

# Illinois Forestry Development Council

## Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Report

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## From the Director

Illinois contains an estimated 2.1 billion trees that are at least 1" in diameter at 4.5' off the ground. These trees are spread across 4.1 million acres (14% of Illinois landbase) and provide multiple benefits, such as support for the Illinois forest industry, recreational opportunities, habitat to a variety of wildlife species, and sequestration of millions of tons carbon each year!



Most (83%) of the forested area in Illinois is privately owned, with the average forest holding being 45 acres. This creates a challenge for private landowners to get their voices heard for policy changes that help them continue to manage their forests, for the benefit of all Illinois' citizens. High property taxes, increased management expenses, and excessive bureaucratic regulation potentially lead to poor management and/or the development of forested area into other uses, to the detriment of us all. It is imperative that we provide sustainable options and incentivize all private landowners to continue to retain and manage their forests.

The only way to improve Illinois Forestry is through continued discussion of pertinent topics amongst the Illinois General Assembly, State Officials, and other Forestry Partners. If you have ideas concerning forest policy in Illinois, I encourage you to reach out to myself (eholzmue@siu.edu) or other members of the Illinois Forestry Development Council. This is the best way to provide feedback on your idea or potential legislation.

I look forward to having these conversations to improve Illinois forestry in FY23 and beyond.

Sincerely,

Eric Holzmueller, Director  
Illinois Forestry Development Council



July 2022

IFDC Website

<http://ifdc.nres.illinois.edu/>

# IFDC Accomplishments

## SMALL PROJECTS PROGRAM

The IFDC provided funding to seven partners for the following small projects. These projects helped address forestry issues defined by the Council and included actions to mitigate these issues as outlined in the updated Illinois Forest Action Plan.

- The Association of Illinois Soil and Water Districts and 4-H developed a statewide, youth-oriented tree planting initiative focused on action, education, and conservation.
- Southern Illinois Prescribed Burn Association used IFDC funding to revamp their website and develop a membership management database.
- Shawnee RC & D created several educational invasive treatment videos that they posted to their Facebook page.
- Keep Carbondale Beautiful established an urban forestry educational area.
- The Illinois Forestry Association obtained funding to print and disseminate educational materials to promote active forest management to private landowners.
- Naturalist Chris Benda hosted two Illinois NAI workshops. He is also continued his work on the recertification and verification campaign for the Illinois Big Tree Register.



Chris Benda with newly recertified champion trees left to right: American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) in Carroll County and black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) in Tazewell County. For a map of other Big Tree Champions across the state go to: [go.illinois.edu/championtrees](http://go.illinois.edu/championtrees)

## TIMBER BUYERS LICENSING ACT - (225 ILCS 735/) UPDATE

The IFDC continues to work with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to update language to the Illinois Timber Buyers Licensing Act. Multiple stakeholders have voiced their concerns with the proposed changes, and we will continue our discussion this fall with plans for introducing new language next spring. The Council appreciates the willingness of the DNR to improve this Act for the benefit of all involved with Illinois forestry.

## IFDC MEETINGS

The IFDC met six times over the course of FY-2022. The Council meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the odd months. Locations are varied across the State and a remote option is always available. All meetings are open to the public. If you are interested in attending, check out the Council website for more information: <http://www.ifdc.nres.illinois.edu/>. Minutes of previous meetings are also available on the website.

## Illinois Forest Action Plan Storymap

The 2020 Illinois Forest Action Plan (IFAP) is a 311-page document that details the forest resource assessment and strategy for Illinois over the next 10 years. While this well written, comprehensive document is the result of input from numerous forestry partners across the state, it is admittedly somewhat difficult to digest in a traditional format. This past year, the Illinois Forestry Development Council partnered with Dr. Brent Pease, an Assistant Professor in the Forestry Program at Southern Illinois University, to develop a Storymap for the Illinois Forest Action Plan. Storymaps are a web-based application that allow creators to visually highlight important content from large documents. They are user friendly and allow individuals to view and share content from a desktop, laptop, or mobile device.

Highlights of the IFAP Storymap include interactive maps and graphics that showcase important facts concerning Illinois forests. For example, did you know that Illinois is home to over 200 vertebrate wildlife species, with 75% of those species requiring forests for at least part of their life? It also discusses several threats to Illinois Forests including, but not limited to, increased threats to forest health, fewer forestry professionals, and a shrinking forest industry. Lastly, the Storymap presents several strategies to move forward and face the threats to Illinois forests.

Check out the Illinois Forest Action Plan Storymap here:

**<https://arcg.is/1SiD50>**



# Illinois Forestry Development Council

The Illinois Forestry Development Council was created in 1983 upon passage of the Illinois Forestry Development Act (525 ILCS 15). The Council's charge is to identify and evaluate the social, economic, scientific, and educational value of Illinois' forest lands and forest products industries. The 29 members of the Council represent the following interests or groups:

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>REPRESENTING</b>	<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>REPRESENTING</b>
Vacant	Landowner Engaged in Farming	Ms. Lydia Scott	Environmental Issues
Vacant	Landowner Engaged in Farming	Dr. Robert Schooley Mr. Jay Hayek**	University of Illinois/Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences
Vacant	Private Timber Grower	Dr. John Groninger	Southern Illinois University, Forestry Program
Mr. Steve Graves	Private Timber Grower	Mr. Jerry Costello II Mr. Scott Schirmer**	Illinois Department of Agriculture
Mr. Joel Pisoni	Wood Products/Primary Forest Industry	Ms. Collen Callahan Mr. Tom Gargrave	Illinois Department of Natural Resources IDNR State Forester
Mr. Scott Swisher	Wood Products/Primary Forest Industry	Ms. Sylvia Garcia Ms. Kim Watson**	Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
Mr. Matt Pustejovsky	Illinois Tree Farm Committee	Mr. Chris B. Meister Ms. Lorrie Karcher**	Illinois Finance Authority
Mr. Tom Walsh Mr. Dave Gillespie**	Illinois Forestry Association	Dr. Christopher Merrett Mr. Robin Hanna**	Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
Mr. Casey Calvert	Illinois Walnut Council	Vacant	IL Speaker of the House
Ms. Jenny Lesko	Illinois Chapter of the Society of American Foresters	Mr. Patrick Windhorst (R)	IL House Minority Leader
Dr. Justin Shew Dr. T.J. Benson**	Illinois Chapter of the Wildlife Society	Vacant	IL Senate President
Vacant	Urban Forestry Representative	Mr. Jason Barickman (R)	IL Senate Minority Leader
Mr. Robert Sproule	Illinois Arborist Association		USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service Illinois
Mr. Steve Stierwalt Mr. Dale Shumaker**	Association of Illinois Soil & Water Conservation Districts	Mr. Michael Chaveas*	U.S. Forest Service Shawnee National Forest

\**Ex-officio Members*

\*\**Designee or Alternate*

For more information on the Illinois Forestry Development Council go to:

[ifdc.nres.illinois.edu/](http://ifdc.nres.illinois.edu/)