

## Preface

### A Forest for the Future

*Forestland is a key to Indiana County's economy, quality of life and environmental health. Yet, while the forest plays a significant role in our lives very little forestland is managed with the guidance of a long-range plan.*

Approximately 60% of Indiana County is forested, with the majority of the forest privately owned. According to the Penn State School of Forest Resources there are an estimated 13,000 private forestland owners within Indiana County.

Public ownership amounts to 4% of Indiana County's forestland. As a public agency Indiana County Parks & Trails operates 2,600 acres of land, much of it forested. Although Indiana County acquired Pine Ridge Park in 1966 there has never been a plan to guide the forest's future. This document provides guidelines and recommendations to do so. This plan is a first-attempt to provide a long-range plan and vision for the Pine Ridge Park forest - one of the largest forests in the County Park system.

This plan is based on the 'Principles of Sustainable Forestry'. To be sustainable, forest management must be ecologically viable, economically feasible and socially acceptable. It must maintain the forest resources and their components to meet the needs of the present, without compromising the integrity of the forest or the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

A primary goal of the plan is to demonstrate sustainable forestry practices at Pine Ridge Park – i.e., to offer a forestry model to demonstrate how forests can be managed with the greater application of sustainable forestry and away from forestry based on short-term economics.

The forest can continue and prosper if wisely managed.