

Burr Oak Nature Preserve

Perhaps one of the best areas to see the budding of spring is the Burr Oak Bend Nature Preserve, which was created with money from a trust established after the 1999 fish kill along White River.

The 128-acre site owned by Central Indiana Land Trust is at 206th Street at the White River in Noblesville.

» **WHAT'S NEW:** Thousands of trees and plants restored to the habitat are maturing. More birds, such as blue jays and red-tailed hawks, are fluttering through. Turtles have nested and deer have found refuge.

» **ACTIVITIES:** Bird watching, hiking, studying nature, taking photos, walking pets on leashes.

» **PROHIBITED:** Fishing, hunting, driving vehicles through.

» **HISTORY:** The land has been used for farming, logging and mining.

» **FISH KILL:** Guide Corp. admitted negligence in a toxic discharge in December 1999 from its Anderson plant, which killed nearly 5 million fish in the White River in Hamilton and Marion counties.

» **LAND TRUST:** The first 52-acre parcel was purchased from Deerfield Estates in August 2002 and restored with \$261,000 from White River Restoration Trust funds following the 1999 toxic spill. The parcel was the first site purchased from the \$6 million set aside to restore the



Mark Oehler, Home Place, uses a bow saw to cut down a bush honeysuckle at Burr Oak. He was among volunteers clearing out unwanted plants and bushes.

waterway.

» **RESTORATION:** More than 13,000 tree seedlings were planted in 2003, plus native grasses and wildflowers.

» **ADDITIONS:** Central Indiana Land Trust bought 76 more acres in 2004 and 2005 to add to the site.

» **QUOTE:** "A lot of our properties were in a natural state

INDYSTAR.COM



Go to IndyStar.com/multimedia to see photos of Saturday's volunteer cleanup at Burr Oak in Noblesville.

when we acquired them. This one needed more active restoration work," said the land trust's Maria Steiner.

CENTRAL INDIANA LAND TRUST

The nonprofit manages 15 nature preserves in Morgan, Hendricks, Hamilton, Jennings, Marion, Parke, Putnam, Hancock, Ripley, Johnson, Henry and Sullivan counties, and several conservation easements on private lands.

In addition to Burr Oak, in Hamilton County it has:

» 77 acres south of 116th Street in Fishers, where Wapihany Nature Preserve will debut later this year.

» Stony Creek Conservation Easement, 49 acres east of Allisonville Road roughly between Carbon Street and Stony Creek in Noblesville.

» Hinkle Creek Conservation Easement, 29 acres between 226th and 231st streets east of Deming Road, about 2 miles east of U.S. 31.

— Chris Sikich



Cliff Chapman (far right), conservation director for the Central Indiana Land Trust, leads volunteers into Burr Oak Bend Nature Preserve for Saturday's cleanup.