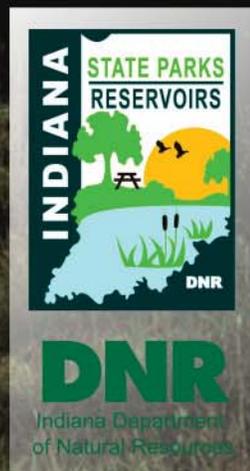
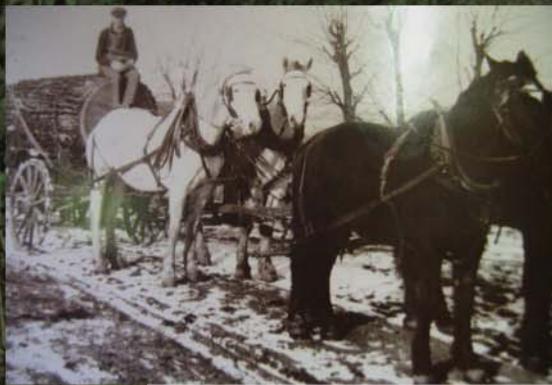


Patoka Reservoir Interpretive Master Plan 2009



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Introduction

In response to a need to stay current with interpretive and visitor trends and to maximize limited staff and financial resources, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of State Parks and Reservoirs has developed this Interpretive Master Plan for Patoka Reservoir. The plan accomplishes this task by:

- a. focusing interpretive efforts on a site-specific theme
- b. identifying needs for guided and self-guided interpretation, and
- c. recommending actions to fill those needs.

The process of developing interpretive recommendations considers three components:

- a. Resource. What are the natural and cultural resources of the site?
- b. Visitor. Who are the current users? What are the untapped audiences?
- c. Agency. What is the mission of the agency? What are the management goals within the agency?

Other regional interpretive experiences and partnerships are incorporated to stretch staff and finances, foster cooperation and prevent competition.

Several factors make the plan important for Patoka Reservoir:

- a. Maintaining maximum visitor contacts with minimal staff during economically tight times
- b. An increased interest in regional traditional music
- c. A Visitor Center that is located away from high use areas
- d. A need to upgrade exhibits
- e. The recent reconstruction of an historic log cabin adjacent to the Visitor Center.

The intent of the plan is to serve as a long-term guide for interpretation at Patoka Reservoir. The phased and prioritized recommendations are designed to further Patoka Reservoir in the near future and into the Division's next 100 years.

Resource Overview

The following resource overview is general and related to the interpretive themes. For a more detailed resource overview, see the 5-year Wildlife Management Plan at the Reservoir Office.

I. Natural History

A. Geology

The limestone and sandstone bedrock were marine and river deposits, laid millions of years ago. The resulting layers of sedimentary bedrock have since been dissected through erosion. This has resulted in steep slopes and narrow valleys.

The region is unglaciated, resulting in thin soils on the ridges and slopes. The deepest soils are the alluvial soils along the Patoka River Valley. Soil fertility in the region is low.

B. Water

1. Patoka River. The Patoka River winds 130 miles from its headwaters near Paoli to its confluence with the Wabash River.

2. Springs. The Patoka River is fed by countless springs. The springs result from the underlying bedrock being dissolved, creating underground passages. When the passages surface, the result is a spring. Historically, these springs served as watering holes for livestock and cool water for springhouses.

3. Patoka Reservoir. Patoka Lake is under the auspices of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It was authorized for flood control in the Wabash River Basin. The lake serves as flood control, water supply, recreation, and fish and wildlife management in the region. The lake is stocked with game fish.

The decision to build the dam was made in 1965, with completion in 1978. The 161 miles of shoreline contains 8,800 acres of water at normal pool.

Since its completion, the lake has become a natural ecosystem. Fish, turtles and frogs live in the lake. Raptors, waterfowl, wading birds and shorebirds hunt along its edges.



4. Wetlands. Wetlands along the periphery of the lake provide a valuable ecosystem and protect the lake from siltation. The lake level is seasonally altered to provide nesting areas.

5. Wildlife ponds. Constructed wildlife ponds provide water for wildlife species.

C. Plant Communities

1. Historic records. The Patoka region was historically a densely forested area. Mature hardwood forests on the slopes and in bottomlands included oak, hickory, walnut, maple, beech, tulip and other tree species. Historic photos of logging operations show images of huge old growth trees.

