

McCORMICK'S CREEK CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE

TO COMPLETE THE CHALLENGE:

- 📍 Visit 7 of the 10 stops.
- 📷 Take a photo at each.

On July 4, 1916, Indiana citizens were gifted McCormick's Creek as their first state park on Indiana's centennial birthday. This challenge explores the park's unique geology and history that inspired the idea of state parks.

You may complete the challenge in one or more visits. Show your photos to an interpretive naturalist at the Nature Center to get your commemorative sticker. If the Nature Center is closed, email your photos and mailing address to SPContests@dnr.IN.gov, and your sticker will be mailed to you.

1

Canyon Inn



Rated: Accessible

Best Routes: Drive and park at Canyon Inn, follow the paved sidewalk to the front of inn.

Learn about Indiana State Parks' first inn by reading the sign in front of the inn. Step inside to sit by a fireplace or have a delicious meal on the porch.

2

Amphitheater

Rated: Accessible to the top of the amphitheater

Best Routes: Drive and park at Canyon Inn, follow the road to the amphitheater just a short way from the inn.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt implemented many programs through the 1935 Emergency Relief Appropriation Act. These programs, including the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Works Progress Administration (WPA), put men to work during the Great Depression. One of the highlights of WPA work here is the amphitheater completed in 1936.

If you seek more...try to find one of the hidden patterns in the stonework.



◀ Continue your journey inside

McCormick's Creek State Park
250 McCormick's Creek Park Rd.
Spencer, IN 47460
812-829-2235
on.IN.gov/mccormickscreekspace

- @INdnrstateparksandreservoirs
- @indianadnr
- @INDNRstateparks

Enjoyed the challenge?
Consider donating to Indiana State Parks to support interpretive programs! Donate to the "bluebird" donation box or see other ways to give at:
on.in.gov/INStateParksDonate

- Check out other Centennial Challenges at these parks across the state:**
- Indiana Dunes SP
 - Turkey Run SP
 - Clifty Falls SP
 - Pokagon SP

DISCOVER THE RICH HISTORY OF YOUR INDIANA STATE PARKS



CENTENNIAL CHALLENGE

McCormick's Creek State Park

3 CCC Recreation Hall



Rated: Accessible

Best Routes: Drive and park at the CCC Recreation Hall.

Explore the Nationally Registered CCC Recreation Hall. It's the only building created by the CCC at the park that's in its original location in unaltered condition. Read the sign to learn how this was converted into Indiana's first nature center.

4 The Statehouse Quarry



Rated: 1-mile moderate hike on Trail 2

Best Routes: Drive and park at the CCC Recreation Hall, follow Trail 2 to quarry.

Explore the remains of the quarry where what was once considered the state's finest limestone was harvested to build the State Capitol.



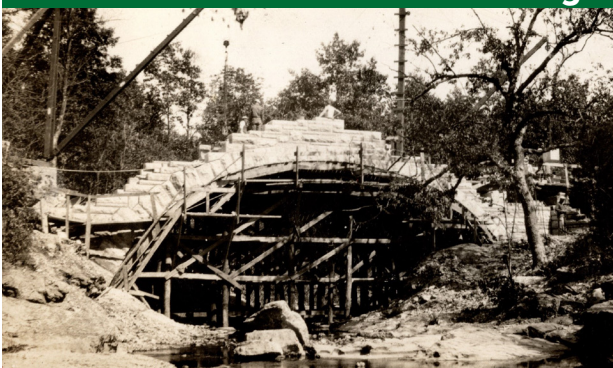
7 Fire Tower

Rated: 1.4-mile hike on Trail 4

Best Routes: Drive and park at Canyon Inn or park office, follow Trail 4 to the fire tower.

CCC Co. 589 constructed the 86-foot tower in 1935 to detect wildfires. In 1967, the fire tower was decommissioned and made available for public use. The Friends of McCormick's Creek restored the fire tower in 2019 by raising \$100K. Find more information on the sign and try climbing the 105 steps.

6 Stone Arch Bridge

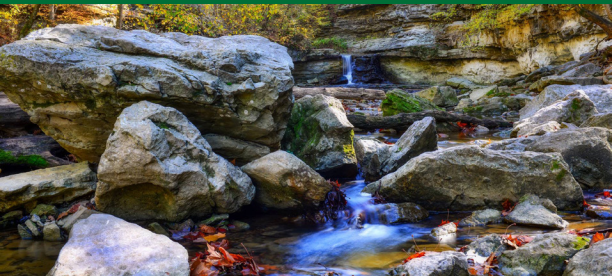


Rated: Accessible

Best Routes: Drive and park at the Stone Arch Bridge.

Built by the CCC in 1934 to span McCormick's Creek, this was the first stone bridge within park boundaries. Its distinctive keystone style of construction makes it entirely self-supporting. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1993.

7 Waterfall & Echo Canyon



Rated: Accessible

Best Routes: Begin your path at the Centennial Shelter, follow the accessible Echo Canyon Trail to two ADA waterfall lookouts. Mobility devices are available at the Nature Center.

While the limestone bedrock of McCormick's Creek formed over 300 million years ago, the waterfall didn't form until the last glacier passed over Indiana. As temperatures increased, the melted glacier flowed rapidly through McCormick's Creek, carving the deep canyon and waterfall that are the focal points of the park's geological history. This scenic view became the inspiration of Indiana State Parks.

If you seek more...park at the Waterfall Overlook lot and descend to Echo Canyon on the staircase to see the iconic view of the waterfall.

8 Birthplace of Interpretation



Rated: Accessible

Best Routes: Drive and park at the Nature Center; exhibit's inside the Nature Center.

Not only is McCormick's Creek Indiana's state park, it's also home to the first Indiana State

Park interpretive naturalist, Lucy Pitschler, who began leading nature programs in 1923. Today, Indiana State Parks has 27 year-round interpretive naturalists. Read more about Lucy in the Nature Center.

If you seek more...honor the 100-year-old tradition by attending a naturalist-led program.

9 Wolf Cave



Rated: 2.8-mile hike on trails 8 and 5

Best Routes: Drive and park at the Nature Center, follow Trail 8 to Trail 5 to reach Wolf Cave.

The Wolf Cave Nature Preserve was purchased by the CCC to cover a mistake after workers accidentally built a road on private property. After 90 years of conservation, the preserve was the finest example of mesic hardwood forest in Indiana. The forest succession was reset by a F-3 tornado in 2023. Take a photo at the Chronolog station to help document the nature preserve's recovery. Read the sign and Wolf Cave brochure for more information.

10 Peden Farm Site



Rated: 1.2-mile hike on Trail 9 or .5 mile on Farm Site Loop

Best Route: Park at Deer Run playground.

Just off Trail 9 are the remnants of a once prosperous farm owned by John McCormick's daughter, Nancy Peden, and her family. Walk past these remains and explore the Peden cabin homesite, springhouse, and barn. Read the sign for more details.