



CENTRAL
INDIANA
LAND TRUST

Preserving the Heartland

Winter 2013/2014



From the Leadership



I am writing to let you know Executive Director Heather Bacher has resigned from the Central Indiana Land Trust. Heather served the organization for 10 of its 23 years, and oversaw the organization's transformation from a small, minimally funded non-profit into a professional organization that serves as a national example of land trust operations and the state's only accredited Land Trust.

Under her leadership, the Land Trust has protected more than 3,700 acres, increased the operating budget and membership more than five-fold, organized thousands of hours of volunteer service and conceived and spearheaded the visionary Greening the Crossroads plan, which seeks to help local officials and stakeholders forge connections between the natural landscape and the economic environment to create the best community and quality of life possible.

The board and staff thank Heather for her valuable contributions and wish her well in her future endeavors. We look forward to continuing the good work she began here. I anticipate a smooth transition. The board asked Conservation Director Cliff Chapman to serve as interim director until a permanent executive director is named. The board will launch a comprehensive search in the near term.

Thank you for your ongoing support and interest in the Land Trust. We couldn't do what we do without you.

Best regards,

Alexander C. O'Neill
Board President, Central Indiana Land Trust Incorporated

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1500 N. Delaware St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
317-631-5263

Welcome New Members

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Catherine Rymph



Core Conservation Areas strategy gaining steam

Like a lot of ideas, this one started on a bar napkin. Unlike other bar-top inspirations, though, this one actually survived Happy Hour, found credibility in science and put down roots – in some cases, literally – in Indiana’s landscape.

One evening, while enjoying a Scottish ale in MacNiven’s pub on Mass Ave, Cliff Chapman scribbled some thoughts on a napkin, making lists of ecological characteristics that make Central Indiana special, and where they can be found. When he paid up and left, he took those napkins with him.

The next day, he typed up his scribbblings. Feeling he was onto something, he began to research best practices, talk with trusted colleagues and read journal articles. Soon, he realized he could back up his observations with credible research. The result? The scientifically based vision now known as the Strategic Conservation Plan for Central Indiana, which helps the Land Trust decide where to focus its energies and resources.

The foundation of the plan came from these basic observations about Central Indiana’s natural areas:

Attributes we want to protect:

- Old Growth Forest
- Tall Grass Prairie
- Emergent Marsh
- Groundwater Wetland
- Forest Interior Habitat
- Endangered Species Habitat
- Unique Geologic Features.

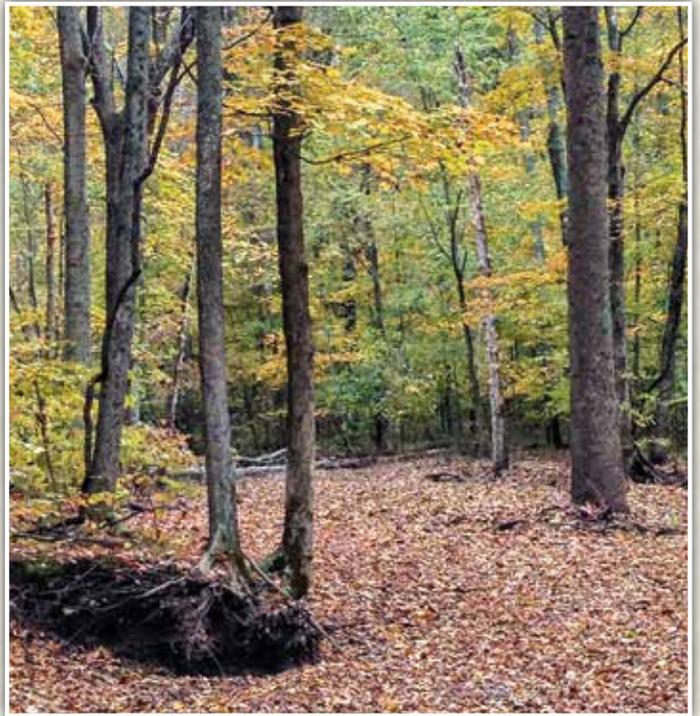
*“Like a lot of ideas,
this one started on a
bar napkin”*



Snake Creek Core Conservation Area in Putnam County

Places those attributes are found became known as Core Conservation Areas:

- Blue Bluff-Bradford Woods in Morgan County – Forest Interior Habitat and Endangered Species
- Browning Marsh in Boone County – Emergent Marsh and Endangered Species
- Flatrock Fen in Decatur County – Groundwater Wetland
- Ice Block Ponds in Morgan County – Unique Geologic Features
- Indiana Bat-Airport West in Hendricks County – Endangered Species
- Indian Prairie in Tipton County – Tall Grass Prairie
- Hills of Gold in Johnson and Brown counties – Forest Interior Habitat
- Long Ridge in Morgan County – Forest Interior Habitat
- Lower Sugar Creek in Parke County – Forest Interior Habitat
- Snake Creek in Putnam County – Forest Interior Habitat
- Meltzer Woods in Shelby County – Old Growth Forest
- Sand Pond in Parke County – Unique Geologic Features
- Woolen’s Garden-Ft. Harrison in Marion County – Old Growth Forest, Forest Interior Habitat



Hills of Gold a shining gem

How do those napkin scribbles play out in the real world? Consider Hills of Gold in Johnson and Brown counties, the Core Conservation Area where the Land Trust is making the most progress.

Named for the gold that was found in the creek beds in the late 1800s, Hills of Gold is comprised of 4,400 acres of mostly unbroken forest where several rare species can be found in abundance.

Why is the program working there? Thanks to relationships the Land Trust has developed with landowners. They've let the organization get boots on the ground and get to know the area firsthand and during different times of the year, allowing, for example, for the observation of various tree types in winter, wildflowers in the spring and breeding birds in the summer.

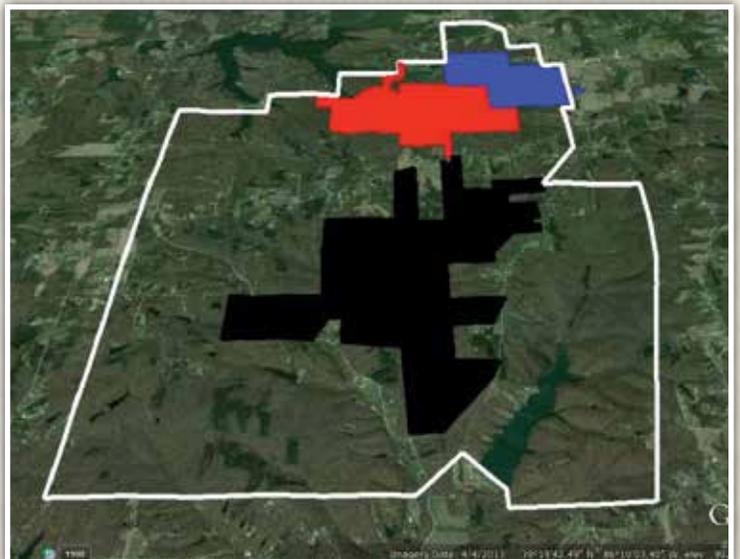
In addition, landowners have sold properties to the Land Trust at bargain prices. Success with Hills of Gold has come as the result of good resource stewardship and making a big impact with a small investment.

Included in the Hills of Gold area is the newly opened Laura Hare Preserve at Blossom Hollow, as well as the adjoining 246-acre conservation easement on Bob's Woods. The Land Trust is working to protect another adjoining 203 acres of high quality natural area and will be sharing that opportunity soon.

Core Conservation Areas work in complement to the Land Trust's Greening the Crossroad initiative, which is more model-based and focused on connected lands. Core Conservation Areas consider a land's function as well as its diversity, whereas Greening the Crossroads considers function only.

"We think function plus diversity equals resilience," said Cliff Chapman, interim executive director of the Land Trust. "If we can protect these areas, they'll be resilient in the face of invasive species, climate change and the unknown. Lots of journal articles strongly support this concept."

"Plus, when we're successful in protecting all of these areas, we'll ensure the natural character of Central Indiana will be sustained."



*Hills of Gold Core Conservation Area outlined in white
Lands permanently protected by CILTI in red
Lands permanently protected by Forest Legacy Program in black
Land in process of permanent protection in blue*

You're Invited...

We'll celebrate the holidays and kick off a season of giving with our annual Holiday Happy Hour on Giving Tuesday, the non-profit sector's answer to Black Friday and Cyber Monday. No need to RSVP in advance, but for questions please contact Rachel Eble at reble@conservingindiana.org.

Holiday Happy Hour on Giving Tuesday
Tuesday, December 3 • 4:30 - 7:00pm
1500 N. Delaware

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 those donors who have created such a legacy. If you have made a provision for the 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.