2. Present Conditions. Timber harvesting and farming were early activities in the region. As a result, the region was cleared with the onset of settlement. Forests today are younger second or third growth forests.

Other areas are maintained as old field, grasslands and forest openings for the purposes of wildlife management.

Portions of Patoka are planted in perennial and annual legumes, sunflowers and cereal grasses to enhance food sources for game species.

3. Invasives. Johnson grass, kudzo and crown vetch are invasive plants pervasive at Patoka.

D. Fauna

1. Historic extirpated species. Large mammals such as black bear and bison were documented in the Patoka River Valley in the 1600s and 1700s. Bison herds followed ages-old traces through Orange County to salt licks. None of these historic traces crossed the reservoir property.

Black bear were also prevalent prior to European settlement. In last reported bear killed in Orange County occurred in 1825.

2. Today. The Indiana DNR leases the land around the lake from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The land is managed to protect the lake from erosion and to create wildlife habitat. Hunting and fishing is an emphasis as well as camping, hiking and other passive forms of recreation.



Managing for wildlife includes game and non-game species. The lake is stocked with warm shallow water fish. Grassland restoration, food plots and wetland management create habitat for quail, turkey, grouse, deer, mourning dove, rabbit, squirrel and other game species. Likewise, habitat management and other activities have been beneficial to non-game species. The creation of the lake provides habitat for fish-eating raptors such as bald eagles and osprey.

At this time no officially recognized rare and endangered species are present at Patoka.

II. Cultural History

A. Pre-settlement

Patoka has evidence of 4000 years of human occupation. Research at Totem Rock rock shelter has uncovered flint points, mussel shells, pottery shards, tools and other artifacts from varying time periods. Evidence suggests that Totem Rock was used as a hunting camp. Petroglyphs representing turtles once decorated the walls of Totem Rock, but have since been obliterated.



B. European Settlement

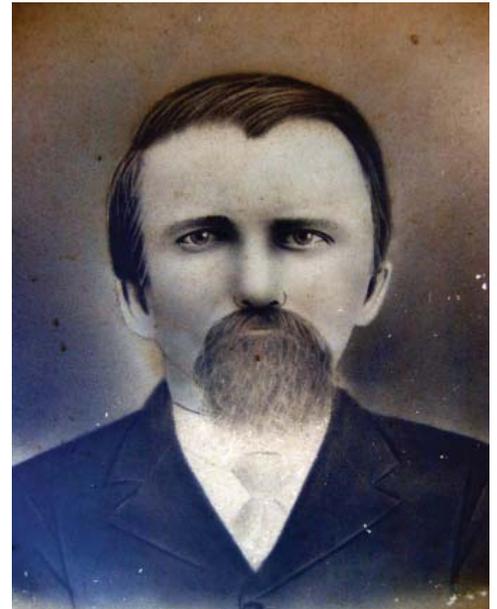
1. Timber. European settlers began to arrive in the Upper Patoka River Valley in the late 1700s and early 1800s. The region's abundant forests along the Patoka River made it an ideal location for logging and sawmills. Oak, walnut and other trees were cut into logs that were then bound together into rafts. These rafts floated down the Patoka River to mills in Jasper, a 3-4 day trip. After arriving in Jasper, the rafts were dismantled and rafters would walk home.

2. Farming. Once timber was removed, farms began to dot the landscape. As the farms grew, towns began to form to provide goods and services to farmers. The river towns of Newton-Steward, Elon and Ellsworth had general stores, churches and schools. They formed the center of a dispersed farming community. The Patoka River was the scene of many baptisms and skating parties.

In the late 1800s, railroads became the main mode for transporting goods. The steep topography of the Patoka River Valley was bypassed by the railroads, and its small towns became isolated from commerce. Within a few decades, the river towns had greatly declined in population.

3. Immigration

In the mid-1800s, the Patoka River region experienced an influx of Germanic immigrants, escaping the political climates of their homelands. Jacob Moery, a Swiss immigrant, brought his family to the region in 1865 and built a cabin just outside of the reservoir property. The cabin is scheduled to be relocated at a site adjacent to the Visitor Center.



C. Reservoir History

Flooding along the Patoka River was frequent and at times devastating. The town of Jasper regularly flooded. By the 1940s, discussion began about how to protect the region. In 1965, the decision was made to build the reservoir, which was completed in 1978.

