The Tippecanoe River was a major highway for this trade; both groups plied its waters. Settlement came slowly but inevitably to the area. In the 1830s, clearing, draining and farming of the lands was taking place. The Potawatomi were removed to a Kansas reservation. The land in the vicinity of the park was slowly cleared. Farming and grazing became the primary activity as most wildlife disappeared. The area remained this way until the Great Depression in the early 1930s. At about that time, the U.S. Department of the Interior, through its National Park Service, acquired about 7,353 acres of land in an area bordering Tippecanoe River and U.S. 35, approximately 5 miles north of Winamac, in Pulaski County. Most of the land, which has a high sand content, was not well suited for agricultural use. The area was called the Winamac Recreation Demonstration Area. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) developed most of the existing facilities at that time, under the direction of the National Park Service. In 1943, the land was transferred to the Indiana Department of Conservation for operation as a state park. On Jan. 1, 1959, 4,592 acres were transferred to the DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife and named the Winamac Fish and Wildlife Area. All of the 4,592 acres lie west of U.S. 35. The remaining 2,761 acres, which lie east of U.S. 35, are still part of the state park.

THIS IS YOUR PARK

Visitors shall observe the rules, which are designed to fulfill the purpose for which state parks were established, namely, to preserve a primitive landscape in its natural condition for the public’s use and enjoyment.

Please let wild animals remain wild.

Feeding is prohibited. Feeding of wild animals can result in harm to both the animals and people. Animals who depend on handouts become a nuisance to visitors and a danger to themselves. Please lock up all food and coolers inside cars or campers. Roll up car windows tightly.

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 in a vehicle, except when owner is participating in an activity authorized by written permit for that purpose.

Do not feed any wildlife. Dogs and cats must be attended at all times and keep a leash no longer than 6 feet. Be sure that dogs are vaccinated and are on a lease. Fencing or hedges shall not be allowed to enter or leave a state park without prior permission of the Department of Natural Resources is prohibited.

Swimming in Tippecanoe River is extremely hazardous. No swimming or wading. Take no chances.

Please call out all trash you produce in order to keep your park clean and beautiful for others to enjoy!

Tippecanoe River is extremely hazardous. 

No swimming or wading.

TIPPECANOE RIVER STATE PARK

This park offers some of the finest recreational opportunities in the state, featuring a unique natural area.

The land, which is generally level, drains toward the Tippecanoe River, which meanders approximately 7 miles along the eastern border of the park.

The park offers a variety of habitats, such as oak forests, pine plantations, prairie habitats, marshes and the river. An occasional small sand dune adds variety to the scenery.

An extensive trail network offers hikers a variety of terrain and vegetation. The 112 campsites include four that are accessible. All sites in the family campground are electric.

The Tippecanoe Recreation Building for day-use only is available mid-March through mid-October. In the 1600s and 1700s, this was the land of the Potawatomi. The early explorers were French fur traders or “Voyagers” who came from Montreal, Canada. They sought Native American encampments, eager to acquire beaver pelts in exchange for blankets, utensils and any other items to barter.

DESCRIPTION OF HIKING TRAILS

Trails 2, 4, 7 and 9 should be avoided during wet periods, as they will be cut to natural grass.

TRAIL & DESCRIPTION DISTANCE DIFFICULTY

1. Sand Ridge Trail 1.9 miles Moderate

Begins near fire tower parking area or waterfowl parking lot, leads to fire tower, and traverses sand hills. Connects to trails 2, 6, and 7.

2. Pin Oak Trail 4.7 miles Easy

Begins at fire tower parking lot. Short loop 1 mile through sand dunes and 5.7 miles mostly flat ground that can be muddy or impassable during wet periods.

3. Homestead Trail 1.4 miles Easy

Begins at trailhead parking north of entrance. Leads through oak and pine forest. Connects to trails 2, 4 and 5.

4. Oxbow Trail 2.3 miles Easy

Begins at river picnic area and leads along an oxbow lagoon, through low river bottoms, along the river, through pine forest, past electric campground, and back to picnic area. Trail may be flooded during high water. Connects to trail 3 and 5.

5. River Bluff Trail 4.2 miles Moderate

Linear trail that begins at trailhead parking north of electric campground entrance. Leads through oak and pine forest. Connects to trails 2, 4 and 6.

6. Barrens Trail 2.1 miles Moderate

Begins at lake parking area and follows a 1 past fire tower. Hillry and sandy. Opens through open barren areas and oak forests. Connects to trails 1, 7, and 9.

7. White Pine Trail 2.7 miles Moderate

Begins at fire tower parking lot, follows Trail 1, and turns right before reaching fire tower. Passes through pine and oak forests. Available mid-March through impassable during wet periods. Connects to trails 1 and 9.

8. Bluestem Trail 1.2 mile Moderate

Begins at Tippecanoe parking lot. Goes through Sand Hill Nature Preserve. Passes through oak forest, oak savanna, mature pines, and a small prairie. May be muddy or impassable during wet periods.

9. Bleak Oak Trail Moderate

Begins in horse campground. Travels through oak woods and sand hills. Connects to trails 7 and 10.

10. Sand Blowout Trail 8 miles Moderate

East of horse camp and day-use areas. Circles prairie and sand blowouts. Connects to Trail 9.

PLEASE STAY ON MARKED TRAILS.