

## Updates, Upgrades and Successes

### Indiana State Parks and Reservoirs for 2008



#### Brookville Lake/Whitewater Memorial State Park

- The Vietnam Memorial Moving Wall visited Whitewater Memorial State Park in September, drawing a crowd of over 10,000 visitors.
- Spooktacular Camping Weekend (Mounds SRA and Whitewater Memorial State Park) drew 2,310 participants in 2008 versus 1,129 participants in 2007.
- Walkways were replaced at the beaches at Whitewater Memorial State Park and Brookville Lake's Mounds State Recreation Area to provide better accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- Cabin 20 at Whitewater Memorial State Park received a new parking pad and cabins 6 and 20 received new walkways to allow better accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- Six cabins at Whitewater Memorial State Park had beds upgraded from full sized to queen sized mattresses to better serve the public's needs and comfort.
- In September, high winds associated with Hurricane Ike demolished the tent serving as the saddle barn at Whitewater Memorial State Park. Approximately 50 boats broke free from their moorings at Quakertown Marina and Fairfield Marina, were beached, and returned to their moorings through DNR employee efforts.
- A new foot bridge was constructed on the Templeton Creek trail at Templeton Creek (Mounds SRA) to allow safer crossings of the creek.
- The children's fishing pond in the Mounds SRA Campground was overhauled and improved for better fishing.

#### Brown County State Park

- Brown County State Park's Morel Mushroom Festival was hosted by park staff and the Friends of Brown County State Park, who purchase and sell mushrooms as a fund raiser. Tours, talks, music, food sampling and contests rounded out a busy (DNR INShape/Welcome Back Day) weekend.
- Successful fall events included the Friends Haunted Trail, Trick-or-Treat trail, campsite-decorating contest and pumpkin-carving contest in October.
- Two IU intern students volunteered at the park on property management, interpretation, & resource management projects.
- The Hardwood Ecosystem Experiment (HEE) program research continued at the park.
- The new indoor water park opened at Abe Martin Lodge.
- 2008 was a fantastic year for mountain biking in Brown County! Highlights included a Midwest Women's Clinic, the DINO mountain bike race with over 300 racers and friends/families attending and the Brown County Breakdown had 336 riders from a dozen different states.

#### Chain O'Lakes State Park

- Campground gate house got a new look.
- A vault toilet was improved to include a baby changing area.
- The new wastewater treatment plant was completed.
- A unique floating campfire program was offered on the lake for canoers and kayakers.

#### Charlestown State Park

- Two new trails were added in 2008:

- Trail 5. This moderate 1.2 mile trail is conveniently located in the campground near site 17. It descends a wooded ravine to a platform overlooking Fourteenmile Creek below. Non-campers can enjoy this trail, by parking in the overflow lot and hiking the .3-mile leg to the main loop.
- Trail 6. This rugged 2.3 mile scenic trail starts across the road from the Riverside Overlook and runs along the top of the river bluff, offering glimpses of the Ohio River, Twelvemile Island, and the boat ramp. A bridge crosses a natural waterfall and descends to the old Charlestown Landing site where locals used to send and receive goods by boat pre-1940's. From there it is a stroll back along the bluff bottom. During spring, look for an abundance of wildflowers.

### **Clifty Falls State Park**

- Clifty's primary accomplishment is found not in a new structure or a new service, but in a "recovery" ... from Hurricane Ike. Not since the Great Flood of 1937 has the Ohio Valley witnessed nature on a rampage on such a devastating scale. Most damage occurred from falling trees.
- For many the electricity went off shortly after noon on Sunday September 14. It stayed off an average of 5-6 days for most who lost power... from Leavenworth to Louisville to Madison and up to Cincinnati. Some were without power for nearly two weeks. Fortunately, damage to Clifty's physical buildings and other assets was slight. Clifty Inn and the nature center were without power for five days. The park office and campground lacked power less than 48 hours. In a gesture of support for area citizens, campground showers and toilets were opened to those awaiting restoration of electricity.
- Damage to the woodlands was horrific. Parks roads to the campground, office, Clifty Inn and the nature center were cleared of fallen trees within 48 hours. Not so for Clifty Canyon Road. Utilizing available park staff and double the normal compliment of Department of Corrections laborers the canyon rim road, including the north gate entrance and driving access to virtually all the canyon natural area, was cleared for reopening by Friday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, twelve days after the storm blew through.
- Visitors in 2009 will begin to see a thicker woodland understory along Clifty Canyon Road... the result of a good deal more sunlight reaching the forest floor.
- A significant accomplishment in Clifty Falls resource management began to unfold in 2008 with the copperhead tracking study undertaken by IUS. This two year study is examining copperhead range, distribution, and abundance on the property and will produce management recommendations.

