

Turkey Run and Shades State Parks Interpretive Master Plan 2008

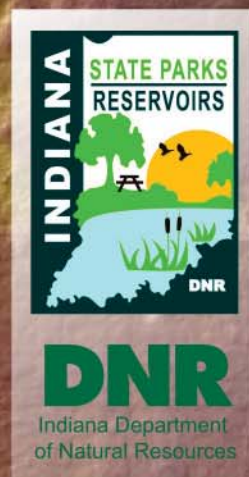
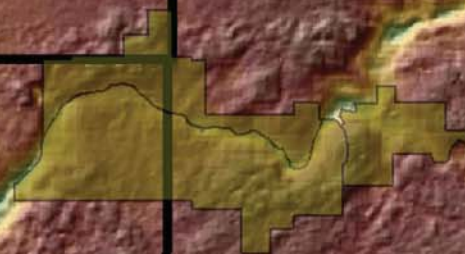


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Introduction

In response to the need to address new and changing interpretive needs in changing times, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of State Parks and Reservoirs has developed this Interpretive Master Plan for Turkey Run and Shades State Parks.

Factors and trends that are reflected in this plan include:

1. Management Changes. Turkey Run and Shades State Parks have combined under one management and one interpretive service. Staffing, facilities and resource needs under this arrangement have to be addressed.
2. Indiana Bicentennial and State Park Centennial. In 2016, Indiana will celebrate its bicentennial. This coincides with the state park system's centennial. One hundred years ago, it was Turkey Run that was identified to be the 1916 centennial gift of a first state park. This benchmark event provides the motivation to evaluate and plan for the next 100 years.
3. Interpretive Center Exhibits. The current Interpretive Center and its exhibits are over 20 years old. Exhibits are old and outdated. New exhibits reflecting trends and technology will make Turkey Run a showcase for the upcoming centennial.
4. Visitor Trends. Visitor use patterns and interests have shifted over the past several years related to interpretation. Additionally, transportation and budget constraints have resulted in declining use by school groups.

To address these factors, this plan:

1. focuses interpretive efforts on a site-specific theme, and
2. provides recommendations for guided and self-guided interpretation

The intent of the plan is to serve as a long-term guide for interpretation at Turkey Run and Shades State Parks. The phased and prioritized recommendations are designed to further the two parks in the near future and into the Division's next 100 years.

Resource Overview

This following resource overview is general and related to the interpretive themes. For a more detailed resource overview, see the Turkey Run and Shades Natural Resources Management Plans located in the Turkey Run Nature Center, or contact the full-time interpretive naturalist at Turkey Run.



I. Geology

A. Common Stories and Features

1. *Bedrock Formation.* Bedrock Formation. Both Turkey Run and Shades have sandstone bedrock from the Pennsylvanian Period some 225 million years ago. During that time, large rivers flowing through the area deposited delta systems when their sediment-laden waters entered an inland sea not far beyond park boundaries. This load of unconsolidated quartz sand was, over millions of years, compacted and compressed into sandstone. Crossbedding seen in the outcroppings shows evidence of changing river course, volume and sediment content.

2. *Glacial Influence.* Over the past one million years, a series of glaciers impacted both parks. Boulders known as “glacial erratics” were carried down by the glaciers and not of the same material as the underlying bedrock. Granite, gneiss and basalt make up some of the Canadian rocks found.

3. *Topography.* Additionally, large volumes of glacial meltwater cut through the sandstone bedrock forming the canyons of Shades and Turkey Run.

The terrain of both parks is rough. Steep slopes, canyons and branching ravines create elevation drops.

4. *Fossils.* Fossil fragments are found on both properties. The most common fossils are from marine animals: bryozoans, brachiopods and crinoids. A few fossils are from plants that grew along the ancient river banks. These prehistoric swamps form coal beds that outcrop in a few locations.

B. Unique Stories and Features: Shades

1. *Mississippian Bedrock.* An older, lower layer of bedrock is exposed at Shades. This bedrock is of the Borden Group and dates from the Mississippian Period, 250 million years ago. Siltstone, limestone and shale as well as sandstone are present in this layer. This layer represents an ancient delta formation. Fossils present in this layer includes marine animals such as crinoids, bryozoans and brachiopods.

2. *Backbones.* The Pine Hills Nature Preserve includes extremely narrow ridges cut by stream meanders, or “backbones”. Devils Backbone is of the older Borden Sandstone.

3. *Honeycomb.* Sandstone in Honeycomb Rock is full of eroded pockets. These pockets are thought to have been pockets of algae that eroded away.

4. *Silver Cascade Waterfall.* Silver Cascade is a convex waterfall. Unlike most waterfalls whose upper edge juts out over the edge, Silver Cascade bows out. This is the result of a continuous flow of water preventing the freeze-thaw action that would ordinarily break apart lower rock layers.

C. Unique Stories and Features: Turkey Run

1. *Quarry.* Sandstone from Turkey Run was quarried and used in construction of the Parke County Courthouse.

2. *Potholes*. Glacial erratics would at times be trapped by a current. Their tumbling would carve out a pothole in the softer sandstone. The Punchbowl is an example of a pothole.

3. *Joints*. Vertical fractures in the bedrock were caused by plate tectonics, causing the sandstone to form cracks. During the Pleistocene, melting glaciers poured water into these cracks. Fluctuating temperatures caused freezing and thawing, forcing cracks to widen and the rock to fracture. Ice Box, Box Canyon and Wedge Rock are examples of this cycle.

II. Water

A. Common Stories

1. *Sugar Creek*. Sugar Creek bisects both parks. Originating in Tipton County, Sugar Creek ends its 90-mile journey at the Wabash River. Over this span, Sugar Creek drops 465 feet in elevation.

This high quality riparian corridor is significant for at least 2 reasons:

- a. The shady creek corridor included in Shades and Turkey Run is considered one of the highest quality in Indiana.
- b. The wooded segment of this riparian corridor stretches for many miles, providing important migration and dispersal corridors for birds and other wildlife

2. *Tributaries, Springs and Seeps*. Both parks contain underground aquatic resources that surface in the form of springs and seeps. Surface run-off creates several small streams that feed eventually into Sugar Creek.

3. *Ponds*. Man-made impoundments are found on both parks. The ponds pre-date the parks; the Shades pond was built for fishing and aesthetics, the Turkey Run pond the result of road construction. The pond at Turkey Run is considered one of the largest fishless ponds in the state, creating significant habitat for amphibian reproduction.

