

Saturday, July 6, 2024



Hoosier Environmental Council
all. together. now.

Dear HEC Supporter,

A heartfelt THANK YOU to everyone who contributed to our End of Fiscal Year campaign. Because of your generous support of HEC, we met our ambitious \$75,000 match from the Efroymson Family Fund!

Worried because you missed out on the match? We can still use your support! Helping HEC start this fiscal year strong [with your donation](#) assures our team quickly of the resources available to pursue all we hope to accomplish over the next 12 months.

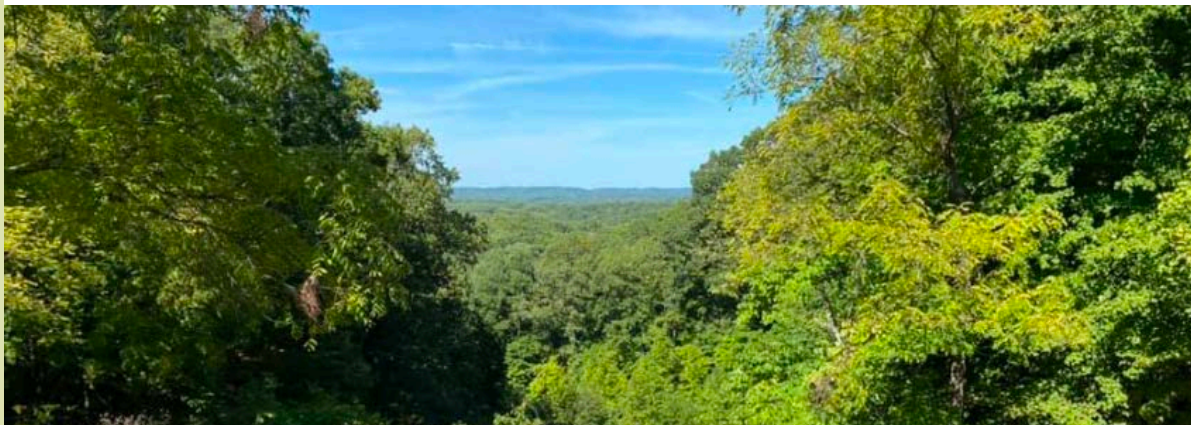
Thank you again for this vital role you play advocating with us for a better environment! Read on for your weekly action item, updates on an exciting legal victory for HEC, a new blog on the impact of the LEAP district on our headwaters, and more.

Take Action

Tell your Representatives to Support the Deam Wilderness Expansion Act!

We continue to seek the support of Senator Young for S.4402, The Benjamin Harrison National Recreational Area and Wilderness Establishment Act, and for the companion house bill H.R.8535. If you haven't yet, please [send Senator Young and your Representatives a message](#) asking them to support these important pieces of legislation. If you've already signed, please share with a friend!

[Send My Representatives A Message!](#)



Kirtland Snake Victory!

The Hoosier Environmental Council achieved a significant legal victory this week when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agreed to reconsider federal protections under the Endangered Species Act for Kirtland's Snake.

This small snake with a striking red-pink belly lined with black spots depends on specific wetlands habitats for its survival. They rely on flat, seasonally wet areas with abundant crayfish burrows. This type of wetland – and all the species that live in them, including Kirtland's snake – is targeted for drainage and development under Indiana's laws that fail to protect wetlands. These snakes are found throughout Indiana but are [only locally abundant](#).



HEC will continue to push for federal protection, including for habitat that is critical for the survival of the Kirtland's Snake.

[Read the press release by our partners at the Center for Biological Diversity.](#)

Green Infrastructure

Headwaters are the beginnings of rivers, and Lebanon's LEAP sits right on top

Every river that flows has a beginning, and that beginning is referred to as a headwater. Headwaters are small streams that branch out from larger streams, which feed into the main stem of a river, much like branches of a tree growing out of the main trunk.

Headwaters are critical to the health of downstream waterways, but they are at risk of disappearing because they are often small, dry up, and largely unprotected under state and federal laws. The proposed LEAP Lebanon development will be building on the headwaters to Sugar Creek, which flows through Turkey Run and Shades State



Parks, some of Indiana's most beloved and high-quality recreational areas.



[Read more about headwaters and the potential environmental impacts from LEAP.](#)

Sustainable Agriculture

Indiana's inventory of lost farmland 2010-2022

On July 1, 2024, the [Indiana State Department of Agriculture](#) (ISDA) submitted an inventory of lost farmland report to the Legislative Council. In 2023, the Indiana General Assembly passed [House Enrolled Act 1557](#), which tasked ISDA to complete an inventory of lost farmland in Indiana from 2010-2022.

ISDA determined through the inventory of lost farmland that there has been an overall reduction of farmland acres of approximately 1.5-2% from 2010-2022. This represents a loss of approximately 350,000 acres. The results show that agricultural land was most likely to be lost in areas around the edges of cities and suburban areas. The primary cause of reduction in farmland was due to residential use.

“The inventory of lost farmland was an opportunity for ISDA and legislators to gain access to reliable data, where up until now, we could only make assumptions,” said Don Lamb, director of the Indiana State Department of Agriculture. “This information is important to have for policy development as we work to balance economic growth, food security and the preservation of agricultural land, because we know when agriculture is strong, Indiana is too.”

[View the full 2010-2022 report.](#)



HEC in the News

- "[Midwest's Imperiled Kirtland's Snake Gets Second Chance at Endangered Species Act Protection](#)," Center for Biological Diversity, July 1, 2024.
- "[Less green than it seems: Rapid transition to biofuel production fraught with own environmental risks](#)," by David Van Gilder, *The Journal Gazette*, June 26, 2024.

Events

- (July 13 | 1-3pm) [Hellbender Beer Launch Party](#), Metazoa Brewing Co, 140 S College Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46202
- (August 15 | 5:30-8:30pm) [Frogapalooza: Wine, Wetlands & Art Fundraiser](#), Little River Wetlands Project, 5000 Smith Rd, Ft. Wayne 46804
- (August 21-22, All Day) [2024 Indiana Water Summit](#), Biltwell Event Center, 950 S. White River Pkwy W. Dr. Indianapolis, IN 46221
- (Sept 22 | All Day) [2024 Annual Environment and Spirituality Summit](#), Hybrid
- (Sept 26-27 | All Day) [2024 Great Lakes Conference](#), The Drake Hotel, 140 E Walton Place Chicago, IL 60611

For a complete listing of events, check out our [events calendar](#).

Your thoughtful contributions support the work of the Hoosier Environmental Council. Please consider becoming a member with a gift of any amount today!

Support Our Work

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