Many residents along the river were relocated to make way for the reservoir. The towns of New-ton-Steward, Elon and Ellsworth no longer exist.

In addition to flood control, the reservoir provides drinking water to eleven surrounding counties and recreational fishing and boating experiences.

Existing Conditions

I. Audiences

A. Campers.

Approximately 455 electric sites and 45 primitive sites are offered at Patoka Lake. All camping is located at the Newton-Steward State Recreation Area on the south side of the lake. The Visitor Center is also on this side of the lake, however, it is about 2.5 miles from the electric campgrounds.

Many of the campers visit Patoka primarily to enjoy the fishing and boating opportunities. They are frequently on the lake during the day and not partaking of the interpretive programs.

B. Day Users

The largest group of day users are at the property for fishing and hunting. These groups are not participating in interpretive programming. In a few instances family members of those fishing and hunting may be in the campground and will come to the Visitor Center.

Patoka Lake is not located close to a metropolitan area, however, there has been a noticeable increase in property visitors out for the day. Among the activities cited are hiking, birding and geocaching. There has also been an increase in people coming from the newly refurbished casinos in French Lick, 15 miles to the north.

Local residents are also visiting the property in larger numbers. In part these are people who have recently retired in the area, as opposed to long-time residents. Some of these have become volunteers at the Visitor Center.

C. Schools

Patoka is set in a rural area without large urban areas close by. Jasper is the closest town at 20 miles away with a population of approximately 12,000. As a result, school programs are few.

German exchange students have requested specific programming. The region's rich German history ties into interpretive cultural history programs.

D. Special Groups

Churches and scout groups schedule special programs with the Interpretive Service.

E. General Comments

Patoka is still an "undiscovered" property where visitors can have a quieter experience. Many visitors come to Patoka not for a scheduled event, but for some personal hiking, fishing or canoeing time.

Patoka offers a multi-use approach with hunting, fishing, mountain biking and disk golf among the opportunities. Many of these users are there for their specific activity and are not using the Interpretive Service.

II. Facilities for Interpretation

A. Visitor Center

The Visitor Center was completed in the 1980s. The building includes an exhibit area, program room, restrooms and offices. An outdoor program area and garden area are behind the building. A raptor enclosure contains several birds that are used for programs.

The program room is a multi-purpose room with tables, seating and A/V capacity.

The building was originally designed with solar panels in the A-frame exhibit area. Recent remodeling included removing the solar panels, replacing windows with UV resistant glass (exhibits were extremely faded due to direct sunlight), the addition of ceiling fans and improved insulation. Woodwork in the exhibit area was sanded. All of these changes have made the building more functional, comfortable and attractive.

The Visitor Center is open throughout the year. In the winter, the building is open from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday - Saturday and closed on Sunday. (NOTE: This winter of 2009, the building was closed to save on energy costs.)



B. Beach

The beach offers a location for scheduled programs and roving interpretation.

C. Campground Center Shelter

A roofed shelter is located next to the Campground Gatehouse. This shelter is specifically designated for the Interpretive Service and can't be rented. The shelter has benches and tables and a nearby amphitheater.

There is parking near the shelter, but it also serves as overflow parking for the campground. As a result parking is not always available for a scheduled program. There are also no restrooms in the vicinity.



Successful activities have been held on afternoons when campers are first arriving and setting up their campers. Informal programs for children and youth, such as craft programs, are well-attended. Children participate while parents handle check-in and camper set-up.

D. Moery Cabin

The historic Moery Cabin is in the process of being relocated from private property

to a site adjacent to the Visitor Center. Once it has been reconstructed on the site, it will be available for interpretation. The building will be open only when staff is conducting a program. There is ongoing discussion regarding the extent that it will be furnished in period furniture or used for exhibits on the Moery Family, cabins, etc.

III. Staff

Interpretive Staff

As of this writing, staff includes:

One full-time interpreter

One 180-day seasonal interpreter

One 180-day clerk

IV. Interpretative Programs

A. Traditional Programs

Scheduled programs on cultural and natural history topics are offered throughout the year. Many of these originate at the Visitor Center due to the amenities of the facility (space and restrooms). Additionally, the staff needs to be present at the building during open hours. This can make it difficult to provide programs at other sites while maintaining public hours.

