

# HUMAN:NATURE

More People. More Places. More Partnerships.

The Nature  
Conservancy



Protecting nature. Preserving life.

Five-Year Conservation Vision for Indiana

# We Need Nature and Nature Needs Us

Balance is a difficult thing to achieve, but no organization works harder to make sure nature and humanity live in concert than The Nature Conservancy (TNC). With each new decade, achieving that balance has become more complex and more critical.

Now more than ever, we need nature. A walk in nature slows our breathing, awakens our senses and relaxes our minds. Henry David Thoreau noted, "I took a walk in the woods and came out taller than the trees."

Maintaining natural floodplains protects our Hoosier cities and towns from downstream flooding. Keeping our forests healthy cleans our air. Ensuring intact soils means healthy, plentiful food. While some of nature is not obvious in urban areas, the people living there depend on nature for water, clean air to breathe and healthy open spaces to connect. No matter our personal geography, whether we live in a metropolitan area or in wide open spaces, humans and nature are inexorably linked.

**We have always needed nature, and today nature urgently needs us.** Like a piece of cloth, each thread of our natural world is connected. We cannot stand by and watch it be unraveled at an unprecedented rate.

Our growing demands for food, water and energy are pushing our natural world to its limits. Harmful algae, invasive species, disappearing habitats, floods and drought threaten our very security and way of life. The actions we take in the next 10 years will be pivotal for our planet.

Despite the challenges, we have hope for the future. We know nature is resilient. By engaging **more people**, impacting **more places**, and building **more partnerships**, we can have a profound impact on our state's future.

## Why The Nature Conservancy?

We are a trusted leader because of our non-confrontational, non-partisan approach to our work. We are driven by science, and worldwide TNC employs 400 scientists. With more than 100 strategic partners, we are collaborative, innovative and results-oriented.



By participating in our \$40 million Human:Nature campaign, you can:

- Protect Indiana's disappearing prairies, forests and wetlands for future generations
- Inspire more Hoosiers to connect with nature at new and expanded Indiana preserves
- Build healthy, fertile soil by working from farm-to-table with the agricultural sector
- Increase TNC's impact across the state through events, partnerships and volunteerism
- Protect both Indiana's and our planet's most biodiverse and carbon-capturing habitats

# What Has Come Before

## Indiana Milestones

Since the beginning, the Indiana chapter has been a conservation leader in our state. TNC has protected 100,000 acres of Indiana's forests, prairies and wetlands. A \$40 million transformational bequest by Sally Reahard was instrumental in reaching that goal. Additionally, we were able to leverage Sally and other donors' land protection dollars by matching donations one to three (one donor dollar for every three partner dollars) through collaborations with other organizations.

TNC has also helped position Indiana as a national leader in the soil health revolution to renew agricultural lands. Fostering the return of iconic wildlife in Indiana, from bison to rare butterflies, has been a key legacy of our chapter. We were critical in restoring the Calumet River from a toxic waterway to one teeming with wildlife. Other key milestones since our founding in 1959 include:

**Efroymson Restoration at Kankakee Sands.** A herd of more than 70 bison now roam the prairie at this 8,400-acre preserve, the largest and most diverse prairie restoration east of the Mississippi. Obtaining this land in 1995 connected more than 30,000 acres of high-quality natural areas.

**Wabash River.** The longest undammed river segment in the eastern United States, the Wabash River is now home to a myriad of wildlife, thanks to more than 60,000 acres of restored floodplains. TNC in Indiana has also been a leader in no-till farming, soil health practices and two-stage ditches reviving agricultural practices throughout the Wabash River watershed.

**Goose Pond Fish and Wildlife Area.** TNC was a key part of the collaboration which made possible this 8,064-acre preserve in Greene County. As one of the most successful wetland restorations in the country, it provides Hoosiers with a wildlife viewing area, seasonal hunting and trapping opportunities and hiking trails.

While we are proud of what we have accomplished, we are not content to stop there. Our Indiana requires more from us. In these critical times, we need to be more protective of important places, more diligent in keeping our water clean and more emboldened to address catastrophic events due to climate change. Backed by science, we are committed to achieving our goals in a non-partisan, collaborative and sustainable way.