Members of the Burr Oak Society

Christine Carlson	Tom Hougham & Ann Deutch	John Pelton*
Oliver Daugherty*	Marjorie Jones	Mary Pelton*
Rebecca and Thomas Dolan	Eleanor Krauss*	Ruth Ratcliff*
Van Eller*	Cheri O'Neill	Deb Smith

*deceased

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 Rachel Eble at reble@conservingindiana.org or 317-631-5263.

Volunteer Spotlight: Tom Hohman

A retired civil engineer and former director of engineering for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Tom Hohman is a dedicated advocate for native plants and caring for Indiana natural areas. When he's not out rescuing native plants for the Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society (INPAWS), of which he is the former president, you can probably find Tom in the woods killing invasive weeds. Tom has been a faithful site steward and "Wednesday Warrior" for the Land Trust since 2007. His tireless work in controlling invasive weeds, educating the public about the importance of native plants and monitoring Land Trust preserves throughout the region is extremely important to the Land Trust. At times, staff will even joke that it feels as if Tom is a staff member and not a volunteer. Thank you, Tom, for your dedication to the Land Trust!



"I think invasive species, both plants and animals, are the most serious threat to the environment today," commented Tom, pictured above removing oriental bittersweet from the Fred and Dorothy Meyer Preserve.

CENTRAL INDIANA LAND TRUST GIFT MEMBERSHIP



Give the gift of conservation this holiday season with a Central Indiana Land Trust Gift Membership.

Please include the name, address, e-mail and phone number of the person you wish to receive a membership with your check. Gift Memberships are \$30 each and the recipient will enjoy full membership with the Central Indiana Land Trust for 1 year, including our newsletter and invitations to special member events all year long. We will welcome them to the Land Trust with a special welcome package that includes a recent newsletter, a Central Indiana Land Trust Member window decal and a letter that lets them know who gave them the gift of membership.

For more information, please contact Rachel Eble at reble@conservingindiana.org

Take a Hike

The month of November is proving to be a big one for the Central Indiana Land Trust. With the opening of two new preserves for the public to enjoy, our mission of protecting the function and beauty of Central Indiana's natural areas for present and future generations takes a big step forward.

On Nov. 5, we opened the Meyer Preserve in Morgan County, and followed that less than a week later with the opening of the Hare Preserve at Blossom Hollow in Johnson County on Nov. 11. Following are some quick descriptions of our newest preserves.

Fred and Dorothy Meyer Nature Preserve

IF YOU GO

Take S.R. 67 south of Mooresville. Turn onto Observatory Road and travel ½ mile. A gravel parking lot will be on your right.

WHAT TO SEE

The preserve is approximately 69 acres of pristine land consisting of large unbroken forest blocks, a forest interior habitat and ridges from where the glaciers stopped.

Not only do rare species live on this land, they are sufficient enough in number to sustain a population of the species. So look for the hooded and worm-eating warblers, and Eastern Box Turtle, as well as the state-endangered cerulean warbler. This area supports the northern-most chestnut oak forests in Indiana.

WHY IT'S SPECIAL

Meyer is “quintessential Morgan County” in that it includes some of the northernmost region of Indiana that was not covered by glaciers. As a result, the land features ridges unique to the area, and even though the land has been harvested for timber, the logging was done in a sustainable way and the ridges remain intact.

In addition, it is located in the Long Ridge Core Conservation Area and is a “core forest” as part of our Greening the Crossroads plan, a science-based strategic conservation plan.

As part of creating the preserve, the Land Trust worked with the Indiana Heritage Trust, which also contributed to the purchase with a grant funded by the sale of



The new trail at the Meyer Preserve is almost a mile loop that is a beautiful place for a fall hike and approximately 20 miles south of downtown Indianapolis

environmental license plates. This partnership with the state and the quality of the property will help it become a state-dedicated Nature Preserve. When it is dedicated, it will be one of the more than 250 Nature Preserves in the state.

THANKS

The purchase was made possible by a significant donation from the Robert R. and Gayle T. Meyer Family Fund, a fund of the Central Indiana Community Foundation. Additional support was contributed by the Indiana Heritage Trust and Amos Butler Audobon.

Laura Hare Preserve at Blossom Hollow

IF YOU GO

From Trafalgar in southern Johnson County, take S 300 W and turn right onto Roberts Road. Travel approximately one mile and the road becomes Hougham. The preserve is located on your left just before the mailbox at 3637 Hougham Road.

