Heartwood was founded in 1991 to coordinate efforts to protect the central hardwood forests. The Heartwood network now stretches from the Ozarks to the Chesapeake, fighting common threats to forests, mountains, streams, and communities. Heartwood unites local and regional efforts challenging logging, mountaintop removal coal mining, biomass incineration, and oil and gas development that compromise the natural character of landscapes and watersheds.

In times characterized by privatization, commercialization, and a changing climate, Heartwood recognizes that the means with which we organize and resist are as important as the ends. Building a sustainable movement and sustainable communities means taking care of each other, while simultaneously resisting the forces of extraction and exploitation.

Heartwood organizes two annual events that create spaces for celebration, education, and connection. These gatherings also provide people with opportunities for strategic support, training, and outreach. The Heartwood Forest Council occurs over Memorial Day Weekend every year in a different location within the Heartwood region. The Heartwood Reunion, which happens every fall in the hills of southern Indiana, creates the space for reconnection with the earth and each other.

Heartwood provides organizational, technical, financial, and legal support to empower those working to protect natural areas and their communities. Heartwood’s legal challenges have protected thousands of acres of public forest from logging and other extraction.

Artwork by Tabitha Tripp

“The forests are not a resource; they are the source.”