



**CENTRAL INDIANA
LAND TRUST**

SPRING 2020



**DISPATCH
FROM 2050**

**TRIBUTES TO
TWO KEY SUPPORTERS**

**WHITE RIVER BLUFFS
PROTECTED FOREVER**



CENTRAL INDIANA LAND TRUST

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FROM THE LEADERSHIP

In the previous issue of this newsletter, you learned about our amazing staff. 2019 was a banner year for Central Indiana Land Trust, Inc., and 2020 is off to a roaring start. The CILTI staff deserve credit for that success, and on behalf of CILTI's board of directors, I thank them and honor them for their hard work, intense dedication to the mission of preserving the best of Central Indiana's natural areas, and the professional experience, expertise and talent they bring to that mission.



Curt DeVoe, President

You may also know we are celebrating CILTI's 30th year. When the land trust was formed 30 years ago, the organization did not have a professional staff. What they did have was a small group of individuals who shared the vision of identifying and preserving the best of Central Indiana's natural areas, and who were willing to contribute their time, talents and financial support to make that vision a reality. CILTI's current board of directors shares that same vision and dedication. Your board consists of scientists, conservationists and environmentalists (including a few who have spent most or all of their careers in public service, and another who is a poet), land acquisition experts, lawyers, financial experts and business people with management and planning skills. We all bring our different backgrounds and talents to the task of providing guidance and oversight to the CILTI staff. And we all share that core belief of the founders: that Central Indiana is a beautiful place, and we need to set aside and protect land where that beauty can flourish.

We can't do any of that without you, our members and supporters. Take a moment to think about how you can support CILTI's mission in 2020. Think about a special property that could be preserved for future generations, and let us know about it. Learn about CILTI's properties and the conservation values they protect and promote—and take a few hours to visit one of our nature preserves. Participate in a work day or come to our 30th anniversary celebration or another special event. Continue to provide financial support.

You can also try something my wife, Lynn, and I seek to do every day—identify a “nature moment,” something that stops you in your tracks and brings you out of your day-to-day worries and troubles. A few nature moments made possible by CILTI include touching the bark and trying to sense the soul of a huge oak tree in Meltzer Woods (yes, we are literally tree huggers) and finding a turtle and a fiery red salamander at Blossom Hollow. Those and many other nature moments over the years represent the best of Central Indiana to me.

