

What's New in State Parks and Reservoirs - 2012

We hope you enjoy taking a look at some of the projects our staff completed in 2011. Most have a direct impact on the facilities you use and enjoy when you visit in 2012. Our special events calendar is filled with great opportunities for inexpensive fun and family memory making this year. Visit www.stateparks.in.gov for details.

You may notice that much of the work completed in 2011 did not involve the construction of new buildings or major infrastructure overhauls. Our division has over 2000 buildings, 600 miles of trails, 631 hotel/lodge rooms, 75 marinas, 16 swimming pools, 15 beaches, almost 8400 campsites, over 200 shelters, 160 or so playgrounds and 149 cabins.....that's a lot of maintenance, and in these tight fiscal conditions, most of our time and energy has been focused on basic facility care.

We have wonderful donors, partners and volunteers who help us accomplish a variety of projects. Our friends groups contributed thousands of dollars and hours for projects and events. The YHCC program brought us assistance again in 2011. And finally, we have creative and dedicated staff who do all they can to find ways to stretch the dollars that you pay when you enter the gate, rent a campsite, launch a boat or attend a special workshop or program. We want to provide you with a great experience during every visit!

Enjoy this snapshot of some of the work we did in 2011 – and know that there are hundreds of other projects and events that are not mentioned here that are also designed to manage and interpret the facilities, natural and cultural resources and history of Indiana's state parks and reservoirs.

Your Indiana state parks and reservoirs are a great value, both in cost and in serving as great places to get healthy, relax in the outdoors and create great stories and memories for the future. Get outside with your family and friends – you'll be glad you did. We'll see you on the trail in 2012!

Across the Division

- Improvements to our Central Reservation System include photos of campsites to help you decide which site you like best.
- We continue to maintain our entrance, camping and other fees at the same basic pricing structure we've had since 2006. For rate and fee details, see <http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2391.htm>.
- We challenge you to get your children, grandchildren or other kids you know outdoors this year, and help them check off the eleven important things we believe every Hoosier child is entitled to do. See more at www.childrenplayoutdoors.dnr.IN.gov.
- Our new SPR Go! (Get Outside) program offers discounts on the items you most like to buy each year, including annual passes, camping, state park inn stays, swimming pool passes and more. See <http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/7313.htm> for details.
- We will be able to better protect our campground shade trees and forests with the new firewood property rule. You can bring firewood from home only with bark removed, or you can purchase firewood with a state or federal compliance stamp. You may also bring scrap kiln dried lumber. Get your questions answered at www.firewood.dnr.IN.gov.



Brookville Lake/Whitewater Memorial State Park Complex

- A seaplane concession will provide rides and flight instruction on Brookville Lake (for information call 515-509-7027 or 812-654-3600).
- The interior of the Mounds SRA comfort stations have been painted.
- Nuisance animals (raccoons, etc.) were removed from Whitewater Memorial State Park, hopefully resulting in fewer campground wildlife encounters.
- Several ponds in resource management areas were renovated at Brookville Lake.
- A new trail was constructed at the Mounds SRA camp store.
- Several new johnboats, paddleboats, canoes and kayaks will be available at the Whitewater rental.

Brown County State Park

- Glassboard paneling was installed on the interior walls of the Horse Campground comfort station. The installation of this durable, low maintenance paneling will eliminate the difficulty of repainting this heavily used facility.
- The intermediate difficulty level Green Valley Trail, which connects to both the North Tower Trail and the Aynes Loop, is a 5-mile long addition to the park's mountain bike trail system that is now open. This addition makes a total of 25 miles of mountain bike trails in the park, and these trails have received international acclaim.
- The concrete floor is poured for a new shelter house to be built near the Nature Center. The Friends of Brown County State Park are funding the construction of this shelter, to be used for interpretive programs and special events.
- Members of the Indiana Heritage Corps have moved on-site and begun their service within Brown County State Park. The team will work until the middle of August on improving horse trails within the park.
- Wooden stairs and porch floors were replaced on two rustic cabins at the Abe Martin Lodge.
- Dozens of dead trees were removed along park roads to eliminate the possibility of them falling onto the roads and creating hazards for passing vehicles.
- Wooden signs and sign posts have been re-painted throughout the park.
- Efforts are underway, primarily with the help of volunteers, to combat the spread of invasive plant species in the park. Most of the focus thus far has been on controlling Japanese stilt-grass along the mountain bike trails and the park roads.

