

November 4, 2005

Dear Legislator:

When I was appointed by Governor Daniels to serve my fellow Hoosiers as Director of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, I was given one charge: look into every aspect of the agency to find ways to cut costs and improve efficiency, while continuing to provide the services Hoosiers expect.

Since taking this position, I have been examining our "user fee" system. Entrance fees to our state parks, fees for camping, hunting and fishing licenses, inn room rates, and annual dock rates have all been scrutinized. In a few weeks, I am going to present to the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) a fee restructuring plan. This plan will take on a market-based approach, calling for changes in rates based on the demand for DNR's services.

I will propose fee ranges so that the DNR and its property managers can adjust fees based on the time of year, capacity, location, and demand. By reducing our dependency on the state's general fund, we can weather tight budget times, allowing the DNR to better serve Hoosiers without having to reduce services or opportunities for families.

We intend for there to be both increases and decreases in various fees. By doing so, we believe that we will better maximize returns on key weekends while providing Indiana families with a more reasonably priced vacation opportunity when attendance has been historically lower.

Because of the potential for you to receive questions about the fee restructuring from your constituents, I wanted to advise you of these changes in advance of proposing them to the NRC. Please feel free to contact me (317-232-4020) if you have any questions.

Respectfully,



Kyle J. Hupfer  
Director, Indiana Department of Natural Resources