

# **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

PROPOSED TRANSFER OF FEDERAL INTERESTS FROM 1,250 ACRES AT ATTERBURY FISH AND WILDLIFE AREA (JOHNSON COUNTY, INDIANA) TO 1,990 ACRES AT PROPOSED DEER CREEK FISH AND WILDLIFE AREA (PUTNAM COUNTY, INDIANA)

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## **PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION**

### **Proposed Action**

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and National Park Service (NPS) propose an exchange of land and the transfer of federal interest from 1,250 acres in Johnson County, Indiana to 1,990 acres in Putnam County, Indiana. The 1,250 acres in Johnson County is currently owned and managed by IDNR, Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) as Atterbury Fish and Wildlife Area (AFWA) and would be transferred to the Military Department of Indiana (MDI). The 1,990 acres in Putnam County is owned by the Indiana Department of Correction and would be transferred to the Department of Natural Resources and be managed as a new Fish and Wildlife Area to be called Deer Creek Fish and Wildlife Area (Appendix A).

### **Purpose, Opportunity, & Need for Action**

In 1968, the General Services Administration (GSA) granted the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) DFW rights to purchase a portion of surplus land at Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center (Camp Atterbury) in Johnson County, Indiana (GSA, Disposal No. D-IND-412-F). Camp Atterbury is owned by the Department of Defense (DOD) and is managed by the Military Department of Indiana (MDI) primarily for Indiana National Guard (ING) support and training. The Indiana DFW proposal included dedicating 5,410 acres for use as a public park and recreation area under the Federal Lands to Parks (FLP) program, Public Law 616 of the 80<sup>th</sup> Congress. Under Public Law 616, GSA conveyed the property to the Indiana DFW subject to deed restrictions reflecting the use and maintenance of the property in perpetuity as a public park and recreation area. NPS administers the FLP program and holds the interest for these property use restrictions.

The Indiana DFW purchased the property with a combination of hunting and fishing license funds and federal grant funds from the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) Program, known at that time as Federal Aid in Fish and Wildlife Restoration. Utilizing the WSFR grant funds restricted the property use to the purpose for which the grant was authorized, specifically for use as a State Fish and Wildlife Area (FWA), known today as the Atterbury FWA. FWS administers the WSFR program and holds the interest for these property use restrictions. The use of State hunting and fishing license funds similarly restricts the property use for the administration of the Indiana DFW, as a State Fish and Wildlife Area (Indiana Code 14-22-33-4 and I.C. 14-22-33-5).

Since 1969, when Indiana DFW acquired and began managing the 5,410 acres as Atterbury FWA, Indiana has acquired additional land through several transactions that have been added to the FWA. WSFR funds have been used for acquisition and/or management of all additional land. Some land was swapped with adjoining Johnson County Park. Also created from the Camp Atterbury surplus, Johnson County Park also had FLP restrictions which remained in the land transfers. The present area of Atterbury FWA is 6,206 acres. FLP interest is held on 5,465 acres and WSFR interest is held on all 6,206 acres.

Over time, the needs of the Indiana National Guard (ING) have changed. Camp Atterbury, adjoining Atterbury FWA to the south, has reached its maximum capacity and the ING must meet an expanding mission assigned by the Department of Defense (DOD), including increasing troop capacity. Beginning in 2005, the Military Department of Indiana (MDI), which oversees ING, informally approached the IDNR, FWS, and NPS with inquiries related to reacquiring a portion of the Atterbury FWA to meet the expanding mission of the ING. In September 2009, the DOD required ING to demonstrate land control over the 1,250 acre portion of Atterbury FWA to address national security issues and ING's expanding military mission.

On behalf of the MDI and ING, the Governor's Office has requested to exchange a portion of Atterbury FWA for other land that has equal or better wildlife habitat, recreational value and fair market value. The identified area for exchange is 1,990 surplus acres of the Putnamville Correctional Facility property and proposed to become Deer Creek FWA. The Putnamville Correctional Facility consists of 2,535 acres owned and managed by the Indiana Department of Correction, which would retain 545 acres. The proposed Deer Creek FWA is located in Putnam County, Indiana, along U.S. Highway 40.

FWS and NPS are the program administrators for the federal programs that place restrictions on the property use and management and thus, for the proposed transfer of Atterbury FWA. Both programs have provisions for exchange of land and both NPS and FWS need to respond to Indiana's exchange request under the requirements of their respective programs. Before the State of Indiana is able to transfer the 1,250 acres of the Atterbury FWA to Camp Atterbury, both Federal agencies need to ensure that the programs they administer are made whole. NPS requires an exchange of property equivalent in fair market and recreation value pursuant to the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended. FWS requires an exchange of property of equal or better fair market value, wildlife habitat value and recreational value consistent with the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration programs.

The purpose of the proposed action is to implement a single action that meets the needs of all involved agencies and the federal programs administered by NPS and FWS. The action meets the need for NPS and FWS to respond to the transfer request within the rules of their respective programs. It is also an opportunity to extend program protections for 1,990 acres of good wildlife habitat that the State of Indiana would have otherwise sold at public auction.

This environmental assessment (EA) evaluates the alternatives to and the effects of the proposed land exchange on 1) recreational use by the public, 2) wildlife habitat and management on the proposed exchange parcels and 3) financial aspects. Indirect effects to neighboring areas are reviewed where applicable. The EA is part of the decision-making process in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) by the NPS and FWS. Both agencies will prepare individual findings of no significant impact or notices to prepare an environmental impact statement after completing the EA preparation process. The EA process provides the public with two opportunities to participate; in the initial phase during the scoping process and in the middle to comment on the draft EA (Appendix B).

The proposed action would allow the MDI to expand into the upland portions of the Atterbury Fish and Wildlife Area while providing equal or better replacement public hunting and fishing recreational opportunities and sport fish and wildlife restoration at the proposed Deer Creek Fish

and Wildlife Area in accordance with the Pittman-Robertson Act and the Federal Lands to Parks Act. The lead agency in preparing this document is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Cooperating agencies are the National Park Service and the State of Indiana, Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

### **Decisions to be Made**

FWS needs to decide whether or not to transfer its Federal interest under the Pittman-Robertson Act from 1,250 acres, excluding the buildings and structures within the eight-acre service area, at Atterbury FWA, to 1,990 acres at the proposed Deer Creek FWA. USFWS will also decide whether this Environmental Assessment (EA) is adequate to support a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) decision, or whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will need to be prepared.” The decision maker for the FWS in this process is Tom Melius, Midwest Regional Director.

NPS needs to decide whether to recommend transfer of the deed restrictions from the 1,250 acres at Atterbury FWA to 1,990 acres at the proposed Deer Creek FWA. NPS will also decide whether this Environmental Assessment (EA) is adequate to support a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) decision, or whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will need to be prepared.” The decision maker for NPS in this process is Dennis R. Reidenbach, Northeast Regional Director.

The State of Indiana needs to decide whether to transfer management of 1,990 acres of Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) property at the proposed Deer Creek FWA to the IDNR. At the same time, Indiana needs to decide whether to transfer management of 1,250 acres at Atterbury FWA from the IDNR to the MDI. IDNR would transfer its management from the 1,250 acres at Atterbury to the 1,990 acres at the proposed Deer Creek FWA.

### **Definitions & Scope of Analysis**

This assessment evaluates the conservation (wildlife and their habitat), recreational and financial values of the proposed transfer parcel at Atterbury FWA and the proposed Deer Creek FWA. The assessment also analyzes potential impacts to conservation and recreation on the remaining portions of Atterbury FWA under the proposed action. Effects to surrounding properties are included where applicable.

For the purposes of this assessment, conservation, recreation, and financial values are evaluated for the following:

Conservation: 1) existing habitat composition, 2) wildlife populations, where known and 3) habitat management and restoration.

Recreation: 1) opportunities for users, as expressed in types of users and number of efforts, and 2) public availability, defined as distance from major population centers.

Financial: 1) fair market values of the proposed exchange parcels as determined by appraisals and 2) additional costs and revenue that directly result from the proposed action.

*Conservation.* For this assessment, conservation is defined as the habitat restoration and management for sport fish and wildlife species. Managing public lands for hunting and fishing is the primary objective for the DFW and the WSFR program. This information on game species is readily available and heavily utilized in this analysis. Available information of non-game species and species of greatest conservation need is limited. Evaluation of non-game species is habitat-based, as these species benefit from habitat restoration for game species.

*Recreation.* Recreation includes primary activities of hunting and fishing, and compatible secondary activities of wildlife viewing, hiking, and other forms of recreation. Pheasant releases that occur at Atterbury FWA are distinguished separately from all other hunting types because this activity is solely funded through state funds and not by the WSFR program. Wildlife viewing is a compatible secondary activity indirectly supported by the WSFR program, but other recreational activities, such as picnicking, mushroom hunting and berry-picking are conducted without WSFR assistance. The FLP program, however, supports a variety of recreational activities. Generally, all non-hunting and non-fishing recreational activities are classified together as secondary (or other) recreational uses, unless otherwise noted.

*Financial.* In order for FWS and NPS to satisfy the requirements of their programs, the appraised value of the replacement land at proposed Deer Creek FWA would need to be equal to or greater than the proposed area at Atterbury FWA. The State of Indiana contracted a certified appraiser who appraised the two properties using Federal appraisal standards. The appraisal was reviewed and approved by the General Services Administration (GSA) Boston Office Review Appraiser. The GSA has assured the NPS and FWS that the fair market value of proposed Deer Creek FWA is comparable to the fair market value of Atterbury exchange property and adequate to proceed with the exchange.

*Efforts.* Primary and secondary recreational use is measured by efforts, a term commonly used in professional management for hunting and fishing. An effort is defined by a visit or an attempt to perform a recreational activity by one user. Over the course of the year, an individual may contribute multiple efforts. Some secondary activities, such as hiking and wildlife viewing, typically are measured by visits. For this document, the term effort is used in reference to all forms of recreational use.

*Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).* This environmental assessment discusses requirements under the ADA and impacts to individuals that are protected under the Act. The DFW is held to ADA standards by a programmatic agreement with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for all Fish and Wildlife Areas under Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson. DFW compliance with ADA standards is reviewed under these programmatic agreements and under individual grants.

Opportunities for enhanced accessibility are discussed very briefly in this analysis. Enhanced accessibility refers to features used by individuals with limited mobility but who do not meet the definitions of “disabled” under ADA. These features are not required. Atterbury FWA provides

some enhanced accessibility because of the existence of abandoned road beds that provide easy walking. They were not constructed and are not maintained for this purpose, but are popular with certain user groups.