Chain O'Lakes State Park

- A new trail will open Memorial Day weekend. Trail 9 starts at the Stanley School House parking lot and encircles Kreiger Lake. This new trail is approximately a mile long, travels through a wetland, climbs a large glacial hill with vistas of long lake, and has a large beaver dam at the lake out let.
- "You are Here" laminated trail maps on posts were placed at trail crossing for better way finding on the trails. Ten trail benches were constructed from old recycled wooden park signs and placed at several scenic rest spots on the hiking trails.
- A program to reduce the number of Canada geese on the swimming beach that incorporates hunting, egg addling, and harassment has been successful. You don't have worry about where to step or throw down a blanket anymore.
- The main entrance boulevard has been enhanced with the removal of invasive plants and the sowing of native prairie plants and wild flowers.

- Three trail running events have been added to the schedule this year, including a 5K run/ walk sponsored by the Noble County SWAT team on June 2nd, the Nobleman Triathlon on August 4th, and the HUFF 50K trail run on December 29th.
- The gravel roads in the remote west end of the park that travel to the Miller/ Norman lake area and Youth Tent/Rally camping area were re-surfaced with hundreds of tons of new road gravel.
- The park's boat rental now has a total of 30 single kayaks for rent. Twenty brand new aluminum canoes were also purchased for the summer recreation season.
- A tile drainage system was installed in an area of the campground near comfort station number one that has historically been a trouble spot during times of heavy rain fall.
- The Emerald Ash Borer has not been kind to Chain O'Lakes campground. Seventy five large ash trees some more than thirty years old had to be removed from campsites. Some favorite campsites that were shaded are now in full sun.
- A digital video security surveillance system was installed at the park's entrance gate. This system has the capability to record vehicles entering and exiting the park 24 hours a day providing a higher level of security for our visitors.

Falls of the Ohio/Charlestown State Park Complex

- The Falls of the Ohio rotunda now features a kinetic sculpture and an open space reservable for events.
- The historic Portersville Bridge installation was completed over Fourteenmile Creek at Charlestown State Park, and guests now have access to the Rose Island area, which was a turn of the century picnic ground and amusement park. A brochure is available and regular hikes to the site will happen throughout the year.
- The McGee Cabin at the George Rogers Clark site is completed, and will interpret the history of the slaves owned and then working as indentured servants for General Clark.
- The new wing is completed at the George Rogers Clark Park boat ramp.
- A technology upgrade in Falls of the Ohio's library included a flat panel monitor for use with a video microscope. This will allow school groups to view fossils and other items up close and watch videos.
- Both Falls of the Ohio and Charlestown got a public wifi upgrade during the year.

Fort Harrison State Park

- The park has new multi-use (hike/bike) trails. The three mile Schoen Creek loop is already open with another 5 miles to be completed in 2012 in the Lawrence Creek area.
- New exhibits will be open in the park visitor center (park office) by Memorial Day weekend.
- A portion of the Fall Creek hiking trail has been rerouted, moving it from a floodplain to a sustainable hillside trail.
- Park visitors will be able to experience the sight of more warm season grasses and native wild flowers due to extensive resource management efforts. This will be most notable in the Millenium Grove Picnic Area, the Walnut Plantation area and roadsides throughout the park.
- Four new nature preserves were dedicated (Lawrence Creek, Bluffs of Fall Creek, Chinquapin Woods and Warbler Woods) totaling 640 acres.
- Fort Harrison will once again host the Hoosier Outdoor Experience on September 15-16, 2012.

