

*(Passed 7-0-1)
w/3 lex absent
Volan absent for
discussion - ABSTAINED*

RESOLUTION 08-06


RECOGNIZING THE SPECIAL VALUE OF THE BACKCOUNTRY AREA OF MORGAN MONROE AND YELLOWWOOD STATE FORESTS AND URGING THAT IT BE PERMANENTLY PROTECTED FROM COMMERCIAL LOGGING

- WHEREAS, the Backcountry Area of Monroe County in the Morgan-Monroe and Yellowwood State Forests was established in the early 1980s as a special area "to be enjoyed by the wilderness seeker as a place of solitude and repose" and has not been commercially logged since its establishment; and
- WHEREAS, the Backcountry Area is enjoyed by many hikers and backpackers and is the only area open to backpack camping in the Morgan-Monroe and Yellowwood State Forests; and
- WHEREAS, in addition to recreational opportunities, the Backcountry Area provides many other ecosystem services that improve the quality of life of residents of Monroe County, including carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, protection of biodiversity, water and air purification, storm water control and protection of soils from erosion; and
- WHEREAS, the Backcountry Area is now under threat of commercial logging by the Division of Forestry of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources's statewide plan to increase logging by 500% in a five-year period in an effort to raise revenues; and
- WHEREAS, Indiana State forests are public resources that comprise less than one percent (1%) of the land area within the State, but also comprise approximately thirty percent (30%) of the land available for public recreation; and
- WHEREAS, the short-term gain in revenues from commercial logging of the State forests is contrary to the wishes of a majority of the citizens of Indiana who, according to an Indiana University poll conducted in 2001, oppose all commercial logging in these publicly-owned State forests; and
- WHEREAS, to lose this mature forest and the long-term value it provides in recreational and tourism opportunities and clean air and water, among many other ecosystem services, to the short-term gain in revenues from commercial logging is a travesty to current and future visitors to the forest; and
- WHEREAS, not only will logging trigger these damaging losses, but the losses will be opaque and hidden from public scrutiny under a recent change to State law that exempts the Indiana Division of Forestry from the provisions of the Indiana Environmental Policy Act, absolving the Division of its duty evaluate the environmental impact of its actions (I.C. §14-23-4-1(b)); and
- WHEREAS, the City of Bloomington has a long history of preserving greenspace, and the protection of our region's forested land is an important part of the City's sustainability ethic; and
- WHEREAS, as a former Indiana State Representative for District 61, City of Bloomington Mayor Mark Kruzan introduced House Bill 1342 in 2002, which proposed a ban on logging State forest land; and
- WHEREAS, current Indiana State Representative for District 61 -- and former Bloomington Common Council representative -- Matt Pierce, has introduced House Bill 1370, which requires the Indiana Department of Natural Resources to prepare: annual statements of proposed removal of merchantable timber from State forests and proposed replanting of trees; an environmental impact statement before the department may proceed with the proposed activities; a procedure for public comment with respect to the proposed activities and the environmental impact statements. The bill also prohibits the removal of timber less 500 yards from a trail in Morgan-Monroe and Yellowwood State Forests and bans the removal of timber during migratory bird nesting season;

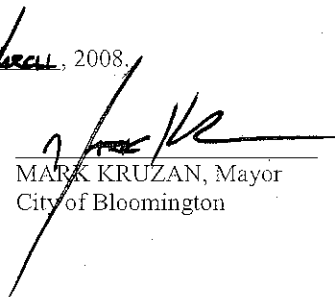
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, MONROE COUNTY, INDIANA, THAT:

1. The recreational and environmental value of the Backcountry Area of Morgan-Monroe and Yellowwood State Forests far outweigh the short term gain in revenue from commercial logging.
2. All plans for commercial logging in the Backcountry Area of Morgan-Monroe and Yellowwood State Forests should be cancelled.
3. The entire Backcountry Area as it now exists on maps of Morgan-Monroe and Yellowwood State Forests should be permanently protected from commercial logging.
4. The City Clerk shall distribute copies of this resolution to Governor Mitch Daniels, the Division of Forestry in the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, and local State representatives.

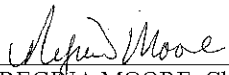
PASSED and ADOPTED by the Common Council of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, upon this 19th day of MARCH, 2008.


SUSAN SANDBERG, President
Bloomington Common Council

SIGNED and APPROVED by me upon this 24th day of March, 2008.


MARK KRUZAN, Mayor
City of Bloomington

ATTEST:


REGINA MOORE, Clerk
City of Bloomington

SYNOPSIS

This resolution is sponsored by Councilmembers Rollo and Piedmont. It recognizes the special value of the Backcountry Area of Morgan-Monroe and Yellowwood State forests, urges that it be permanently protected from commercial logging, and directs the City Clerk to forward the legislation to Governor Mitch Daniels, the Division of Forestry in the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, and local State representatives.

Note: This resolution was revised after distribution on Friday, March 14, 2008 and introduction at the Regular Session on March 19, 2008 in order to add Councilmember Piedmont as co-sponsor of this legislation.

State Reps to:
Legge (10)
Cottrell
Webmaster

CA/CA(3)
Clerk
P/O

governor Daniels
div. of forestry/DNR

state reps - P. Rice
W. Welch
Michael