



# Friends of White's Woods Monthly Newsletter



JULY

## CONTROVERSIAL IUP TIMBERING UPDATE

The IUP Student Cooperative Association (Co-op) timbering project in the forest behind the IUP College Lodge appears to involve more timbering than previously understood. The Co-op has refused requests by I-card holders, faculty, alumni, and FWW to share their timbering plans. But as many, or more, as 350 big trees along the 2.5-mile primary recreation trail in the forest are marked, reportedly to be logged.

It appears that much of the area in which the big trees are slated to be cut lies within or adjacent to the 2023 survey boundaries of the [Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory](#) (PNDI) for White's Woods and surrounding areas (see map).



In this PNDI, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service noted that “To conserve foraging and roosting habitat for endangered bats, while also carrying out the proposed conservation, restoration, or stewardship project/activity, conserve and protect forested areas. Emphasis should be placed on retaining (or restoring, if not already present) mature forests with at least 60% canopy closure. Also, retain all hickory trees, and large diameter (>12 inches d.b.h.) snags, dying, and injured trees to ensure a continuing supply of potential roost trees for bats.” The Co-op has not cited steps taken to protect endangered species.

## U.S. Fish & Wildlife-Certified Bat Surveyor in White's Woods

Wildlife Biologist Julie Zeyzus will lead an after-dark walk in the White's Woods Nature Center (WWNC) on July 26, 2026. Participants will meet at the WWNC 12th Street Entrance at 7:30 p.m. for this 90-minute educational event. Following an introduction to bat habitat and behavior, Zeyzus, using specialized equipment, will give walkers a chance to “listen” to the ultrasound emitted by bats. This is the second year that Zeyzus has joined FWW for a walk in White's Woods. To join this Night Critters expedition: email [info@friendsofwhiteswoods.org](mailto:info@friendsofwhiteswoods.org)



Julie Zeyzus

## Independent Forester Evaluation of Co-op Timber Harvest Plans

FWW asked [Appalachian Forest Consultant](#) forester Mike Wolf [to offer his perspective](#) on the unfolding IUP Co-op forest timbering project (after confirming that the public is welcomed to walk in the College Lodge forest). Wolf noted that he could understand the concern by FWW and the public. Mature forests are hard to find, said Wolf. “Recreationally (see page 2)

## UPCOMING FWW EVENTS

**SATURDAYS: Barberry Removal:** Weather permitting.

**10- noon. Please help!** Sign up at the [FWW website](#).

**July 26, 2026: Bat Education Walk** in White's Woods, Julie Zeyzus, Wildlife Biologist; President, Tealeaf Ecological, LLC, 7:30 p.m., 12th St. Entrance.

See the monthly [Naturally](#) column, **brought to you by [The Indiana Gazette](#)**, and FWW to showcase the **wonders of nature in our area**.

Contact [Save the IUP Co-op Forest](#) coalition at [savetheiupcoopforest@gmail.com](mailto:savetheiupcoopforest@gmail.com)

For more information, visit: [friendsofwhiteswoods.org](http://friendsofwhiteswoods.org)  
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Issue 70  
JULY 2026

## Independent Forester Evaluation of Co-op Timber Harvest Plans

(continued from p. 1)

and aesthetically, the forest that spans these two properties is practically indistinguishable and, for our area, the combined forest has what I would consider to be the highest recreational and aesthetic value possible.”

Unfortunately, said Wolf, the IUP Student Cooperative Association’s timbering plan fails to line up with their stated land management goals. “[A]fter walking many miles of the [IUP forest] property and looking at hundreds of high value trees that have been marked and designated for harvest, there is the appearance that a vast number of these marked trees have been chosen for their individual and overall market value and not directly for the purpose of meeting the stated goals...

“I am also saying that harvesting all those painted trees will actually detract from [the IUP Co-op’s] ability to accomplish some of their stated goals. Will harvesting all the painted trees improve forest health? No. Will harvesting all the painted trees improve aesthetics? No. Will harvesting all the painted trees improve sightliness? NO. Will harvesting all the painted trees enhance visual quality? No. Will harvesting all the painted trees enhance the natural character of the forest landscape? No.”

However, said Wolf, people who want to buy timber will be glad to buy them.

But beyond the fact that the planned timber harvest doesn’t meet the Co-op’s stated management goals, the project is also likely to do considerable damage to the forest. Both the Co-op forest and White’s Woods are more park than working forest. “But, even in a working forest, the harvest prescriptions should match up with the landowner’s goals.” The Co-op’s timbering plan will leave the forest with decreased tree quality and decreased stand diameter: What they are leaving behind after their harvesting are smaller trees of lesser value. This “is a version of improper harvesting that will degrade the forest, decrease productivity, and decrease many forest benefits.” [Read Forester Mike Wolf’s complete report here.](#) The report includes recommendations to help the Co-op reach forest management goals in ways that protect forest health and the existing character of the park.

### *It is time to renew your FWW membership!*

You can get a [great new FWW t-shirt](#) with a \$25 membership renewal. Even better, you can support FWW community education (website information, signs, presentations), research (forest ecology consultants, audio recording devices), and ongoing projects to protect the woods. [Support FWW](#) and continue your efforts to save White’s Woods.

### *Back to the Future...again!*

As we learned years ago, the goal of “sustainable forestry” is to make sure that the timber crop is sustainable over time. [This is a timber industry term.](#) Industrial foresters can be distinguished from ecological foresters by the former’s focus on the timber crop and the [latter’s focus on layers of interlocking forest ecosystems](#): underground mycelium network, insects, plants, wildlife, trees, and more. To protect a park, one needs an ecological forester.

Co-op Chair Joshua Castle, in a June 25th email in response to a faculty inquiry, emphasized that the Co-op had gotten a second opinion, they had consulted another “forestry industry” professional, a good choice for managing a timber farm. An ecological forester would be far more help in managing a park.

### **WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE IF THE INTACT FOREST IS 500 ACRES -OR SIGNIFICANTLY LESS (because of timbering)?**

Larger parcels of land support more species, [including migrating songbirds](#). But many species require the protection provided by less fragmented habitat. Even Eastern Box Turtles (another species with declining populations) suffer when [habitat is broken](#) up into two or more patches. Larger forest patches help control invasive species by reducing edge effects and provide more core interior habitat.

## CLIMATE FORESTS UPDATE

The multiple threats to national forests remain. SOMETIME SOON a public comment period about protecting the Roadless Rule (leaving some wild places in national forests) will finally be announced.. [Fifty-seven percent](#) of at-risk species live in Roadless areas. [Firefighters](#) have recently weighed in to protest the attempt to repeal the Roadless Rule. Please watch your email so that you can help. Other links:

### **Repealing the Roadless Rule:**

[Defenders of Wildlife](#)

**Farm Bill:** [Forest Service](#)

[Employees for Environ Ethics](#)

“**Fix Our Forests**” (ironically named) Act:

[Environment America](#)

[Endangered Species Act](#) current status.

\*[Sierra Club](#) & [NPCA](#) and other groups are working, too.

The current administration is also [dismantling national parks](#) by reducing legal protections and [professional staff](#).

For more information, visit: [friendsofwhiteswoods.org](http://friendsofwhiteswoods.org)  
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Issue 70  
JULY 2026