Hardy Lake

- The south shelter house has been extended and partially enclosed. There is a new overlook as well.
- The accessible fishing pier at beach has been rebuilt.
- There is a new wildlife blind on Quick Creek marsh for wildlife observation/hunting.
- New exhibits were created at DNR building located at the Scott County fairgrounds.
- New gates have been installed at 3 wildlife management areas.
- A taller antenna was installed at campground gate for faster camper check-in.
- A new full-time security officer will be on staff this year.
- A new floor tile was installed in beach house.
- Sycamore Marsh dike has been repaired/rebuilt and now holds water.

Harmonie State Park

- The campground playgrounds have several improvements.
- Additional mileage continues to be added to the mountain bike trail; the total is now 5.5 miles.
- Horse trails and bicycle trails received improvements.
- A new 1 mile trail was installed to a pioneer cemetery on the property.
- A new friends group is well under way, and is working on park projects for the summer – stay tuned!
- Dedicated two new nature preserves (Harmonie Hills and Wabash Border) totaling 579 acres.

Indiana Dunes State Park

- Restoration of Dunes Creek at the main beach parking lot is now complete, and a dedication will be held this summer.
- The beach boardwalk has now been reopened for campers traveling to the beach.
- The nature center watershed exhibit is complete and available to enjoy.
- A new culvert was installed near the Wilson Shelter, which should reduce the flooding in the area.
- A new wastewater treatment system developed by AlgaeWheel, has been installed in the park.
- Early stage prep-work has been done for a picnic area restoration project that will happen this fall.
- Additional invasive undergrowth clearing has taken place near the main entrance gate.
- Visitors will see new bridge on State Road 49 as they approach the park. These were built in the original state park architectural style.
- Animal Planet has confirmed the absence of Bigfoot in the park.

Lieber SRA (Cagle's Mill Lake)

- Improvements were made to the Covered Bridge Trail and the Eagle Overlook near Hilltop Shelter.
- Look for great poolside activities by the visitor center staff this summer, and enjoy the water slide.
- Ten new displays have been added at the visitor center, and the sensory garden has new plants thanks to the Friends of Cagle's Mill Lake.

Lincoln State Park

- Additions to the nature center include entrance and parking improvements, and establishment of the bird viewing area. A new barn owl mount is on display in the center as well.
- The Lincoln Amphitheatre features four new shows and a remodel this summer. More information is available at <http://www.lincolnamphitheatre.com/>.

- New windows, shutters and heirloom garden plants are in place at the Col. William Jones Home. Additional repairs/improvements will happen later this summer.
- The boat rental has new jon boats, canoes and kayaks available. Hayrides, another fun activity, will be available throughout the year and daily in season.
- A new playground is coming to the family cabin area this year.
- Group camp reservations are now much simpler – they can be made online as well.

McCormick's Creek State Park

- Hillcrest Shelter and the B Loop comfort stations both received interior remodels this winter.
- A spur loop was added to trail 9 that allows visitors to trek past the historic Peden Farm Site. Interpretive signage has been placed at the site to explain its history, and the springhouse foundation is being restored thanks to support from the Friends of McCormick's Creek.
- A new liner is being installed in the Canyon Inn pool
- The tennis courts are being resurfaced.
- A new bridge is being constructed in the Trail 5 bottoms to replace the one that was destroyed during the flood of 2008.

Mississinewa Lake

- The water tower has a new access door, new paint and the property's name installed.
- About 35% of the campground pads now have new stone to increase pad size. This project will continue throughout the summer.
- New concrete sink that include vanity space will be installed in comfort stations 3 and 5 this spring.
- The men's shower room in comfort station 2 has new stall partitions.
- A playground obtained from Roush Lake will be installed at the beach this year.
- Restoration clearing and fire break creation is underway at Pearson Mill SRA by property wildlife staff.
- A new concrete walkway has been installed at the Miami Ramp courtesy dock, and a new sidewalk is in place behind the beach house.
- Campers will see a new Kubota ATV being used by security staff in the campground this year. It was purchased with donations from Mississinewa 1812.
- Large rocks/boulders will now protect and mark water and sewer valves and electrical components in mowed areas for a more natural look than previously used carsonite markers.