B. Roving Interpretation

At 26,000 acres, Patoka is a very dispersed and large property, surrounding a large reservoir. Getting from one of the property's four State Recreation Areas to another requires miles of driving to circumnavigate the lake. While the campgrounds and Visitor Center are located in the Newton-Stewart State Recreation Area, features are miles from each other.

Due to this situation, roving interpretation has proven to be successful when feasible. Taking the interpretation to more heavy-use areas reaches more people.

C. Music “jam” sessions

The Visitor Center has become host to informal jam sessions by local musicians. Bluegrass and other regional music and folk instruments are featured. Participants are encouraged to bring their own instruments. Some presentations feature pre-performance interpretive programs.

D. Special Events and Workshops

Special themed events such as raptor events are offered. These tie in several speakers and activities throughout the day. Themed workshops such as Gardening for Wildlife include hands-on activities and information related to a specific topic.

Other non-interpretive special events such as fireworks programs offer opportunities for informal or roving interpretation.

E. Badge-related Scout Programs

Interpretive programs are available upon request for scouts working toward a specific badge.

VI. Interpretive Media

A. Visitor Center Exhibits

The Visitor Center exhibits are largely along the two side walls running the length of the exhibit room. These exhibits are in moveable cases and are passive. Several of them are the original 1980s exhibits. Most of the exhibits deal with regional natural and cultural history topics and management issues such as the emerald ash borer. One changeable exhibit features the work of local artists. A Native American exhibit has an archaeological emphasis.

Several taxidermy mounts are located on the overhead areas. Interactive quiz board exhibits and a children's area use the central floor space.

B. Wayside Signs

New wayside exhibits cover the Patoka River (River, Settlement and Reservoir), the Narrows, the Moery Cabin and raptors.

C. Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards provide current information and schedules as well as interpretive information.

D. Fish Exhibit at Main Office

The main office houses a large exhibit featuring the fish found at Patoka Lake.

E. Self-guided Trails and Brochures

Three self-guided trails leave from the Visitor Center.

1. *Wildlife Management Trail*. This trail has numbered stops and a corresponding brochure.

2. *Garden Rock Trail*. The Garden Rock Trail has routed plastic signs identifying trees and other features.



3. *Totem Rock*. Totem Rock is a destination. A brochure deals with information about the geology, ancient history and more recent history of the site. The brochure also includes a map and directions to Totem Rock.

Regional Offerings

1. **Holiday World.** Holiday World is located about 30 miles southeast of Patoka. This huge amusement park offers numerous rides, water rides, shows, dining and overnight accommodations.
2. **Corydon, Indiana.** Corydon is located about 30 miles southwest of Patoka. Corydon is the first capitol of Indiana. The town includes many historical points of interest and an historical district.
3. **Marengo Cave.** Marengo Cave is 20 miles east of Patoka. This commercial cave offers tours for individuals and groups. The facility also offers camping and cabin rental.
4. **Blue Springs Cavern.** Blue Springs Cavern is about 30 miles north of Patoka. The boat tours through the cave are conducted April through October.
5. **French Lick and West Baden.** French Lick and West Baden are large resorts about 15 miles north of Patoka. Built in the early 1900s as spas and resorts, both have been recently restored to their former grandeur. A casino, golf course, spa and horseback riding are among the activities offered at the adjacent sites.
6. **Canoe Rentals.** Canoe Liveries are available on the Blue River, 20 miles east of Patoka. The Blue River is a high quality river in terms of species biodiversity and protection.
7. **State Parks.** Spring Mill State Park is about 35 miles northeast of Patoka and offers camping and inn lodging as well as natural and cultural features including a pioneer village with an operating mill. O'Bannon Woods State Park is about 30 miles southeast of Patoka. O'Bannon Woods manages Wyandotte Caves, which conducts tours and is the largest Indiana bat hibernaculum in the state. Lincoln State Park is about 40 miles southwest of Patoka. Lincoln's sister is buried in the church cemetery contained within the park.
8. **Lincoln Boyhood Home.** Adjacent to Lincoln State Park is the Lincoln Boyhood Home. This facility is under the auspices of the National Park Service. It includes the Lincoln Cabin site and cemetery where Lincoln's mother is buried. A reconstructed farm with first-person interpreters is open to the public as well as a large Visitor Center with orientation film and museum.
9. **St. Meinrad Archabbey.** Located 35 miles south of Patoka, St. Meinrad was founded by the Benedictine order in Switzerland. The abbey was founded in 1854. Guided and self-guided tours of the church and grounds are available.
10. **Wineries.** Southern Indiana has several wineries. The two closest to Patoka are Winzerwald Winery in Bristow, Indiana (15 miles south of Patoka) and French Lick Winery (10 miles north of Patoka).
11. **Paoli Peaks.** Snow skiing is available at Paoli Peaks, located 15 miles north of Patoka. This seasonal facility attracts southern visitors from Kentucky, Alabama and Tennessee for skiing.