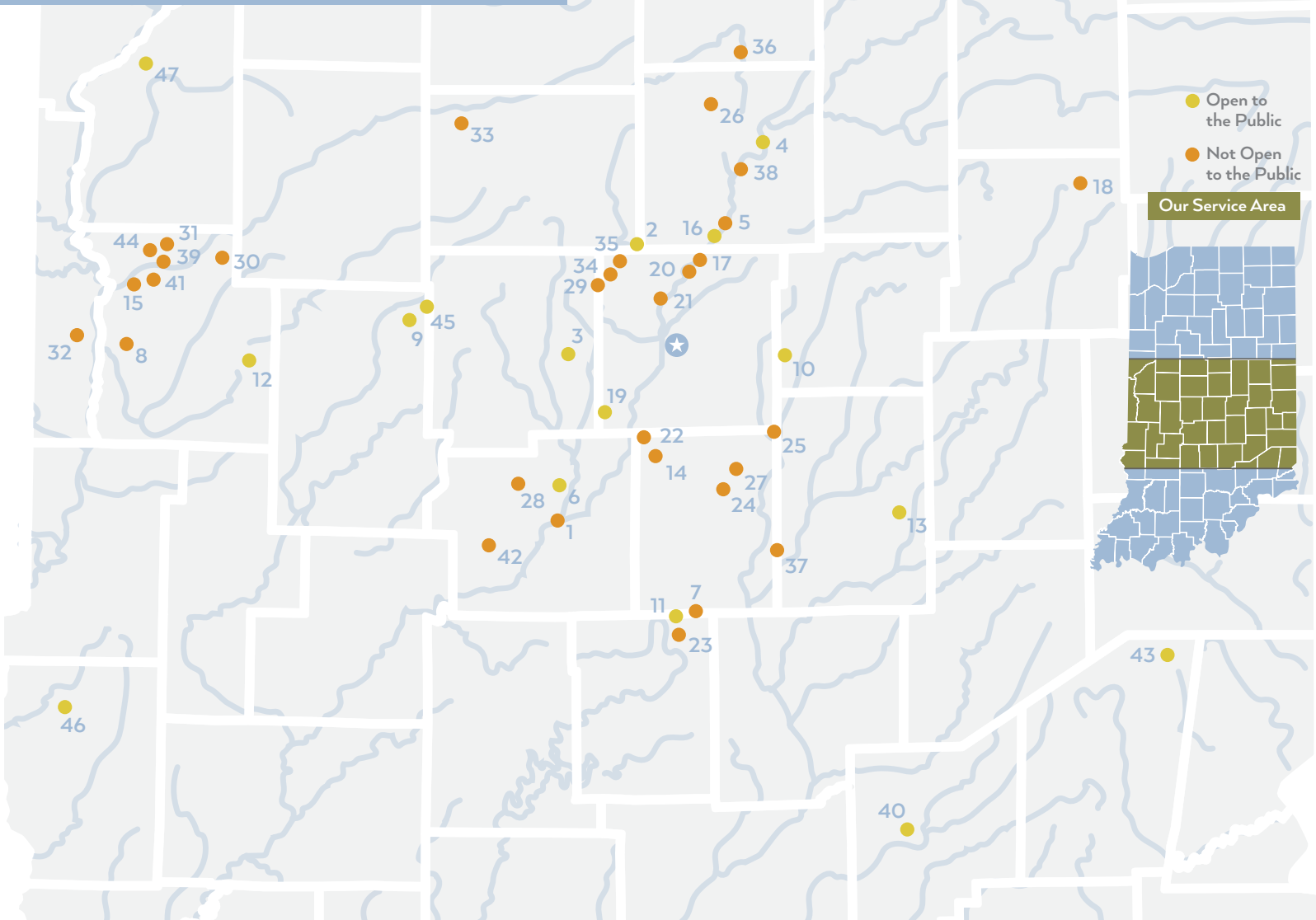
Here's to 30 years of CILTI preserving and protecting the places where nature moments happen. Thanks for your contributions to that effort. Think about how you can contribute to CILTI's future. And get out there and find your own nature moment.

Curt DeVoe
President, Board of Directors

ON THE COVER:
Spring azure butterfly



OUR PROPERTIES



NATURE PRESERVES

1. Blue Bluff Nature Preserve
2. Browning Marsh
3. Burnett Woods
4. Burr Oak Bend
5. Eller Farm
6. Fred & Dorothy Meyer Nature Preserve
7. Glacier's End
8. Hajji Hollow
9. Hemlock Ridge
10. Jacob Schramm Nature Preserve
11. Laura Hare Preserve at Blossom Hollow
12. Laura Hare Preserve at Turtle Bend
13. Meltzer Woods
14. Millard Sutton/
Amos Butler Audubon Sanctuary
15. Mossy Point Nature Preserve
16. Nonie Werbe Krauss Nature Preserve
17. Oliver's Woods

18. Prairie Cemeteries
19. Wallace F. Holladay Preserve at Ameriplex
20. White Owl Conservation Area
21. White River Bluffs

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

22. Baldwin's Farm
23. Bob's Woods
24. Crystal Spring Farm
25. Hide-A-Way Farm
26. Hinkle Creek
27. Jones Farm
28. Lamb's Creek
29. Left Gate Farm Nature Sanctuary
30. Lough Ridge
31. McCurdy
32. Mule Ridge
33. Nakaania

34. Peine
35. Phil's Folly
36. Sherwood Forest
37. Smiley's Mill
38. Stoney Creek

ASSISTS

39. Coal Hollow Nature Preserve
40. Frank Ratcliff Memorial Forest
41. Gelhausen
42. Hurricane Hills
43. John Sunman's Woods
44. Healthy Rivers Initiative Addition
45. McCloud Nature Park
46. Sanctuary Oaks
47. Whistler Hare Preserve



DISPATCH FROM 2050:

CELEBRATING UNPARALLELED LAND PROTECTION

Photo by Elizabeth Mahoney

“(CILTI) IS VITAL FOR THE SAME REASONS TODAY THAT IT WAS WHEN IT STARTED. CENTRAL INDIANA IS WHERE THE DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE IS HIGHEST. CENTRAL INDIANA IS WHERE THE NEED FOR PROTECTION IS PERHAPS GREATER THAN ANYWHERE ELSE, AND CILTI FILLS THAT ROLE.”