Monroe Lake

- The newly renovated Nature Center, located at Paynetown SRA, will open in May (the interior was completely destroyed by flooding in May 2011)
- Extensive interior renovations at Four Winds Resort, located at Fairfax SRA, will debut in May (fourwindsresort.com).
- A full-time interpretive naturalist (Jill Vance) added to the Monroe Lake staff will result in more extensive programming and special events, including offerings during the winter months.
- Bluebird and tree swallow nesting boxes at Stillwater-Northfork Complex are in the process of being repaired and replaced (thanks to volunteers from the National Turkey Federation and the Boy Scouts).
- Waterfowl blinds at Stillwater-Northfork Complex, destroyed by May 2011 floods, have been replaced.
- Three new, active, bald eagle nests have been located on the lake, bringing the nest count to eight.
- A new volunteer program for Monroe Lake is being introduced this spring.
- The hiking trail at Fairfax SRA has been rehabbed and benches added (thanks to an Eagle Scout).

- Control measures were implemented for three invasive species (purple loosestrife, autumn olive, and bush honeysuckle) at Crooked Creek SRA, Fairfax SRA, and the Stillwater-North Fork Complex.
- Numerous projects were completed throughout the property to recover existing facilities from the extensive damage that resulted from a record flood event in May 2011.

Mounds State Park

- A new seamless floor has been installed in pool bathhouse building.
- Several buildings have a new coat of stain.
- The last seven remaining gravel pads have now been paved.
- Dead/diseased trees were removed from campground.
- Several benches were constructed by Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and installed along hiking trails
- The park welcomes a new full-time interpretive naturalist (Dewayne Hook) for school groups, public programs, workshops and more.

O'Bannon Woods State Park

- More than three new miles have been constructed on the multi-use (hike/bike) trail.
- The recreation hall of the group camp has been re-roofed.
- Hundreds of hazard trees have been removed from the Section D of the modern campground, & over 500 stumps were ground.
- New aggregate was placed on the horse trail to the Breeden Property and on the Nature Center Spur. More than 50 miles of horse trails were cleaned of debris and trash by volunteers.
- Remediation of the group camp facilities is underway.
- The Young Adventurer Series continues this year at the Nature Center.
- There will be special guest lambs on the farm/in the pioneer village through the spring/summer.

Ouabache State Park

- The bison enclosure has a brand new fence and brand new posts – they're ready for viewing! Half the enclosure will be planted with warm season grasses in May, which will eventually more closely simulate how bison might have been seen moving through the prairie. The trail around the enclosure has been widened and graveled in several areas.
- Repairs have been made to the concrete walls of the swimming pool and it got a new paint job, too.
- By the end of summer all telephone poles will be removed from the park. Many are already gone.
- A new bridge has been constructed for trail #5 and will be installed as soon as conditions permit.
- A new campground store will be opened and operated out of the pool concession building.
- A new friends group is being organized to support the park.
- Several lengths of trails that hold moisture have been graveled.
- The tennis and basketball courts have received a new coat of sealant.

Patoka Lake

- A new, non-releasable eastern screech owl is now housed at the Patoka Visitor Center.
- The Corps of Engineers has worked hard to ensure water levels are lowered this spring to prepare for the seasonal rains – look for sand at the beach!
- A new hiking trail map has been developed to help guests using the large hiking area behind the Visitor Center, and the hiking trailhead map has a new roof.

- New ventilation has been added to the modern campground shower facilities to keep them cooler in the summer.
- A smokehouse is being added near the Moery Cabin. This structure allows the staff to interpret early Patoka River history.
- Improvements have been made to several fishing piers.
- Hiking trails have been cleared from last years severe spring storms.
- More asphalt mileage on the bike trail has been replaced with concrete.

