

RESOLUTION 2024-02

Regarding the Expansion of the Charles C. Deam Wilderness and the Establishment of the Benjamin Harrison National Recreation Area

WHEREAS, combined with the adjacent Brown County State Park, the expansion of the Deam Wilderness to include these national forest lands to the southeast, east and north will create a large sanctuary for the enjoyment of wild nature and native hardwood forest that is unparalleled in the states of Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois; and

WHEREAS, most of the land within the Deam Wilderness and adjacent national forest land to the southeast, east and north of this Wilderness is rugged hills with steep slopes and deep hollows that drain to streams and creeks that feed Monroe Reservoir, a public water supply for more than 130,000 people; and

WHEREAS, legislation to expand the Deam Wilderness to the north, east, and southeast, to protect the public national forest lands by law from activities that may adversely impact the water quality of Monroe Reservoir, is important to maintain the water supply of Nashville; and

WHEREAS, the expansion of the Deam Wilderness and the establishment of the Benjamin Harrison National Recreation Area will bolster the renowned local environmental tourism of the Brown County area; and

WHEREAS, cycling is an important part of Nashville and Brown County's short- and long-term economic development plans. The proposed "nonwilderness corridors" will protect and maintain bicycle access to the existing trails including Trail D, Nebo Ridge, Trail 4, Trail 18, Trail 20, Trail 21 and Combs Road; and

WHEREAS, the restoration of our natural forest ecosystem requires that as many examples of that ecosystem of landscape scale in size be protected to return to the old growth condition as possible; and

WHEREAS, while the Hoosier National Forest is one of America's smallest national forests, within Indiana, the Hoosier National Forest is by far the state's largest public forest, it is Indiana's only national forest and it contains the largest tracts of wild, undeveloped forest among the public lands in Indiana with several of those tracts located adjacent to each other in the northern Pleasant Run Purchase Unit of this public forest; and

WHEREAS, the Charles C. Deam Wilderness (Deam Wilderness) and many thousands of adjacent acres of national forest land comprise an area of deep, uninterrupted hardwood forest of incomparable wild beauty in the nation's industrial heartland; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned public national forest lands include: Nebo Ridge, Bad Hollow, Porter Hollow, Will Hay Branch, Panther Creek, Deckard Ridge, Eel Creek, Hickory Ridge, Fleetwood Branch, Combs Branch and Moses Ray Branch, and other national forest lands within the Pleasant Run Purchase Unit of the Hoosier National Forest; and

WHEREAS, these national forest lands have been set aside from commercial timber harvest for the past 32 years under the 1991 and 2006 Hoosier National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans; and

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WHEREAS, the protection of these national forest lands to the north, east, and southeast, of the Deam Wilderness as wilderness will ensure that large tracts of old forest will return to the old growth condition on a landscape scale and continue to provide ample habitat for species such as the cerulean warbler, timber rattlesnake, Indiana bat, northern long eared bat, tricolored bat, and other forest dependent animals, plants, and fungi that are endangered or rare in the state and which have been identified by recent Indiana Forest Alliance surveys in these forests; and

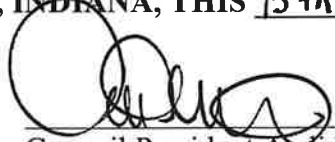
WHEREAS, the Hoosier National Forest is heavily enjoyed by Hoosiers for its recreational value as a natural area and the establishment of the Benjamin Harrison National Recreation Area aligns with this interest, in a manner that prioritizes the water quality of the Monroe Reservoir; and

WHEREAS, the Benjamin Harrison National Recreation Area and expansion of the Deam Wilderness will maintain and enhance the capacity of Monroe Reservoir and the surrounding land to absorb precipitation and mitigate against floods predicted to increase in Indiana according to all climate models,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF NASHVILLE, INDIANA:

The Nashville Town Council hereby endorses S. 2990, known as the Benjamin Harrison National Recreation Area and Wilderness Establishment Act of 2023, introduced in the US Senate by US Senator Mike Braun of Indiana, that extends the boundaries of the Deam Wilderness to include approximately 15,300 acres of additional national forest land, and establishes the Benjamin Harrison National Recreation Area consisting of approximately 29,382 acres of national forest land that surrounds the expanded wilderness area.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF NASHVILLE, BROWN COUNTY, INDIANA, THIS 15th DAY OF FEBRUARY 2024.


Council President Andi Wilson ☒ yea ☐ nay ☐ abstain



Council Vice-President Dave Rudd ☒ yea ☐ nay ☐ abstain


Council Member Anna Hofstetter ☒ yea ☐ nay ☐ abstain


Council Member Lance Miller ☒ yea ☐ nay ☐ abstain


Council Member Rex Watters III ☐ yea ☒ nay ☐ abstain

ATTEST:


Clerk-Treasurer, Brenda K. Young