B. Unique Stories and Features: Shades

Springs. The contact point of the two bedrock formations creates conditions for numerous springs at Shades. During the late 1800s through the early 1900s, waters from these springs were believed to have curative and health benefits. This led to a resort and bottled water industry on the property.

C. Unique Stories and Features: Turkey Run

1. *Circumneutral seep and fen*. Groundwater surfacing through the gravel deposits are responsible for these two significant ecosystems and their associated flora and fauna.

2. *Fishless Pond*. A pond formed as the result of an earth fill during John Lusk's ownership. It is isolated from Sugar Creek, providing an important area for amphibian reproduction, free of predation by fish.

III. Ecology

A. Common Stories

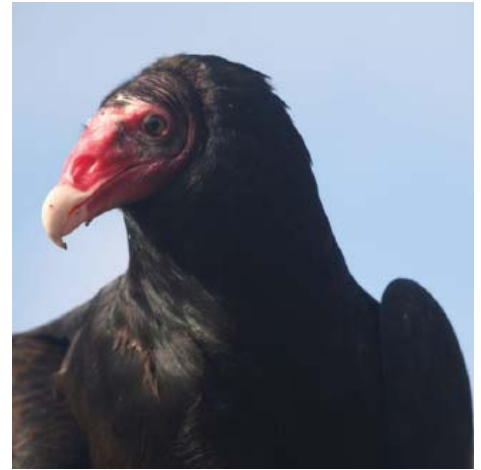
1. *Relict System*. Both properties contain hemlock stands, remnants of a colder climate. Turkey Run and Shades represent the extreme of the hemlock's range, which is more prevalent in New England and Canada. These stands were present when early surveyors visited in 1819 and are among the few remaining post-glacier ecosystems that covered a more extensive area. Climate shifts to hotter summers and colder winters eliminated



this ecosystem throughout most of the state except remnants found in areas like the protected canyons of Turkey Run and Shades.

2. *Bryophytes*. The woods and canyons of Shades and Turkey Run provide an ideal habitat for mosses (bryophytes). A high diversity of species, including several rare ones have been documented.

3. *Species Diversity*. The unique terrestrial ecosystem, high quality Sugar Creek and long history of protection has created a high flora and fauna diversity in both parks.



B. Unique Stories and Features: Shades

1. *Native White Pines*. Although several properties have planted white pine stands, Shades is unique in having a native stand. White pine is at its edge of range here.

2. *Younger Forests*. Property making up Shades was more recently cleared and used for agriculture. As the result, the upland forests tend to be younger. Old fields are present, though over the years will return to forest through succession.

3. *Turkey Vulture Roost*. Shades has been the northern-most site of a large winter roost for turkey vultures.

C. Unique Stories and Features: Turkey Run

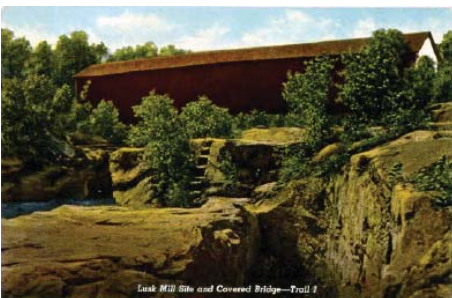
Overwintering Eagles. The part of Parke County that includes Turkey Run State Park currently has the highest number of overwintering bald eagles in the state.

IV. Cultural History

A. Common Stories

1. *Early Protection*. The high ecosystem quality of both parks is due in part to a private owner who preserved their land rather than extract all of its resources. In the case of Turkey Run, this was the Lusk Family, with John Lusk in particular. Shades was preserved by Joseph Frisz, owner of the Dells Resort. Frisz maintained that the lovely scenery and spring waters were therapeutic and curative.

Portions of both properties are dedicated nature preserves. Roughly half of Turkey Run's acreage is the Rocky Hollow Falls Canyon preserve. Pine Hills Preserve at Shades is Indiana's first nature preserve. Pedestal Rock Nature Preserve at Shades was closed to pedestrians due to overuse.



2. *Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)*. Both properties had CCC camps located on them. Enrollees housed at Shades completed many resource projects outside of the property. Turkey Run has several buildings and other features constructed by the CCC.

3. *Mills and Covered Bridges*. Once land was cleared for farming, early settlers needed a mill to grind their wheat and corn. Mills were situated on Sugar Creek at both park locations. Covered bridges that allowed mill access from both sides of the creek are still standing at mill locations, although the mill structures are not. Depending on the site, foundations, dams and other mill remains have been located.

B. Unique Stories and Features: Shades

1. Joseph Frisz: Father of the Shades

In 1886, the popularity of mineral water for its medicinal properties led to the formation of the Garland Dell Mineral Springs Association at the Shades. The association included Joseph Frisz. Joseph Frisz bought out his partners in the association.

Frisz's motives were environmental as well as entrepreneurial. Frisz was adamant about protecting the trees. He even went so far as to divert road construction to avoid cutting down a tree. Following Joseph Frisz's death, his holdings were purchased and in 1947 became Shades State Park.

2. Dells Resort. The bedrock geology and its resulting springs gave birth to an active resort at the Shades. An inn was located at the Dells Shelter. Guests could enjoy a boat ride on Sugar Creek or on a constructed "lagoon", hiking the trails or horseback riding. The Pavilion was a site for dances, meetings and reunions and at one time housed a soda shop and store area. Both the inn and Pavilion were torn down.

C. Unique Stories and Features: Turkey Run

1. Salmon Lusk Home. Salmon and Mary Lusk ran a mill and farmed property that makes up Turkey Run. He and his son John protected forested acres that later would become the park. Salmon and Mary's brick home is restored and furnished with some of their original furniture.

2. Coal Mine. A coal mine from the late 1800s through early 1900s was gated in 2000 with a "bat friendly" gate.

3. Turkey Run Inn. The original structure was built in 1919, with several upgrades and expansions since then. This was the first Inn built in the state park system.