Pokagon State Park

- Due to the removal of over a thousand mature, but dying, Emerald Ash Borer-infected ash trees, the park will look a little different. There will be some openings where there once big trees towered. In their place will be smaller trees that will be planted in the Arbor Day month of April.
- Through the generosity of a Boy Scout Eagle project, the Nature Center front lawn is sporting a new program area of natural, hewn logs and a relocated fire ring and newly planted tulip trees.
- New last year, this second year will see the purple martin gourd racks located for better visibility and monitoring of nesting purple martins!
- This past winter, staff discovered the roosting hole and likely nest cavity of a pair of pileated woodpeckers near the Nature Center. This will provide hopeful hours of viewing enjoyment.
- Many improvements have been made in the 1940's historic cabins at the Potawatomi Inn.
- Group campers will continue to see improvements to the landscaping and buildings at our 1930's-built, historic group camp, Camp Mitig.
- By summer, we hope to have the locations of the building sites of the CCC Camp that stood near the Nature Center from 1934 to 1942, marked with corner posts and interpretive signs. A brochure will lead history enthusiasts on a walk through the time over this special site.

Potato Creek State Park

- Accessible Cabin #8 received a makeover with a walk-in shower, tiled floor, and wider door widths.
- New tub surrounds are in place in the 17 family housekeeping cabins, and several cabin floors were rehabilitated.
- Hitching rails have been repaired in the horse campground.
- A new cabin loop trail provides easy access between cabins without having to walk the road.
- Several new boats, kayaks and paddle boats will be available at the boat rental.
- The park is now providing year-round access to firewood for visitors.
- The Whispering Winds West shelter house was renovated, and nearby shoreline was stabilized.
- A half court basketball court was added in the family campground.
- The mountain bike trail was extended 8/10 of a mile.

Prophetstown State Park

- A two year remediation project will be coming to a close early this summer as the final planting of plant plugs and trees take place along the Wabash River on the east end of the park. Visitors can expect great things as these areas return to what we think they looked like before settlement.
- US Aggregates, formerly Vulcan, has installed a tunnel beneath Swisher road to allow mined material from state property on the south side of Swisher to be transferred to a processing area. This is the very first stage of the creation of a lake for the park.

- The interpretation and programming related to Native American heritage at the park, including the Native American Village, that formerly operated under Historic Prophetstown has been transferred to the state park (DNR).
- A new full-time interpreter (Angie Manuel) will be offering not only Native American programs, but a variety of other programs throughout the year. School groups are welcome to schedule field trips, too.
- Historic Prophetstown will be offering a variety of programs related to the farming practices of the Wabash Valley area...the time when the steam engine met the draft horse.
- Stay tuned for a new hiking trail this summer that will take the visitor to the area where the two rivers meet. This trail will also allow a visitor to see how our fen is formed and overlook a large restoration project in the lower floodplain area.
- Park staff will be planting a large area near the campground this spring that will serve as a ball field or an open grassy area for other activities.
- We welcomed District 3 of DNR's Law Enforcement division to the park office and expanded our conference room to allow space for interpreter programs and more meeting space.
- Spring resource management prairie burns mean that visitors may notice large areas of "black" for short periods of time; the park will continue toward a goal of two-thirds of the park in native prairie by planting more areas this spring.

Raccoon SRA (Cecil M. Harden Lake)

- The boat rental area and main ramp east seawall have been rehabilitated.
- Guardrails have been installed at the Mansfield boat launching ramp.
- Fish Attractors were installed near various public fishing access sites on the lake.
- Staff finished up the rehab/reglazing of the first floor windows at Mansfield mill.
- Two pull-through sites were developed in Raccoon SRA's Songbird Campground (sites 54 & 55)
- Security gates were installed at both state boat docks at main ramp
- The Hollandsburg Boat Ramp has been renovated.
- The first phase of INDOT's repaving of the main property road has been completed.
- A new, permanent part-time interpreter (Michelle Swick) is on board with programs this year.

