follow the 2009 Process flow chart.	Per the Resource Management Process, the flowchart order and timeline are for reference and are approximate. Actual process activities may occur somewhat out of

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
 Division of Forestry
 State Forest Resource Management Guide Public Comment Summary

	the shown order. Comments received during comment periods are given consideration as part of the overall management process.
Recommends DoF should publish timber sales in largest newspapers of affected counties.	The Division of Forestry will advertise sales publically through multiple outlets, including newspapers serving the area.
Concerned on impacts to recreation, including primitive-type recreation experience, including impacts to the Knobstone and Tecumseh trails.	This tract receives little recreation use. The Knobstone and Tecumseh trails are not in the project area. However, the proposed management will have temporary impacts on recreational use of the area. During management operations the area will be closed to public access for safety reasons. Closure would likely be 1-4 months in duration.
Seeks to know costs of operation and true value of trees being sold. Contends trees to be sold may be worth tens of thousands of dollars each.	The Division of Forestry does and will continue to tract timber sale costs. In fiscal year 2011-12 State Forest timber sales totaled \$2,686,672. Timber sale costs were \$251,452. Counties receive 15% of net sale revenues to support local fire departments. Timber sales will follow well established competitive bid processes to assure market value for timber sold. The contention of individual tree value is unfounded, however not unfounded for overall sale value. Sale prices are disclosed as a matter of public record.
General comments of tract uniqueness and concern on impact to rare/unique habitats. Requests no management be undertaken until the area is re-evaluated for designation as HCVF for recreation, aesthetic and ecological reasons; and until certification CARS related to HCVF/old growth are completed.	The back country area was nominated and evaluated as a candidate for High Conservation Value Forest designation in 2008. From that analysis, 320 acres were set aside and dedicated as the Low Gap State Nature Preserve in March 2010. No harvesting will occur within the nature preserve and natural processes will be the predominant influence. Certification CARS related to HCVF and old growth were closed out in 2012. A review of the Indiana Heritage database of unique resources was utilized during the development of the management guide and findings incorporated.
Concern on impact to Indiana bat	The Division of Forestry will utilize guidance from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and other sources to avoid take impacts to the Indiana bat.
Concerned about impact of harvest on the spread of invasive species.	Invasive species are known to exist on the site. They will be monitored and treated where appropriate.
Reverse the trend toward increased logging of old growth state forests	The tract is not old growth forest. 320 acres of the backcountry area have been set aside as a State Nature Preserve.