*Expansion by MDI and ING.* Future construction activities that may occur on the proposed area to be transferred to the Military Department of Indiana are not included in this analysis. Construction and other development activities will be reviewed and assessed by applicable state and federal laws and regulations as they occur in the future. Future compliance reviews may include endangered species consultations, historical and archeological reviews, and NEPA environmental assessments.

*Supporting planning documents.* In addition to personal communications with staff experts at the Indiana DFW, the following documents are used for the analysis with their abbreviated titles:

- Assessment of the Conservation and Recreation Value for the MDI / IDNR / IDOC Land Exchange Proposal (Conservation and Recreation Assessment),
- Deer Creek Fish and Wildlife Area Proposed Site Management Plan (Deer Creek Management Plan), and
- Atterbury Fish and Wildlife Area 5-Year Management Plan 2011-2016 (Atterbury Management Plan).

The above planning documents were completed by different authors at different times. Thus, they have some inherent differences in terminology and inferences with respect to the time they were written. This EA takes into account those differences and analyzes the most accurate, up-to-date information available.

### **List of Acronyms Used**

dbh	diameter at breast height (to measure trees)
DFW	Division of Fish and Wildlife (Indiana)
DOD	Department of Defense
EA	Environmental Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FLP	Federal Lands to Parks
FWA	Fish and Wildlife Area
FWS	Fish and Wildlife Service
GSA	General Services Administration
IDNR	Indiana Department of Natural Resources
IDOC	Indiana Department of Correction
ING	Indiana National Guard
MDI	Military Department of Indiana
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NPS	National Park Service
NWI	National Wetland Inventory
SGCN	Species of Greatest Conservation Need
WSFR	Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration

## **Public Notification and Involvement**

Stakeholder meetings were held at Atterbury Fish and Wildlife Area on April 5 and the Indiana State Police Post in Putnamville on April 7. A Governor's press conference was held on April 15, 2010 at Atterbury Fish and Wildlife Area where the proposed land exchange was announced. News releases have been published in various sources throughout the state. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the Indiana National Guard also made available details of the land exchange proposal via publications and web pages. Public meetings were held on April 26 at the Atterbury Fish and Wildlife Area and April 28 at the Indiana State Police Post in Putnamville.

Throughout the process, comments were received by the public and resources professionals and have been incorporated into this environmental assessment. This information was used to develop a list of issues and concerns related to the project. They are grouped into three categories: 1) issues analyzed in the assessment, 2) issues not analyzed in the assessment and 3) management recommendations. Appendix B outlines the public involvement process and comments in detail.

## **Summary of Authorizing Programs & Laws**

*Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act.* Federal aid is provided to states for fish management and restoration.

*Endangered Species Act (ESA).* Section 7 of the ESA requires that any federal action does not jeopardize the existence of any listed endangered or threatened species or adversely modifying their critical habitat.

*Federal Lands to Parks (FLP) Program.* Federal surplus property is transferred to state and local governments to be used and maintained exclusively, in perpetuity, for public park or recreational purposes (41 CFR 102-75-680). National Park Service is the administrator. Subsequent to the official transfer of the property, if it becomes unsuitable for recreation or if the recipient's needs change to the point where the property cannot be appropriately used for recreation, NPS may authorize a land exchange to assure no net loss of recreational facilities for the public.

*Indiana Code 14-22-33-4 and I.C. 14-22-33-5.* Assent to federal aid for wildlife and fisheries restoration projects.

*Indiana Code 14-21-1.* Historic and archeological review is required for transfer of properties by the state.

*National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (P.L. 91-190).* Requires consideration of environmental effects in the federal decision-making process. An environmental assessment is prepared when a federal agency must determine whether or not a proposed federal action may have a significant effect on the human environment.

*National Historical Preservation Act.* Requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Section

106 of the Act outlines a process of consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer prior to the approval of any federal action.

*Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act.* Federal aid is provided to states for the management and restoration of wildlife, including acquisition of wildlife habitat.

*Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) Programs.* The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service works with states, insular areas and the District of Columbia to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, their habitats, and the hunting, sport fishing and recreational boating opportunities they provide. The WSFR mission is to work through partnerships to conserve and manage fish and wildlife and their habitats for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations. The authorizing legislation for WSFR activities are the Pittman-Robertson Act and the Dingell-Johnson Act (50 CFR 80; 43 CFR 12; and 522 FW 1, 2, 6, and 20). Grant funding comes from an excise tax on hunting and fishing equipment.

## ALTERNATIVES

### Alternatives Eliminated from Consideration

The following alternatives were initially considered but were eliminated from further analysis.

***Identify Alternative Land near or Adjacent to Camp Atterbury that does not include Atterbury FWA.*** Lands available on other areas near or adjoining Camp Atterbury have floodplains and/or wetlands associated with them and are not suitable for expansion of the military facilities. These areas lack access to paved roads, have unsuitable soils and slopes, and require new roads and underground infrastructure to be constructed. Investigation did not reveal any lands suitable for the needs of ING.

***Monetary Compensation for FWS and NPS by State of Indiana and no land exchange occurs.*** This approach does not appear to be consistent with NPS requirements under the FLP program. Additionally, this action results in 1,250 acres being permanently lost for conservation, recreation, and other public benefits.

***Monetary Compensation for FWS, and Alternative Land Identified for NPS.*** In this alternative, the State of Indiana identifies separate means of addressing the requirements of the WSFR and FLP programs. The WSFR receives payment for the current appraised value of the parcel. FLP restrictions are placed on 1,250 acres of different land that provides equal fair market and recreational value, but not necessarily wildlife habitat. This alternative was eliminated because both NPS and FWS lack authority to remove federal interest until all regulatory commitments are met.

***Instead of the parcels in Putnam County, much larger tracts of land in southern Indiana are exchanged for the 1,250 acres at Atterbury, potentially at a 5:1 ratio or more.*** A key aspect of replacement land for Atterbury FWA is to maintain comparable recreational and conservation values. Other lands identified are located far from Indianapolis and would likely increase costs and commuting time for existing users or inhibit the same users all together. Additionally, these lands also typically contain habitat types, such as woodlands or forests, which are significantly different from Atterbury FWA and would require substantial habitat management to produce equal conservation and recreation value, even at a very high acreage replacement ratio. Areas in southern Indiana do not have comparable replacement recreational and conservation values exhibited at Atterbury FWA.

### Alternatives Considered for Study

***Alternative A - No Action.*** Federal interests remain on the 1,250-acre parcel at Atterbury FWA and the FWA continues to be managed for hunting and wildlife restoration under the Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife.

Under no action, no changes occur to the existing conservation, recreation, or financial values on all 6,206 acres at Atterbury FWA. The service area with the administrative building continues to be owned and used by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. As a result of no action, the transfer of land to the Military Department of Indiana is not allowed. A railroad spur that passes

through a northern portion of Atterbury FWA continues to be periodically used by the Military Department of Indiana.

The 1,990 acres of the proposed Deer Creek FWA remains under Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) management until sold at a public auction to the highest bidder. When auctioned, DOC will cease operations of timber management, agriculture contracts, and limited recreation activities by employees. No expectation of public recreation or private fish and wildlife management exists if auctioned.

***Alternative B - Proposed Action.*** Federal interests in the FLP and WSFR programs are transferred from 1,250 acres at Atterbury FWA to 1,990 acres at the proposed Deer Creek FWA. WSFR and IDNR interests in the service area at Atterbury FWA remain until a replacement occurs without the use of WSFR funds or hunting or fishing license fees, and meets all conditions of disposal or transfer of facilities under the WSFR program (Enclave MOA, Appendix C). DFW would continue to use the headquarters and maintenance buildings as they do now.

Under this alternative, public use and management for fish and wildlife cease on the 1,250-acre parcel at Atterbury FWA. The remaining portion of Atterbury FWA (4,956 acres) continues to be held under FLP and WSFR programs and managed for fish and wildlife as well as public recreational use. Long-term management will change to allow for additional early successional habitat and its associated small game hunting opportunities.

As a result of the action, IDNR is able to transfer management of the 1,250-acre parcel at Atterbury FWA to the Military Department of Indiana (MDI) to expand Camp Atterbury. A one-mile portion of the railroad spur will be contained within new MDI boundaries, but a two-mile portion will remain surrounded by Atterbury FWA. MDI will expand capacity of the railroad spur within the exchange area and continue periodic use of the railroad spur through the remaining portion of Atterbury FWA. Use consists of switching operations with typically six to ten railroad cars. Frequency of railroad spur use will be no more than three days in duration twice a month, for a maximum of 72 days per year. They will be stopped and unloaded only in the proposed exchange area within the new MDI boundaries. No physical or operational barriers will be placed to inhibit operations of Atterbury FWA (Rail MOA, Appendix C). An anti-terrorism force protection (safety) buffer required by the Department of Defense will enclose the entire proposed exchange area. The 150-foot-wide safety buffer will be placed within Camp Atterbury boundaries and will not encroach onto Atterbury FWA nor affect public use or operational activities (Buffer MOA, Appendix C).

Hospital Road, School House Road and Mauxferry Road are adjacent to the exchange area. They provide access to Atterbury FWA, Camp Atterbury, Johnson County Park, and Atterbury Job Corps in addition to being frequently used by local commuters. Edinburgh Street, off of Hospital Road, provides access to the Atterbury Shooting Range Complex. All of these roads will remain open. Road ownership will remain unchanged except for those portions that form new boundaries between IDNR and MDI along the exchange area. Ownership will be shared to the centerline of Mauxferry, Edinburgh, and Burnside. IDNR will have full responsibility to maintain these shared roads. Access to Atterbury FWA and surrounding areas by IDNR personnel and the public will not be restricted (Buffer MOA, Appendix C). For security purposes, Burnside Street, North Street, and all other interior roads within the exchange area are expected to be closed to public access as needed by MDI in the future once area development occurs.

The State will also transfer management of 1,990 acres from the Indiana Department of Correction to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources to be managed as Deer Creek Fish and Wildlife Area.

Public use and management for fish and wildlife will be added to 1,990 acres at the proposed Deer Creek FWA. Fish and wildlife management efforts will focus on early successional and forest habitats. Public use is expected to begin immediately, in the fall of 2010. Hunting and fishing will be the primary uses, mainly for small game and deer hunting. Wildlife viewing, foraging, gathering wild berries, nuts and mushroom hunting, will be allowed as compatible with the primary use. The preparation of this property for public use requires several start-up costs. Funds from the WSFR and FLP programs and funds generated from the sale of hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses will not be used for these costs.