Partnerships

1. Disk Golf Organizations. A disk golf course is on the property. Disk golf organizations host events and rehabilitate the courses.
2. Astronomical Societies. Local astronomical societies host events and conduct programs.
3. Local Artists. The Visitor Center provides an Art Space exhibit. This is a changeable exhibit that local artists maintain.
4. Mathers Museum. The Mathers Museum is Indiana University's museum of archaeology. The museum provides items for display and research information to Patoka.
5. Musicians, storytellers. Local musicians and storytellers conduct concerts and programs for the interpretive service.
6. Master Gardeners. The Master Gardeners group contributes volunteer hours toward maintaining the backyard wildlife garden behind the Visitor Center.
7. Department of Corrections. Prison labor provides trail rehabilitation and maintenance work.
8. County Historical Society. The County Historical Society contributes resource information, artifacts, temporary displays and conducts presentations.
9. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Patoka Dam and Reservoir are under the auspices of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The COE has a visitor center near the dam. Additionally, the COE conducts cooperative programs and facility tours and loans displays.
10. Local businesses. Businesses around the periphery of the lake provide a place to post schedules. They contribute prizes for special events.
11. Eagle scouts. Eagle scout groups conduct trail work including rehabilitation, bridge building and other projects.
12. Southern Indiana Center for Independent Living. This organization organizes a fishing event for special needs children.
13. Bass Clubs. Several fishing events are organized and conducted at the lake each year.
14. Wild Turkey Federation. This federation conducts programs at the property on hunting and turkey calling.
15. Conservation Officers conduct programs on gun safety and firearms. They also assist with fishing derbies and acquire food for interpretive service's raptors.
16. Coast Guard. The Coast Guard offers courtesy boat exams to check for safety.

17. Sailing Club. The local sailing club conducts lakeshore clean-ups, sailing lessons and regattas at Patoka Lake.

18. Other DNR properties. O'Bannon Woods and Falls of the Ohio offer program assistance.

Interpretive Theme

Theme: The Patoka River and Reservoir connect the region's resources with its people.

Subthemes:

A. The Patoka River and its valley are the result of ancient geological forces.

Objectives:

1. Visitors will understand the karst topography and its formation.
2. Visitors will appreciate the influence of the karst on natural and manmade water systems.

B. Throughout history, the Patoka River and its valley were abundant in natural resources that were attractive to humans.

Objectives:

1. Visitors will be familiar with historic wildlife and its uses by indigenous people.
2. Visitors will appreciate the old forests that existed in the Patoka Valley and their attraction to early settlers.
3. Visitors will know the story of Germanic immigrants who farmed the Patoka Valley.
4. Visitors will appreciate the several communities that once thrived along the Patoka River.

C. The Patoka Reservoir was built in response to devastating floods in the valley.

Objectives:

1. Visitors will understand that property and income loss due to flooding were once common to communities along the Patoka River.
2. Visitors will become familiar with the decisions and construction that resulted in the dam and reservoir we have today.

D. Today, Patoka Lake provides many benefits to the region.

Objectives:

1. Visitors will appreciate the flood control and management function of the lake.
2. Visitors will appreciate the eleven counties that receive drinking water from Patoka Lake.
3. Visitors will become familiar with the recreational and wildlife resources resulting from the creation of Patoka Lake.

E. Managing Patoka for multi-use requires planning, research and constant monitoring.

Objectives:

1. Visitors will become familiar with management decisions related to hunting and fishing opportunities.
2. Visitors will know the non-game species that are attracted to lake habitats.

3. Visitors will become aware of the shoreline and forest management decisions as they relate to maintaining Patoka Lake.