The Human:Nature campaign focuses on the nexus of humanity and nature coming together, telling a story of natural and necessary coexistence. We invite you to celebrate your own personal legacy of interactions with nature while also helping to preserve our natural Indiana. As nature's caretakers, it is our obligation to be stewards of the wonders around us. We are ready and willing to tackle the tough problems in Indiana, which will be an integral part of helping protect our precious planet.





# What's **Next**

## Primary Focus

The success of this campaign will have a significant impact on four main initiatives:



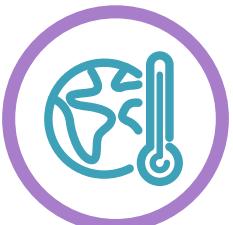
Protecting  
Important Places



Providing Food &  
Water Sustainably



Inspiring People  
for Nature



Driving Climate  
Solutions

*"For nature in Indiana, the clock is ticking – the next decade is critical. We are committed to achieving bold goals to change the course of Indiana and our planet, and we need your help."*

– Larry Clemens, State Director,  
The Nature Conservancy in Indiana

# Protecting Important Places

With more than 100,000 protected acres in Indiana, TNC will build on our success by acquiring, restoring and managing additional priority properties. For more information on Protecting Important Places, see our map on page 15 for a visual representation of the work being done across Indiana as well as a high-level overview of some of the areas of focus.



Restore thousands of acres along the lower Wabash River in southwest Indiana, a critical habitat for migratory birds.



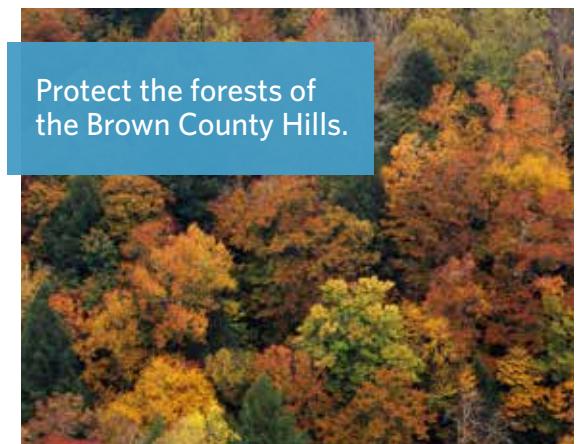
Work to ensure that our TNC preserves persist as part of a healthy biodiverse world long into the future.



Protect an additional 40,000 acres of land in Indiana by collaborating with our conservation partners to improve land management, proactively manage invasive species and work with landowners and our conservation partners to acquire high-priority lands.



Revive northeast Indiana's lake country, home to many wetlands, rivers and streams



Protect the forests of the Brown County Hills.



When we asked Dawn Slack, Director of Stewardship at The Nature Conservancy in Indiana, to share her thoughts about Indiana's natural resources and why our work to protect them is important, she shared this with us. It's a perspective about Indiana that is often overlooked, and a good reminder about why this Human:Nature campaign is so critically important. Through meaningful partnerships across the state to protect these diverse places, more people will be able to gain the appreciation of all that Indiana has to offer.

*"I may have fallen in love just a bit with Indiana..."*

because it is amazingly biodiverse. It boasts waves and sandy beaches in the northern part of the state where the extremely diverse dune and swale ecosystems are located... to the tall grass prairies, deep glacial lakes and fen complexes, remnant black swamps and oak savannas... glaciated till plains and dry oak and hickory uplands... glade and barren systems, karst terrain, limestone cliffs and bottomland swamps with massive cypress trees. I find it endlessly fascinating and breathtaking.

Indiana is diverse and has many places worth protecting. We must care for these lands, we must manage invasive species and protect our natural heritage. It is, after all, what made Indiana the diverse and fascinating place it is."

# Providing Food & Water **Sustainably**

With 64% of Indiana's land dedicated to farming, there is no denying that healthy, fertile soil is the foundation for food and water and the cornerstone for the Hoosier way of life.