### **Falls of the Ohio State Park**

- A designer has been selected and fund-raising is underway through the Falls of the Ohio Foundation for complete redesign and installation of state-of-the-art exhibits.
- Twenty new Naturalists at Heart, volunteers carefully trained to assist with events and groups at the park, were added to our program. About 100 regular volunteers provide assistance to staff.
- Thirteen successful special events (including Rock the Rocks) were hosted with a total estimated attendance of 3,274.
- Staff presented 106 workshops with attendance of 1,305.

### **Fort Harrison State Park**

- Eight area Boy Scout troops removed 6.5 acres of bush honeysuckle, an exotic invasive species, from the historic walnut plantation.
- Prescribed fire management was implemented on the natural areas of the golf course and in several other areas of the park. Trained staff assisted with prescribed fire projects on several other properties as well.
- Fort Harrison sent a team sawyers to aid O'Bannon Woods SP after hurricane damage closed many of the trails there.

- Several successful events included Casablanca night with The Garrison and Lawrence City Parks, the Indianapolis Symphonic Band, a Halloween event and a boat-in at Delaware Lake co-sponsored by Dick's Sporting Goods.
- We increased the volunteer base at Fort Harrison State Park with the help of the Museum of 20th Century Warfare.
- We plowed and planted ten acres of warm season grasses along the roadsides in late fall.

### **Hardy Lake**

- Friends of Hardy Lake purchased a new food building for the Dwight Chamberlain Raptor Center.
- Friends of Hardy Lake's non-profit status was approved.
- Hardy Lake's Raptor Days event was bigger and better than ever in its 8th year.

### **Harmonie State Park**

- A mountain bike trail is under construction with the assistance of volunteers who have logged hundreds of hours on this project. The beginner loop may be completed sometime in 2009.
- Volunteers have also logged hundreds of hours constructing a new horse trail, also expected to be completed sometime in 2009.
- Our interpretive naturalist held a spring and fall wild edibles workshop. They were both very successful and we plan to hold several more workshops in 2009.

### **Indiana Dunes State Park**

- Park-wide accessibility projects were completed, including new accessible boardwalk, Nature Center front deck, and a picnic deck alongside the boardwalk.
- The new Dunes Creek Nature Preserve was dedicated.
- New Universal Pictures movie "Public Enemies" featuring Johnny Depp taped in park.
- A Bird Banding Education Station was established at the Nature Center.

### **Lieber SRA (Cagles Mill Lake)**

- The Friends Of Cagles Mill Lake was formed and recently became an official group.
- An historical marker was placed and dedicated at Cataract Falls Covered Bridge.
- Successful events include continued school groups, a Halloween weekend event, Hunters' Rendezvous and Breakfast/Pictures with Santa, which grows each year.

### **Lincoln State Park**

- The Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Celebration was a priority in 2008 and will be again in 2009. This included
  - Indiana's Signature Event on Mother's Day weekend when over 7,000 Boy Scouts and visitors camped and participated in events and a ceremony at the Lincoln Amphitheater with Governor Daniels.
  - The paving of the park road from front gate to Lincoln Amphitheater and the amphitheater parking lot.
  - Administration of the Lincoln Family Album exhibit, which is traveling around the state.
  - Groundbreaking and planning for the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Plaza, which will be dedicated in June 2009 as a lasting memorial to Lincoln and the bicentennial year.
  - Renovation of the Lincoln Amphitheater in preparation for the new drama called "Lincoln" which will premiere on June 12, 2009.
  - Renovation of the bathhouse and accompanying infrastructure in Gobbler's Run Campground.

### **McCormick's Creek State Park**

- Rerouted a portion of trail 5 and constructed a terraced staircase near Wolf Cave. This was completed to reduce erosion and provide a better hiking trail.

### **Mississinewa Lake**

- Held the 3rd Mighty Mississinewa Triathlon Event in September with over 300 participants and 150 spectators. Over \$6000 was generated for the Indiana Natural Resources Foundation for Mississinewa land acquisition.
- Autumn Camping Weekends with programs filled campgrounds for two consecutive weekends and also drew lots of local residents.
- A new precast vault toilet was installed near pond cabin/disc golf course.
- A new walking/hiking path was constructed from the Interpretive Shelter to the front campground gate and playground area. This gives patrons a place to walk instead of using the road.
- The gravel floor in Beach Shelter was replaced with a new concrete floor and lights were added.