Recommendations

I. Facilities

A. Visitor Center

1. General Comments

The A-frame design of the Visitor Center gives a church-like feel. The high vaulted ceiling with built-in windows creates a lovely open feel.

As an exhibit space, the design has been problematic. Most exhibits line the side walls and the central area is largely open. A lot of overhead space is underutilized.

a. Cultural Performances

Over the past few years, the interpreter has been successful in using the building for performances. Musical jam sessions have brought in local musicians.

Since the region has a rich music tradition, it is recommended to keep the central area open and develop the performance idea further. Musical performances, regional craft demonstrations, or other types of performances could be marketed to property visitors and the regional population.

Among the recommendations:

Purchase a small portable riser or stage system

Purchase a high quality sound system

Purchase storable seating that can be removed when performances are not being conducted

Design easily moved exhibits for the central area for non-performance times

b. Overhead Areas

The A-frame design provides a lot of overhead space in the display area. Additionally, large platform areas are over doorways at either end of the display area. Currently, taxidermy mounts are placed on the shelves, however, these spaces could be better incorporated into the interpretive themes. An eagle nest replica could be placed on one of the platforms. Another platform could have a life-sized logger on a log raft. Raptor mounts could be suspended from the ceiling.



2. Exhibits

The current exhibit layout is static. Exhibits line opposite

walls, facing each other across the room. At a glance, a visitor can see them all, with no defined starting or ending point.

To make the exhibit set-up more engaging, it is recommended that the exhibits be presented in themed alcoves with a defined flow from one alcove to the next. Visitors would be drawn to the first welcoming exhibit and walk through Patoka's story. The pathway through the exhibits could be representative of a river through the use of color.

Exhibits would be positioned within the area between the wall and the beams, leaving the central area open. Some exhibits would have their backs to the center, or perpendicular to the center (see floorplan).



a. Entryway

Upon entering through the main entrance, the visitor sees a banner over the central exhibit area with the theme statement: Patoka: Connecting the region's resources with its people.

b. Geology

Sub-theme: The Patoka River and its valley are the result of ancient geological forces.

Exhibit b1. Bedrock Formation

The sub-theme statement forms the heading of this exhibit. Through flat graphics and text, the exhibit explains the marine conditions that formed the sedimentary bedrock layers. This includes an analogy of the layers being like a deck of cards.

Within the same exhibit, a lenticular demonstrates how those layers were tilted and sheared to form the north-south running bedrock layers of Indiana. Text explains how older formations are found in eastern Indiana and more recent formations in western Indiana.

Exhibit b2. Karst and Springs

This 3-D diorama shows a cross-cut of underground karst with an emphasis on conditions that create the prevalent springs in Patoka as well as caves and sinkholes.

Exhibit b3. Patoka River

This exhibit is a pre-reservoir map of the Patoka River in its entirety. Text and graphics cover the erosive processes that formed the upper Patoka River Valley and the glacial influences of the lower Patoka River Valley.

The relief map will have LED lights that identify the original river path and the Patoka watershed. The Patoka reservoir property is identified.

c. Natural Resources and Human Influence

Sub-theme: Throughout history, the Patoka River and its valley were abundant in natural resources that were attractive to humans.

Exhibit c1. Early wildlife

This exhibit features early abundant wildlife in the Patoka Valley. Using existing mammal mounts in a case, the display will also feature buffalo and black bear, once prevalent species. These two animals could be featured as head mounts, or as illustrations on the exhibit background diorama.

Exhibit c2. Forests

This exhibit emphasizes the heavily forested Patoka River Valley. On the floor (possibly extending into the central area) is a circle representing the diameter of a large tree from the early 1800s. A nearby text label explains forests, tree sizes and asks: “How many people can fit inside the trunk diameter? How many people does it take to reach around the trunk diameter?”

Exhibit c3. Indigenous People

A newly completed exhibit on indigenous people could be incorporated into the exhibit flow. Staff will need to confirm its accuracy and acceptance by local indigenous people.

Exhibit c4. Timbering

Element of an existing exhibit on timbering and timber rafts on the Patoka could be incorporated. The exhibit should be placed in a case that fits with other new cases. Text needs to be evaluated.

Exhibit c5. Farming and Immigration

This exhibit focuses on the small farms that appeared on the landscape. A particular emphasis is on the Moery Family who immigrated from Switzerland and whose cabin has been relocated next to the Visitor Center. The exhibit will consist of text and historic photos. A slide door shows a before and after image of the cabin when it had a log exterior and after siding was added.

