



Indian Creek Forest Legacy Tract, Indiana

February 2002

Two Hoosier landowners have partnered with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the USDA Forest Service's Forest Legacy Program to leave a legacy for future generations by protecting their property from commercial development.

On February 15, 2002, Hubert Tieman and Hubert Tieman, Jr. transferred development rights on their 820-acre forested tract in Greene County to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources via a conservation easement.

"The biggest farm in our neighborhood has been clear cut and is now being sold off in 5-acre lots. I could not let this happen to a beautiful place like this."

Landowner Hubert Tieman, Jr.

This marks the Indiana Forest Legacy Program's second purchase. Indiana's Forest Legacy Program was formed to protect local forests from future development to commercial, residential and other non-forest uses by purchasing the development rights to environmentally sensitive forests from willing landowners like the Tieman's.

The Tieman's were paid \$328,000 for the conservation easement that was valued at

\$470,000. The \$142,000 difference was made up by a donation from the landowners to serve as the non-Federal cost share for the project.

"This property plays a vital role supporting the area's threatened and unique scenic, cultural, fish, wildlife, and forest resources," Dan Ernst, Forest Legacy Coordinator, observed.

The Tiemans initially bought the property to keep it from being commercially developed. "The biggest farm in our neighborhood has been clear cut and is now being sold off in 5-acre lots. I could not let this happen to a beautiful place like this," commented Hubert Tieman, Jr.

Several ecological features are located on the property, including bottomland hardwoods forests, upland hardwoods forests, cave communities, and bluff communities. Archeological sites, including remnants of an old gristmill, a possible sawmill, and a cemetery that dates back to the early 1800's, are also present.

Indian Creek, which runs along the property and directly into White River, is part of the area's largest watershed. Deep ruts from the old wagon trains have left a visible ford. Possible Native American villages are also located along the creek. "I have a very strong Native American heritage and preserving a large piece of land such as this is very important to me," Tieman Jr. said.

"My goal is to leave this forest as natural as possible," he continued, "and look as close as possible to the way our forefathers found it."

The Indiana Forest Legacy Program protects important forests from conversion to nonforest uses. These forests provide valuable forest products and essential wildlife habitat, protect water quality and karst resources, offer outstanding recreation opportunities, and provide the opportunity to continue traditional forest uses. A Federal-State partnership allows landowners to keep their land private while ensuring it remains forest forever through the use of conservation easements.



Landowners Hubert Tieman Jr. (left) and Hubert Tieman unveil their Forest Legacy sign at the property's dedication in June 2002.
Photo by Dan Ernst