

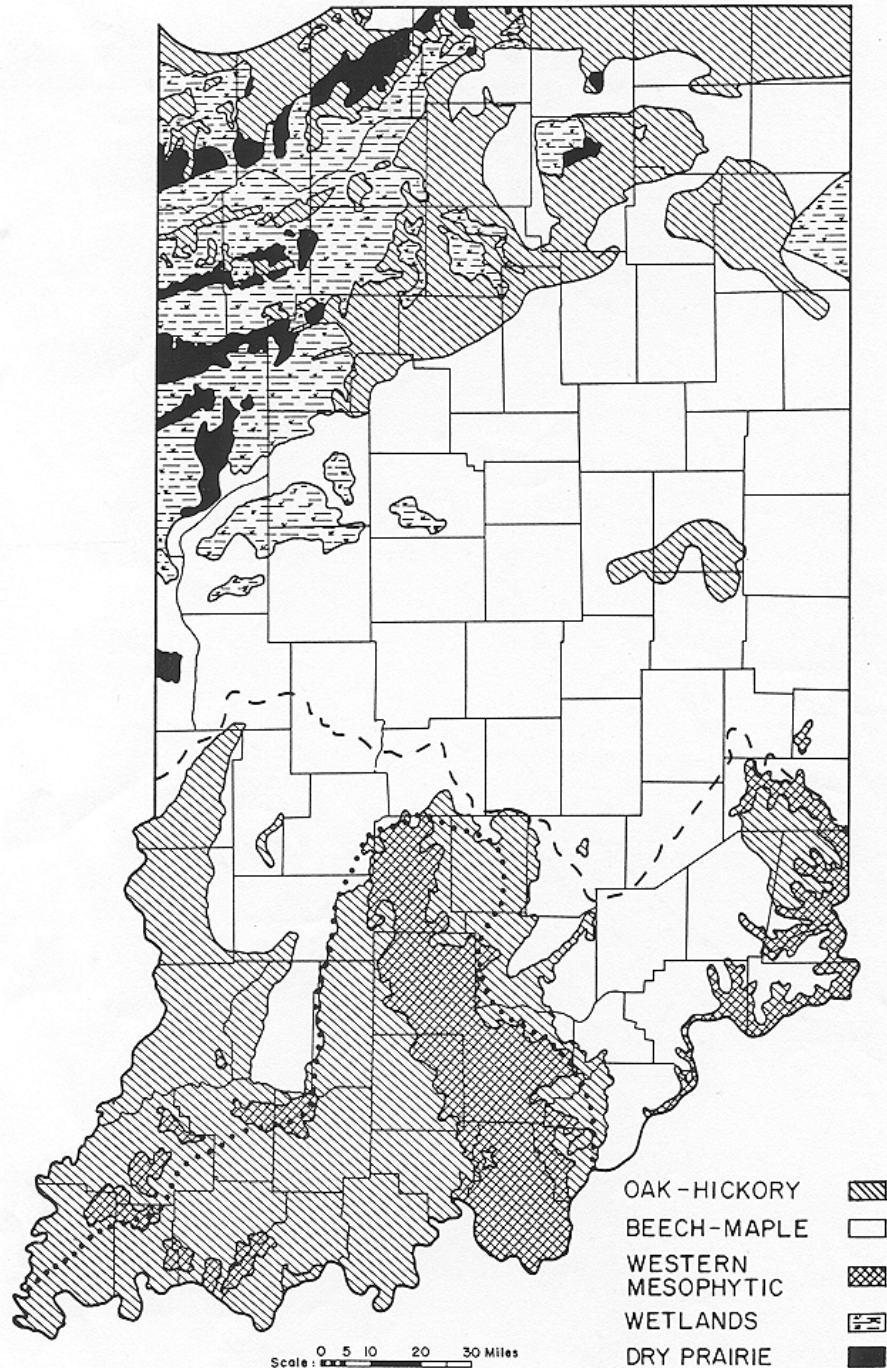


# Indiana Classified Forest & Wildlands Program

Brenda Huter, Forest Stewardship Coordinator



In 1800, 19.8 million acres of Indiana's 22.4 million acres were forested. Indiana was once 85% forested!



# Indiana's Forests Converted





# Indiana's Forests Converted





**1875 - 1900**

Indiana was ranked #1 in the nation in timber production.







“Indiana contains 22,403,502 acres. The Yearbook of Indiana for 1917 credits the state with 1,664,886 acres of timberland. This area had shrunk in 1920 to 1,387,248 acres - an average decrease of 92,456 acres. Our area of timber in 1920 was a little over 6% of our area...”