Exhibit c6. River Communities

Communities including schools, churches and businesses developed along the Patoka. This exhibit incorporates the images and narratives collected during a cultural history project. A continuous loop program on a screen includes still images backed by excerpts from the interviews. Subtitles of the narrative will appear along with the text. The program will include information about community activities, anecdotal stories, and the demise of the

river communities when the railroad bypassed them.

d. Flooding on the Patoka

Sub-theme: The Patoka Reservoir was built in response to devastating floods in the valley.

Exhibit d1. Floods and Building the Dam

The backdrop for this exhibit is a map of the reservoir with the original Patoka River channel highlighted. Brief text describes the events and decisions leading to the construction of the dam. A flip book features captioned photos of early flooding and reservoir construction.

e. Patoka Lake Today

Sub-theme: Today, Patoka Lake provides many benefits to the region.

e1. Patoka Lake Benefits

This interactive exhibit features 6-8 lift or slide doors and multiple choice questions on flood control and drinking water. An example of a question might be: How many counties receive their drinking water from the Patoka Reservoir? The answer would include a map of the region served. Other questions would cover statistics on the pool level, flood level and number of downstream communities protected by the reservoir.

e2. Recreation on Patoka Lake

This exhibit could be incorporated into e1. as the third function of Patoka Reservoir (flood control, drinking water, recreation). This portion is a powerpoint-style presentation of various recreation opportunities at Patoka with the heading “What can you do at Patoka?”.

f. Resource Management

Sub-Theme: Managing Patoka for multi-use requires planning, research and constant monitoring.

f1. Wildlife Management of Game Species

This exhibit features the wildlife species that are game species. Taxidermy mounts of the species are featured in the diorama. Text labels provide brief information on the types of habitat management conducted to promote this species.

f2. Wildlife Management of Non-game Species

This exhibit focuses on the habitat created for non-game species. The emphasis is on raptors. The exhibit contains raptor taxidermy mounts. A touch button near the text label would light a bulb by the corresponding taxidermy mount. Text identifies how the lake creates habitat for non-game species.

B. Moery Cabin

The Moery Cabin is being relocated to a site adjacent to the Visitor Center. The Moery Family represents the mid-1800s wave of German-speaking immigrants to the Patoka region. The Moerys were Swiss.

An interpretive panel, already completed covers the history of the cabin and the Moery Family. The cabin, once completed, will be open only when a staff person or volunteer is present. Programs would cover topics such as cabin construction styles and immigration. The building and grounds can be used as a site for historical special events and serve as a back-drop for regional music programs and demonstrations.

Interior

At least one room should be furnished in period style representing the Swiss immigrants of the time. This would create other programming opportunities and a site for first-person interpretive demonstrations.

Garden

The grounds around the cabin can be interpreted by installing an herbal/medicinal garden. Using plants typical of a frontier garden (both indigenous and plants brought from Europe), it would serve as a visual for guided and self-guided interpretation.

C. Campground Center Shelter

This site should continue to serve as an informal activity site during heavy campground check-in and check-out times. Activities such as crafts or other projects would be geared to children, allowing parents to set-up and take down their campers and tents. A set time such as 4-6 p.m. on Fridays could appear on the schedule.

Due to the traffic around the site, safety precautions may be needed to keep children safe when crossing the road by the campground gate and parking lot.

Conceptual Exhibit Floor Plan



*C2 is on outline on the floor with explanatory text on adjacent pillar

D. Raptor Center

Patoka has found a niche with their raptor interpretative programs. The interpretive service cares for several raptors and uses them in programs.

At present the raptors are housed in an outdoor area some of which is not accessible to the public. It is recommended that an indoor raptor center be constructed for the raptors. The raptor center would be attached to the Visitor Center, if possible, and maintain the same public hours as the Visitor Center.

The Raptor Center would include:

spacious cages for the birds

viewing area for the public

staff-only work area with water, work and storage space, and a refrigerator

II. Staff

A. Scheduling staff hours

Patoka has some unique attributes that make traditional scheduled programs more problematic. They include:

the large and dispersed nature of the property,

the fact that many visitors are coming exclusively to use the lake, and

the Visitor Center's location far from the lake

The emphasis of interpretation at Patoka needs to be on roving interpretation over traditional scheduled programs. During busy times at congested areas, an interpreter should be a visible presence.