4. Colonel Richard Lieber. Colonel Lieber was instrumental in the creation of the Indiana State Park system and along with others, fought to make Turkey Run the State's first park. Several sites are related to his work.

a. Colonel Richard Lieber Memorial. Lieber's ashes, as well as those of his wife and son are buried at the site. A bust of Lieber is set in a lovely hemlock grove.

b. Lieber Log Cabin. Colonel Lieber moved this 1840s cabin to Turkey Run in 1917. The cabin is listed in the National Historic Register. Huge tulip logs make up its walls. A restored "cat and clay" chimney used sticks of white walnut and a Mansfield sandstone base.

c. Log Church. Colonel Lieber moved the church to Turkey Run in 1923. It was built in 1871 and originally located at Oak Ridge. The church is still used as a house of worship.

d. Juliet Strauss Memorial. Juliet Strauss was instrumental in saving Turkey Run from timber interests and, with Lieber, making it a state park. A widely-read journalist, Strauss grew up hiking the canyons of Turkey Run.



Existing Conditions

I. Audiences

A. Common Audiences

1. *Campers.* Both parks operate campgrounds. Turkey Run has more developed camp sites than does Shades.
2. *Bus Tours.* Tour buses visit the park and participate in programs and lunch at the Inn.
3. *Day Users.* Visitors come for the day for family reunions and events as well as for day hiking. Many are from Illinois as well as from Indiana.
4. *Schools.* Both properties have school groups, though Turkey Run currently schedules more than Shades does.
5. *Special Groups.* These would include scouts, churches, family reunions and other organized groups. Turkey Run currently schedules more special groups than Shades does.

B. Unique Audiences: Shades

Those choosing Shades over Turkey Run have chosen a less developed, more primitive experience.

C. Unique Audiences: Turkey Run

1. *The Turkey Run Inn* offers rooms, dining facilities and conference rooms. Families as well as organizations stay at the Inn.
2. *Pool Users.* Many people come to the park exclusively to use the pool.
3. *Turkey Run Inn Restaurant Visitors.* The restaurant at the Inn serves as a local restaurant for the region. Many come after church or for other social or business meals.

D. Potential Audiences

Research Groups. Universities and other science groups conduct ongoing research at both parks.

II. Facilities for Interpretation

A. Common Facilities

1. *Trails.* Both parks have extensive trail systems that pass through significant natural areas as well as to natural and cultural destinations. Many popular trails at Turkey Run originate from the Suspension Bridge. Several popular loop trails at Shades are accessed from the Hickory Shelter parking area.
2. *Shelters.* Shelters are used for interpretive programs primarily by groups that have reserved the shelter. There is a reluctance by the parks to reserve a shelter specifically for a program as this would remove the shelter's revenue generating potential.
3. *Amphitheater.* Turkey Run's new amphitheater is under construction at this time. Located near the Interpretive Center, the amphitheater will offer an outdoor program area. The Amphitheater at Shades is located near the Campground.

B. Unique Facilities: Shades

1. *The Service Area* at Shades has been made available for programs. This will be addressed in the Recommendations.



2. *Backpacking Trail*. A 2.5 mile backpacking trail ends at a campground specifically for backpackers.

C. Unique Facilities: Turkey Run

1. *Interpretive Center*. In addition to housing the interpretive staff, the center includes a display area, Planetarium/Program Room, bird watching room and library. Exhibits cover general topics related to Turkey Run. They are primarily passive display cases.

The Planetarium is a circular room with the equipment in the middle and chairs facing the center. While this has been ideal for a planetarium, it has been unsatisfactory as program room. The star equipment is awkward to work around for presentations other than star programs. A rear projection screen on one wall is too large for the distance between the screen and the projector.

As the headquarters for interpretation for both properties, the current facility has reached capacity for office space, storage and work space.

2. *Turkey Run Inn*. Conference rooms and the lobby provide space for talks, presentations and workshops.



3. *Lusk Home*. Tours and events are held at the Lusk Home. Volunteers provide many of the tours and other interpretive services. Open hours are currently limited. The home is restored and contains period furniture, some of which is original to the home. The basement of the Lusk Home contains exhibits about the home and its restoration. A period garden, created by volunteers, is on the grounds of the home.

The home has an attached bedroom, but no water or restroom. The kitchen, the back of the home, is at present unrestored. Archaeological research on the home itself has been conducted, but no work has been done to locate the out-buildings that were once part of the home.

Visitors may drive to the Lusk Home and park in a parking lot, or hike to the home via Trail 4.

4. *Lieber Cabin*. The cabin currently houses exhibits telling the story of Lieber and the creation of the State Park system.

5. *Swimming Pool*. Roving interpretive programs have been held during life guard breaks.

D. Potential Facilities

1. *Shades Service Area*. The Service Area is available for programs. At this time Shades lacks a meeting place with a roof and walls.

2. *Log Church*. The church is currently used for weekly services during the summer season. The congregation from the original location has rights to use the church annually for a reunion. The log church has issues of vehicle access and safety and cannot be used extensively for programs.



III. Interpretive Staff

A. Common Staff

A full-time interpreter oversees programs, facilities and interpretive staff at both properties.

NOTE: Shades has only three full-time positions. One of these is the property manager, who is also the property manager for Turkey Run.

B. Unique Staff: Shades

One 90-day interpreter oversees interpretive programs at Shades. Programs are presented at Shades Friday evening through Sunday plus holidays. A desk is provided at Shades. However, most of their program preparation takes place at the Turkey Run Interpretive Center.

C. Unique Staff: Turkey Run

1. *One 180-day interpreter.* Seasonal interpreters are responsible for planning and conducting interpretive programs, planning interpretive messages for bulletin boards, working with volunteers, and implementing occasional resource management.

2. *One 180-day laborer.* Laborers conduct repetitive programs such as the Planetarium Program and handle the operation of the Interpretive Center (cleaning, maintenance, live animal care, office administration).

3. *One 90-day laborer.* Same as above.

D. Volunteers

Turkey Run relies on volunteers to assist staff with interpretive center operations, Lusk garden maintenance, Lusk Home tours and other tasks.

E. Staff Training and Professional Development

1. *Seasonal Naturalist Training Session.* The annual 4-day interpretive staff training is conducted for new and returning seasonal interpretive staff. It includes foundation classes on interpretation as well as practical ideas for planning and conducting interpretive programs. This training is held in May prior to the start of the summer season. It is organized by the Chief of Interpretation and conducted by full-time interpretive staff.

2. *In-service Topical Training.* DNR sponsored sessions on specific topics such as stewardship, history, mussels, etc. are offered for full-time and seasonal staff.