TNC is a leader in the soil health revolution. Healthy soils prevent sediment and excess fertilizers from entering nearby waterways.



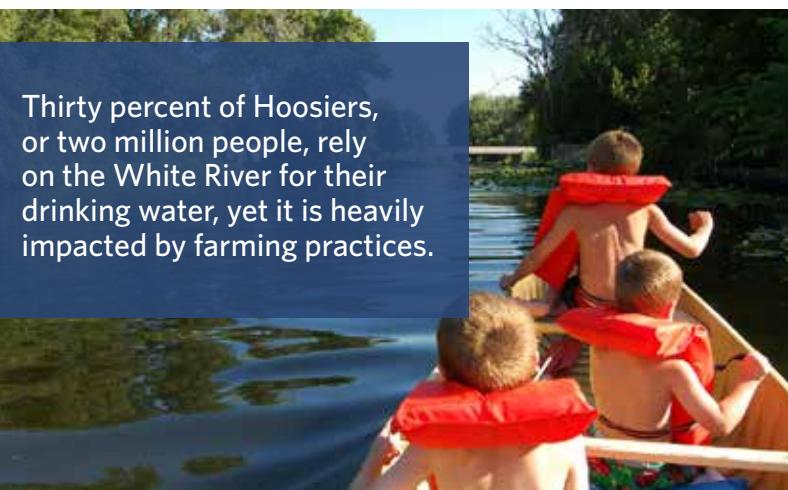
## 2025 Key Goals

- Work with farmers to improve soil health on 50% of Indiana's acres
- Improve agricultural practices to help reduce nitrogen and phosphorus in our waterways by 20%

TNC provides the tools needed by Indiana farmers to implement sustainable farming practices while remaining profitable.



Clean rivers, streams and lakes lead to healthier wildlife habitats and greater recreational opportunities in places such as Lake James, the Wabash River and Geist Reservoir.



Ray McCormick is a Board Trustee of The Nature Conservancy in Indiana and a fourth-generation farmer from Vincennes, Indiana. He is well-acquainted with Hoosier agricultural issues and the changing landscape associated with soil and water conservation.

"In June 1986, at the recommendation of a crop advisor, I moved to no-till farming and planting into cover crops. This completely changed the way we have farmed over the years. My fields are now green with cover crops of clover and annual rye grass in the winter. The cover crops sequester carbon and nutrients into the soil profile; this sponge holds water and provides 'free irrigation' in times of drought.

*"Climate change is having a dramatic impact on farming."*

Frequent flooding on the White River has had a big impact on my bottom line. The cover crops we plant hold crops' residue and help soils become resilient to the scouring impact of floodwaters. Working with landowners to replant bottom land forest is also a way to rehabilitate our floodplains.

These practices also help reduce greenhouse gases and provide the most cost-effective way of protecting millions of acres of agricultural land.

TNC is a great partner to farmers by helping bring a new audience to the world of soil health, thus reducing nutrient runoff."



# Inspiring People for Nature

"In the end we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand; and we will understand only what we are taught." – Baba Dioum, 1968



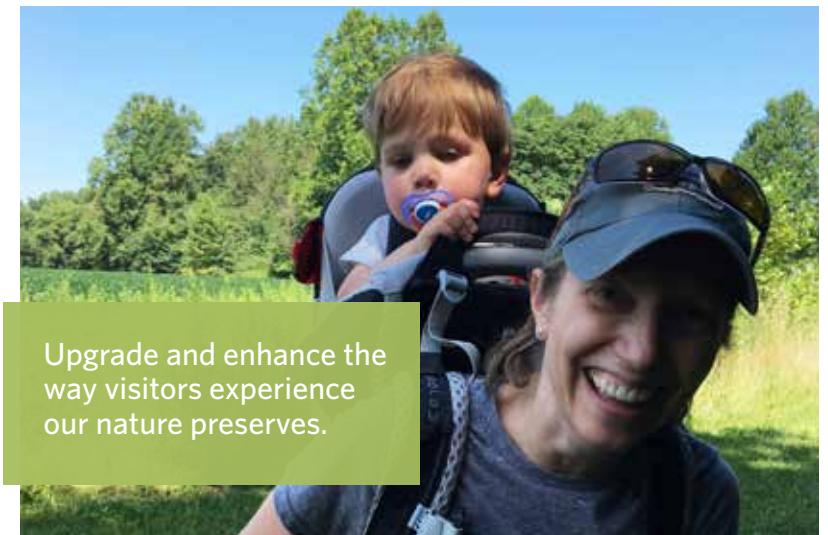
Develop partnerships that help us connect new, more diverse and urban audiences, like our efforts with the Indianapolis Recorder, the City of East Chicago and the City of Gary.