Salamonie Lake

- Lost Bridge West campground has new 3-phase power and two newly replaced transformers, which should result in fewer electrical problems in the campground this season.
- General maintenance and upkeep projects, including painting and cleaning should make facilities ready for summer visitors.
- Grassland restoration in Resource Management Unit 19 and wetland repairs in Unit 24 will provide better watchable wildlife opportunities for guests.
- Unit 19 pond repairs and Unit 22 wetland repairs will increase opportunities for hunters, as will repair work to Majenica Marsh.

Shakamak State Park

- Rental cabins B and D have new flooring and fresh paint.
- The log cabin (rental for meetings, picnics, weddings, etc.) has a new cedar shake roof.
- Several campsites were repaired and improved with gravel pads.
- New mulch and border is being installed playgrounds.
- Several new paddle boats and jon boats will be available for rent.
- The Shakamak Prairie Nature Preserve was established.

Spring Mill State Park

- Three new full-time staff (interpretive naturalist, account clerk and laborer III) are getting started to work in the park.
- A new shelter house for youth tent site C is now available.
- The park is now operating the pool and pioneer village concession stands, so look for new menu items this year.
- Park staff continue to remove ash trees from the campground due to infestation by the emerald ash borer (please follow our firewood rule this summer!)
- Look for more activities at the swimming pool for families this summer!
- The camp store has new siding, and a new fire ring for folks waiting for hayrides in on Friday and Saturdays.
- Spring Mill Inn accessibility improvements include three renovated rooms on the first floor with a ramp to improve access, main lobby restroom renovations, a new elevator and powered exterior door to dining room.

Summit Lake State Park

- Park restrooms, including the beach house, are getting a face lift.
- Property staff and local volunteers and partners have removed significant amounts of autumn olive and other invasive plants.
- All buildings got new roofs this year.
- A power upgrade has been provided in campground A
- Water heaters and the fish cleaning station have received upgrades.
- Parking lot repairs were made throughout the park.
- A new campground control station is being constructed on the main road near the campground entrance.

Tippecanoe River State Park

- A newly organized friends group will allow people to assist the park and become more involved.
- New campground directional signs are being added to our family campground and the site posts currently in use will be removed.
- Souvenir Tippecanoe River t-shirts, hooded sweatshirts, post cards, and refrigerator magnets are now for sale in the park office.
- The north road has been widened in one location and will soon have new pavement.
- The Smokey Bear sign was refurbished after many years of greeting visitors at the front of the park
- All the buildings group camp area #3 were given a fresh coat of paint.
- New stone was installed at all the hitching rails in the horse camp.

Turkey Run/Shades State Park Complex

- There is a new log honeybee hive at the Nature Center, offering a peek inside a natural beehive.
- The Lusk Heritage Garden, located behind the Salmon Lusk Home, is a sample of a northern Indiana kitchen garden, showcasing only those herbs and vegetables grown here prior to 1860.
- All new feeders attract birds and squirrels in the wildlife observation area at the nature center.
- New sidewalk lights have been installed on the approach to Turkey Run Inn
- Two of the inn cabins received new siding, and all their exteriors have been repainted.
- The dining room floor in Turkey Run Inn was refinished.
- A new CXT vault toilet was installed in the Pine Hills parking lot at Shades State Park.
- Several trail structures were rehabbed at Turkey Run and Shades State Park.
- The mechanical system for Turkey Run's olympic pool has been rehabbed which will provide better water quality for our guests.
- All primitive toilets at Turkey Run have all been rehabbed.

Versailles State Park

- The main entrance gate has been renovated and has a new look.
- Exterior renovations were made to the campground comfort station.
- The park is beginning a cooperative effort to develop a horseman's campground at the location of the old saddle barn with the assistance of volunteers.
- Former saddle barn ride trails have been opened to day-use horse riders.
- Park playgrounds have been resurfaced.
- The Hoosier Mountain Bike Association and the Indiana Trail Riders Association have completed several trail reroutes and maintenance to mountain bike and horse trails respectively.
- There have been water line and sewer line improvements in the park.
- Improvements were made to several campsites, including adding additional dirt, grass seed, and straw to help remove standing water. Trees were removed from a number of sites to provide area for tip-outs for camping units and better living area for tents and a dining fly.