To Bluffton and
33
201
301
Rustic Oak
Shelter
Lodge Rec. 
Building
Park
Office
Service Area
Electric B
Youth Tent 
Campground

OUABACHE STATE PARK
4930 E. S.R. 201 • Bluffton, IN 46714 • (260) 824-0926
1,104 acres            Established 1962
12/2018
developing a game preserve. At one time the park was widely acclaimed as the “Greatest Wildfowl Laboratory in the United States” for its raising of pheasants, quail, raccoons and rabbits. One can still see remnants of their old pens along some of the trails.

By the early 1960s the game-raising program was phased out. In 1962 the park was designated Ouabache State Recreation Area, administered by the Division of State Parks. These days, other than the presence of some of the original buildings, the park’s appearance scarcely resembles that of its early existence.

In 1983, the State Recreation Area became a state park. Features include a modern campground, tennis and baseball fields, a 100-foot-tall observation tower, picnic areas, playfields, and boating and fishing on 25-acre Kunkel Lake. American bison, commonly known as buffalo, is located just north of the fire tower.

An asphalt bike trail, accessible at the entrance gatehouse, connects to a Rivergreenway Trail outside park boundaries and follows the Wabash River to the east edge of Bluffton. A 3-mile-long forested trail area is popular with hikers and joggers. The entire trail is approximately 3 miles long. Motorized vehicles of any kind are prohibited on the trail.

The Wabash River winds along the southern edge of the park, while County Road 100 South is the northern boundary. Many types of wildlife such as deer, fox and squirrels are free to roam along park roads and throughout the property. Motorists should watch for park visitors and wildlife. Please obey posted speed limits and drive cautiously.

**ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES**

**BEACH**—Free access beach open the Saturday before Memorial Day to no later than Labor Day.

**BISON EXHIBIT**—A 20-acre exhibit consisting of American bison in a natural setting.

**BOATS, CANOES, KAYAKS, PADDLEBOATS, BICYCLES**—Day or hour rental. Lifeguards available.

**BOAT RAMP**—Accessible on the east side of the lake, north of the beach. A lake permit is required to launch private boats. Only electric trolling motors, powered by no more than 12-volt batteries, are allowed.

**CAMPING**—Electric and primitive youth tent sites for approved groups only. Campground equipped with flush toilets, hot water and showers. Occupancy limited to 14 consecutive nights. Most sites will accommodate trailers. No full hookups, but water station and dump station available. Reservations available through the Central Reservation System.

**FIRE TOWER**—A 100-foot tower offers scenic views of the entire area. An adult must accompany children climbing the fire tower.

**FISHING**—Bass (restricted size), bluegill, etc. State license required. Contact park office for license purchases.

**HIKING**—Miles of moderate trails—no bicycle or vehicles of any kind permitted on hiking trails.

**INTERPRETIVE NATURALIST SERVICE**—Explore the world of natural resources while enjoying informative and recreational programs. Seasonal naturalist on staff. Program schedules at InterpretiveServices.IN.gov.

**IRON MIKE**—The men of CCC Company 1592 lived and worked at the Wells County Game Farm from 1935–40. The game farm became an Indiana State Park in 1962.

**LODGE RECREATION BUILDING**—Rustic design featuring fireplace, kitchen facilities and parking. Reservations up to 6 months in advance available through the Central Reservation System. Contact park office for details. No overnight stays allowed.

**PAVED BIKE TRAIL**—2½ miles, asphalt trail connects east end of park south of campground to town at 450 East and Bluffton’s Rivergreenway Trail.

**SHELTERS**—Two modern picnic shelters, one open shelter, many tables, and charcoal grills. Playground equipment is available throughout the park. Reservations for shelters are available through the Central Reservation System.

**SPORT FACILITIES**—Tennis/Basketball courts, both of which are equipped with lights. Sand volleyball, softball diamond with backstop, playfield, bocce ball court. All are available first-come, first-served.

**RULES AND REGULATIONS**

- Do not injure or damage any structure, rock, tree, flower, bird or wild animal. Do NOT gather limbs, brush or trees (either dead or alive) for firewood because they rebuild the natural humus.
- Any firearm (except lawfully possessed handguns), BB gun, air gun, CO2 gun, bow and arrow, paint gun or spear gun in possession in a state park must be unloaded or un-nocked and stored in a case or locked within a vehicle, except when owner is participating in an activity authorized by written permit.
- Dogs and cats must be attended at all times and kept on a leash no longer than 6 feet. No leash is allowed in designated areas.
- Vending or advertising without permission of the Department of Natural Resources is prohibited.
- Campfire permits are available in the park campground. Only wood-fired fires are allowed.
- Fires shall be built only in designated places.
- Please comply with the Carry In/Carry Out trash policy for approved groups only. Campground equipped with lights. Sand
- Drinking water is tested regularly for purity.
- All motorized vehicles shall remain on paved roadway. Snowmobiles and horseback riding are prohibited.
- For a complete list of rules and regulations, inquire at park office.