Empower our Indiana communities to revitalize and connect with nature through the use of platforms such as Vacant to Vibrant, Weed Wranglers® and Good Turn for Nature.



Invest in and expand our partnership with the City of East Chicago for Festival de la Monarca to connect people, culture and nature.



Upgrade and enhance the way visitors experience our nature preserves.

## 2025 Key Goals

- Help one-sixth of Hoosiers understand the vital role of nature in their lives and be moved to care for it
- Increase the number of Hoosiers who believe their actions matter by 20%



*“...The Nature Conservancy is making an effort to bring nature to people’s backyards...”*

The East Chicago Festival de la Monarca is now entering its fourth year, typically reaching 500 local residents. During COVID-19, we reached over 100,000 people through social media impressions. Organized by The Nature Conservancy in Indiana in partnership with the City of East Chicago, it is also made possible by our many conservation partners in the region: Audubon Great Lakes, the Field Museum of Chicago, Save the Dunes, Shirley Heinze Land Trust, U.S. Forest Service and the Gibson Woods Chapter of Wild Ones.

Joel Perez-Castaneda, Restoration Crew Leader for The Nature Conservancy, had the inspiration for the festival after speaking with organizers of a similar celebration in Minneapolis. Joel shares that “The festival connects the protection of the beautiful monarch butterfly with the cultures of the countries which the monarchs travel through, and invites the Latinx community of East Chicago to celebrate their culture while learning about conservation. The festival shares stories not only of the monarch butterflies, but also of the people whose lives are touched by them.”

Iris Sanchez, Director of Student life, Development and Leadership at the East Chicago Ivy Tech campus, shared her appreciation for the opportunity she and her students have had in partnering with TNC on the Monarch Festival. “I believe the festival is becoming an important event in the city that uplifts the Latinx community in East Chicago through dance, art and music but also offers the opportunity for the community to learn more about local conservation and how to help vulnerable species like the monarch butterfly and other pollinators. It is something my students look forward to every year. Our community doesn’t get many opportunities to connect to nature, and it is refreshing to know that The Nature Conservancy is making an effort to bring nature to people’s backyards.”

The festival features stories, lessons and activities that educate about and help protect the monarchs’ 2,000-mile migration from East Chicago to Mexico. Monarch butterflies are especially meaningful to area residents, serving as a symbol of hope and life. Through monarchs, we empower residents with information they can use to make a difference in the natural world.

# Driving Climate Solutions

Tackling climate change is not easy, but TNC does not shy away from complexity. A low-carbon future requires transformative action on a much greater scale. We must rise to the challenge of protecting our environment in Indiana and across the globe - this will be a defining issue of our time.



Find solutions for cities and towns to become more resilient to drought, flooding and other impacts of climate change.



Promote clean energy policies including wind, solar and other creative solutions.