WHAT TO SEE

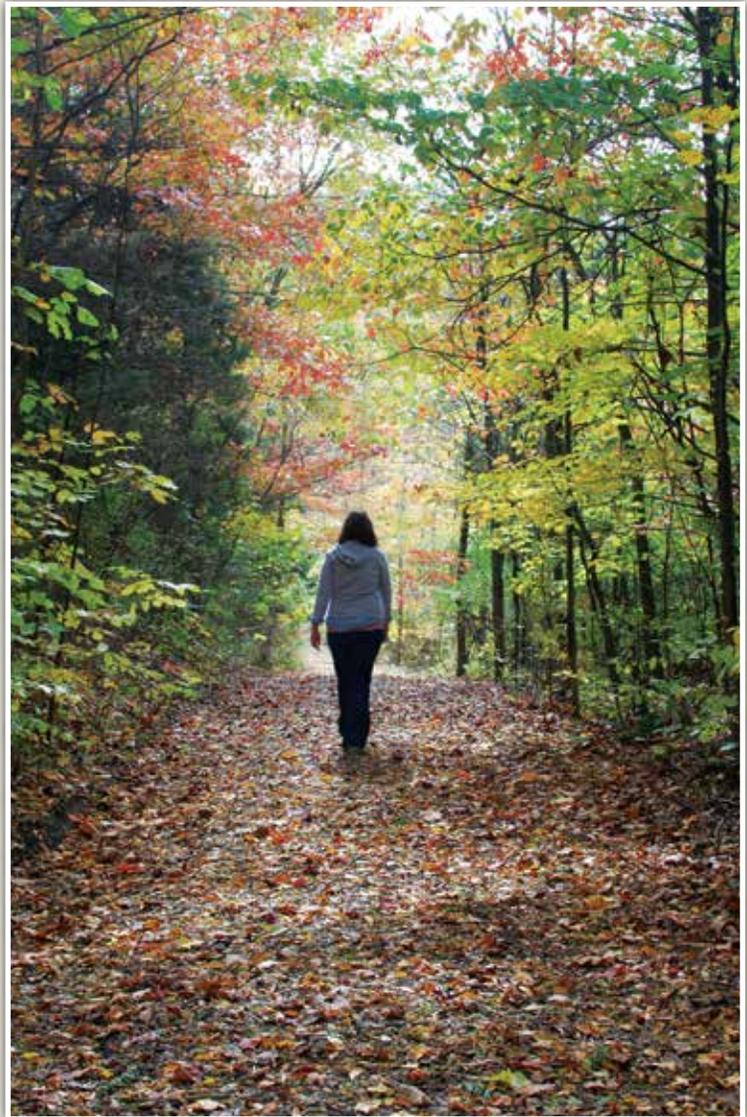
From a small gravel parking lot, hike the new trail and notice the large unbroken hardwood forest block. Few such areas remain in Central Indiana, so look for migratory birds and forest interior nesting birds. Also keep your eyes open for three rare species: the worm-eating warbler, hooded warbler and Eastern box turtle.

WHY IT'S SPECIAL

In addition to the unbroken forest block, this is a small part of the state where bedrock-laden hills were covered by glaciers. Because of this, the soil structure is complex, producing diverse plant communities. You can walk along the flat-bottom creek underlain by bedrock and see chunks of granite brought by glaciers lying on the forest floor.

THANKS

Generous contributions came from the Dr. Laura Hare Charitable Trust, Russell W. Lamb Trust, Indiana Heritage Trust, Johnson County Community Foundation, IPL Golden Eagle Grant, Amos Butler Audubon, INPAWS and several individuals.



This almost 2-mile loop trail features spectacular ridges containing mature white and red oaks clinging to slopes covered with ferns and wildflowers



Did you know that the cute little guy pictured on our cover is the American Mink?

This semiaquatic carnivore can be found in all counties of Indiana, but are most numerous in the northeastern part of the state where many ponds, streams and lakes are located. Even though they are widespread throughout Indiana you will likely never see one because of their secretive habits and behavior.

Mink have been spotted at several of our nature preserves including Oliver's Woods on the northside of Indianapolis and Burr Oak Bend in Noblesville.

