Environmental Profile: Scott County, Indiana

Information & County Contacts

Scott County Visitor’s Center:
(812) 752-9211

Scott County Soil & Water Conservation District:
(812) 752-2269 ext. 3

Land, Water, & Biodiversity & Conservation Efforts:

Clark State Forest

Clark State Forest, established in 1903, is the oldest state forest in Indiana. The original appropriations to purchase a 2,000 acre tract took place during the administration of Governor Winfield Durbin. In the ensuing 96 years, additional acquisitions have increased this area to the present 24,000 acres. Much of this land was originally part of Clark’s Grant, lands provided by a clause in the Virginia Cession of Claims to the Northwest Territory on December 20, 1783. Clark State Forest was used as an experimental forest for many years, early in the development of forestry into a science and profession. More than 150 experimental tree plantings, established from 1905 through 1935, can still be observed in many areas throughout the forest.¹

¹http://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/4827.htm
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**Endangered Species:**

Indiana Bat (*Myotis sodalis*)

The Indiana bat was listed as endangered in 1967 due to episodes of people disturbing hibernating bats in caves during winter, resulting in the death of large numbers of bats. Indiana bats are vulnerable to disturbance because they hibernate in large numbers in only a few caves (the largest hibernation caves support from 20,000 to 50,000 bats). Other threats that have contributed to the Indiana bat's decline include commercialization of caves, loss of summer habitat, pesticides and other contaminants, and most recently, the disease white-nose syndrome. Indiana bats are found over most of the eastern half of the United States. Almost half of them hibernate in caves in southern Indiana. The 2009 population estimate was about 387,000 Indiana bats, less than half as many as when the species was listed as endangered in 1967.²

²http://www.fws.gov/Midwest/Endangered/mammals/inba/index.html