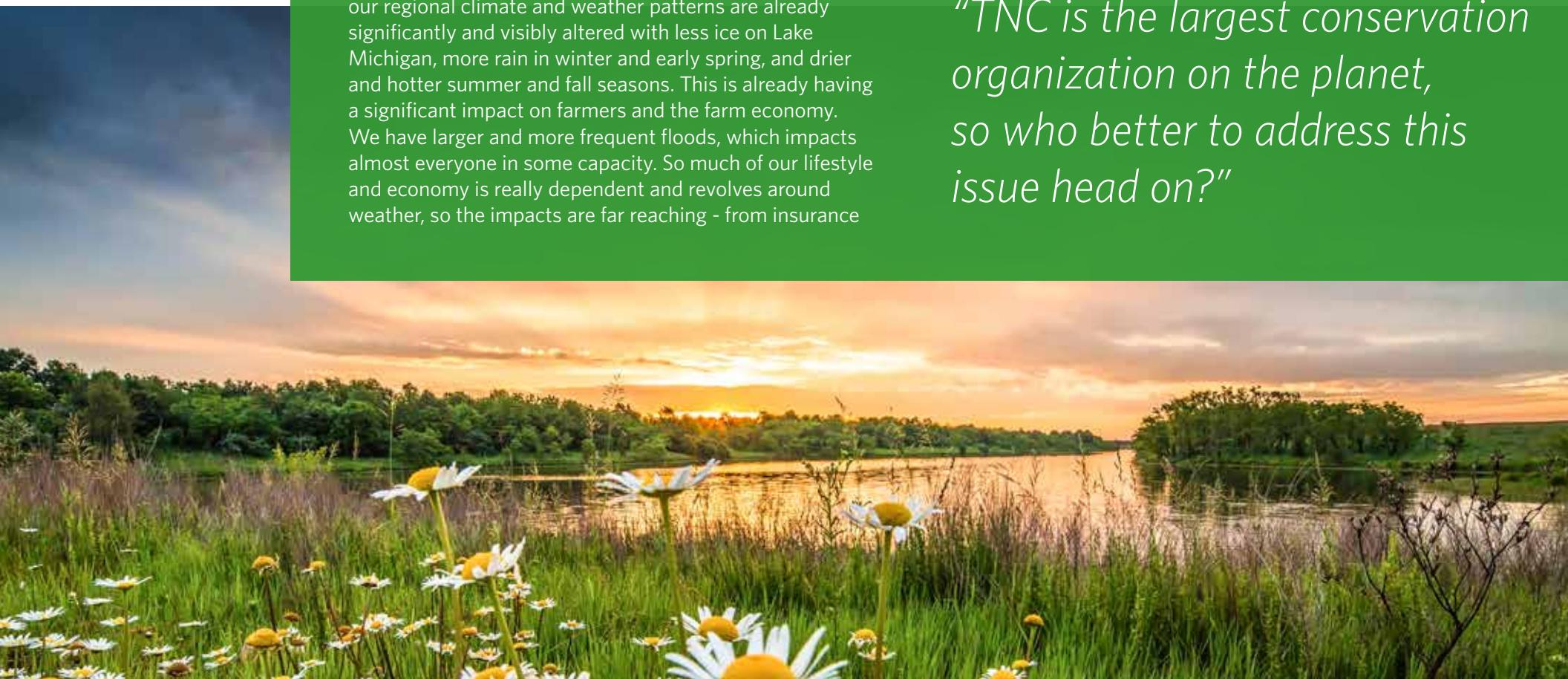
One windmill can power approximately 220 homes for a year.



Plant more trees to take carbon out of our atmosphere. We've planted nearly three million trees in the past two decades, but we can do more.



Facilitate collaborations with divergent groups to find win-win solutions to lower our emissions of carbon and other greenhouse gases.



Will Ditzler is Chair of the Board of The Nature Conservancy Chapter of Indiana. He is active in 1% for the Planet and passionate about environmental conservation. We asked Will for his thoughts surrounding climate change and TNC's role.

"We cannot achieve the targets needed to mitigate and reduce the extent of climate change without bold and significant policy action and legislation in addition to natural solutions. Ultimately, we have to address the external costs of carbon on our planet and price those costs into carbon. We will get to that point as the impacts of climate change grow and more people are willing to take action. However, the sooner we act on the science, the more we will be able to limit the extent of warming and its devastating impacts on our reefs, glaciers, biodiversity and humans.

When it comes to the impact of climate change on Indiana, our regional climate and weather patterns are already significantly and visibly altered with less ice on Lake Michigan, more rain in winter and early spring, and drier and hotter summer and fall seasons. This is already having a significant impact on farmers and the farm economy. We have larger and more frequent floods, which impacts almost everyone in some capacity. So much of our lifestyle and economy is really dependent and revolves around weather, so the impacts are far reaching - from insurance

rates, to lost income, to reduced recreational opportunities. Without bold and decisive action, we are only scratching the surface in terms of negative impacts on quality of life.