White River restoration project underway

Asian bush honeysuckle infestations on riverfront land north of Indianapolis are affecting more than the land on which they grow. They're also contributing to sediment build-up in the White River. Thanks to a \$43,200 grant from the Indiana Natural Resource Foundation, the Central Indiana Land Trust is fighting back with a 1.25-mile restoration project on the stream bank between 86th Street and I-465, at Oliver's Woods Nature Preserve.

Honeysuckle that has grown along and near the river banks has caused the soil to erode and slide into the river. The resulting build-up is affecting the aquatic population and food chain.

Honeysuckle manages to crowd out native trees and other vegetation. Since it's nearly impossible for tree seedlings to germinate under honeysuckle, the Land Trust works to eradicate it and replace it with native vegetation. Otherwise, the river corridor could one day be treeless, and further erosion would jeopardize species survival. If honeysuckle were allowed to thrive, the

corridor would lose much of the plants and trees that welcome migrating species, and, as a result, they likely would shift their ranges.

The restoration project has focused on removing the honeysuckle, but it also includes overseeding the exposed stream bank and top bank with native riparian seed mix. Tussock sedge and native shrubs – including dogwoods, willows, elderberries and indigo bush – have also been planted, and, where needed, erosion-control blankets have been installed.

The preliminary results have been much better than expected or even hoped for. The seed bank along the river has responded extremely well after the honeysuckle saw its first wave of control and once bare ground under invasive shrubs is now covered in lush green vegetation with all important soil-holding root systems.

Once the restoration measures are completed, the Land Trust will manage the stream bank with spot treatment to control new honeysuckle plants for many years to come.



Before the restoration, the riverbank was devoid of vegetation and soil was eroding into the river

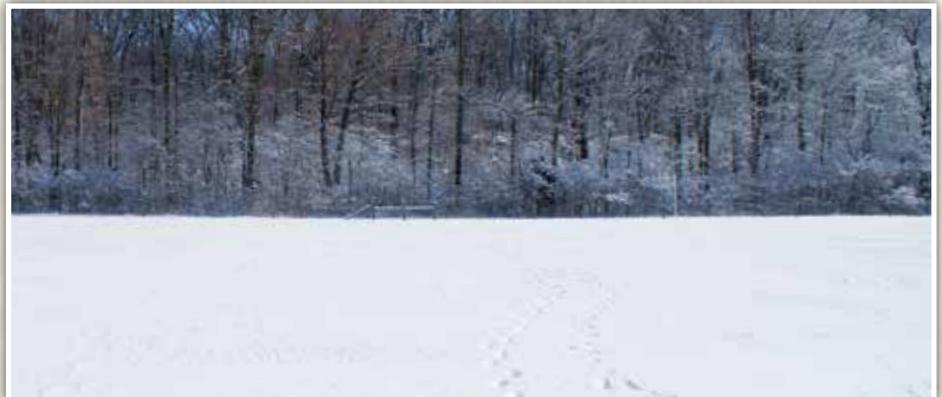


After the restoration, the riverbank is lush and thriving with native vegetation that hold the bank secure

Winter Walk

Save the Date: January 26, 2014

Come see the White River restoration progress first hand. Join us for our annual winter walk at Oliver's Woods Nature Preserve. Enjoy the winter landscape as we discover the interesting world of winter in the woods. Spots are limited, so e-mail Stacy for more information at info@conservingindiana.org.



Thank you for the following tributes

In memory of...

Gail Wayne Allison
Ms. Sarah K. Allison-
Armstrong

Lila Dean Dunn
Thomas and Priscilla
Johnson

Roberta G. Hill
Art Harris

Bob Hougham
Mr. and Mrs. Dennis
McCreery

Joe Kinney
Thomas and Priscilla
Johnson

Fritz Leucht
Thomas and Priscilla
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Damon Meredith
Thomas and Priscilla
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Donovan Miller
Barbara Miller

Dr. Philip Morton
Thomas and Priscilla
Johnson

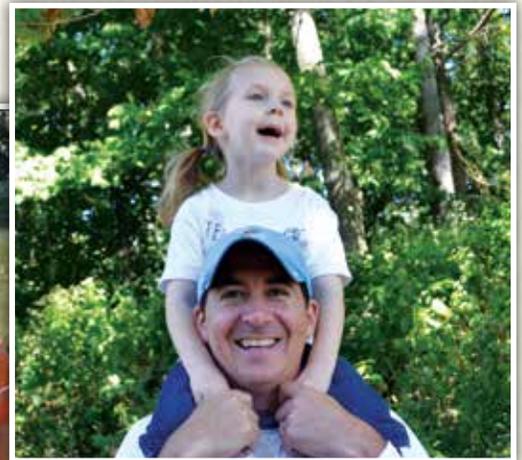
Bud Starling
Mr. Carl E. Weber

In honor of...

