

Letter sent to select IUP major administrators, July 15, 2026

Hello,

As an Indiana University of Pennsylvania alumna and former faculty, I have serious ethical concerns with the current IUP Student Co-Op Association's maintenance plan for the Co-Op Park based upon these four reasons:

1) Safety as a ruse:

The SCA Director and Board Chair, Mr. Garzarelli and Dr. Castle both have both expressed that the current plan to log the SCA forest is primarily to keep students and park users safe from falling tree branches. Given that there is a greater chance of being struck by lightning (1 in 7 million) than the chance of being struck by a falling tree limb (1 in 10 million), this concern is clearly ludicrous. If this were true, then the entire National Park Service and the Pennsylvania State Park system would need to remove all trees along all millions of acres of forested trails (which they don't). Keeping trail users safe from falling tree limbs does not necessitate extensively logging the entire forest, and should only ever entail removing weak or diseased trees along a trail (which is not what is taking place in the SCA maintenance plan). Therefore, one can only conclude that Mr. Garzarelli and Dr. Castle are either pitifully gullible or they are outright deceitful about the rationale for logging the SCA Co-Op Park.

2) Conflicts of interest:

a) In the Friday, July 10, 2026 meeting with the SCA Director and Board Chair, Louis Garzarelli and Joshua Castle informed Amanda Poole, B.A. Harrington, and Jonathan Warnock that the SCA will not be collecting any revenue from the logging company Millstone, and the proceeds, instead, will go to their contractor, Millstone Land Management, LLC, to pay for their work improving safety. So, in essence, the SCA is handing over to the vendor, Millstone Land Management, the liquidated assets (timber) of the IUP Student Co-Op because he told them that said assets are a liability and safety issue. This is gravely concerning and represents a conflict of interest because of course, it is in the best interests of any logging company to maximize their profits by taking out as many valuable trees as possible. In this case, the vendor is using fear tactics (falling tree limbs) as a means to justify extensively logging the SCA forest and thereby deceptively characterizing his work as resolving safety issues. As pointed out by IUP Economics Professor Emeritus, Dr. Willard Radell (see his comments in response to this [article](#)),

the IUP SCA seems to be allowing its vendor to set the ground rules of the work order, which in this case are biased with impaired objectivity that is of course designed to financially benefit the vendor even if it goes against the greater best interests of the IUP Student Co-Op (which in this case, should be managing its forest as a community forest, not as a timber plantation).

b) Additionally, there are also some other possible ethical concerns surrounding the IUP Student-Co-Op's decision to blindly accept these vendor-established ground rules while apparently never opening up this project for bid by other, more qualified vendors who are forestry professionals, not logging professionals. There is no evidence that any RFP ever went out to other vendors, which seems a highly irregular practice for a non-profit contract that stands to generate potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars of revenue for a vendor, and may connect with the next point (2.c.).

c) The vendor, Millstone Land Management, LLC is owned by Mike Lawer who coincidentally is the nephew of the person who provides legal counsel to the SCA, Wayne Kablack.

3. Institutional ethical concerns:

While operating as an independent, non-profit cooperative, the IUP SCA nonetheless carries the IUP name and is therefore expected to align with the institutional values of IUP which emphasizes education and community. In fact, the IUP SCA stated goals are "to provide facilities, programs, and services that enhance the social, cultural, recreational, and learning experiences of the university community". Logging its own forest park, under the flimsy excuse of safety, completely undermines the SCA's own stated mission. As the IUP student body, the greater Indiana community, and national environmental groups like the Sierra Club and The Old-Growth Forest Network are only now becoming fully aware of the extent of the ecologically destructive logging that is to take place under the Millstone plan for the SCA Park forest, this will not reflect positively on IUP in the public eye.

Additionally in the previously cited meeting of July 10, 2026, Garzeralli and Castle also emphatically stated that from now on and forever, anyone who is not an activity fee paying ICard holder, would be considered illegal trespassers and are not ever allowed to use the SCA Park again (including alumni and current IUP faculty). How is banning non-fee paying IUP faculty from the IUP SCA Park, even for instructional purposes, in keeping with core educational values of IUP or the SCA? How does shutting out the Indiana community from ever accessing the IUP SCA Park to hike, sled ride, or play disc golf enhance IUP's connection with the greater Indiana community?

4. Ecological ethical concerns:

The IUP SCA Park forest is widely perceived to be a special, highly revered place of natural beauty that is both accessible and unusual for its many large, mature trees that serve as the habitat backbone for an astounding diversity of wildlife. It is also adjacent to and ecologically connected with the 250-acre White's Woods Nature Center, which the local community also holds in equal high esteem and which the community almost lost to a nearly identical plan only a few years ago by the very same contractor, Millstone Land Management, LLC. It was only after overwhelming public outcry that the plan was delayed to conduct independent, objective assessments by qualified foresters and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources who all found that Millstone's plan was misleading, ecologically destructive, and contrary to the principles of responsible forest management and sound stewardship. Ultimately, the plan was stopped and White's Woods was saved from the ill-conceived Millstone Land Management plan, which just like their current plan for the IUP Student Co-Op, was designed to seduce and mislead the stakeholders in order to extract as much profitable timber as possible.

If the original Millstone plan would have been enacted in White's Woods six years ago, the ecological devastation would be deeply apparent and nowhere even near recovered to this day. For example, here in Pennsylvania, one mature native oak tree can serve as a larval host for over 500 different species of caterpillars which are the most critical food source for birds, most of which cannot eat seeds as babies. Each mature oak tree removed equates to real habitat loss for our songbird populations, which are already facing steep population declines. As another example, our vulnerable box turtle populations rely very heavily on the fruits of the native mayapple plant, and removal of mature trees and all the canopy cover they provide will devastate the mayapple colonies resulting in likely death for the resident box turtles of the SCA Park forest. I could go on and on citing similar such examples of the fragile complexities of forest ecology, but suffice it to say, that the utterly unnecessary and capriciously misguided SCA plan to log the park forest will result in a net negative long term impact on the forest's ecology. Habitat will be destroyed, food sources lost, invasive plant species will spread, and much will be irrevocably and shamefully lost.

Thank you for taking the time to read my four-part list of grave ethical concerns with the current Millstone plan for the IUP Student Co-Op Park. Please feel free to contact me at

Sincerely,
Stacey Patrick

