

BRINGING BACK THE ARTS TO OUR STATE PARKS

The Indiana Arts Commission (IAC), in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), will launch a major arts program as a Bicentennial gift to our citizens which also celebrates the Centennial of Indiana State Parks and the 50th Anniversary of the IAC. Beginning in 2016, the IAC will offer annual grants to organizational arts providers and artists statewide to bring arts programs and services to our 32 state parks and four state forests. This program will attract tourists and visitors, join local communities and their arts assets and artists with their local state parks, and deliver art services to our most rural areas. It will also join together two of the most heralded aspects of quality of life in Indiana – the arts and the environment.

Throughout the year, state parks and forests will host performing arts events, exhibitions, educational residencies, and hands-on arts activities for citizens and visitors of all ages. The program will draw on the very best traditional and non-traditional arts and artists in Indiana, weaving their magic into our state's natural beauty and rural settings.

Artists and organizational providers will apply yearly to the IAC for grants from \$500 to \$3,000 after consultation with park interpretive staff where the proposed service will occur. This process will ensure educational value, access, artistic quality and public accountability (the hallmarks of all IAC grant programs) while tailoring programs to the unique assets represented in each park or forest property. Grant selection committees will have both arts and environmental representatives.



Limestone carver Matt Bruce teaches carving at Spring Mill. Photo courtesy Department of Natural Resources.

REACH AND IMPACT

The IAC plans to administer enough grants to provide an average of one program a month for “full-service,” year-round parks, and several a year for parks and forests with more limited facilities or seasons. **In all, approximately 250–325 programs will be provided with an estimated annual cumulative attendance of approximately 1 million.** Even more significant in impact will be the relationships built between the state parks and local communities, organizations, schools, artists and citizen organizers. The program will also offer a training element to local artists and organizations so they are better equipped to mount successful projects in a parks environment.

FUNDING, RESOURCES AND LOGISTICS

The program will use existing IAC staff, grant software and processes, and DNR interpretive staff expertise. The IAC will also use its existing relationships with Traditional Arts Indiana and its 11 Regional Arts Partners to help promote and administer the program to artists and organizations statewide. **Approximately \$350,000 annually will need to be identified outside of the IAC's current budget and appropriations to fund this program.**