## Summary of Considered Alternatives

Table 1. Summary of Alternative Actions by Issues

	<b>ALTERNATIVE A : NO ACTION</b>	<b>ALTERNATIVE B : PROPOSED ACTION</b>
<b>FLP &amp; WSFR interests</b>	No change. Federal interests remain on Atterbury FWA. No interests are added to the proposed Deer Creek FWA.	Federal interests are removed from 1,250 acres at Atterbury FWA and transferred to 1,990 acres at the proposed Deer Creek FWA. No changes to remaining 4,956 acres at Atterbury FWA. The Headquarters and maintenance buildings will be replaced.
<b>Conservation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indiana DFW continues to manage for fish and wildlife at Atterbury FWA on all 6,206 acres.</li> <li>• No fish and wildlife management occurs at the proposed Deer Creek FWA by the DFW. When auctioned, land use at proposed Deer Creek FWA is unknown, although likely to be agricultural, residential, and possibly mining.</li> <li>• No changes to Indiana bat habitat.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fish and wildlife management ceases on 1,250 acres at Atterbury FWA and is transferred to 1,990 acres at proposed Deer Creek FWA.</li> <li>• No losses occur to aquatic and wetland habitats at Atterbury FWA.</li> <li>• Loss of early successional habitats at Atterbury FWA is replaced with similar habitat at proposed Deer Creek FWA and creation of early successional habitat on the remaining Atterbury FWA.</li> <li>• Other habitat types gained include forest, ponds, streams, and wetlands at the proposed Deer Creek FWA.</li> <li>• No adverse effects likely to occur to Indiana bat or its critical habitat, as supported by FWS.</li> <li>• Fragmentation caused by removing a central portion of Atterbury FWA is not anticipated to adversely affect any wildlife species.</li> </ul>
<b>Recreation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public use is available on 6,206 acres at Atterbury FWA. No public use is available at proposed Deer Creek FWA.</li> <li>• Primary recreational activities include small upland game hunting, deer hunting.</li> <li>• Secondary recreational activities include wildlife viewing, hiking, and gathering of nuts, berries and mushrooms.</li> <li>• Majority of users travel from Indianapolis. Atterbury FWA is one of two FWAs within 1 hour of Indianapolis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public use is available on a total of 6,918 acres; 4,956 acres at Atterbury FWA and 1,990 acres at proposed Deer Creek FWA.</li> <li>• Public use lost at Atterbury FWA occurs primarily to small game hunting associated with early successional habitat. This loss will be offset with the creation and management of early successional habitat at proposed Deer Creek FWA and the remaining portion of Atterbury FWA.</li> <li>• Loss of abandoned interior roads on the 1,250-acre parcel results in a loss of enhanced accessibility for users with limited mobility. Exact replacement is not anticipated, but farm lanes may become designated for this purpose.</li> <li>• Two sites reserved for hunters with disabilities are located on the area proposed for transfer to MDI. These sites will be replaced in the next year with two new sites on the remaining AFWA.</li> <li>• Proposed Deer Creek FWA creates additional recreational opportunities, including fishing and deer, turkey, and waterfowl hunting.</li> <li>• Secondary activities, such as wildlife viewing, hiking, and collection of nuts, berries, and mushrooms, will continue to be available at Atterbury FWA in addition to Deer Creek FWA.</li> <li>• Proposed Deer Creek FWA becomes a third FWA available within 1 hour of Indianapolis, and 45 minutes from Terre Haute. Atterbury FWA remains available within 1 hour of Indianapolis.</li> <li>• Recreation and user access to the remaining AFWA will not be inhibited by road closures, rail usage, or the anti-terrorism force protection (safety) buffer.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Financial</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No additional expenses are created at Atterbury FWA or proposed Deer Creek FWA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fair market value of the 1,990 acres at proposed Deer Creek FWA is equal or greater than the 1,250 acres at Atterbury FWA.</li> <li>• WSFR funds were invested in the improvements of the service area at Atterbury FWA. Federal interest remains in the service area until an equal replacement occurs, as outlined by the Enclave MOA. The DFW will continue to use the headquarters and storage buildings until they are replaced.</li> <li>• Preparation of proposed Deer Creek FWA for public use requires additional expenses. Funds from the WSFR program or state license funds will not be used.</li> <li>• Management costs at Atterbury FWA are expected to be similar due to anticipated increased management in the remaining portion of the FWA. Proposed Deer Creek FWA will have new costs associated with the creation of a new management area and ongoing operational costs.</li> </ul>
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## **AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT**

### **Atterbury Fish and Wildlife Area**

The existing Atterbury Fish and Wildlife Area consists of 6,206 acres in southern Johnson County about one mile west of the city of Edinburgh, Indiana and approximately 30 miles south of downtown Indianapolis. It is roughly bounded by Hospital Road, South 100 East, U.S. Highway 31, and East 550 South. Adjoining the FWA are Camp Atterbury to the south, Johnson County Park and Atterbury Job Corps in the south central portion, and private lands to the north, west, and east. Sugar Creek traverses the eastern side of the FWA.

The proposed Atterbury exchange area represents a 1,250-acre parcel in the south central portion of the existing Atterbury FWA. The exchange area is generally bounded by Hospital Road to the south, Johnson County Park to the west, Burnside Street on the north, and Mauxferry Road on east. The area includes the current headquarters for Atterbury Fish and Wildlife Area, but does not include the Atterbury public shooting range or any of the fishing lakes. Maps of the property and proposed exchange parcel are provided in Appendix A.

Several roads are adjacent to and pass through the proposed exchange area: Hospital Road, School House Road, Mauxferry Road, and Edinburgh Street. They are frequently used by commuters to/from Edinburgh and Nineveh, local residents, and visitors of Atterbury FWA, Camp Atterbury, Johnson County Park, and Atterbury Job Corps. None are dedicated public rights-of-way.

Hospital Road, running east-west on the south side of the FWA, is entirely owned by DOD and maintained by MDI from just east of the Sugar Creek Bridge west to Nineveh. It is not a dedicated public right-of-way, but is maintained by MDI.

School House Road runs north-south through the FWA on the west side of the proposed exchange area, adjacent to the east side of Johnson County Park, and through a portion of Atterbury Job Corps. From the intersection with Hospital Road, School House Road is controlled by Atterbury Job Corps, then by Johnson County to the Quartermaster area at Atterbury FWA. From that point, IDNR controls School House Road to the north FWA boundary where Johnson County controls the Road.

Mauxferry Road runs north-south through the FWA and adjacent to an eastern portion of the proposed exchange area. IDNR owns the portion of Mauxferry Road from Hospital Road to the north FWA boundary. Johnson County owns and maintains Mauxferry Road to the north of the FWA as a dedicated public right-of-way.

Edinburgh Street intersects with Hospital and Mauxferry Roads, running northwest and west towards Atterbury Job Corps. This road provides access to the Shooting Range Complex and is owned by IDNR.

Several smaller interior paved roads also traverse the proposed exchange area within Atterbury FWA. The most frequently used are Burnside Street and North Street (also known as Pisgah Road and County Road 650 South). Other roads entirely contained within the exchange area have been abandoned and existed prior to DFW ownership when it was a military barrack area.

Atterbury FWA contains an 8-acre service area that includes the headquarters, a maintenance area with a building, and a parking lot. The service area is located within the proposed exchange area along Hospital Road and Rowe Street. The improvements within the service area were made with WSFR funding over several years. The construction of the main headquarters building occurred in 1994.

A railroad spur enters the FWA on the northeast side of the property and runs northwest and west for roughly three miles into the FWA, terminating at School House Road. The rail is primarily single-track, with a small two-track portion east of Burnside Street. Since Indiana DFW acquired Atterbury FWA in 1969, right-of-way ownership of the railroad spur has been retained by the Federal Government. This railroad spur is used by the Military Department of Indiana to move equipment into Camp Atterbury once every month or less. The train cars are unloaded in the FWA and transported to Camp Atterbury by truck via School House Road. The railroad spur and its use do not currently pose any known barrier to wildlife or recreational users.

The affected environment described below consists of the Atterbury FWA in its entirety and the proposed exchange parcel.

**Conservation.** As indicated by 2001 land cover data (Appendix A) and the Conservation and Recreational Assessment (Appendix D), available habitats at Atterbury FWA include early to late successional land (characterized by grass, shrub, and scrub), forest land, developed land, and aquatic cover (wetlands, lakes, and streams). The proposed exchange parcel is primarily comprised of early successional upland and developed habitats. Based on the land cover data, existing habitat compositions at Atterbury FWA and the exchange parcel are:

	<u>Entire FWA</u>	<u>Exchange parcel</u>
Early Successional	3,476 acres (56%)	887 acres (71%)
Forest	2,296 acres (37%)	313 acres (25%)
Water	310 acres (5%)	0 acres
Roads and Developed areas	124 acres (2%)	50 acres (4%)
Total	6,206 acres (100%)	1,250 acres (100%)

Land cover data did not identify any water or wetland cover types on the proposed exchange parcel. The National Wetland Inventory indicates two wetlands and a freshwater pond on the parcel, all under 1 acre in size (Appendix A). No modifications to these water bodies are proposed and thus are not affected by the proposed action.

The 100-year floodplain associated with Sugar Creek is located on the east and north portions of Atterbury FWA (Appendix A). This floodplain area does not occur on the proposed exchange parcel.

In terms of continuous habitat cover, existing abandoned roads on the exchange parcel creates fragmentation. The FWA outside of the exchange parcel has more contiguous habitat types, particularly forest lands on the east side. Other early to late successional habitats are mixed in with forests on the north and west sides of the FWA.