Please let wild animals remain wild. Feeding deer is prohibited. Feeding of wild animals can result in harm to both animals and people. Animals who depend on handouts from visitors are a danger to themselves. Please lock up all food and groceries inside cars or campers. Roll up car windows tightly.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Write: Ouabache State Park 4803 E. S.R. 201 Bluffton, IN 46714 Call: 260-824-0926 Fax: 260-824-0843 Online: ouabachesp.stateparks.IN.gov

**SPECIAL NOTE**

Receipt from admission and service charges are used to help defray the operation and maintenance costs of the park. List of fees available in the main office.

**CENTRAL RESERVATION SYSTEM**

Reservations for all types of camping, family cabins, and shelters at state parks, reservoirs and forests can be made online or by calling toll-free.

Call: 1-866-6campIN (1-866-622-6746) Online: camp.IN.gov Reservations for the Indiana State Park Inns and Inn-operated camps can be made online or by phone. Call: 1-877-lodges1 (1-877-563-4371) Online: IndianaInns.com

**DNR PROPERTIES NEARBY**

- **Limberlost State Historic Site**—The Limberlost marsh was the perfect laboratory for author Gene Stratton-Porter to study nature. At a time when most women were homemakers, Stratton-Porter created a lasting legacy of northern Indiana’s vanishing natural history through her writings and photos.
- **J. Edward Roush Fish and Wildlife Area**—Boating, boat ramp, fishing, hunting, camping, wildlife watching, shooting range.

Pick up an Indiana Recreation Guide for more information.

**TRAIL & DESCRIPTION DISTANCE DIFFICULTY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAIL</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>DISTANCE</th>
<th>DIFFICULTY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trail 1</td>
<td>1 mile Easy</td>
<td>Circles bison exhibit, starting at exhibit parking lot.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail 2</td>
<td>Begins at north end of campground. Winds north through pine plantation, then south along volleyball court and back east to campground.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail 3</td>
<td>1.5 miles Easy</td>
<td>Begins at the north end of the campground, travels east through magnetointact stand of oak and hickory, passes a woodland marsh and ends at the point of origin.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail 4</td>
<td>3 miles Moderate</td>
<td>Accessible from levee. Runs throughout interior of property, traveling through pines and hawthornes. Allows access to fire tower, lake and northern section of bison exhibit.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail 5</td>
<td>6 miles Moderate</td>
<td>The &quot;Ouabache Trail&quot; begins at the bison exhibit and circles the entire property, using portions of all trails. Trail 5 may be started and finished at any trail entrance. The trail will take you through virtually all types of trees and terrain available in the area. Several interesting footbridges dot the trail.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PLEASE STAY ON MARKED TRAILS.**

This area of Wells County was once occupied by the Miami, whose villages flanked the banks of the river that bears the name Wabash. Ouabache is difficult to spell but easy to pronounce, O-ba-chee. In 1829, the first settler built a cabin along the river, near the eventual state park site. After the Native Americans were removed to reservations in Kansas and Oklahoma during the 1830s and 40s, the area was rapidly settled and cleared for farming.

Ouabache was developed and operated as the Wells County State Forest and Game Preserve in the early 1930s. By that time the area had been cleared of most of its mature timber stands and, as a result, was severely eroded. The area gradually returned to a more natural state through the efforts of the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) and the WPA (Works Progress Administration) programs of reforestation and land management. Their major activities included constructing the various buildings and shelters of native stone and timber, planting for a nursery and

© 2018 Indiana Department of Natural Resources

**Ouabache:** A sandy plain located in eastern Wells County, Indiana. The area was once occupied by the Miami Indians, whose villages flanked the banks of the Wabash River. The land was later settled by European-American farmers in the early 19th century. By the 1830s, the area had been cleared of most of its mature timber stands and, as a result, was severely eroded. The area was subsequently developed and operated as the Wells County State Forest and Game Preserve in the early 1930s. This area is one of several state parks located in the region, which include the nearby Limberlost State Historic Site. These parks are part of the Indiana State Park System, which is managed by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The DNR is responsible for preserving and managing Indiana's natural and cultural resources, including state parks, forests, and recreation areas. The department also conducts research, provides education and outreach programs, and manages habitat restoration projects. The Ouabache State Park, located in eastern Wells County, is one of the state parks in Indiana. The park is situated along the Wabash River and includes a variety of natural features, such as wooded areas, playfields, and boating and fishing on 25-acre Kunkel Lake. The park also features a modern campground, tennis and baseball fields, a 100-foot-tall observation tower, and a 20-acre bison exhibit. The Ouabache State Park is administered by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, and is open to the public for year-round activities, such as picnicking, hiking, and wildlife viewing. The DNR provides information and resources to help visitors make the most of their experiences in Indiana's state parks and other natural areas.