—Ellen Jacquart, founding member

We just stepped off the time-machine after a look 30 years into the future. In 2050, CILTI marks our 60th anniversary, and there is so much to celebrate: Acres and acres of protected land...millions of trees planted...countless species of wildlife thriving...plus people of all ages connecting to the beauty and power of nature, right here in Central Indiana.

Back in 2020, people who cared about nature stepped up like never before. Because of unprecedented collective action, Indiana has become a conservation leader, committed to preserving forests, prairies, wetlands—and doing our part for climate change mitigation. (We definitely still battle invasive species, which are on a tear with the earth’s warming temperatures, but our members and volunteers are helping us stay on top of that threat.)

It’s true that we’ve seen global changes that are not within our control, but here at home, we still have migratory warblers, native butterflies and Eastern box turtles finding sanctuary in our protected lands. We still see orchids in bloom and nodding trilliums carpeting the forest floor. We still can bring children to the places that open them up to astonishment in the face of nature’s majesty.

All the land that can be protected in our region is, in fact, under protection—and CILTI’s staff is devoted to maintaining and stewarding the land, as well as introducing new generations to its glories.

Time-machines aside, in all seriousness, the partnerships and vision we collectively nurture today—in CILTI’s 30th anniversary year—will make all the difference for the next 30 years.

We’re going to continue preserving the iconic natural areas that have been here for thousands of years. Not only will we make sure these landscapes are protected forever, we’ll also plant trees in the open lands around these treasured places. This will extend forest habitat for vulnerable species like Eastern box turtles and cerulean warblers.

In this reforestation effort, many of the trees we’re planting have 500-year lifespans—representing a true gift to the children of the future. Forest conversions like this sequester tremendous amounts of carbon over time, for a powerful cumulative effect on the climate.

It’s a story a long time in the making, with countless people contributing in myriad ways over the years. Looking back at our first 30 years, the numbers show clearly how much we have grown. Whether we speak in terms of acres, number of preserves, funds, staffing, membership or volunteers, the numbers have all climbed steadily.

But we’ve also grown in how we approach the business of saving land. Initially, our transactions did not involve surveys, title insurance, environmental inspections or other formal steps. We had no money set aside for the ongoing stewardship that’s required when bringing land under protection.

Founding member Ellen Jacquart was one of the initiators of CILTI’s existence back in 1990. Of those early days, she recalls, “Nobody had that much experience with land trusts. We were just trying to figure out the first acquisition, how would that work, and what kind of lands would we accept, and what were the rules we would work by, and how would we prioritize projects—all of those introductory things.”

As the organization grew and evolved, we began to see that if we were pledging to protect land not just temporarily but forever, we needed to make some significant changes.

Now, we have these formalities in place. We know that even taking on a donated property comes with a price tag of \$20,000 to \$40,000, and we are clearer about what’s involved in protecting land forever. Though the formalities may slow down our process, this level of diligence is critical. How can we promise “perpetuity” without it?

The need for conservation is still immense. As Jacquart notes, “(CILTI) is vital for the same reasons today that it was when it started. Central Indiana is where the development pressure is highest. Central Indiana is where the need for protection is perhaps greater than anywhere else, and CILTI fills that role.”

Our 30th year is by no means our victory lap. We’re just getting started laying the foundation for a viable future, where the planet is cooler, wildlife and plants thrive, and all people value their natural heritage.

As a key supporter today, when you write that check made out to CILTI—or when you volunteer at one of our preserves, tell your nature-loving friend about our work, or even share a social media post—know that you are planting seeds for that kind of future. It’s a future that takes all of our care to nurture, and we are honored that you continually choose to partner with us in creating it.





Burnett Woods
Inset: Reta Rutledge

RETA RUTLEDGE: SUPPORTING LAND PROTECTION OVER THREE DECADES

Five years ago, longtime CILTI supporter Reta Rutledge moved to Arizona, but she still stays connected to the organization. So much so that when you talk to her about CILTI, she speaks in terms of “we.”

