

April 20, 2020

To: White Township

Milt Lady, Township Manager

George E. Lenz, Chairman

Gail L. McCauley, Supervisor

A. Eugene Gemmell, Supervisor

Rich Gallo, Vice Chairman

Sandi Gillette, Supervisor

Planning Commission Members:

Robert Begg, Chairman

Edward Kuckuck, Secretary

George E. Lenz

Dennis Roumm, Assistant Secretary

Nancy Smith

Dear White Township Supervisors and Planning Commission Members:

We are writing to request that you cease all work—as described in the White Township Sustainable Forest Management plan—in the White’s Woods Nature Center until there is ample opportunity for effective citizen input regarding the goals, objectives, and sustainable management strategies for the proper management of this park.

As you are aware, Friends of White’s Woods (FWW), along with its many supporters, has long expressed our desire to work with you to find a mutually favorable resolution regarding the future of the White’s Woods Nature Center. In 2008, over 1,000 people signed a petition and 200-400 citizens attended public meetings to alert the Township Supervisors of our collective interest in developing park management goals and strategies. In just the past week, based on FWW’s outreach efforts, it appears that citizen interest in this issue is as strong as ever –if not stronger.

On June 19, 2008, we received confirmation from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation that FWW could “be assured that our concerns will be taken into consideration” regarding the management of the White’s Woods Nature Center. Yet the Township moved ahead to develop a new plan without meaningful effort, perhaps without any effort at all, to involve FWW or any other potential constituency or stakeholder in the White’s Woods Nature Center, even though such outreach is typically incumbent to legitimate governance decision-making.

It is of note that the White Township Sustainable Forest Plan identifies the primary objective in White’s Woods as a “Sustainable Objective Timber Harvest.” The information that we have received indicates that the percentage of timbering planned for The White’s Woods Nature Center is significantly greater than would be consistent with appropriate management of the park for conservation and recreational purposes.

Sincerely,

Sara B. King, President

Friends of White’s Woods

info@friendsofwhiteswoods.org

Andrew C. Davis, Vice President

Friends of White’s Woods

cc: R. Michael Keith, Chair, Indiana County Commission  
Robin Gorman, Indiana County Commissioner  
Sherene Hess, Indiana County Commissioner  
Mayor George Hood, Indiana  
Todd Marino, WCCS Radio station  
Patrick Cloonan, Indiana Gazette  
Indiana County Chamber of Commerce  
Welcome to Indiana Board of Directors  
Friends of Indiana County Parks  
Center for Community Growth, Indiana, PA  
Susan Fitzsimmons, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
Cindy Rogers, Evergreen Conservancy  
Margaret Higbee, Todd Bird Club  
Indiana League of Women Voters in Indiana County  
County Cooperative Extension  
Indiana Garden Club  
Marie Olson, Indiana Community Garden  
President Michael Driscoll, IUP  
Representative James B. Struzzi II, Pennsylvania House of Representatives  
The Honorable, Tom Wolf, Governor of Pennsylvania  
Cindy Adams Dunn, Secretary, PA Department of Conservation and National Resources

Additional Contact Information:

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