

# The *J.D. Marshall* Preserve

Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the *J.D. Marshall* Preserve?

The *J.D. Marshall* Preserve is the first underwater preserve in Indiana. It is based around the *J.D. Marshall* shipwreck site. The ship sank on June 11, 1911.

## Why designate this as a State dedicated nature preserve?

State dedicated nature preserves are usually on land, but many include portions of ponds and lakes, and a few include entire lakes. Some nature preserves also include cultural features. Nature preserves can be established for a variety of reasons, and one of those reasons (per the Nature Preserves Act, IC 14-31-1) is to promote understanding and appreciation of cultural values by the people of the State of Indiana.

## What does it mean to be a nature preserve?

State dedicated nature preserves are given the highest amount of protection a tract of land can have within Indiana. The intent is to keep the preserve from any threats or conversion to another use. In this case, that means trying primarily to keep the *J D Marshall* in an undisturbed condition.

## Why protect a shipwreck?

Shipwrecks are more than just wood and steel beams. They tell an important story about past events and about the people who lived before us. They provide information regarding our economic, technological, and cultural history, and give us insight into early survival on the Great Lakes. Shipwrecks represent both archaeological and artistic values, and show us how the decisions we make today can affect future generations. If we preserve shipwrecks, they will be available for many to see and study for years to come.

## How big is the preserve?

The preserve is approximately 100 acres. It extends from the lake bed up to space.

**How will I know where the boundary of the preserve is located?** The boundary of the preserve will be denoted by seasonally-placed marker buoys at the corners and along the northern edge. In addition, the NOAA nautical charts will be updated to include the boundary.

## *J.D. Marshall* Facts

Vessel type: Canneler

Built: 1891 in South Haven, MI

Length: 154.5 feet

Width: 33.5 feet abeam

Draft: 12 feet

Weight: 531 gross tons

Purpose: Transport commercial and industrial

goods such as lumber, converted to a barge for sucking and hauling sand.

Fate: Capsized in a storm, reportedly hauling

1,000 tons of sand

Date Lost: June 11, 1911

On Board: Captain and 10 crew

Lives Lost: 4 crew members

Location: Porter County, Indiana Dunes State Park

Pictured: A southeast view of the *J.D. Marshall* shipwreck site.

## Can I still fish in the preserve?

Yes, paddling by canoe or kayak and fishing by boat with a draft less than 8 feet are both allowed; however, no anchoring is permitted by any vessels within the boundaries of the preserve for the protection of the shipwreck and surrounding debris field. DNR may place mooring buoys for fishing or diving (one boat per buoy permitted) within the boundary of the nature preserve. Use of the preserve for paddling and fishing are subject to preserve rules established by the Administrator and also subject to state fishing regulations.

### **Why can't I use my anchor in the preserve?**

The shipwreck extends above the lakebed, and anchors can catch onto important and fragile parts of the ship. Submerged cultural resources like the J.D. Marshall are nonrenewable. The damage could result in a permanent loss.

### **Are there other restrictions inside the preserve?**

Restrictions are designed to protect the shipwreck and debris field while allowing recreation on the surface to continue as it has in the past.

- Moving, removing, injuring, possessing, or attempting to move, remove, injure, or possess, a preserve historical resource is prohibited. Per Indiana Code 14-21-1, a permit is required to conduct archaeological field investigations of historic shipwrecks on state property.
- Mineral or hydrocarbon exploration, development or production is prohibited.
- Discharging or depositing any materials or other matter from within the boundary of the preserve is prohibited.
- Divers and snorkelers must follow requirements of current state law.
- Dive boats must be of no greater tonnage than the limit of the mooring buoy.
- Introducing or releasing an exotic species of plant, invertebrate, fish, amphibian, mammals, or physical objects into the preserve is prohibited.
- Marking, defacing, placing of any physical objects, or damaging in any way or displacing, removing, or tampering with any official signs, notices, or placards, whether temporary or permanent, or with any navigational aids, monuments, stakes, posts, mooring buoys, boundary buoys, trap buoys, or scientific equipment is prohibited.

### **If I want to dive, what do I need to know?**

If diving within the preserve, remember to display the diver's down flag, follow standard safe diving practices, dive within your limits and level of training, and know both the regulations that apply to diving within the preserve and the environmental conditions. Make sure you are familiar enough with the dive site that you are able to orient yourself with your dive buddy and your surface support or boat. The preserve has a flat sandy bottom with few underwater features for navigational reference. Also, after a rain or storm, underwater visibility is reduced by outfall from local rivers. Such reduced visibility can happen while you are underwater. Therefore, you should have an underwater compass to assist with navigating within the preserve and the J. D. Marshall. Most importantly, all items (cultural or biological) and ship structure are owned by the state of Indiana. Removal of any items is prohibited. Take only pictures and leave only bubbles.

### **Are there places where I can learn to dive in Lake Michigan so I can visit the J.D. Marshall Preserve?**

Contact a local SCUBA store for information and SCUBA training for diving within Lake Michigan. There are many stores in Indiana and adjacent states. Some stores offer special SCUBA training such as "Indiana Lake Michigan Diver" specialty SCUBA certification.

### **Is there a place where I can see images and information about the J.D. Marshall?**

J.D. Marshall information and artifacts are on display at the Indiana Dunes State Park Nature Center. Regular interpretive programs are also offered at the nature center. The propeller can currently be seen on the Indiana Dunes Historic Beach Pavilion's east side. The state park also has a brochure about the J.D. Marshall. The website [indianashipwrecks.org](http://indianashipwrecks.org) has historical information and historical and current underwater still and video images of the J. D. Marshall shipwreck and other Indiana Lake Michigan shipwrecks.

### **Who will watch over the preserve?**

The preserve is jointly managed by the DNR divisions of Nature Preserves, State Parks & Reservoirs and Law Enforcement through an intra-division management agreement.

### **What happens if I use my anchor or violate another rule in the preserve?**

Our goal is to make everyone aware of the regulations and enjoy voluntary compliance; however, violation of preserve rules could result in a verbal warning, a written warning, or a ticket. DNR Law Enforcement has enforcement authority. Any action taken would depend on several factors.

### **How many other shipwrecks are there in Lake Michigan? Are you planning to do the same thing with them?**

There are accounts of up to 50 shipwrecks within Indiana's 241 square miles of Lake Michigan. Of those, only 14 are in known locations. Additional underwater preserves will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

