

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/31/2024 2:04:06 AM

First name: Jeanne

Last name: Stangle

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I grew up on a farm on the wooded banks of the Wabash River south of Vincennes, Indiana, where we had hollow sycamore trees in the 1950s so large that four adults or six kids could easily seek shelter from rain. The tall cottonwoods seemed to reach the sky. In summer, my father kept the sows across the levee in these shady woods to have their baby pigs each July. Confined hog feeding was abhorrent to my father. My father and mother have died now, but my sisters and I share ownership to preserve. On Sundays, my farmer father loved to go to the Hoosier National Forest and State Parks of Indiana to see the big trees. My father and mother took me to the Beall Woods of Southern Illinois. Except for these government maintained forests, many farmers have cut down their trees and drained wetlands in my area of southern Indiana. Indiana Ditch Law made mandatory the cutting of mature trees along the Meskiman Ditch with is the back property line of our farm in Knox County, Indiana. Approximately 2014-2015-2016 the big trees were cut, the banks of the Meskiman Ditch were scraped, burned, and sterilized with chemicals allowing erosion of soil. We hired a lawyer, but he was helpless under Indiana Ditch Law. Huge turtles were left homeless. Although the Meskiman Ditch wildlife habitat was destroyed, thankfully, the trees remain along the Wabash River south of Vincennes, and a bald eagle has made a nest! I beg you to have policies to preserve these old growth mature forests to give habitat to wildlife and mental and physical health to humans.