Charles Deam, 1922 Dept. of Conservation Annual Report

Deam later predicted that at this rate of clearing, Indiana would be treeless in 15 years.

# Classified Forest Program 1921



Program authorized March 10, 1921.

Purpose: To encourage timber production and protect watersheds

Landowner incentive: Property tax reduction - \$1/acre assessment

Size & shape: 3 acre minimum, any shape

Inspection: Any time



# Classified Forest Program 1921



1938 Classified Forest – Marion County – containing oak, elm, hickory based on photo notes.

Annual Report: Required – false statements resulted in misdemeanor and fine up to \$250 (\$3,673 current), imprisonment in county jail/state farm for up to 6 months.

Landowner had 3 years to establish trees. Detailed definition of forest plantation and native forest based on trees per acre.

# Classified Program Growth - Education





# Classified Program Growth - Resources



# Classified Wildlife Habitat Program

Began March 23, 1979

Purpose: To set aside areas supporting a growth of native or planted trees, shrubs and grasses for production of wildlife, protection of watersheds & soil erosion control

Incentive: property tax reduction

Minimum acreage: 15 acres





# Law Change 2006



Merger created the Classified Forest & Wildlands Program adding 90,000 acres.

# Property Tax Change

Changed how land was assessed.  
Land assessed based on use.

Landowner must prove land being  
used for agriculture (timber) to keep  
lower ag assessment.

Land assessment changed to  
excess residential.

Increase enrollment from an average  
of 7,000 acres/ year to 21,000  
acres/year.