Reta supported CILTI monetarily from the very beginning, and soon became involved in other ways too—giving time in the field, serving as board president, and helping with the Land Trust Accreditation Commission’s accreditation process. She helped CILTI to the finish line as the first land trust in Indiana to become accredited.

She remembers donating to support the 1998 purchase of Burnett Woods, the first public nature preserve in Hendricks County. She began to serve on CILTI’s board of directors soon after, and was on the board when our first executive director was hired—a major milestone in 2001.

Looking at the ways the organization has grown and changed, she recalls helping to create a “check sheet” for the evaluation of potential land protection projects. That allowed the board to have a common understanding when assessing properties. (An expanded version of this score sheet is still in use today.)

“WHEN YOU’RE DOING
THINGS TOGETHER,
THAT’S THE THING
THAT GLUES YOU.”

“Cliff moving into the executive director position (in 2013) has been a major game changer for the land trust,” she says. She credits much of CILTI’s recent success to the combination of his ecological knowledge and ability to connect with people.

She points to our expanded donor outreach, increased board engagement and our Hills of Gold bio-blitz as areas of significant

growth since the land trust’s early days. She has seen CILTI’s focus evolve to be more science-based over the years—from originally taking on projects regardless of natural value, to now focusing on areas with the highest ecological value, with a goal of connecting fragmented habitats. “That’s been exciting to watch,” she says.

She’s also pleased to see stewardship continue to be a growing piece of the conservation puzzle for CILTI, with two staff members currently devoted to it. And she looks forward to exciting new uses of Oliver’s Woods, a prime location in metropolitan Indy for outreach and nature education.

Reta was involved with some early tree plantings, including a 2005 effort at the heron rookery (Millard Sutton/Amos Butler Audubon Sanctuary—a preserve that is not open to the public due

to the fragility of the nesting herons). “That was not science-based,” she says. “That was heart-based, and it shows.”

“It seemed like a really good idea, but you have to recognize that when you’re doing a tree planting, you have to be able to take care of the area, to fight back on the things that are going to overpower it. That’s what happened at the rookery.” She recalls how quickly fast-growing pioneer species took over. “And they outperformed our trees. We lost most of what we planted.”

And that’s another area where CILTI has professionalized—to the point that in this 30th year, the organization has pledged to plant a million trees over the coming years. Because of the generous support of key donors, the tree planting process has evolved to be fairly sophisticated, with dedicated equipment and a long-term stewardship plan.

Another planting Reta remembers took place at Burr Oak Bend, and those trees fared better. She counts the memory of that day as one of the highlights of her time with CILTI—and a testament to camaraderie. It poured, a truck got stuck in the mud, and Reta herself was covered with mud by the end of the project. But the fun of working collectively on something important—and the “can-do” spirit of everyone involved—is what really made the day memorable. “When you’re doing things together,” she says, “that’s the thing that glues you.”

As seasoned as we have become in our restoration work, one thing hasn’t changed: We still heavily rely on our devoted volunteers, and we’re grateful for all the hands that have shaped us over the decades. Like Reta, who—to this day—says, “I feel really bonded to CILTI.” We feel the same about Reta.

*Wild geranium at Burnett Woods
Photo by Dick Miller*



THANK YOU FOR THE FOLLOWING TRIBUTES

IN HONOR OF...

Stacy Cachules
Rachel and Nick Eble

Cliff Chapman
Rachel and Nick Eble

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Leah Nahmias

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IN MEMORY OF...

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Lynne Arrowsmith

Sharon Cachules
Stacy Cachules
and Matt Kleinert

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Stephen and Sharon
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The Davalos Family
Bill and Janet Wagner

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Marnie Maxwell

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John Sumner and
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Mary Ann and Allen McCormick

**Ann, Rainer and
Arthur Zangerl**
Carl and Laurel Zangerl-Salter

BOB MEYER:



AN INFLUENTIAL

CHARACTER IN OUR

EVOLVING STORY

Bob Meyer grew up with a strong understanding of why protecting high-quality natural areas is important—and also the awareness that land protection is hard work. You see, his dad, Fred Meyer, was an early chair of The Nature Conservancy Indiana chapter's board of trustees. When Bob was a kid, he walked the area now known as Pine Hills Nature Preserve (Indiana's first such preserve) before it was even protected with his dad, who was the land protection chair for this still new organization.