Limited information is available for species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) at Atterbury FWA. The Natural Heritage Database, maintained by the Indiana Division of Nature Preserves (DNP), contains SGCN records that represent chance encounters with state listed species reported to the Natural Heritage Database since 1979 and do not represent results from a comprehensive survey. According to the database, the following species were recorded at Atterbury FWA (Appendix A):

- Henslow's sparrow, *Ammodramus henslowii*
- Upland sandpiper, *Bartramia longicauda*
- Sedge wren, *Cistothorus platensis*
- Snuffbox (mussel), *Epioblasma triquetra*
- Least bittern, *Ixobrychus exilis*
- Clubshell (mussel), *Pleurobema clava*
- Rabbitsfoot (mussel), *Quadrula cylindrical cylindrical*
- King rail, *Rallus elegans*
- American badger, *Taxidea taxus*
- Barn owl, *Tyto alba*
- Little spectaclecase (mussel), *Villosa lienosa*

Most of these species were identified in the FWA area outside of the proposed exchange parcel and will not be affected by the proposed action. Of these, only Henslow's sparrow and upland sandpiper were recorded on the proposed exchange parcel in the 1980s and 1990s. Upland sandpiper was also identified outside the exchange area as well. These species use the type of early successional grassland habitat that is being managed for at Atterbury FWA.

No comprehensive non-game species survey has been conducted at Atterbury FWA. However, according to wildlife experts at Indiana DFW, several confirmed reports indicated the presence of bobcats in the general area and are likely supported by small mammal prey populations in early successional habitats. Additionally, several bat studies conducted at Camp Atterbury have indicated the presence of Indiana bats nearby.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service identifies two federally-listed species that occur within Johnson County, Indiana:

- Indiana bat, *Myotis sodalis*, endangered
- Rayed bean mussel, *Villosa fabalis*, candidate for listing

Within Johnson County, rayed bean mussel occurs in Sugar Creek. Sugar Creek runs through the eastern portion of Atterbury FWA, and is not a part of the proposed action. No habitat is available for the rayed bean mussel on the proposed exchange parcel and will not be affected by the proposed action.

Indiana bat is recorded as statewide. Maternity and foraging habitat for Indiana bat includes forested areas with mature trees and riparian areas. Caves and mines serve as hibernacula for Indiana bat. No caves or mines exist at Atterbury FWA, but forested areas and mature trees are present. The majority of Indiana bat habitat occurs on the east side of the FWA along the Sugar Creek corridor.

Indiana bat is also well documented in surveys of surrounding areas. Therefore, Indiana bat is considered to be present on the property and consultation with the FWS Ecological Services Field Office (located in Bloomington, Indiana) is required under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

In Section 7 consultation for the proposed action, the FWS Ecological Services Field Office in Bloomington has recommended a “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” determination for the Indiana bat. Habitat for Indiana bat is limited on the proposed exchange area and no known roost trees exist on the exchange area. In addition, MDI has agreed to follow Timber Management Guidelines produced by the FWS. Documentation of this finding is provided in Appendix F.

***Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife Associated Recreation.*** In terms of recreational activities, hunting and fishing are primary uses managed for by Indiana DFW at any fish and wildlife area. Secondary uses, not actively managed for, generally include wildlife viewing, nature study, gathering of nuts, berries, and mushrooms, and hiking.

Upland game hunting, also referred to as small game hunting, occurs in the early successional habitat. Small game at Atterbury FWA includes eastern cottontail, mourning dove, American woodcock, fox and gray squirrels, and northern bobwhite. Several dove fields are also created on the property in order to allow the pursuit of mourning doves. Roughly 3,700 small game hunting efforts occur per year at Atterbury FWA. It is estimated that 40% of these efforts (roughly 1,480) annually occur on the exchange parcel.

In addition to wild upland game, ring-necked pheasants are also released by IDNR for put-and-take hunts in November. This activity also occurs in areas of early successional habitat. These pheasant hunts are not supported by the WSFR program and are funded solely from Indiana DFW. This program produces roughly 1,600 efforts annually, of which 50% to 75% occur on the exchange parcel.

Some white-tailed deer and wild turkey hunting occur in the forested areas at Atterbury FWA. Forest habitat on the exchange parcel is limited. Thus, deer and turkey hunting primarily occur on the portion outside of the proposed exchange area. In 2009, there were about 4,477 deer hunting efforts at the FWA with a less than 1% success rate. The proposed exchange parcel lacks appropriate deer and turkey habitat, and the number of efforts (visits) is expected to be small.

There are two hunting areas on Atterbury FWA that are reserved for hunters with disability hunting permits. Both are located in the proposed transfer area.

Fishing, waterfowl hunting, boating, and canoeing exist on the portion of Atterbury FWA outside of the proposed exchange area. No lakes, streams, or other water features exist on the proposed exchange parcel. Water-related recreational opportunities will not be affected by the proposed action. In 2009, Atterbury FWA had over 15,000 fishing efforts, and boating and canoeing activities consisted of 2,300 uses.

Other recreational opportunities at Atterbury FWA include wildlife observation, hiking, and natural food gathering like morel mushrooms and berries. For 2009, these recreational activities consisted of 18,340 uses for the entire FWA, and do not include the number of “sightseers” that are simply

driving through the area. The actual number of these activities within exchange area is unknown, but can be estimated at 3,670 assuming an equal distribution throughout the property. (The exchange area is roughly 20% of the entire FWA.)

Most users of Atterbury FWA either live in close proximity or live in the Indianapolis metropolitan area, based on hunter records. Other large population centers (greater than 30,000 people) within 50 miles of Atterbury FWA include Columbus, Indiana and Bloomington, Indiana. Atterbury FWA is the closest public hunting area to Indianapolis and is one of only two fish and wildlife areas within an hour's drive of the city.

Four Indiana Department of Natural Resources properties are located within 30 miles of Atterbury that provide hunting opportunities. These properties are almost entirely composed of either aquatic or forested areas. As such, they provide mostly fishing and woodland game hunting opportunities, unlike the small game related recreational opportunities at Atterbury FWA.

Several abandoned private drives are present at Atterbury FWA, which are primarily located on the proposed exchange parcel. They provide access throughout the property and provide easy walking for users with limited mobility. These older and abandoned roads existed on the property prior to DFW ownership. Benefits that result have been unintentional and not managed for by DFW. There are no records to indicate the number of these users or level of this use, but enhanced accessibility is known to be a positive attribute of Atterbury FWA.

Affected recreational opportunities at Atterbury FWA are anticipated to be limited to small game hunting and secondary recreational uses by the proposed action.

**Financial.** Management activities on all 6,206 acres are supported with WSFR funds. Improvements within the service area, including construction of the headquarters building in 1994, were also funded partly through the WSFR program.

**Historic preservation.** The Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) conducted an archeological and historical review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the proposed action. SHPO has issued a "No Historic Properties Affected" finding for the proposed land transfer at the Atterbury Fish and Wildlife Area. No further consultation under Section 106 is required. Documentation with SHPO is provided in Appendix F.

**Surrounding property.** Johnson County Park borders Atterbury FWA to the south-central. The Park focuses on public recreation activities such as horseback riding, remote control aircraft and golf. There is little interaction, other than access via existing roads, between these activities and the activities occurring on the FWA and the proposed exchange area.

Private landowners are adjacent to Atterbury FWA to the west, north, and east, but are not adjacent to the proposed exchange parcel.

## Proposed Deer Creek Fish and Wildlife Area

The proposed Deer Creek FWA is currently managed by the Indiana Department of Correction for the Putnamville Correctional Facility. The property is a single irregularly-shaped 2,535-acre parcel in southern Putnam County. It is located approximately one mile southwest of Putnamville, Indiana, about 41 miles southwest of downtown Indianapolis, and 30 miles northeast of Terre Haute. U.S. Highway 40 traverses the center of the property and an abandoned railroad forms a portion of the northern boundary. Approximately eight miles of gravel to hard-surface roads exist throughout the property. Deer Creek runs through the southern portion of the property.

The affected environment includes 1,990 acres of the Putnamville Correctional Facility property proposed to be transferred to the Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife and managed as Deer Creek FWA. The proposed area for exchange consists of three parcels. One 975-acre parcel is located south of U.S. Highway 40, and the other 630-acre and 385-acre parcels are north of the highway. This property was listed as State surplus land to be publicly auctioned to the highest bidder, but removed to serve as the exchange parcel for the Atterbury FWA land. Maps of the property and proposed exchange area are provided in Appendix A.

The north parcels contain eight barns, one shed, a picnic shelter, and playground equipment. Five open-structures with roofs are located on the south side parcel. These structures are used for storage and equipment maintenance. An iron bridge dated 1908 crossing Deer Creek is also on the south parcel. In the proposed exchange area, the Indiana Department of Correction leases out 588 acres of crop land for agricultural production. Crops include corn, soybeans, and hay. The Putnamville Correctional Facility uses labor from inmates for timber management on a regular basis.

The affected environment consists of the 1,990-acre proposed exchange area, referred to as the Deer Creek FWA.

**Conservation.** As described in the Conservation and Recreational Assessment (Appendix D), existing habitats at the proposed Deer Creek FWA include crop land, early successional land (characterized by grass, crop, shrub, and scrub), forest land, developed land, and aquatic cover (wetlands, lakes, and streams). The proposed FWA is currently comprised primarily of early successional, agricultural land and mature forestland. Based on 2001 land cover data (Appendix A) and the Conservation and Recreational Assessment, existing habitat composition at the proposed Deer Creek FWA is:

Early Successional	1,134 acres (57%)
<i>(includes agricultural land – 588 acres)</i>	
Forest	816 acres (41%)
Water	20 acres (1%)
Roads and Developed areas	20 acres (1%)
Total	1,990 acres (100%)

Land cover data identified 20 acres of water and wetland cover types at the proposed Deer Creek FWA. The National Wetland Inventory (NWI) indicates approximately 17.5 acres of wetlands in scattered areas along Deer Creek and the Deweese Branch (Appendix A). The NWI also indicates

approximately 11 acres of ponds and streams on the property. No physical modifications to these water bodies are proposed and they are not affected by the proposed action.

The 100-year floodplains associated with Deer Creek and the Deweese Branch are located in the southeastern and northern portion of the proposed FWA, and along the new proposed eastern boundary of the Correctional Facility (Appendix A). Approximately 300 acres of the 100-year floodplain is located within the proposed Deer Creek FWA. No modifications to the floodplain areas are proposed.

In terms of continuous habitat cover, the proposed Deer Creek FWA is considered to be fragmented due to the scattered mix of forest and grassland habitats. In addition, there is little to no transition between these habitats that consist of shrub-scrub. The property contains over 1,000 acres of open grass or agricultural land. Forested areas are scattered throughout the property and do not form a contiguous cover. U.S. Highway 40 that bisects the property is another existing source of fragmentation.