From a global perspective, if we do not act, we will lose a significant percentage of the world's species. The human costs will be significant, and our very quality of life, especially of our younger generations, is at stake.

We have the scientists, the policy influencers and a network of trustees and members throughout the world to generate more influence than any other non-government organization. We also have built trust with businesses, governments and individuals who are all needed to bring solutions at a scale to really make a difference. Utilizing these relationships and knowledge is the only way we can achieve success."

*"TNC is the largest conservation organization on the planet, so who better to address this issue head on?"*



# Vision

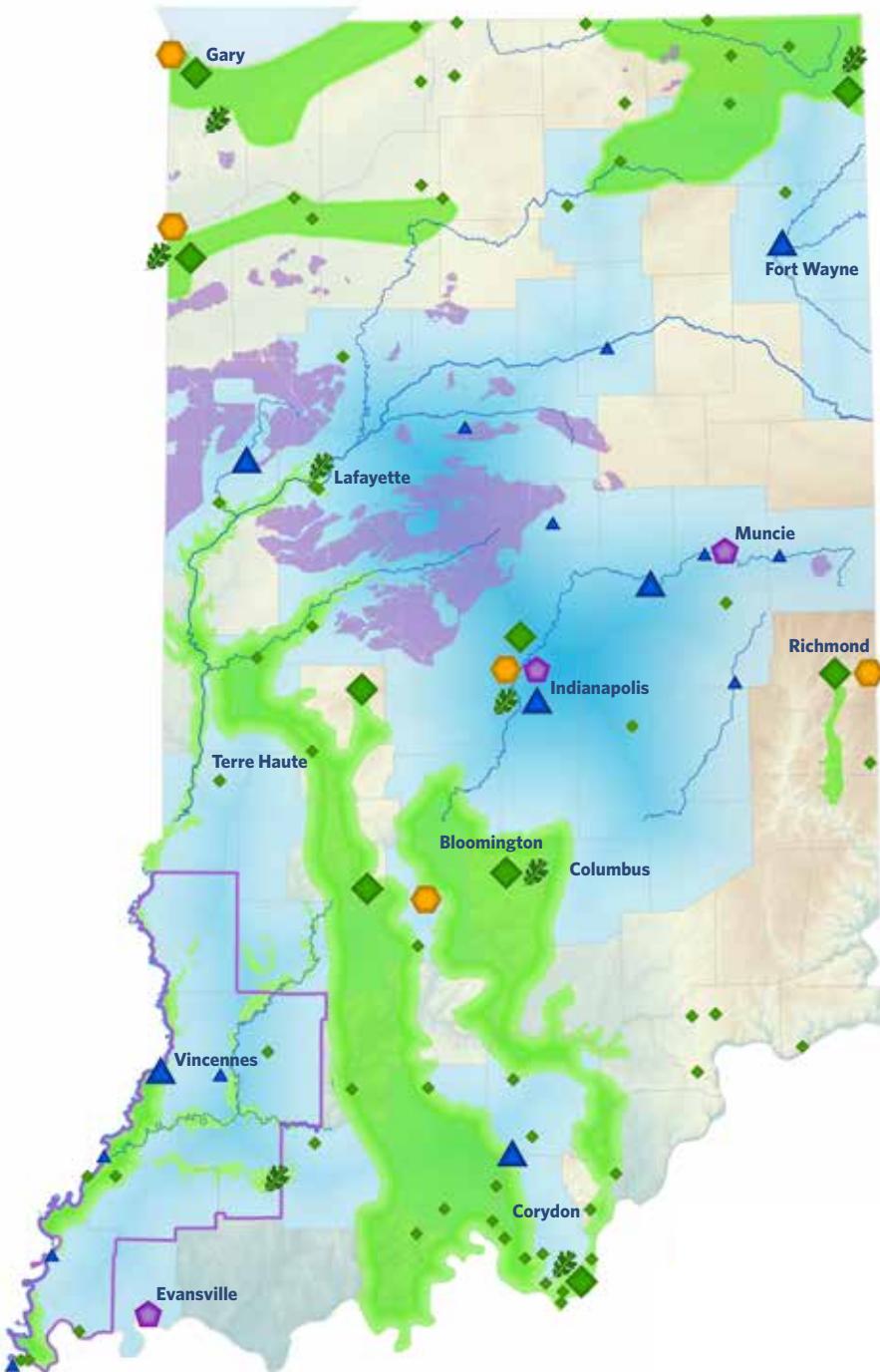
Your commitment to TNC's work will connect more people, touch down in more places and embolden more partnerships than ever before across the state.

