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White's Woods a community treasure

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White's Woods is a treasure that we are so fortunate to have in our community. It is precious and valuable far beyond the monetary value of the trees.

The forest is not “managed” but left to evolve on its own. The mature trees that fall nourish insects, mosses and mushrooms, which then feed the many bird species and the plentiful wildlife that inhabit this unspoiled ecosystem. With songbirds and insect species disappearing at an alarming rate, natural areas like White's Woods are refuges where these creatures can survive and thrive.

I would disagree with the assessment that certain species of plants or trees need to be culled from the forest, or that the undergrowth must be cleared for the health of the forest. When I hike or run through the park, the whole history of the land is there to read in the plants that grow there. The barberry tells me those are areas where perhaps someone once had a home; there are old wells that were used by former residents of the land where now box turtles live. If you look closely, you can find the remains of old foundations, old fences and stone walls built when the land was farmland.

And then, there are the trees. The forest reclaimed the land as the traces of human habitation were absorbed into the forest. A mature forest is a rarity these days and is something to be conserved and protected, not exploited.

Any time I am in White's Woods I encounter hikers, runners, mountain bikers, dog walkers and foragers enjoying the forest.

There are secret spots of incredible beauty; hidden streams, wildflowers, ferns and moss covering the forest floor. Scarlet tanagers, towhees and kestrels flit through the trees and deer watch us go, not threatened by our presence.

In these times of upheaval, we need unspoiled natural spaces more than ever to recharge and reconnect with the Earth and with nature. White's Woods provides this connection to our community. Destroying this beautiful park with logging is not the right choice.

Save White's Woods, now and for the future.

Sherry Shank

Marion Center