Limited information is available for species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) at the proposed Deer Creek FWA. The Natural Heritage Database, maintained by the Indiana Division of Nature Preserves (DNP), contains SGCN records that represent chance encounters with state listed species reported to the Natural Heritage Database and do not represent results from a comprehensive survey. According to the database, the only species recorded at the property is River Otter (*Lontra canadensis*) from 1983 within Deer Creek (Appendix A).

No comprehensive non-game species survey has been conducted at the proposed Deer Creek FWA. Site visits have indicated the presence of great-blue herons, deer, wild turkey, song birds, and bald eagles. The fish population in Deer Creek is reported to be diverse and smallmouth bass are known to be present. A great-blue heron rookery along Deer Creek is composed of 35 to 60 nests that can be easily observed during winter months. The number of active nests is unknown, but the rookery appears to be very active.

Indiana bat, *Myotis sodalis*, is the only federally-listed species identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that occurs within Putnam County, Indiana. Indiana bat is recorded as a statewide occurrence. Maternity and foraging habitat for Indiana bat includes forested areas with mature trees and riparian areas. Caves and mines serve as hibernacula for Indiana bat. No caves or mines exist at the proposed FWA, but forested areas and mature trees are present with riparian areas along Deer Creek and Deweese Branch. Therefore, Indiana bat is considered to be present on the property and consultation with the FWS Ecological Services Office in Bloomington is required under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

In Section 7 consultation for the proposed action, the FWS Bloomington Field Office has recommended a “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” determination for the Indiana bat. Indiana bat guidelines established by the FWS Bloomington Field Office will be followed at the proposed Deer Creek FWA. Documentation of this finding is provided in Appendix F.

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was conducted at the proposed FWA by Astbury Environmental Engineering in May 2010. No recognized environmental conditions were identified

with the exception of a small pistol shooting range that was previously used by employees of the Correctional Facility. It is located on the northernmost parcel in a 0.25 acre area consisting of gravel and grass, not ideal habitat for sensitive wildlife. Munitions may contain lead and may have contaminated the immediate area. Although unlikely, this area may present a risk to human health if left not remediated. Impacts of the pistol range and remediation actions are addressed in the Environmental Consequences, Conservation discussion section.

***Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife Associated Recreation.*** Public use does not exist at the property; however, employees of the Putnamville Correctional Facility use the property for hunting deer, squirrel, and turkey. A picnic area on the north side of the property is maintained for employees. The area includes a mowed lawn, a picnic shelter, and playground equipment in addition to a pond with a boat launch area for fishing. The property is currently being managed for row crop agriculture, pasture, and timber uses. No history of public hunting, fishing and other recreational use exists for this property.

There are currently seven IDNR-owned properties within 30 miles of Putnamville that provide hunting opportunities. These properties are almost entirely composed of either aquatic or forested areas. As such, they provide mostly fishing and woodland game hunting opportunities.

***Historic preservation.*** The Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) conducted an archeological and historical review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the proposed Deer Creek FWA. SHPO has issued a “No Historic Properties Affected” finding for the land transfer at the proposed Deer Creek Fish and Wildlife Area. No further consultation under Section 106 is required. Documentation with SHPO is provided in Appendix F.

***Surrounding property.*** The proposed Deer Creek FWA is located in a rural agricultural setting. Approximately fifty private landowners are adjacent on all exterior sides of the proposed FWA. Most of the property has a woven wire perimeter fence that is in excellent condition.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

### Conservation

#### *Alternative A – No Action.*

Atterbury FWA. Under this no action alternative, the FLP and WSFR programs remain unchanged at Atterbury FWA. Habitat types and management remain similar to present conditions. No changes to management of habitat and fish and wildlife are expected on any part of the FWA. Available managed habitat consists of early successional, 3,476 acres; forest, 2,296 acres; and water and wetlands, 310 acres. Roads and developed areas consist of 124 acres. With no changes to habitat management, no impacts are expected to special status species, including species of greatest conservation need and federally-endangered Indiana bat.

Right-of-way of the railroad spur has remained in federal ownership, but to date, no formalized agreement among the federal and state entities involved has been made regarding use of the rail at Atterbury FWA. Therefore, even under this no-action alternative, a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife, and Military Department of Indiana will be completed. This MOA is required in order to resolve the discrepancy regarding rail usage and to minimize potential impacts to Atterbury Fish and Wildlife Area.

Use of the railroad spur through Atterbury FWA is expected to continue under the no action alternative. The rail MOA under the no action alternative would take a similar form to the MOA under the proposed action (Appendix C). However, MDI would not be able to develop the railroad spur, which would result in an increased frequency of railroad spur use by MDI. This would be no more than five days in duration twice a month, for a maximum of 120 days per year. This level of rail use will be able to support up to ten brigade training events per year at Camp Atterbury. As trains pass through the FWA, they will be typically six to ten cars in length and will be unloaded in the FWA. Additionally, no barriers will be installed, constructed, or presented along the rail line. Specifically, no fence will be constructed, no trains will be parked or idled along the FWA portion of the line, the FWA will not be closed for train movements or transport of goods from the train, and no restrictions on FWA recreational use will be imposed. Thus, the railroad spur is not expected to pose a barrier to wildlife or to recreational users.

The railroad spur has been within Atterbury FWA boundaries since DFW first acquired the property in 1969. No additional adverse impacts of fragmentation or impacts to habitats and species are anticipated to occur as a result of the railroad spur within the FWA boundaries.

Proposed Deer Creek FWA. Under this no action alternative, no FLP or WSFR program interest is placed on the property. This property remains in IDOC management for the immediate future. This land, which has been designated as surplus by the State of Indiana, would be sold at a public auction to the highest bidder in the near future. Once auctioned, land use and changes to land cover is uncertain. The most probable land uses are agricultural, residential, and mining. According to the 2007 Putnam County Comprehensive Plan, part of the area has been identified for potential mineral extraction. Greater fragmentation is also likely to result from smaller parcel sizes.

Once auctioned, there is no expectation for any type of management for fish and wildlife. Therefore, incidental management for wildlife habitat (species of greatest conservation need and for Indiana bat) would remain at current conditions. Remediation of the pistol range identified in the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment does not necessarily occur and may present human health and environmental concerns.

Net Result. Under this alternative, the total area under FLP and WSFR programs at Atterbury FWA are 5,465 acres and 6,206 acres respectively. Use of the railroad spur by MDI at Atterbury FWA is clarified with a MOA among involved federal and state agencies. The proposed Deer Creek FWA is publicly auctioned; FLP and WSFR interests are not added.

The available habitat types are: early successional, 3,476 acres; forest, 2,296 acres; and water and wetlands, 310 acres. Roads and developed areas consist of 124 acres. No changes to existing fish and wildlife management would occur at Atterbury FWA. No impacts to federally-listed species and species of greatest conservation need are expected at Atterbury. The auctioning of the proposed Deer Creek FWA would remove state and federal protections to wildlife species and their habitats.

***Alternative B – Proposed Action.***

Atterbury FWA. Under the proposed action, FLP and WSFR interests are removed from the 1,250-acre exchange area and remain on the other 4,956 acres. The habitats removed from DFW management include 887 acres of early successional habitat and 313 acres of forests. About 50 acres of roads and developed areas are also lost for a total of 1,250 acres. Wetlands and floodplains are absent on the exchange parcel. Thus, no losses or impacts to wetlands or floodplains will occur.

After the proposed action, the habitat composition of Atterbury FWA would consist of the following:

Early Successional	2,589 acres (52%)
Forest	1,983 acres (40%)
Water	310 acres (6%)
Roads and Developed areas	74 acres (2%)
Total	4,956 acres (100%)

Management for habitat, fish and wildlife on these 4,956 acres is expected to be similar to existing management (Appendix E). Aquatic systems will continue to be a part of Atterbury FWA management. It is likely some additional early successional habitats will be created to continue providing for wildlife associated with this habitat type. This may help offset habitat losses occurring on the exchange area.

Since the majority of loss will be to early successional habitats, it is anticipated that impacts to wildlife species would be limited primarily to those associated with this habitat type. Henslow's sparrow and upland sandpiper, the only two species of greatest conservation need recorded within the exchange area, use grasslands such as early successional habitats. Other early successional and grassland habitats will remain available on the retained portion of Atterbury FWA. Thus, no adverse effects would be expected.

As identified by the FWS Bloomington Field Office, Indiana bat, the only federally-listed species, is not expected to be adversely affected by the proposed action. The exchange area contains limited mature forests and trees with characteristics for Indiana bat habitat. Known locations of Indiana bat and its ideal habitat occurs outside of the exchange area. FWS Endangered Species guidelines will be followed for future development activities. Specifically, the removal of any tree greater than three inches dbh will not occur during the active season for Indiana bats from April 1 to September 31. Documentation of FWS consultation is provided in Appendix F.

This alternative may increase fragmentation and its impacts at Atterbury FWA. Removing the exchange parcel from Atterbury FWA removes a central portion of the FWA. Although the FWA remains a single, contiguous area under this alternative, the FWA essentially is divided into two halves. Further, an anti-terrorism force protection (safety) buffer required by the Department of Defense will be located just within the exchange area boundaries (Buffer MOA, Appendix C). This buffer may be no more than an operational setback of development for MDI, but may eventually include permanent fencing or other barrier. If the buffer is solely a setback with no physical barrier, no impacts would be expected to wildlife travel or movements from one part of the FWA to the other. However, the construction of a fence or barrier may pose impacts to wildlife travel patterns for white-tailed deer.

Deer is the only wildlife species identified by DFW that may be affected by a physical barrier, specifically in terms of local travel patterns. Deer populations on and near the exchange area are minimal due to limited habitat. Deer harvest records at Atterbury FWA show a less than one percent success rate, also indicating a small deer herd in the area. Travel patterns of local populations will likely shift to the surrounding lands where habitat is also available. Other than deer, there are no known species at or near Atterbury FWA that may be sensitive to this type of fragmentation and physical barrier. This source of fragmentation is not anticipated to have adverse effects on wildlife populations.

In order to clarify the authority of ING to use of the railroad spur, a MOA will be completed. According the Rail MOA (Appendix C), use of the railroad spur through Atterbury FWA is expected to no more than three days in duration twice a month, for a maximum of 72 days per year. As trains pass through the FWA, they will be typically six to ten cars in length and will be unloaded in only the proposed exchange area. Additionally, no fences or barriers will be constructed, no trains will be parked or idled along the FWA portion of the line, the FWA will not be closed for train movements, and no restrictions on FWA operations and use will be imposed.