Our campaign is ambitious, but as the largest conservation organization in the world, we know that we must move ahead with confidence and conviction to solve the most critical challenges Indiana, and our entire planet, have ever seen.

The Human:Nature campaign is all about hope. Hope in a healthy and vibrant future – one where our forests, prairies and wetlands are protected; Hoosiers are connected to the natural world; the food that sustains us is grown in a more sustainable way; and our climate can be stabilized.

Success is imperative, because we need nature – and nature needs us.

# Our Conservation Priorities in Indiana



The Nature Conservancy tackles and solves our state's most complicated conservation opportunities and challenges. This map illustrates where our four focal areas will touch down in our state through our distribution of **TNC offices** in a way that creates a ripple effect of change, much like tossing a pebble into a pond.

## Important Places: Conserving another 40,000 acres

- **Priority Protection Areas** Through science, we have identified the most important places in the state that need to be conserved through increased management, securing high biodiversity hot spots and maintaining the connectedness of habitats for generations to come.
- ◆ **Nature Preserves** These areas help link already protected lands together, but there is still more work to accomplish through our partnerships to protect important lands.
- ◆ **Flagship Preserves** Nature preserves are becoming a popular place for people to experience the best nature has to offer in our state. We will improve access and the overall experience at our most visited locations.

## Providing Food and Water Sustainably: Driving to 50% of our farmland using conservation practices

- **Important Counties** Science guides us to get the biggest impact for water quality. It also shows us where the greatest need and opportunities for scaling adoption of conservation practices exist. Since many partners are based at county levels, we work through partnerships.
- ▲ **Watersheds** We are focused on the highest-impact watersheds, and we are collaborating with numerous partnerships to find solutions for the farmers, people and industries that rely on these freshwater systems.
- ▲ **Conservation Projects** We often demonstrate on-the-ground projects to pilot new technologies and conservation practices.

## Inspiring People for Nature: Hoosiers need to renew their understanding of the value of nature

- **Partnerships and Preserve Improvements** We will introduce new audiences and connect people to nature. We plan to create upgraded trails, parking and signage while we continue to build partnerships in key urban places to broaden the base of support for nature by all people for a sustainable future in Indiana.

## Driving Climate Solutions: Reducing carbon emissions

- **Reforesting Lands** In southwest Indiana, we'll work with willing people and partnerships to reforest lands that can remove and store carbon, providing the maximum impact for climate and in places that create habitat corridors and riparian areas that can clean the water.
- **Wind Energy Mapping** This guides us to the places where wind energy can be sited that can have the least impact on nature. Green-energy projects can be sited or designed to benefit natural habitats.
- **Climate Adaptation Communities** We will work with partners in key urban areas to seek solutions for people and communities that are being impacted by extreme climate.



# Be Part of the Transformation

Now is your chance to make a bold investment in Indiana. Together we can shape a healthy and vibrant future, change the course of nature and leave a lasting legacy for all across our state. The work we accomplish as partners will transform people and places as well as transcend time and future generations.

Help us create an environment for Human:Nature to thrive in the Hoosier state for generations to come.

*Our campaign committee is comprised of the following community members: Will Ditzler (Chair), Judy Singleton (Co-Chair), Pat James (Co-Chair), Christa Adkins, John Brooks, TJ Kanczuzewski, Anne Nobles and Jane Stautz.*



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