Heather Bacher
Thomas and Priscilla Johnson

Evelyn Borgdoll
Ms. Loree Everette

Hikes, Work Days and Family Fun Day





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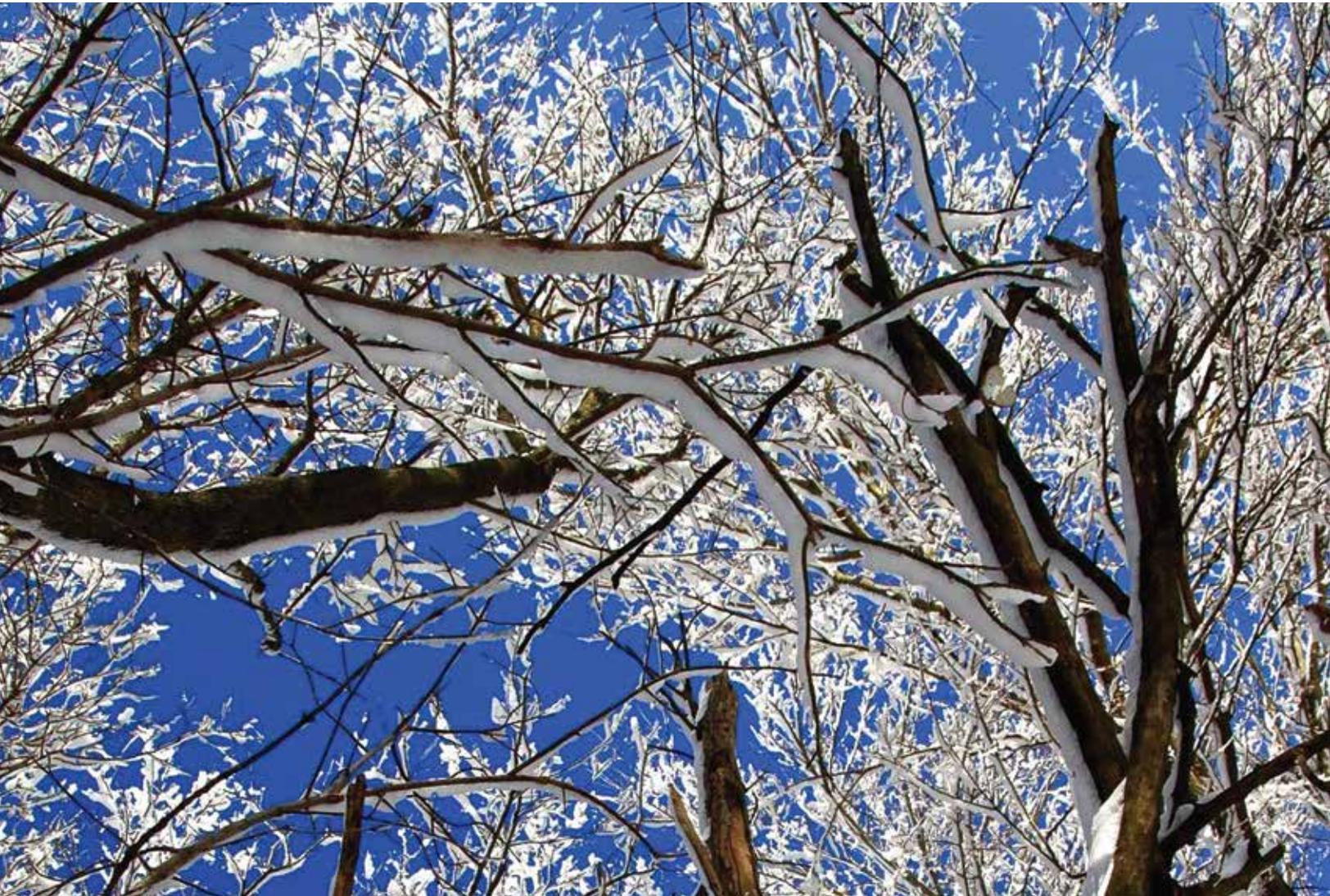
Preserving the Heartland

Central Indiana Land Trust, Inc.
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www.conservingindiana.org



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