Due to the use and stipulations that prevent physical or operational barriers, the railroad spur is not expected to pose a barrier to wildlife or to recreational users. No additional impacts of fragmentation and impacts to habitats and species are anticipated to occur as a result of the railroad spur within the FWA boundaries. Future rail development and maintenance activities within the exchange area will be contingent upon future environmental compliance reviews, such as endangered species consultations, historical and archeological reviews, and a NEPA environmental assessment.

Proposed Deer Creek FWA. Under the proposed action, FLP and WSFR interests are added to 1,990 acres at the proposed Deer Creek FWA, and management is transferred from IDOC to DFW. For habitats managed by DFW, the action results in an immediate gain of 1,134 acres of early successional habitat, 816 acres of forests, and 20 acres of water and wetlands. Existing row-crop agriculture, 588 acres, are included in the early successional habitat. Roads and developed areas consist of 20 acres. With concentrated management efforts by DFW, available habitat types are expected to change over time. Some changes will be immediate, others will occur as funds and other resources become available.

Based on the proposed Deer Creek FWA Site Management Plan and the Conservation and Recreation Assessment, the only long-term habitat changes anticipated are a decrease in row-crop agricultural land and an increase in early successional land. Some row crop farming will remain as a management tool to establish better wildlife habitat, to provide a winter wildlife food supply, and to control succession. In the initial phases, available contract farming will decrease to about 470 acres (80% of existing agricultural land) and to 300 acres after several years, which will be rotated on a three to four year schedule. Therefore, quality of and benefits from early successional habitat will increase as agricultural land is taken out of production, and will eventually consist of approximately 15% of the property.

The proposed Deer Creek FWA contains both wetlands (17.5 acres) and floodplains (300 acres). No physical modifications or construction in these areas are proposed and are not adversely affected by the proposed action. Habitat management by DFW is likely to be beneficial for wildlife species that use these aquatic areas.

Information on existing species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) is limited. The only species recorded in the Natural Heritage Database on the property, river otter, occurred within Deer Creek which would become under DFW management. Other species known to occur at the proposed Deer Creek FWA include great-blue herons, song birds, bald eagles, and a diverse fish population. Gains of available habitat types with professional wildlife management would be beneficial for most wildlife species. Species associated with forests, early successional, and aquatic habitats are likely to benefit from the habitat gains under DFW management.

As identified by the Bloomington FWS Ecological Services Office, federally-endangered Indiana bat is not expected to be adversely affected by the proposed action. Habitat for Indiana bat at proposed Deer Creek FWA includes mature forests and riparian corridors. Under this alternative, the use of federal funding to manage the FWA requires compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and guidance made by the FWS. This alternative results in enforcement to protect additional Indiana bat habitat. Documentation of FWS consultation is provided in Appendix F. FWS guidance has been incorporated by DFW into the Deer Creek Management Plan.

The proposed Deer Creek FWA has existing land cover fragmentation due to segmented agriculture and forest lands with little to no transition between the two. Management by DFW that softens these “hard edges” between row crop agriculture and mature forests will reduce the effects of fragmentation and is likely to support additional wildlife diversity.

A fence with signs surrounding the correctional facility will be installed to mark the boundary between the facility and the FWA. The fence will be a high-tensile, four-strand wire about four feet in height, which is not expected to pose a barrier to deer or their travel patterns.

Risks to human and environmental health presented by the pistol range on the north side of the property identified in the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment will be addressed by Indiana DFW. The existing potential for lead exposure to humans at this site is minimal, and will be eliminated through closure of the range for use and through remediation and restoration of the area. Remediation of the lead exposure will be done in accordance with state (IDEM) and federal (EPA) regulations. Remediation procedures are outlined in the proposed Deer Creek Management Plan (Appendix E).

According to the Deer Creek FWA Management Plan, five parking lots are proposed to be added to the Deer Creek FWA prior to public use. These parking lots will be gravel-covered to accommodate users and will be placed in open areas along edges of the property boundary accessible by paved roads. These lots are small in nature and not expected to significantly impact existing habitats.

As indicated in the proposed Deer Creek FWA Management Plan, several structures will be removed from the property. A couple of structures will be retained and be used as a future office and check station or for equipment storage and maintenance. The picnic shelter will be retained, but the playground equipment will be removed. Retaining and removing these various structures will help Indiana DFW better manage wildlife habitats.

Net Result. Under this alternative, FLP and WSFR interests are transferred from 1,250 acres at Atterbury FWA to 1,990 acres at the proposed Deer Creek FWA. The total area under FLP and WSFR programs would be 6,205 acres and 6,946 acres, respectively. The habitat types immediately available are: early successional, 3,723 acres; forest, 2,799 acres; and water and wetlands, 330 acres. Early successional habitat includes 588 acres in agricultural land. Roads and developed areas would consist of 94 acres. Long-term management at Deer Creek FWA will result in a decrease of agricultural land.

The loss of 877 acres of early successional habitat at Atterbury FWA will be offset by a long-term gain of 1,134 acres of similar habitat at the Deer Creek FWA. This includes roughly 546 acres of lands consisting of grass, shrub, and scrub immediately, and 588 acres of agriculture lands that will either be managed to become early successional in three to five years or allowed to remain in crop land. Crop lands are used as a management tool to provide some benefits similar to early successional habitat. Over time, professional management will include a decrease in available crop land to 300 acres in three to five years.

An addition of about 17.5 acres of wetlands and 300 acres of floodplains at Deer Creek will be managed for fish and wildlife under Indiana DFW.

Loss of early successional habitat on the proposed exchange parcel at Atterbury FWA is replaced with similar habitat at the Deer Creek FWA and would be expected to support similar wildlife species. Species of greatest conservation need and other non-game species associated with these

given habitat types are not anticipated to be adversely affected since each habitat type has a comparable or net gain in size and benefits immediately and/or long-term.

Indiana bat habitat exists at both properties and presence of the species is expected. Indiana bat habitat is limited on the exchange area at Atterbury FWA and is in greater abundance at the proposed Deer Creek FWA due to the presence of mature forests. After the proposed action occurs, endangered species guidance from the FWS will be followed by MDI on the exchange area at Atterbury during future development and by DFW at proposed Deer Creek FWA during land management activities. In a letter dated July 20, 2010, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Bloomington Field Office provided concurrence of a “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” determination for the Indiana bat. Documentation is provided in Appendix F.

This alternative may result in increased fragmentation at Atterbury FWA, but no adverse effects are anticipated. The removal of a central portion of the FWA with a construction of a physical barrier may restrict travel patterns of some wildlife. With available lands nearby, wildlife patterns may be altered but are not expected to adversely impacted. At the proposed Deer Creek FWA, habitat-based fragmentation is expected to decrease with management efforts to provide transitional habitats between the agriculture fields and forest lands.

## **Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife Associated Recreation**

### ***Alternative A – No Action.***

Atterbury FWA. Under the no-action alternative, no changes would occur to the types of hunting, fishing, and wildlife associated recreational opportunities available at Atterbury FWA. Uses would remain about similar as today on all 6,206 acres. Hunting opportunities for wild animal populations primarily include small upland game associated with early successional habitats, and would produce approximately 3,700 efforts (visits). Hunting opportunities for white-tailed deer and wild turkey are available, and would continue to produce roughly 4,480 hunting efforts. Total small game and deer hunting efforts are expected to remain constant, roughly 8,180 per year for the entire FWA. The two areas reserved for hunters with disability hunting permits would remain open.

Secondary recreational uses of Atterbury FWA include wildlife viewing, as well as berry-picking, mushroom gathering, among others. These uses are estimated at approximately 18,340 per year. No changes to fishing, waterfowl hunting, boating, or canoeing opportunities would occur.

User access via roads around and within the FWA will remain unchanged under no action. Thus, access to recreational opportunities would not be impacted. The older abandoned interior roads on the proposed exchange parcel continue to provide easy walking for anyone, including people with limited mobility.

The Rail MOA developed under this alternative would be similar to the one provided in Appendix C. According to that agreement, use of the rail by MDI through the FWA will be no more than five days twice a month or 120 days per year. Additionally, no physical or operational restrictions will be placed that would restrict public access and use of the FWA.

Users continue to be primarily from Indianapolis and the area near Atterbury FWA. Similar recreational opportunities exist at four other IDNR-properties within 30 miles of Atterbury FWA.

Proposed Deer Creek FWA. Under the no-action alternative, the proposed Deer Creek FWA would remain in IDOC management in the short term and be sold at a public auction to the highest bidder. There is no expectation of public use once auctioned.

Opportunities for fishing, hunting and other recreation within 30 miles of Putnamville are available at seven other IDNR-owned properties.

Net Result. Under the no-action alternative, hunting, fishing, and other recreational opportunities are available only at Atterbury FWA on 6,206 acres. The 1,990 acres at proposed Deer Creek FWA would not be available for public use and would remain in IDOC management short-term. Within a year, the property would be auctioned with no expectation of being managed for wildlife restoration or public access.

The types of recreational opportunities would not change at Atterbury FWA. Hunting opportunities for small upland game associated with early successional habitats and would yield about 3,700 user efforts. Deer hunting, which occurs primarily outside the proposed exchange area in the woodland habitats, would have approximately 4,480 user efforts. The total number of WSFR-supported hunting efforts would remain around 8,180 per year. The two areas reserved for hunters with disability hunting permits would remain open. Secondary recreational uses are estimated at approximately 18,340 per year. No public hunting opportunities would exist at proposed Deer Creek FWA.

No change in fishing, waterfowl, boating, or canoeing occurs. Fishing opportunities remains at Atterbury FWA outside the proposed exchange area. Without public access, no fishing opportunities exist at the proposed Deer Creek FWA.

Users continue to be primarily from Indianapolis and the area near Atterbury FWA. The abandoned interior roads on the proposed exchange parcel continue to provide additional benefits such as easy walking for people with limited mobility.

Atterbury is one of two FWA within one hour of the Indianapolis metropolitan area.

### ***Alternative B – Proposed Action.***

Atterbury FWA. Under this alternative, public recreational opportunities cease on 1,250 acres to be exchanged and remain on 4,956 acres. Impacts to primary recreation uses are anticipated to be limited to small upland game opportunities (as much as 1,480 efforts) due to the loss of 887 acres of the early successional habitat on the exchange parcel. Small game hunting on the remaining portions of Atterbury would be around 2,220 efforts.