3. *Other.* First aid, safety and personnel issues training conducted by DNR is attended by the full-time interpreter.

IV. Interpretive Programs

A. Common Programs

1. *Theme Days.* Special events revolving around a theme have been successful at both parks. Themes include: birds, cultural topics, wildflowers, astronomy, and Welcome Back.

2. *Roving Interpretation.* Roving interpretation involves going to a particular site or high traffic area and providing interpretation as well as a presence.

3. *Traditional Programs.* Both properties offer a variety of public programs (hikes and talks) related to park-related topics.

B. Unique Programs: Shades

Weekends only, plus holidays. At present, the 90-day seasonal offers programs beginning on Friday and running through Sunday during the busier season.

C. Unique Programs: Turkey Run

1. *Planetarium.* The interpretive center at Turkey Run has a planetarium. Planetarium programs have been popular as stand-alone programs and in conjunction with other astronomy-related activities.

2. *Lusk Home Tours.* Tours of the Lusk Home begin with a visit to the basement exhibits followed by a home tour. An historic garden on the grounds is incorporated into programs. Tours are primarily conducted by volunteers. In the past, special events such as ice cream socials were popular. At present staff reductions have limited the numbers of tours offered and open hours for the Lusk Home.



3. *Inn Getaway Packages.* Getaway packages include a room and meals at the Turkey Run Inn, plus interpretive programs.

4. *Eagle Weekend.* This program in conjunction with state-wide eagle counts takes advantage of the large overwintering eagle population near Turkey Run.

Program Topic Evaluation

In response to a questions about topics that are “underinterpreted”, the park interpreter felt that the following areas could use more emphasis:

- a. Insects
- b. Cultural history (CCC, Lusk family, 19th century)
- c. Aquatic Resources (plants, animals)

Resource issues that could use a greater interpretive emphasis are:

- a. Human impacts (noise pollution, soil compaction/erosion, creation/use of unauthorized trails, denuded rocks/hills, fish/mollusk reproduction and habitat)
- b. Invasive plants/animals

Program Success Evaluation

Programs are evaluated using the self-evaluation on the back of the program planning page. The interpretive staff also uses a “more in-depth in-house evaluation” designed for self- and peer evaluation.

Visitor comment cards have not been found to be useful.

Seasonal staff is evaluated 6-8 weeks into their season and again at the end of the season. Year-round staff is evaluated twice a year.

The full-time interpreter’s programs are not observed or evaluated by her supervisor. The interpreter evaluates her own programs and welcomes input from staff.

Comments

Since the full-time interpreter’s supervisor is not an interpreter, it may be difficult to know what to look for in evaluating proficiency. It is recommended that a division-wide form be created (or revised) that would provide a checklist of things to look for regarding presentation, techniques and content. These forms would be submitted to the Chief of Interpretation as well as kept with the property’s personnel file. Evaluation should occur minimally once a year.

A need was expressed for broader surveys to determine visitor demographics and needs as well as measuring program success. There is also a desire to identify untapped visitors in the community and the park. Developing

a study of this kind may require the skills of an outside organization and be division-wide.

V. Interpretive Media

A. Common Media.

Interpretive Signs. Both parks have interpretive signs of varying age that cover features of the parks. New interpretive panels are in progress as of this writing. These panels will feature the ecology and cultural stories of both parks.

B. Unique Media: Shades

Due to the lack of interpretive facilities, there are no unique media for Shades.

C. Unique Media: Turkey Run

1. Interpretive Center Exhibits. A display room in the interpretive center contains exhibits featuring the natural and cultural history of the park. (See photos). Most of the displays are passive cases containing text labels and objects. A children's corner has activities.



2. Lieber Cabin Exhibits. The Lieber Cabin contains display cases covering Colonel Lieber's story and the State Park system. There is an audio of statements from Lieber.

3. Lusk Home Exhibits. The basement of the Lusk Home has exhibits that cover the Lusk Family and Home as well as its restoration.

4. Lusk Garden Brochure. A tri-fold brochure interprets the historic garden at the Lusk Home.

5. Turkey Run Inn. Display cases in the inn lounge interpret topics such as the Native Americans.

Partnerships

A. Existing Partnership

Friends Group. The Friends group has been in operation since 2002. The group has provided program support and fund raising. They has established a foundation and written grants. Money raised has gone for the purchase of new books. It is hoped that the group will raise funds for a planetarium upgrade.

B. Potential Partnerships

Much of the following content comes from the various agency web sites, mission statements, etc.

1. Canoe Outfitters

Sugar Valley Canoes, Turkey Run Canoes, Clements Canoes. These businesses may offer a location to disseminate information on aquatic resource issues and protection.

2. Indiana Audubon Society (IAS)

“The Indiana Audubon Society is the oldest conservation organization continuously operating in Indiana. It is not a chapter of the National Audubon Society, but an independent statewide organization. It was organized to stimulate interest in birds and their protection; to serve the needs of youth, schools, civic, church and other groups by providing information concerning birds; and to educate the public concerning the necessity for conserving and preserving Indiana’s natural heritage, its unique flora and fauna.” IAS hosts bird counts, special events, educational programs and distributes publications. They also operate the Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary near Connersville, IN.

3. Parke County Community Foundation

The Parke County Community Foundation is a tax exempt public charity that allows many individuals, through gifts and bequests, to establish permanent endowment funds within the confines of one large foundation. The income from these separate funds can help a community respond to emerging problems and opportunities as well as prepare for its future. Funds are distributed through a grant program. Grants are awarded for a variety of projects, including educational, social and historical ventures.

4. Parke County Inc.

Parke County Inc. (PCI), Rockville, IN serves as the tourist information center for the county. PCI is a one-stop location for all types of information about the county, including maps, brochures, or historical information. They operate a web site www.parkecounty.com filled with information on upcoming events, lodging, attractions, history, recreation and dining. The site also contains the means to submit a press release for an upcoming event.

5. Parke County Historical Society (PCHS)

The PCHS has about 175 members and is dedicated to the preservation of Parke County history. Among their holdings is a small museum with exhibits in Rockville and the Crowder Log Cabin. The museum is open from April 15 through the end of the Covered Bridge Festival. They are also open during the Maple Sugar Festival in February. In August they hold an Ice Cream Social.

In addition to events and the museum, the PCHS works closely with the Rockville Public Library to provide genealogical resources.