In the mid-2000s, after following in his father's footsteps by serving on TNC's board of trustees, Bob learned about CILTI and felt he could help us. He saw the need for us to grow capacity, especially in the area of science, and the need for us to have a conservation plan to guide our work.

When we interviewed him for our 25th anniversary, he had this to say about the need for conservation work locally: "The conservation ethic (in Indiana) isn't one of our strongest suits. I really think it's critical that there be a Central Indiana Land Trust to boost that ownership, be it in the public hands or in the land trust itself."



*Pine Hills Nature Preserve © Dan Shepardson
Inset: Bob Meyer*

So in 2007, Bob reached out to key people in his circle—friends and families with a passion for nature and a history of supporting its protection. His efforts raised \$300,000 to secure a conservation director position for the land trust, covering several years' salary and associated expenses. With that position, CILTI drafted its first strategic conservation plan in 2009. In the previous 18 years of our existence, we secured \$4 million worth of land. In the ensuing 10 years, we secured an additional \$20 million worth of land following that conservation plan.

Bob is as humble as he is smart and generous, which makes his character something we try to emulate, individually and as an organization.

We are forever grateful for Bob's influence, leadership and vision. He helped launch us from a land trust that was small and limited in scope to one that is regional and continually growing.

JOIN US!

Join us! Renew or begin your membership today by simply using the enclosed envelope or by making a gift online at www.conservingindiana.org.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY...

...TO MAKE A GIFT THAT
LASTS FOR CONSERVATION
IN CENTRAL INDIANA.

By including the Central Indiana Land Trust in your will, your passion for nature serves as a legacy for generations to come.

The Burr Oak Society was established in recognition of CILTI's donors who have created such a legacy. If you have made a provision for the Central Indiana Land Trust in your will or trust, please let us know so we can include you as a member of the Burr Oak Society and thank you during your lifetime.

If you would like more information about including the Land Trust in your plans and becoming a member of the Burr Oak Society, please contact Stacy at scachules@conservingindiana.org or 317-441-0535.

MEMBERS OF THE BURR OAK SOCIETY

Anonymous x 9

Christine N. Carlson

Joe Collins

Oliver Daugherty*

Aron DiBacco

Rebecca and
Thomas Dolan

Van Eller*

Cherí O'Neill and
Bruce Hetrick

John* and Phyllis* Holliday

Tom Hougham and
Ann Deutch

Marjorie Jones

Eleanor Krauss*

Mary* and John* Pelton

Sharon Horvath
and Andrew Pike

Ruth Ratcliff*

Matthew Roesch

Stacey Roesch

Reta and Robert Rutledge

Phil G.D. Schaefer

Deb Smith

June Swango*

*deceased



"WHY I SUPPORT CILTI": THE RESCUER

Phil Schaefer not only supports CILTI in his seasonal role as our Special Projects Coordinator, he also is a longtime member of the Burr Oak Society. "I strongly believe in preserving the environment and especially natural places," he says. "I love the concept of preserving these spaces and this land forever, for future generations to enjoy."



*Phil Schaefer
at Meltzer Woods*

One of his favorite preserves is Meltzer Woods, because it is "nearly untouched... Some of those trees, three people can't touch fingers when they hug them. That's just amazing."

Because of his own experience of on-the-ground stewardship work, he has a unique understanding of what's involved in maintaining nature preserves, so he has a special place in his heart for the care and stewardship of our places. He'd like his legacy to reflect his basic personality of "rescuer." Whether it be saving dogs, restoring antique cars or rehabbing old houses—or helping to save the environment—he is invested in caring for the things that sometimes get overlooked.

We appreciate Phil and all the other members of the Burr Oak Society. For details on planned giving, contact Stacy at scachules@conservingindiana.org or 317.441.0535.