The FWA lakes and fishing areas remain on the Atterbury FWA, thus fishing and waterfowl hunting will not be impacted. Deer hunting efforts on the exchange parcel is negligible and not expected to

be adversely impacted. Deer hunting would continue to have around 4,780 efforts on the remaining Atterbury FWA. Impacts to secondary recreational opportunities, such as hiking, wildlife viewing, and gathering of natural food, are likely to occur. The best estimate would be 3,670 uses, that are lost from the exchange parcel and 14,670 uses would still occur on the remaining portions of the FWA. If these uses are relocated to other portions of the remaining FWA, there would be no loss to these uses.

Due to the loss of some recreational opportunities on the exchange parcel, the total quantity of Atterbury FWA use efforts may decrease. In the worst case scenario, as many as 5,890 recreational uses and efforts (100% estimated efforts on the exchange parcel) are lost. In the best case scenario, some or all users of the exchange area relocate their activities to another part of Atterbury FWA.

Since 4,956 acres will remain as Atterbury FWA and open to public use, it is anticipated that users will continue to travel from nearby and from the Indianapolis metropolitan area.

The loss of abandoned roads that provide easy walking on the exchange area may affect users with limited mobility. Because this type of use is not managed for, the number of users of this type is not quantified but is not known to be a large percent of total use. Exact replacement is not expected since the creation of similar roads would likely have negative effects, such as loss of habitat and fragmentation. The two designated sites for qualified physically challenged hunters would be replaced elsewhere on Atterbury FWA in one location that will provide similar high-quality hunting experience within months of the transfer.

All remaining portions of Atterbury FWA will remain accessible to users. Hospital Road, School House Road, Mauxferry Road, the north portion of Burnside Road, and Edinburgh Street to the Shooting Range Complex will remain open to public users and IDNR personnel (Buffer MOA, Appendix C). Roads interior to the exchange area may remain open by MDI for the immediate future but cannot be expected to remain open once in MDI ownership. These roads include North Street and the majority of Burnside Street.

When closure of Burnside and North Streets occur, users may not be able to easily cross from one side of the FWA to the other. Exterior roads like Hospital Road and County Road 550 South are roads used to travel to the east and west sides of the property. While users may be inconvenienced by the closure of Burnside and North Streets, all portions of the remaining FWA will remain open and accessible. Documentation is provided in the Buffer MOA (Appendix C).

As outlined in the Rail MOA (Appendix C), use of the rail by MDI through the FWA will be no more three days twice a month, with a maximum of 72 days a year. Additionally, no physical or operational restrictions will be placed that would restrict public access and use of the FWA. Access to recreational opportunities is not expected to be impacted on the remaining Atterbury FWA.

Proposed Deer Creek FWA. Under this alternative, public recreational use will become available on all 1,990 acres is expected immediately as soon as parking lots and fences are constructed. As with any FWA under Indiana DFW, the primary public recreational activities managed for would be hunting and fishing. Secondary recreational activities that are available but not actively managed for would include hiking, wildlife observation, and gathering of nuts, berries, and mushrooms.

This property has the potential to provide various types of hunting, fishing, and secondary recreational opportunities. Projected use information of public use is provided in the Deer Creek Management Plan and through communication with experts at Indiana DFW. Estimated use efforts (visits) provided are conservative estimates.

Small game hunting opportunities would be an important hunting component at the proposed Deer Creek FWA. Existing row crop fields and pastures would be managed for early successional habitat (defined by scrub, shrub, and brush) to provide opportunities for small game hunting. Small game at Deer Creek FWA would include northern bobwhite, eastern cottontail, and American woodcock. Managed dove fields have potential for mourning dove hunting. Small game hunting efforts, including squirrel, are projected to be around 1,325 per year.

The proposed Deer Creek FWA has several areas of established mature forest cover that support populations of white-tailed deer and wild turkey. The deer hunting component of property use would contribute an anticipated 2,000 hunting efforts. Wild turkey users are expected to contribute 85 use efforts.

The water features on the exchange parcel, several ponds and a segment of Deer Creek (21 acres total), provide fishing opportunities. Quality stream habitat for species such as smallmouth bass exists on this property. Fishing is expected to have around 100 use efforts.

The proposed Deer Creek FWA may provide regular (if limited) waterfowl hunting for ducks and depending on management regime, Canada geese as well. A few species (such as wood ducks, American green-winged teal, and mallard) may use the ponds during migration, and wood ducks may provide additional opportunities along Deer Creek. Roughly 50 efforts are anticipated.

Competitive dog trials and large hunts will not be offered on this property. Indiana DFW currently does not plan to offer put-and-take pheasant hunts on this property.

Secondary recreational opportunities that will be available at proposed Deer Creek FWA include wildlife observation, natural food gathering like morel mushrooms and berries, and hiking. Conservative estimates of use are expected to be initially at 650, with continued growth as the property becomes familiar to users.

The proposed Deer Creek FWA is within 50 miles of three large population centers (greater than 30,000 people). These include Indianapolis metropolitan area, Bloomington, Indiana, and Terre Haute, Indiana. Due to the proximity of the Putnamville location, users of the proposed Deer Creek FWA are anticipated to be primarily from these areas in addition to local users near Putnamville. Some users of Atterbury FWA may relocate their activities to Deer Creek area.

The property is readily accessible to the public via Interstate 70, U.S. Highway 40, and other state highways surrounding the property. Roads that pass through the Correctional Facility property will remain closed to the public. The surrounding roads provide adequate access to the various areas of the proposed Deer Creek FWA. Five parking lots will be established near the boundaries and are

accessible by public roads. Hard-surface interior roads on the property would not be open to vehicular traffic, but would be available for easy walking.

A high-tensile four-strand wire fence would be installed to mark the boundaries between Deer Creek FWA and the Correctional Facility. This fence will not affect user ability to access portions of the proposed FWA.

Net Result. Under the proposed action alternative, hunting, fishing, and wildlife associated recreational opportunities will be available at Atterbury FWA and the proposed Deer Creek FWA on a total of 6,946 acres.

Small game hunting opportunities that will be available at the proposed Deer Creek FWA (1,325 efforts) are comparable to those opportunities that may be lost on the exchange parcel at Atterbury FWA (1,480 efforts). After the proposed action, Atterbury FWA will still be able to support around 2,220 small game hunters. Small game hunting opportunities at both properties include Eastern cottontail, American woodcock, fox and gray squirrels, northern bobwhite, and, with managed fields, mourning dove. The total for small game hunting opportunities under this alternative is estimated around 3,545 efforts.

Additional deer and turkey hunting (2,000 and 85 efforts), respectively as well as trapping (40 efforts), waterfowl (50 efforts), and angling (100 efforts) estimated opportunities will be available due to the existing 816 acres of mature forests and 20 acres of water habitats at the proposed Deer Creek FWA.

The total number of hunting and fishing efforts for both properties is estimated to be roughly 10,600 per year. Other recreational uses would primarily include wildlife viewing, as well as berry-picking, mushroom gathering, among others. These uses are estimated to be around 15,000 per year.

With the addition of Deer Creek as a FWA, there will be three FWAs located within one hour of the Indianapolis metropolitan area.

While some individual users may be more affected than others, the proposed action is not anticipated to have significant adverse impacts to users overall. It is anticipated that some Atterbury FWA users will shift their activities to another portion of Atterbury FWA or to the proposed Deer Creek FWA. With easy access to Interstate 70, Deer Creek FWA users are generally expected to be from the Indianapolis area. The difference in distance these users will travel is approximately 10 miles. Atterbury FWA remains available for recreational opportunities, thus the proposed action is not expected to impact users that prefer Atterbury FWA or find it to be more convenient.

The number of Atterbury FWA users with limited mobility is not quantified, as DFW does not manage for this type of use and public benefits have been unintentional. While users with limited mobility certainly use Atterbury FWA and the exchange area, it is not anticipated to be a large percent of total use. Interior roads at proposed Deer Creek FWA are mostly hard-surfaced and would not be open to vehicular traffic. These roads would be available to users with limited mobility.

Recreational use will not be impacted by road access and railroad spur usage at Atterbury FWA.

## **Financial**

### ***Alternative A – No Action.***

Atterbury FWA. The service area (headquarters and storage buildings) remains at Atterbury FWA under Indiana DFW, thus no impacts occur. Management activities continue and no impacts occur.

Proposed Deer Creek FWA. The property is sold at public auction and no WSFR or FLP financial interest is placed on the property. No additional WSFR funds are needed to restore and manage habitat.

Net Result. Existing ownership and management of the properties do not change. Thus, no additional financial impacts are expected.

### ***Alternative B – Proposed Action.***

In accordance with Federal standards, appraisals were completed for proposed exchange areas at each property in August 2010. The appraisals determine whether the fair market value of the 1,990 acres at proposed Deer Creek FWA is equal or greater than the 1,250 acres proposed exchange area at Atterbury FWA. The appraisals were reviewed and approved by the General Services Administration (GSA) Review Appraiser. NPS and FWS agree that the fair market value of proposed Deer Creek FWA has an adequate replacement value for the proposed area at Atterbury FWA.

Atterbury FWA. With the loss of management activities on the exchange area, management costs will not be needed for that portion. However, continued management will occur on other portions of Atterbury FWA, including additional management for early successional habitat. Overall, the proposed action is not expected to change the budget at Atterbury FWA. The Enclave MOA (Appendix C) identifies the process that will ensure that the service area facilities are replaced prior to being transferred to MDI. Funding other than license or WSFR grant funds will be used to replace the two hunting sites reserved for hunters with disability hunting permits.

Proposed Deer Creek FWA. Several management costs will be incurred at the proposed Deer Creek FWA and are grouped by one-time and re-occurring management costs.

One-time costs include start-up costs that are needed to prepare the property for public use and costs to establish permanent wildlife habitat. These costs are also associated with creating an equal and comparable financial exchange under this alternative. Such costs include installing boundary signs, installing a fence between the FWA and Correctional Facility, the addition of parking lots, remediation of the pistol ranges, wetland construction, and planting trees, grasses, shrubs for permanent wildlife habitat. Start-up activities will occur prior to public use and will not use any funding from the WSFR program or state hunting and fishing license fund.

Reoccurring costs are those for day-to-day operations and re-occurring field costs, such as control of invasive species. Similar to managing for any FWA, it is anticipated that funds from the WSFR program and state hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses will be used for these management activities.