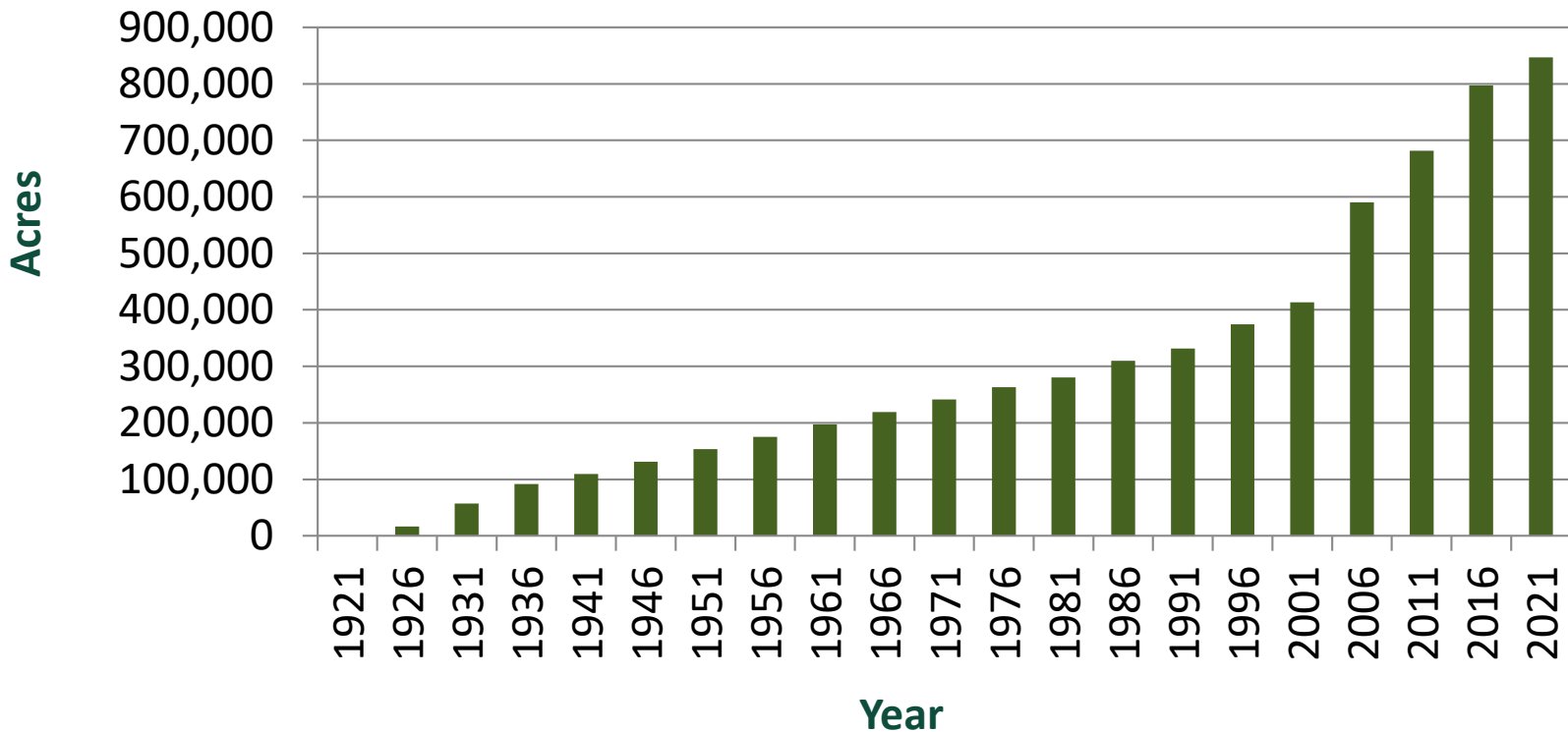
Excess Residential:  
\$1,000+/ acre

Agricultural woodland:  
\$258/ acre

Classified Forest & Wildlands:  
\$14.43/ acre



# Classified Program Growth



# Classified Forest & Wildlands Program

**PRIVATE PROPERTY**

## Classified Forest & Wildlands



Landowner incentive: Property tax reduction - \$16.67/acre assessment. Changes annually for inflation

Size & shape: 10 acre minimum (wetlands: 0.5 acre)

Inspection: 7 years or when requested

Management plan required

Expanded habitats and simplified definitions

Increased withdrawal penalties

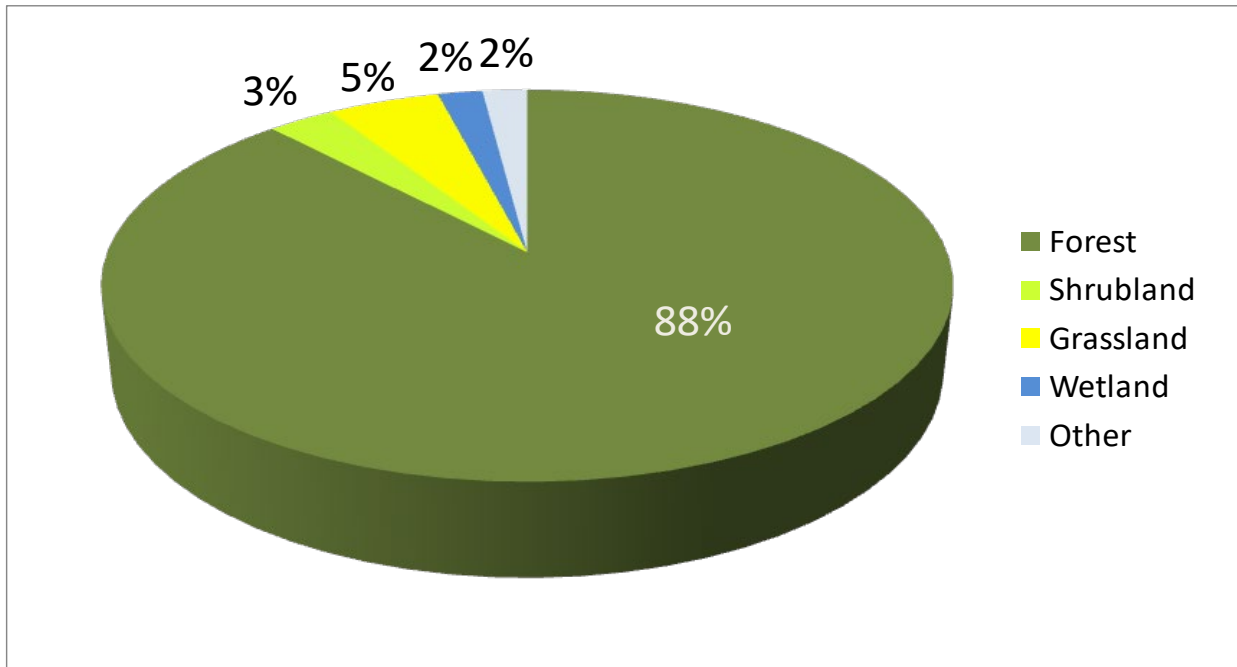
No jail time or fines for missed annual reports

# Classified Forest & Wildlands Program Today

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**878,832** Acres    **18,148** Tracts    **13,281** Landowners

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# Classified Forest & Wildlands

## Getting things done

On average 1/3 of Classified landowners report doing management in any given year:

- Grape vine control
- Invasive species control
- Wildlife food plot
- Creating wildlife brush piles
- Trail work

# Program Administration



## **Classified Forest & Wildlands Program**

<https://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/programs/classified-forest-and-wildlands/>

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