6. Parke County Sentinel

In operation since 1833, this paper is located in Rockville.

7. Sycamore Trails Resource Conservation District (RCD)

“Sycamore Trails RC&D Council is a nonprofit organization that serves Clay, Fountain, Montgomery, Owen, Parke, Putnam, Sullivan, Vermillion, and Vigo counties in west central Indiana. The mission of the RC&D Council is to motivate, assist, enable, and coordinate local citizens in the conservation and development of natural, human, and economic resources.” Projects are frequently collaborative and encompass mine reclamation, fish and wildlife habitat improvement. They also assist with the Master Naturalist Program. The RCD has assisted with gating the coal mine at Turkey Run.

8. Trees Inc.

“TREES Inc. is a local non-profit environmental volunteer group founded in January 1990 to encourage the planting of trees to:

- Replenish our declining urban forest.
- Educate citizens about the importance of maintaining our existing trees.
- Improve the environment.
- Beautify the community.
- Stimulate community participation and civic pride.”

Trees, Inc. is based in Terre Haute, IN. Their many projects include Adopt-a-Street-Tree, Big Tree Contests, Backyard Wildlife Habitat certification, and numerous tree-planting activities.

9. Turkey Run and Rockville High Schools. Two local high schools are located near the park, offering a rare opportunity for joint projects. Among those suggested are environmental club creek clean-ups, art students working on bulletin boards and seasonal exhibits, and writing classes producing brochures.

10. Wabash Valley Audubon Society

The Wabash Valley Audubon Society, headquartered in Terre Haute, is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. The Society has monthly meetings, field trips, speakers, school programs, conservation issues, and bird counts at Christmas and during Spring migration.

11. Parke County Extension Office

The Parke County Extension is a unit the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service. Its mission is the education of Indiana citizens through the application of land-grant university research and knowledge base to develop youth and strengthen agriculture, families and communities. The county extension offers training, classes and workshops. They are also hosts of 4-H and the County Fair.

12. Parke County Soil and Water Conservation District Office

The Parke County Soil and Water Conservation District helps Indiana residents to conserve the county’s land, water, forests, wildlife and related natural resources. Their mission is to coordinate assistance from available sources - public and private, local, state and federal - in an effort to develop locally driven solutions to natural resource concerns.

13. Indiana Geological Survey

The mission of the Indiana Geological Survey is to provide geologic information and counsel that contribute to the wise stewardship of the energy, mineral, and water resources of the state.

14. IDNR Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

The Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology promotes the conservation of Indiana’s cultural resources through public education efforts, financial incentives including several grant and tax credit programs, and the administration of state and federally mandated legislation.

15. IDNR Division of Nature Preserves

The mission of the division is to protect the best remaining natural areas in Indiana. Indiana's Nature Preserve law sets forth a process of dedication for significant natural areas. Those areas dedicated are permanently protected, to be preserved as pristine natural areas for all the people of Indiana. A key component of this purpose is the Indiana Natural Heritage Data Center. This program works to locate and keep track of Indiana's rarest plants, animals, and natural communities.

16. IDNR Division of Fish and Wildlife

The mission of the division is to professionally manage Indiana's fish and wildlife for present and future generations, balancing ecological, recreational, and economic benefits.

17. Friends of Sugar Creek

Friends of Sugar Creek (Established in 1987) is a not for profit, 501 (c) (3) organization dedicated to the restoration and preservation of Sugar Creek and all her tributaries in West Central Indiana.

18. Central Indiana Land Trust Incorporated (CILTI)

The mission of CILTI: "Through land protection, stewardship and education, the Central Indiana Land Trust Incorporated preserves natural areas, improving air and water quality and enhancing life in our communities for present and future generations."

19. Ouabache Land Conservancy

The newly formed conservancy will focus on protecting and preserving land, including working farmland and other natural areas, in west central Indiana for future generations. The conservancy is based in Terre Haute.

Comments

The most productive partnership for the parks came with the establishment of the Friends group. The interpreter credits members' interest in the park and the park's involvement with the group. The interpreter also mentions the friendships that have formed within the group. This social aspect, based on a common interest, keeps people involved with the group.

Regional Interpretive Offerings

1. Big Walnut Nature Preserve

Located roughly 20 miles southeast of the Turkey/Shades area in Putnam County, the property is co-managed by The Nature Conservancy and the IDNR Division of Nature Preserves. The over 2600-acre preserve offers hiking trails through habitat similar to the relict hemlock forest of Turkey Run and Shades.

2. Billie Creek Village

Billie Creek Village is located just east of Rockville, IN. The many historic buildings and covered bridges reconstructed at the site are from the area and date from the 1830s through the early 1900s. Programs demonstrate life during this time period, probably focusing closer to late 1800s through early 1900s.

Billie Creek offers special events, school programs and group programs. There is a modern hotel at the site for overnight accommodations.

3. City of Crawfordsville

Shades State Park is located about 10 miles southwest of Crawfordsville. Crawfordsville is the home of Wabash College and author, statesmen and Civil War general Lew Wallace. Wabash College was founded in 1832 and resides on 60 acres. The Lew Wallace Museum and Study offers historical workshops and events as well as housing artifacts related to General Wallace.

4. Portland Arch

This 293-acre preserve is under the IDNR Division of Nature Preserves. It is located roughly 20 miles northwest of Turkey Run and Shades in Fountain County. The preserve features an arch formed by water carving the Mansfield sandstone. It also contains native white pine and the only known Indiana population of Canada blueberry.

5. Raccoon Lake/Mansfield Roller Mill

These two IDNR properties are 10-15 miles from Turkey Run and Shades. Raccoon Lake offers camping, boating, swimming and hiking. The mill, which is under the management of Raccoon Lake, is a 1880 historic mill, operated by turbines.

A full-time IDNR interpreter manages both sites and conducts programs, demonstrations and events.

6. Terre Haute Children's Museum (THCM)

The mission of the THCM is: To enrich our children's lives through the exploration of science and technology. The museum has been in existence since 1988. In December of 2007, ground was broken for a new facility to house a 23,000 square foot, 3-story museum in downtown Terre Haute. The new museum hope to open in 2009.

The museum is open to the public as well as offering scheduled programs for schools, organizations and birthday parties.

Terre Haute is located roughly 50 miles southwest of Turkey Run State Park.