2019

YEAR IN REVIEW

TOTAL VALUE OF LAND HELD:

\$20,226,144

REVENUE **\$1,474,360** V. EXPENSES **\$718,418**

THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT, IN 2019:

- **CILTI PROTECTED 80 ACRES**, known as the Lamb's Creek CE, in Morgan County. This special forest of tulip poplar, sugar maple, American beech, white oak and sassafras now has a conservation easement on the land to permanently protect it forever.

2019 WAS A YEAR OF MANY "FIRSTS" FOR THE LAND TRUST.

IN FIRSTS FOR PARTNERSHIPS, CILTI:

- **Provided funding for Niches Land Trust** to protect Whistler Hare Woods, an addition to the Shawnee Creek corridor near Portland Arch. This is CILTI's first time sending money to help another land trust close on a property—and also our first time working to protect a property with native white pine.
- **Worked with DNR's Division of Fish and Wildlife** to purchase a property to expand the Healthy Rivers Initiative conservation land in Parke County. In December, once the DNR had the funds secured, they purchased the property from CILTI.
- **Partnered with Indiana Humanities** to bring the National Endowment for the Humanities to Oliver's Woods for a Next Indiana Campfires event. We were honored to offer naturalist expertise to this group of national thought leaders, scholars and partners.

IN FIRSTS FOR OUR OPERATIONS, CILTI:

- **Doubled our staff!** In 2019 we hired our first ever Land Protection Specialist, as well as a Stewardship Manager, Stewardship Assistant and Office and Operations Manager. Our new team members hit the ground running, and their contributions are boosting the pace of both conservation and care for our lands.
- **Started the Evergreen Fund for Nature**, thanks to a generous donation from the Efroymsen Family Fund. This new fund will allow us to act swiftly on opportunities to purchase and protect significant land in Central Indiana forever. Historically we've raised funds project by project, but this new approach of a revolving fund (with a goal of millions of dollars) will allow us to mobilize funding so we can protect more land faster. This inaugural gift lays the groundwork for the protection of nature for years to come.



Thank you to our hard-working
VOLUNTEERS
— who contributed —

650 HOURS of work to restore and maintain the lands we protect.



CILTI
owns and manages
NATURE PRESERVES
across Central Indiana.

OVER 5,500 ACRES OF LAND are protected to benefit plants and animals and allow Hoosiers to experience the wonder of nature.

A stylized illustration of a large, leafy tree in a yellow-green color, positioned behind the text.



Photo by Emily Schwank

WHITE RIVER BLUFFS PROTECTED FOREVER

We are excited to announce that in January, we closed on the final purchase of land from Highland Golf and Country Club, preserving 12.2 wooded acres along the White River in Indianapolis.

Located east of Michigan Road between 56th and 52nd streets along the river, White River Bluffs features some of the oldest trees in Indianapolis growing on a steep bluff above the river. Bald eagles frequent the area and nest nearby. The result of gravel deposited by glaciers 12,000 years ago, the new preserve's delicate slopes represent a unique geologic feature right in the city, with stunning views of the downtown skyline.

Donors from all over the U.S. invested in this special area, seeing the importance of preserving the land in its natural state. In the end, more than 90 contributors made the purchase possible—a testament to this property's unique features.

We've ramped up restoration work at White River Bluffs Nature Preserve, with plans for developing a loop trail along the ridge. We envision creating a butterfly habitat along the 85-foot bluffs featuring thousands of milkweed plants, little bluestem, prickly pear cactus, purple coneflower, blazing star, rattlesnake master and violets.

We plan to share this special place with the public, with a goal of opening it in 2021. In the meantime, we are celebrating 30 years of land conservation at various member events throughout this year, and our May 5 "Evening on the Bluffs" will offer attendees a sneak preview of White River Bluffs.

THANK YOU TO DONORS WHO SUPPORTED THIS PROJECT, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

Amos Butler Audubon Society

Central Indiana Community Foundation

Christel DeHaan Family Foundation

Highland Kessler Civic League

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and YOU...
our members and supporters!

Thank you!

We are pleased to thank the following donors who generously supported conservation right here in Central Indiana with their support of the Central Indiana Land Trust during fiscal year 2019.

(January 1 – December 31, 2019)

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(\$7,500+)

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Red trillium
Photo by Dick Miller

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