This may require scheduling staff so that they can be away from the Visitor Center and at the beach or other busy locations. This may also require limiting the open hours of the Visitors Center.

B. Cultural Resources Program Specialist

Patoka has a rich cultural history and an interest in preserving regional traditional music and art. It is recommended that a position be dedicated specifically to cultural resources and programming. Among the duties of this position would be:

- Maintaining and archiving the extensive audio interviews and historic image collection
- Continuing research of property resources
- Expanding interview and image collections
- Conducting programs and special events related to cultural resources
- Implementing self-guided media related to cultural resources
- Oversight of traditional music programming at the Visitor Center
- Oversight of Moery Cabin programming, gardens and interior

III. Interpretive Programs

A. Roving

As mentioned under Staff, the dispersed site, the high use at the lake and the Visitor Center's location away from the lake makes roving interpretation a priority. Roving interpretation has the potential reach far more visitors than traditional programming. Additionally, a roving interpreter will provide an agency presence and serve both a public relations and deterrent function. The beach, boat ramps and other heavy-use areas provide opportunities for a roving interpreter. Bringing along a prop, demonstration or activity can create an opening opportunity to begin a dialogue.

It is recommended that roving interpretation continue to increase in priority over traditional programming.

B. Cultural Arts/History Programming

The recommended emphasis on expanding the use of the Visitor Center as a performance site, plus the addition of a Cultural Resources Program Specialist will result in increased cultural arts programming. This niche for Patoka will increase the regional and local involvement with the site. Programming emphasis should be on performances, demonstrations and workshops over traditional hikes and talks.

C. Special Events

In addition to roving interpretation, programming should place an emphasis on special events. Interpretation can be a bit player in a larger event (such as fireworks displays), or take the lead in organizing themed events.



IV. Interpretive Media

A. Wayside Signs

1. Totem Rock

An interpretive panel covering the geological, archaeological and historical significance of the site should be located at the site.

2. Log Roll-off

The log roll-off was the point at which logs were unloaded from wagons and rolled down an almost vertical slope to the Patoka River. There, the logs were tied into rafts and floated down the river to markets in Jasper.

A routed wood sign currently marks the location. A panel with more information and graphics illustrating the process would be appropriate. Unfortunately, the site is located on the bend of a narrow road with no shoulder for a pull-off. It is recommended to identify a safer nearby pull-off/parking location with a short connecting trail before installing a sign.

3. Signs at boat launch areas

The 3-panel kiosk at the beach covers the river, settlements and reservoir. These panels can be duplicated and placed at the Jackson SRA ramp, Lick Fork SRA ramp, Painter Creek ramp and the three ramps at the Newton-Stewart SRA.

B. Trails

1. Garden Rock Trail

Markers should be replaced with something more durable than routed plastic.

2. Wildlife Management Trail

The number of stops for this trail should be brought down to twelve stops maximum from its current 19. Keeping the focus on active management sites such as #6 Access Lanes, #8 Burn Area, #12 Setbacks and away from stops that are more general discussions such as #1 Rocks and #3 Animal Needs will make the trail guide more readable.

C. Oral History Tapes

Patoka holds numerous oral history interviews from individuals whose families resided along the river for generations. These interviews are on cassette tapes. It is very important that these tapes (now several years old) be transferred to a more durable format before they are lost forever. They provide not only a priceless historical record for future research, but can be used in a variety of self-guided media and programs.

Phase I	Phase II
Exhibit design and fabrication	Moery Cabin interior
Moery Cabin Gardens	Raptor Center
Campground Shelter check-in programs	Cultural Arts Specialist
Increased roving	Interpretive signs at boat ramps
Develop comprehensive cultural arts programming	Replace Garden Rock Trail signs
Totem Rock Sign	
Log roll-off sign	
Update Wildlife Management Trail and Brochure	
Convert oral history tapes to updated, archival format	

Phase I

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Project							
Exhibits							
Cabin Gardens							
Programs							
Totem Rock Sign							
Log Roll-off Sign							
Wildlife Mgmt. Trail							
Convert oral history tapes							

Phase II

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cabin Interior							
Raptor Center							
Cultural Arts Specialist							
Boat Ramp Interpretive Signs							
Garden Rock Trail Signs							