7. Terre Haute Parks

The City of Terre Haute manages 23 parks. Of special note is Dobbs Park. This park includes a nature center and a dedicated state nature preserve.

8. Vigo County Parks

The department (offices located in Terre Haute) maintains five larger parks as well as several neighborhood parks.

Comments

While the regional offerings include interpretive programs, some cater to a slightly different audience or are too distant to be either cooperative or competitive. For example, the Terre Haute Parks Department is roughly 50 miles from the parks. In addition to the distance, they primarily serve the municipality of Terre Haute. It would not be within their mission to extend far beyond their constituency. Other municipal agencies may also fall into this category.

The interpretive offerings of the City of Crawfordsville are largely specific to Lew Wallace and Wabash College. These may not be of general interest to park visitors. Where they might be of interest would be in a collaborative series of historical programs or special events that includes the Lew Wallace site and the Lusk Home. The Dells story at Shades and other historic spas/sanatorium facilities could be included. These would cater to regional citizens rather than park visitors. Incorporating a stay at the Inn, bringing in speakers and creating an Elderhostel atmosphere (or working with Elderhostel), offers another option.

Several IDNR properties lie within this region. In addition to Turkey Run and Shades (with Pine Hills Nature Preserve), Raccoon Lake, Mansfield Mill, Portland Arch and Big Walnut Preserve are nearby. There may be expanded opportunities for shared staff at events, special tour events and resource work days.

Billie Creek Village is perhaps the most potentially competitive. The facility is roughly ten miles from Turkey Run State Park. It conducts school programs in May and also supplies overnight accommodations in their hotel. Most of their programs are special events on weekends. Topics are historical.

Billie Creek charges \$4/student as opposed to the current \$1/student at IDNR properties. Their school program allows students to “learn first hand how our rural ancestors lived during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.” Students tour the village, observe and participate in activities. A wagon ride is included.

Interpretive Theme

The forces of water, ice and human perseverance have made Turkey Run and Shades the parks they are today.

Subthemes:

1. Oceans and glaciers are responsible for the bedrock and topography of the parks.

Objectives:

- A. Visitors will identify the ocean, delta and swamp conditions that formed the parks' bedrock.
- B. Visitors will understand the erosional forces that carved through the bedrock.

2. Unique relict ecosystems exist along the water-carved gorges.

Objectives:

- A. Visitors will understand how the hemlock stands and their associated species have survived.
- B. Visitors will appreciate the diversity of bryophytes and ferns found in the parks.

3. Sugar Creek creates a healthy forested corridor allowing for wildlife diversity.

Objectives:

- A. Visitors will understand the conditions that make this portion of Sugar Creek one of the healthiest in Indiana.
- B. Visitors will appreciate that the Sugar Creek corridor is the largest forest block in the northern half of Indiana.
- C. Visitors will identify the plant and animal diversity that exists as the result of the healthy creek and the large contiguous forest.

4. Natural and man-made aquatic features provide unique habitats in the park.

Objectives:

- A. Visitors will identify the differences between seeps and springs.
- B. Visitors will understand the aquatic conditions that create a fen and the unique plants and animals that thrive in those conditions.
- C. Visitors will know the stories behind the man-made ponds and the habitats that resulted.

5. Water resources made both parks attractive for settlers, entrepreneurs and preservationists.

Objectives:

- A. Visitors will appreciate the hard work and preservation ethic of mill owner, Salmon Lusk and his descendants.
- B. Visitors will appreciate the entrepreneurial spirit and land ethic of resort owner, Joseph Frisz.
- C. Visitors will appreciate the foresight of early land owners that allowed Colonel Richard Lieber and others to champion the fledgling Indiana State Park system.
- D. Visitors will appreciate the hard work of the Civilian Conservation Corps in protecting the resources and improving your park experience.

Recommendations

I. Turkey Run Interpretive Center

A. General Comments

The current Interpretive Center has been in operation since the mid-1980s. During that time it has experienced changes in use and changes in visitor expectations. It is time to evaluate and recommend changes to keep it current with trends and expectations.

B. Exhibits

An overhaul of the current exhibits is recommended. Funding is already available for this project. New exhibits should include interactive components and a mix of flat and three-dimensional components.

It is important to use the interpretive theme: *The forces of water, ice and human perseverance have made Turkey Run and Shades the parks they are today.* as the focus of the exhibits. A central water feature (representing water coming over the lip of the sandstone) under the skylight would form the hub of the surrounding exhibits. The exhibit could use water or a representation. A label would welcome visitors, introduce the theme and direct visitors to the next exhibit. Sandstone walls (representative or real) would direct the counter-clockwise traffic flow.

Individual exhibits would emphasize the subthemes.

1. *Exhibit Area One:* Oceans and glaciers are responsible for the bedrock and topography of the park.

The exhibit(s) will emphasize the underlying bedrock of sandstone and coal and how each was formed. The post-glacial erosional forces upon the bedrock, creating the topography is conveyed. An interactive exhibit could demonstrate how the cross-bedding in the gorge was created.

2. *Exhibit Area Two:* Unique relict ecosystems exist along the water-carved gorges.

The exhibit(s) illustrates the relict hemlock ecosystem and other important plants found in the gorges. Hemlock trunks could provide the backdrop to the exhibit. A huge bryophyte replica would explain these unusual plants.

3. *Exhibit Area Three:* Sugar Creek creates a healthy forested corridor allowing for wildlife diversity.

This area could include the live animal exhibits. An interactive exhibit could communicate the advantages of a large forest block versus several smaller forest blocks.

4. *Exhibit Area Four:* Natural and man-made aquatic features provide unique habitats in the park.

A diagram, diorama or other means demonstrates springs, seeps, fens and ponds. This exhibit could use water or lights to represent water. With seeps and springs, the “water” would move down through the bedrock. With the fen it would move up through deposits. The ponds would demonstrate water tables.

5. *Exhibit Area Five:* Water resources made both parks attractive for settlers, entrepreneurs and preservationists.

Salmon Lusk and his decision to locate a mill at the Narrows can include a diorama or the mill, demonstrate a turbine and provide an overview of the community that formed around the mill. A second exhibit will cover the preservation of the land by the Lusk’s and the movement to create the State Park system.