### **Monroe Lake**

- A new overflow parking lot for the boat ramp was created.
- Construction began on new docks for rental customers.
- Flood recover occupied a significant amount of staff time, funding and materials.
- A Corn Hole tournament attracted 60+ teams and more than 300 spectators and the Fall Weekend continues to grow.

### **Mounds State Park**

- The swimming pool was renovated, including the addition of splash pad and a tube.
- Removal of a 20 year old stand of bush honeysuckle near campground was started.
- Trail maintenance was performed through several Eagle Scout projects.

### **O'Bannon Woods State Park**

- Construction began on a 1-mile universally accessible trail using donations and grant funding.
- The gravel parking lot at the swimming pool was paved.
- The property's mechanic shop and wood barn were re-roofed, and new wood storage building was added in the interpretive pioneer farm area.
- Construction began on a new, large shelterhouse.
- The HVAC was replaced in Wyandotte Cave.
- Two new young oxen were acquired from Maine for operation of the haypress.

### **Ouabache State Park**

- Camping - After a long planning and waiting period, a construction contract to electrify our 47 site Class B, non-electric campground broke ground in early December. Reservations for these sites in 2009 are being delayed until the project is closer to completion. Demand for electric sites here has always been strong and it is hoped that additional electric sites will result in increased occupancy and camper enjoyment as a result of the upgrades.
- The first annual WOOF (Wells Outrageous Ouabache Fifteen) trail run was held in November. Runners totaled 133 for the 15-mile race consisting of 3 laps of a designated park trail layout.
- The Fall Festival Weekend brought nearly 100% occupancy to the campground. Outdoor activities, campside decorating and hayrides were popular activities.

### **Patoka Lake**

- Comfort stations are being rehabbed and upgraded.
- New courtesy docks are being installed.
- Great events included the Fall Get Away, Fireworks on the 4th of July, and Eagle Watch Weekend.

### **Pokagon State Park**

- Pokagon's Group Camp, Camp Mitig, received an upgrade in 2008 with the remodel of the Counselors Cabin. This overnight facility sleep fourteens. The building was gutted and completely remodeled with new windows and interior pine siding. It was insulated and a high efficiency furnace was installed for use during the busy winter season at Pokagon. The comfort station at Camp Mitig also got a new energy efficient furnace and glass block windows. The parking area was expanded and improved.
- The toboggan tower was painted along with many other buildings through out the park.
- At the Potawatomi Inn, a new tile floor was installed around the whirlpool and inside the sauna.
- Two new events were initiated in the summer of 2008, a Bicycle Rodeo and a Dogs Day of Summer.

### **Potato Creek State Park**

- A larger culvert was installed where the horse trail crosses Potato Creek in an area that has caused the horse trails to be unusable during periods of flooding. This was a cooperative effort in partnership with the St Joseph County Drainage Board.
- Two areas of the bank of Worster Lake were stabilized to stop serious erosion problems. One of these projects was completed by the Friends of Potato Creek and the other utilized the DOC labor crew. Materials for both were paid for by the Friends of Potato Creek group with funds acquired in part from a grant from NiSource. These projects will improve the water quality and protect the areas from deteriorating further.
- The roof line was extended over the entryway to the restrooms at the Nature Center to prevent ice build ups on the walkway below the old roof drip line, eliminating a serious safety issue for winter access to these restrooms.
- Three gatehouses were re-roofed as part of the ongoing care and upkeep of the park's facilities.

### **Prophetstown State Park**

- A seed harvest program was initiated for prairie grasses and wildflowers.
- Three miles of fencing and fencerow trees were removed and prepared for 2009 prairie plantings.
- A large gravel bluff restoration project began that will be part of the recently-dedicated Prophetstown Fen Nature Preserve.
- Thirty-five acres of tall grass prairie and wildflowers were planted and three acres of prairie fen were restored along Trail 2.
- Ten trail benches along the bike and hiking trails with the assistance of a Boy Scout.

### **Raccoon SRA/Mansfield Mill**

- A new bathroom facility was constructed near the amphitheater that has enhanced the visitor experience during programs and when leaving the campground.
- The main dump station has been renovated to allow better access for campers leaving the campground.
- The park assumed operating responsibility for the beach concession stand. This has improved the quality of goods and services available to our visitors.
- New shower fixtures were installed in the beach house. In addition to fixtures, the interiors of both men's and women's changing areas were refurbished.

- Raccoon and Turkey Run partnered to present an entire weekend of the annual Eagles In Flight program. We had nearly 200 participants and produced over \$1,500 in revenue from the program fees collected.
- Raccoon hosted our first annual Introduction to Archery program and shoot at the archery range. The program was attended by 17 individuals. This is a modest start but we hope that each year the program will grow and introduce new participants to the sport of archery.
- As always, the Covered Bridge Festival allowed us to showcase the Mansfield Mill to an overwhelming number of visitors and enhance the public's appreciation of the cultural history of Indiana.