Tenant farming at Deer Creek FWA will contribute additional benefits to the Division of Fish and Wildlife. The primary purposes for tenant farming at Deer Creek FWA are to control succession and to provide wildlife food and cover. These activities will be treated as program income or barter transactions and documented during routine grant and fiscal reporting.

Net Result. Under this alternative, the fair market value of the proposed Deer Creek exchange parcels is equal or greater than the Atterbury exchange parcel. While 1,250 acres at Atterbury FWA are removed from management, management will increase on other portions. The service area at Atterbury FWA that includes the administrative and equipment buildings will continue to be owned and used by IDNR until an equal replacement occurs with non-WSFR funds.

Preparing proposed Deer Creek FWA for public use will require several start-up costs. Funding will come from funding sources other than WSFR program and state-license funds. Additional costs will occur as a part of normal FWA management activities.

## **Surrounding properties**

### ***Alternative A - No Action.***

Atterbury FWA. No changes occur to the management and existing conditions at Atterbury FWA. No impacts are anticipated to landowners adjacent to Atterbury FWA.

Proposed Deer Creek FWA. No immediate changes are anticipated at the proposed Deer Creek FWA. However, the adjacent landowners may be affected by greater mining, residential, and/or agricultural uses when this surplus land is auctioned.

### ***Alternative B – Proposed Action.***

Atterbury FWA. Under this alternative, no impacts to nearby private landowners at Atterbury FWA are anticipated. The proposed exchange parcel is contained within the Atterbury FWA, and adjacent to Camp Atterbury, Atterbury Job Corps, and Johnson County Park.

Johnson County Park and Atterbury Job Corps will continue to be accessible and will continue to serve area residents. Major roads, including Hospital Road, School House Road, and Mauxferry Road will remain open in the proposed action and will not affect access to Johnson County Park or Job Corps. Burnside and North Streets are expected to close within the exchange area. The Buffer MOA outlines road access (Appendix C). No effects to surrounding properties are anticipated.

Proposed Deer Creek FWA. At the proposed Deer Creek FWA, adjacent private landowners may encounter more public users and trespass issues. Prior to public use, boundary signs will be posted so that public users will be aware of private boundaries. Should trespassing issues still occur, conservation officers will enforce State trespass laws.

There will be little to no interaction between the FWA and the Correctional Facility. Prior to public use, a fence will be installed to indicate the boundary between the Correctional Facility and the FWA. A no-use safety buffer within the correctional property boundary will be utilized as an additional safety measure. No impacts are anticipated from or to the Putnamville Correctional Facility.

### **Cumulative Impacts**

Since the acquisition of Atterbury FWA by Indiana DFW in 1969, numerous time and financial resources have been used in the management of the FWA. Today, the FWA demonstrates better conservation and recreational values than it did in 1969. This potential loss of past investment of wildlife restoration is covered to the extent possible through the requirement to make an exchange of land with “equal or greater” values imposed by the FLP and WSFR programs. As it exists today, the proposed Deer Creek FWA would need roughly \$400,000 in specific expenditures identified in the Deer Creek Management Plan (Appendix C), plus replacement of ADA hunting opportunities on Atterbury FWA. The headquarters and maintenance buildings would also be replaced elsewhere on Atterbury FWA. These replacements and start up expenditures would not be funded by hunting or fishing licenses or WSFR federal grants, so there would not be a cumulative financial loss from the transfer to the WSFR program.

The proposed action results in an additional 740 acres to manage for fish and wildlife. Over time, any additional management needed for the proposed Deer Creek FWA is likely to yield numerous positive cumulative impacts not fully quantified in this analysis. On the other hand, the auction of the proposed Deer Creek FWA in the no action alternative would likely result in negative cumulative impacts. The proposed action would result in protection of a new 1,950-acre area for wildlife habitat and public recreation for wildlife and sport fish related activities and the cumulative impact of long-term benefits to wildlife and the public.

In the proposed action, future development activities by MDI on the 1,250-acre exchange parcel would likely increase the effects of fragmentation. The analysis presented above uses a worst-case scenario of an immediate 100% loss of habitat because direct fish and wildlife management would not be expected from MDI. In reality, development will not likely clear all 1,250 acres of habitat and any loss of habitat will be gradual, as would the effects of fragmentation. Moving the headquarters and maintenance buildings to another part of the FWA would cause the loss of eight more acres of habitat, and would not be significant.

The assessment involves uncertainty in terms of future projections. For the analysis, the “worst-case” situation was applied. This means that at Atterbury FWA, the greatest estimates of losses to habitats and recreational opportunities were analyzed. At the proposed Deer Creek FWA, the minimum estimated gain of habitat and recreational opportunities were analyzed. Thus, it is possible

this analysis overestimates the negative impacts and underestimates the positive impacts to ensure that the full potential of effects is considered.

Table 2. Comparison of alternatives by conservation, recreation, and financial issues discussed in Environmental Consequences section.

	NO ACTION			PROPOSED ACTION														
	Atterbury	Deer Creek	Net	Atterbury	Deer Creek	Net												
<b>Conservation</b>																		
Acres in federal programs (WSFR and/or FLP)	6,206	0	6,206	4,956	1,990	6,946												
Habitat types (in acres)																		
Early successional (grass, crop shrub, scrub)	3,476	0	3,476	2,589	1,134	3,723												
<i>(Agricultural land)</i>	0	0	0	0	588 to 300	588 to 300												
Woodlands	2,296	0	2,296	1,983	816	2,799												
Water and wetlands	310	0	310	310	20	330												
Roads and developed areas	124	0	124	74	20	94												
Nongame wildlife	<p>No changes to Indiana bat habitat at Atterbury FWA. Indiana bat habitat at proposed Deer Creek (816 acres of mature woodlands) would be removed from public ownership after auctioned.</p> <p>No changes expected at Atterbury FWA. No expectation for private fish and wildlife management at Deer Creek area.</p>			<p>"Not likely to adversely affect" finding for Indiana bat provided by FWS, Bloomington Field Office. An additional 816 acres of Indiana bat habitat will be under DFW management at proposed Deer Creek FWA.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Habitat loss:</td> <td>Habitat gain:</td> <td>Net habitat:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Early successional: 887 acres</td> <td>Early successional: 1,134 acres</td> <td>Early successional: 247 acres gain</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Forest: 313 acres</td> <td>Forest: 816 acres</td> <td>Forest: 503 acres gain</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Water &amp; Wetlands: 0 acres</td> <td>Water &amp; Wetlands: 20 acres</td> <td>Water &amp; Wetlands: 20 acres gain</td> </tr> </table>			Habitat loss:	Habitat gain:	Net habitat:	Early successional: 887 acres	Early successional: 1,134 acres	Early successional: 247 acres gain	Forest: 313 acres	Forest: 816 acres	Forest: 503 acres gain	Water & Wetlands: 0 acres	Water & Wetlands: 20 acres	Water & Wetlands: 20 acres gain
Habitat loss:							Habitat gain:	Net habitat:										
Early successional: 887 acres	Early successional: 1,134 acres	Early successional: 247 acres gain																
Forest: 313 acres	Forest: 816 acres	Forest: 503 acres gain																
Water & Wetlands: 0 acres	Water & Wetlands: 20 acres	Water & Wetlands: 20 acres gain																
Indiana bat																		
Habitat for non-game wildlife																		
Fragmentation	<p>Effects of fragmentation at Atterbury FWA are limited to what currently exists. Railroad and use of rail not expected to increase fragmentation. The proposed Deer Creek FWA is expected to become more fragmented and experience multiple land use changes if auctioned.</p>			<p>Fragmentation from development at Atterbury may increase if a fence or barrier is constructed surrounding the exchange area, with negligible effect to sensitive wildlife species. The few existing deer may move to new east-west travel paths. Habitat-based fragmentation at Deer Creek will decrease with professional management to provide transition between agricultural and forested land types. The transitional habitat areas are expected to support additional wildlife.</p>														

Table 2 (con't). Comparison of alternatives by conservation, recreation, and financial issues discussed in Environmental Consequences section.

	NO ACTION			PROPOSED ACTION		
	Atterbury	Deer Creek	Net	Atterbury	Deer Creek	Net
<b>Recreation (est. efforts)</b>						
Small game	3,700	0	3,700	2,220	1,325	3,545
Deer	4,480	0	4,480	4,480	2,000	6,480
Turkey	negligible	0	negligible	negligible	85	85
Waterfowl	not impacted	0	not impacted	not impacted	50	50 additional
Fishing	not impacted	0	not impacted	not impacted	100	100 additional
Trapping	negligible	0	negligible	negligible	40	40
Compatible secondary uses	18,340	0	18,340	14,670	650	15,320
Public availability						
Distance to Indianapolis	30 miles	n/a	Atterbury FWA is 1 of 2 FWAs within 1 hour of Indianapolis.	30 miles	40 miles	Net gain of 1 FWA within 1 hour of Indianapolis and 1 within 1 hour of Terre Haute.
Distance to Terre Haute	75 miles	n/a		75 miles	30 miles	
Distance to Bloomington	45 miles	n/a		45 miles	45 miles	
Distance to Columbus	15 miles	n/a		15 miles	80 miles	
# of properties within 30 miles that provide public use	4			4	7	
Enhanced accessibility	Abandoned road beds at Atterbury available to all users, and provide easy walking that is beneficial to users with limited mobility.			Abandoned roads will not be available at Atterbury FWA. Some replacement in the form of farm lanes may offer similar benefits, but exact replacement is not expected. Proposed Deer Creek FWA will have hard-surface interior roads closed to vehicles but available for walking.		
ADA accessible hunting opportunities	Two designated ADA sites at Atterbury FWA will remain open. No changes to existing conditions under no action.			The two ADA sites at Atterbury FWA will be replaced with one identified site that provides similar high-quality hunting opportunities. Deer Creek does not have any specifically-identified sites, but access will be granted to qualified individuals.		
<b>Financial</b>						
Appraised values of proposed exchange parcels	The fair market values of the proposed exchange parcels are not applicable under no action.			The fair market value of the proposed Deer Creek FWA is equal or greater than the exchange area at Atterbury FWA.		
Management and operational costs	At Atterbury FWA, no change of existing ownership and management; no financial changes anticipated. At proposed Deer Creek FWA, the land is auctioned and no state or facility costs occur.			Some Atterbury FWA management costs expected to shift from exchange area to remaining portions, but costs are expected to remain similar. Deer Creek FWA will require additional start-up costs before public use can begin. WSFR and state license funds will not be used for start-up costs, but can be used for long-term management.		

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