6. *Changeable Exhibit:* Near the entryway to the exhibit room a changeable exhibit will be placed. The exhibit will feature happenings at Turkey Run as well as promoting regional locations such as Shades State Park, Pine Hills Nature Preserve, Mansfield Mill and Raccoon Lake. Turkey Run High School students could be used to create and periodically update the exhibit.

C. Planetarium

The current equipment used for the planetarium is several decades old and needs to be replaced with digital equipment. In addition to higher image quality, the equipment allow visitors the ability to move through space, look back at earth, go back in time. It adds depth to the experience.

D. Interpretive Center Addition

The planetarium doubles as a Program Room. The centrally located planetarium equipment creates an obstacle, blocking the view and removing usable space. The rear projection screen does not provide enough distance to project a large enough image. It is recommended that an addition be added to the Interpretive Center.

It would include a Program Room with greater versatility, an unobstructed floor space for presentations and workshops, front projection screen and seating for one classroom.

The current work, office and storage space is lacking in the current facility. A new addition would relieve the situation by providing adequate room for these purposes.

II. Lusk Home

A. General Recommendations

1. *Parking Lot.* An expanded parking lot is needed to accommodate special events and larger groups.

2. *Kitchen Restoration.* The Lusk Home kitchen has served several purposes over the years and is currently unused and empty. It is recommended to restore the kitchen to complete the home.

3. *Historian Position.* Turkey Run has a rich history including the Lusk Home, Lieber Cabin, Log Church and the Lieber/Strauss Memorials. An historian position would provide oversight of the Lusk Home and other historic features including programs, restoration, archaeology and research.

4. *Period Landscaping.* The grounds of the Lusk Home could include landscaping plants from that era. (See May Watts “Reading the Landscape”) Community garden organizations, the Friends Group and historical organizations could be identified for donations and volunteers.

5. *Archaeological research to identify and mark outbuilding locations.* Researching, locating and identifying the Lusk Home outbuildings as well as the tavern, warehouse and other buildings would provide a treasure trove of information for programs and other media. This could be contracted out to a trained archaeologist. The end product would be a document containing information and maps, preservation of artifacts found and locations marked on the ground. Ultimately, replicas of these building could be reconstructed on site to provide an understanding that the Lusk Home was one of several structures.

B. Self-guided Media

1. Interpretive panels

a. Covered Bridge. This sign would include the link between the mill and the bridge, encouraging commerce on both sides of Sugar Creek and bridge details.

b. Mill Site. This sign would cover the specifics of the mill, the tunnel and the other associated businesses that existed at the site.

2. *Exterior Home Tour.* Due to the current limited hours, visitors do not often see the inside of the home. There are exterior features of the home and grounds that could be incorporated into a self-guided tour. A brochure available on the web and at the interpretive center would be created. An iPod tour could be developed and downloaded prior to a visit.

C. Exhibit Recommendations

Visitors taking a tour of the home first enter into the basement where there are exhibits. Time is allowed to observe the exhibits, listen to the guide's introduction and then enter the upper levels for the home tour. Because these exhibits are a springboard for the tour, they should enhance what is seen and heard during the tour.

1. Recommendations for Existing Exhibits

Current exhibit themes are helpful in understanding the context, but some could be more site specific (Construction Techniques), while others should rely less on flat text (Setting Exhibit).

The 3-dimensional replica of the mill provides a good visual of the wheel and the mill race. These are concepts that are hard to picture in text. This item should be kept in a revised exhibit. The spinning wheel and yarn winder might be better utilized in the parlor or bedrooms if they would have been historically found in those places. They currently seem randomly placed and don't tie well with the exhibits.

The Lusk Family exhibit should be expanded upon since there are no photos of family members in the upper floors. This should be the first exhibit that visitors encounter a provide an overview of the Lusks, their arrival and children. "Welcome to Our Home".

A final exhibit(s) would cover the preservation ethic of John Lusk, how the land became a park and the home restoration. Currently the Restoration exhibit is one first encountered, when in fact, it is the final chapter of the story.

2. New Exhibits

a. Basement Features. The basement itself offers some points of interest that should be identified. The sandstone foundation, beams, ash bins and alcoves can have lift doors posing a question that is answered when the door is lifted. For example: "What is the function of this door?" Answer: "This is an ash bin." followed by a short explanation and a "Look for the fireplaces during the home tour.

b. Local Materials. The sandstone, bricks and wood (black walnut) were all from the immediate vicinity of the home. Create an exhibit with touchable examples and descriptions of how they were quarried, fired, carved. Include an invitation to find these items in the basement or during the tour.

c. Heating/Cooling Adaptations. An interactive exhibit demonstrates how a cupola and a transom work to cool or warm the house. Replicas of these home features can be opened and closed to show how warm air was utilized in the winter and removed in the summer.

D. Programs

Limited staff keeps down the number of home tours. Creating an historic interpreter position would increase use of the facility.

Special events have been successful in the past. It is recommended that future partnerships with the Parke County Historical Society or other related organizations be pursued. The PCHS holds events such as an Ice Cream Social that could perhaps be located at the Lusk Home.

III. Lieber Cabin

A. General Recommendations

The interpretive conundrum for the Lieber Cabin is whether to interpret it as an historic cabin or whether to use the cabin to interpret the story of Colonel Richard Lieber and the founding of the Indiana State Parks.

Lieber was instrumental in finding and moving the cabin to its current location. He was dedicated to preserving Indiana's historic past. It was his intent to have the cabin showcase pioneer Indiana.

It is recommended that the exhibits tell the pioneer story, but conclude with the story of Lieber's efforts in historic and natural preservation. A theme for the cabin would be: This cabin is a testament to the Indiana frontier men and women, and the person who sought to honor them.

The cabin should include some exhibits related to frontier life in Indiana and cabin construction. A final exhibit will cover the preservation of this cabin, Lieber's role and an invitation to visit the Lieber Church and Memorial. This will reinforce the nearby 2-panel kiosk covering Lieber and the Lieber Tour.

The cabin is unstaffed and open, so exhibits must be secure.

B. Exhibit Topics

- 1. How big were these trees?* The massive logs used in the cabin give us an indication of the forests that once covered the state. Text and diagrams would estimate diameter and height.
- 2. How was the cabin built?* This exhibit would deal with the cutting, squaring off and lifting the huge logs. Was the wife holding the other end of the log? (Read *Little House on the Prairie*) How was the chimney built?
- 3. Cabin Life.* This exhibit would compare house sizes then and now, family sizes and amount of time outdoors. Furnished replicas would compare the number of possessions and where people slept and ate.
- 4. The Lieber Cabin.* This exhibit tells the story of this specific cabin, how it was found, moved and rebuilt. It also tells of Lieber's vision and dedication.