### **Roush Lake**

- A new hiking trail, called the Lone Wolf Trail was developed next to the youth camping area.
- The mountain bike trail received maintenance and improvements.
- A new wildlife marsh was developed in Resource Management Unit 24.
- New asphalt roads were completed in both Kilsquah SRA and Little Turtle SRA.
- Row boats were installed for rental at the beach.
- The bathhouse at the beach was renovated.

### **Salamonie Lake**

- We opened a 4.5 mile addition to the Bloodroot Mountain Bike Trail in Lost Bridge West. This is a technical loop more challenging to bikers.
- Comfort Station #3 in the modern campgrounds was demolished and a new comfort station is being constructed to replace it.
- Levees were repaired on six property wildlife ponds and marshes.
- A second dumping station was installed to accommodate more campers as they leave and to improve traffic flow in the campgrounds.
- Ten acres in wild areas were added to tenant farming contracts and improve wildlife habitat.

### **Shakamak**

- The fishing pier in Lake Shakamak was rehabbed and reopened.
- Significant campsite improvements were made.

### **Spring Mill State Park**

- The Butternut Restroom at the entrance to the Pioneer Village was completely renovated in-house with new concrete, wall covering, lights, and plumbing at a significant savings to the state.
- Trail 6 was resurfaced.
- New flat screen TVs were installed in Spring Mill's Inn rooms.
- Four new rotating exhibits were developed in the Nature Center, and kid's area under development.
- The Nature Center program room was renovated, including a new floor, walls, roof, and lights.
- Trail 5 was re-opened with a newly constructed bridge.

### **Summit Lake State Park**

- A new comfort station was constructed.
- Two roof projects were completed, the office/maintenance building were painted and comfort station walls were resurfaced.
- Significant exotic plant control was completed in partnership with the Redtail Conservancy and an Audubon Society chapter.
- Corrected shoreline erosion, included saving two points, one of which protects the beach.
- The beach trail was upgraded and made accessible.

## **Tippecanoe River State Park**

- A new entrance sign was installed.
- A major flagstone repair project at Camp Potawatomi, one of the WPA group camps, was accomplished.
- An inholding called the Hilgemeier property was purchased and plans are underway for management of the site.

## **Turkey Run/Shades State Park Complex**

### **Turkey Run:**

- A collaborative partnership among the Rockville Rotary, the Friends of Turkey Run and Shades State Parks and Turkey Run enabled the construction of a new amphitheater near the nature center. The Rotary and the Friends contributed money, and both groups helped in the construction.
- The Halloween Camping Weekend was bigger and better than ever this year, filling the campground to capacity, and with attendance in the hundreds for programs like the after dark Monster Egg hunt and the Haunted House.
- The Eagles In Flight weekend at Turkey Run Inn was a resounding success. Only in its first year, attendance topped out at over 200. Attendees enjoyed guided tours of an eagle roost site and several nest sites, and were treated to 2 live raptor programs and an Owl Prowl.
- Turkey Run spent most of the summer cleaning up down trees after a series of severe storms, the first of which knocked out power to the park and Inn for an entire weekend.
- The invasive plant eradication continued with another 3-month project this past year. Staff are working hard to remove non-native plants from the park so that the forest can recover to a more healthy and natural state.
- Construction on the south wing of the Inn was completed after fire and water damage destroyed everything but the framework, and the Inn now has all rooms finished and open for guests.

### **Shades:**

- A new road was built at Shades State Park on what was formerly an airstrip, opening a section of the park for public usage that was formerly used only by a few pilots.
- The Shades Antique Tractor Show was well attended, and enjoyed by many visitors in the park. Competitive tractor games and a tractor parade through the park were among the high points.
- Oak wilt was discovered at Shades State Park by an observant staff member. Staff at the park collaborated with Purdue University and the Division of Forestry to remove the problem before it could spread throughout the park and kill the remaining oak forest.
- Ice and wood sales were introduced at Shades this year, much to the delight of campers!
- Deers Mill canoe access was destroyed during a flooding event this year. Park staff reclaimed the area, stabilizing the bank with riprap, and is working with IDOT to prevent future problems.

## **Versailles State Park**

- The 20th Anniversary Bluegrass Festival held October 2008.
- An extension of the mountain bike trails is under development.
- Significant Hurricane Ike storm damage was sustained, and the Hoosier Mountain Bike Association and the Ripley County Saddle Club were important partners in the clean-up.