IV. Turkey Run Inn

- 1. Lounge Exhibits.* The displays in the Inn Lounge should be upgraded and encourage people to explore Turkey Run, Shades, Pine Hills and other regional offerings. Display cases could be opened to allow simple low maintenance interactive exhibits such as lift doors, etc.
- 2. Lieber Exhibits.* The Inn can provide a good location for interpreting Lieber than does the current cabin. Inn guests can learn about the State Park system and other parks in the State for their visits and conferences.

It is important to promote the Inn for non-guests. The Interpretive Center can encourage day-users and campers to visit exhibits at the Inn and enjoy a meal.

V. Shades Service Area/Program Area

A. General Comments

At present, Shades State Park does not have an indoor area for programs or an interpretive center. A portion of the Service Area has been made temporarily available. It is possible that this area may be needed as a Service Area in the future. For that reason it is not feasible to make permanent alterations.

B. Recommendations

- 1. Program Area.* This space should be used for indoor talks, workshops or demonstrations. It would be open shortly prior to the program and close again following the program.
- 2. Exhibits.* Due to the fact that staff availability is limited it is not recommended to have it open and maintained as a public facility. However, following the installation of new exhibits at the Turkey Run Nature Center and the Lieber cabin, certain pre-existing exhibits could be moved to Shades. Prior to a program at the Service Area, visitors would be able to look at the exhibits. These cases could be easily be removed if necessary.

VI. Programs

A. Roving Interpretation

This is being done at both parks and should continue. High concentration areas such as Rocky Hollow, campgrounds at both parks, the Suspension Bridge and the Turkey Run Inn are target areas. The resource issues of soil creation of unauthorized trails, climbing on the rocks, etc. may be best dealt with through roving interpretation. Not only would a presence be a deterrent, but rovers might also be able to halt and educate people who are “caught in the act”.

B. Lusk Home Kitchen Garden and Landscaping Programs

The grounds of the Lusk Home could become as much an historic experience as the Home. The existing garden could be expanded to planting flowerbeds, trees and other landscaping popular at that time period. Programs would cater to special interest groups such as garden clubs as well as the public at special events. At present, volunteers contribute a huge number of hours to maintain the current garden. Building on this project would require the addition of a CRR gardener position. An alternative would be for this project to fall under the auspices of the Historian position. That individual would be responsible for oversight and recruiting volunteers as needed. It is not advised to rely solely on volunteers to organize and implement this ongoing project.

Garden programs at the Lusk Home should always mention that many of our invasive plants originated from gardens and landscaping.

C. Log Church Theme Day

A re-enactment of a period wedding, funeral or service using first person interpretation. This would require research and costuming. The local historical society could assist with researching services and practices of the time. This could be offered in conjunction with a larger historic special event.

D. Insect Program/Bug Day

Insects might be best interpreted as a special event. Several successful “Bug Day” events are held at interpretive facilities. Purdue University has held such events and could provide resources. These would involve resource experts, activities and programs (crafts, edible insects, etc.).

As always these recommendations assume adequate staffing to conduct additional programs, or to eliminate programs that are poorly attended.

VII. Trails

A. Short trail loop from Turkey Run Interpretive Center

A short, accessible loop in the vicinity of the Interpretive Center is needed for a self-guided experience as well as with young audiences.

B. Canoe Trails

Partnering with canoe rental businesses, the park could provide laminated interpretive materials. These materials could be attached to the rental canoes, or collected when the canoes are returned. The materials would interpret what people are seeing along the routes: the geology, history and ecology Sugar Creek.

C. Interpretive Running Loops from the Turkey Run Inn

An untapped audience are those attending conferences unrelated to the park itself. At the end of the day, participants may run for exercise. A series of loops of different lengths could point out features. Interpretive information could be available in a brochure or downloaded onto an iPod from the IDNR web site.

VIII. Training and Professional Development

At present, the interpretive training offered is for seasonal staff, not the full-time interpreter. In order to stay current, it is recommended that continuing education for full-time interpreters be supported financially and logistically. This could take the form of attendance at the regional or national National Association for Interpretation Workshops.

There may be other areas where the full-time interpreter feels that further education is needed. These could be in the sciences (astronomy, archaeology for example) or administrative. Classes from Indiana State or on-line universities can be encouraged.

Other professional organizations such as historical or museum associations may provide expertise training related to working at Turkey Run.

The establishment of an annual training/professional development budget will allow the full-time interpreter to select training specific to their needs.

Recommendations by Site

<i>Locations</i>	<i>Phase I</i>	<i>Phase II</i>
Interpretive Center	Develop new exhibits for Interpretive Center	
	Changeable exhibit near entryway	
		Update Planetarium equipment
		Interpretive Center addition
Lusk Home		Parking Lot expansion
		Kitchen Restoration
		Historic Interpreter Position
		Archaeological Research
		CRR Gardener/Programs
	Period Landscaping	
	Interpretive Panels	
	Interactive Tour "Search"	
	Exterior Home Tour	
	Interior exhibits	
	Create partnerships that would allow more special events and period theme days	
Lieber Cabin	New exhibits	
Shades Service Area	Use space for program use only with open hours immediately before and after program.	
		Move appropriate exhibits from Turkey Run to Shades following completion of new TR exhibits.
Turkey Run Inn	New exhibits in Inn Lounge	
Programs	Expand Lusk herb garden to include historic landscaping programs	
	Log Church theme days	
Trails	Create short loop trail from Interpretive Center	
		Create canoe trails partnering with liveries
	Create interpretive running/walking loops from Inn for conference attendees	
Training	Establish annual allocation for full-time interpreter professional development	

Phase II in order of priority with time estimate

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Project									
Move Interpretive Center exhibits to Service Area									
Historic Interpreter Position									
Lusk Archaeological Research									
LuskKitchen Restoration									
Lusk CRR Gardener									
Lusk Period Landscaping									
Lusk Landscaping Programs									
Insect Bug Day Programs									
Lusk parking lot expansion									
Update planetarium equipment									
Nature Center addition									
Canoe trails									

Phase II in order of priority with time estimate

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