

was constructing 15 barracks, a mess hall, an administration building and a recreation building to house the boys ranging from 18 to 28 years old, known as the Civilian Conservation Corps. These CCC enrollees developed the park through tree planting, native stone masonry and wood construction, road construction and path work, watershed and erosion controls, and water construction projects. President Franklin Roosevelt's "tree army" also joined artisans in constructing buildings and shelters. Most of their original work is still present throughout much of Versailles State Park.

During fall 1937, Company 596 was pulled from Versailles to work in Oregon. By April 1943, the National Park Service deeded the property to the state of Indiana, and the "Versailles Project" became Versailles State Park, Indiana's second-largest state park. Today the park includes 5,988 acres.

Construction of Versailles Lake began in January 1954. Using prison laborers, the 230-acre lake was built as an area water supply and recreation outlet, opening to the public for boating, fishing and swimming in June 1958. New facilities and features have been added to the park over the years. A swimming pool complex, complete with a waterslide, opened in 1987. As a result swimming in the lake is no longer permitted.

Running directly through the park is Laughery Creek, named after Col. Archibald Lochry, a Revolutionary War soldier. In 1781, Col. Lochry and his men were traveling down the Ohio River to meet with George Rogers Clark at the Falls of the Ohio. Before they arrived, the soldiers died in a battle with Native Americans where Laughery Creek enters the Ohio River, just south of Aurora.

An abundance of history lies below the park's surface. Over time Laughery Creek has cut its way through Silurian reef limestone, creating rugged cliffs and exposing fossil-rich, 475-million-year-old Ordovician rock. Throughout many of the park's creeks, hikers will find fossils, including bryozoans, brachiopods, corals and crinoids. Numerous sinkholes and associated springs point to an extensive underground drainage system that dominates the park.

The park's beautiful hardwood forests provide expansive habitats for songbirds and a variety of wildlife.

To learn more about Versailles State Park and the opportunities that the park provides, visit the Nature Center located near the lake. Its interactive exhibits prove to kids of all ages that a trip to Versailles can be both educational and recreational.

ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES

BOAT RENTALS—hourly or daily rental. Privately owned boats may be launched at the boat ramp. Only electric trolling motors, powered by no more than two 12-volt batteries, are allowed.

BRIDLE TRAILS—25 miles of bridle trails for day-use only. Horseman's Campground available for overnight stay. No horse rental available.

CAMPING—Tent or Trailer. Campground has flush toilets, hot water and showers. Each site has electricity and a fire ring. Occupancy limited to 14 consecutive nights. Reserve through the Central Reservation System.

CAMP STORE—Located adjacent to the Nature Center near the lake. Firewood available.

CONCESSION—Located at pool during pool hours.

FISHING—230-acre Versailles Lake. Bass, bluegill, catfish, and other small game fish. State fishing license required, available at the park office.

GROUP CAMP—Camp Laughery accommodates 120 persons. This complex includes sleeping cabins, kitchen with appliances, dining hall, shower house and recreation hall. Available April through October. Reserve through the Central Reservation System.

HIKING—More than 8 miles of hiking trails. Ratings for the trails are easy and more difficult. Hiking permitted on mountain bike trails.

INTERPRETIVE NATURALIST SERVICES—Hikes, educational and interpretive programs and evening activities are offered by a seasonal interpretive naturalist. Available three days a week from Memorial Day to mid-August. Natural and cultural history exhibits on display at the Nature Center. Program schedules available at InterpretiveServices.IN.gov or (812) 689-6424.

MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS—16 miles of trails. Hiking permitted on mountain bike trails.

PICNIC AREAS—Tables, grills, restrooms, playground and playfields.

SHELTERS—Reserve through the Central Reservation System.

SWIMMING—25-meter swimming pool, 100-foot waterslide, children's wading pool and "rainmaker," pool house with lockers, showers and concessions.

LAKE SWIMMING IS PROHIBITED
Swimming is prohibited in Versailles Lake.

BRADT NATURAL AREA

Enjoy the scenery of the eastern side of Versailles State Park, known as the Bradt Natural Area. Donated in November 2001, this is where the Bradt family resided and farmed in the 1900s. Although the structures in which they lived no longer exist, those 83 acres now flourish with native flora and fauna. Hike the 3.1 mile long trail through the southwest wooded area. Enjoy watching deer, squirrels, and many species of birds in their natural habitat. Take a stroll and visit the wetland area, which possesses a large body of water with surrounding cattails and aquatic plants. Location: 39°03'44.7"N, 85°12'21.2"W, S. Co. Rd. 300 E., Milan, IN 47031.

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 within a vehicle, except when owner is participating in an activity authorized by written permit.
- Dogs and cats must be attended at all times and kept on a leash no longer than 6 feet.
- Vending or advertising without permission of the Department of Natural Resources is prohibited.
- Camping is permitted only in the campground. No youth groups are permitted in the family campground.
- Fires shall be built only in designated places.
- Please comply with the Carry In/Carry Out trash policy in all day use areas. Overnight guests must put waste in receptacles provided for that purpose.
- Motorists shall observe posted speed limits and park only in designated areas.
- Swimming is limited to the pool, when lifeguards are on duty.
- Horseback riders shall ride on horse trails only. Horses are not permitted on hiking or biking trails.
- The park is closed from 11 p.m. until 7 a.m. No one is allowed entrance into the park between those hours, except anglers and registered campers at their site.

For a complete list of rules and regulations, visit the property office or go online at:

on.IN.gov/INStateParksRules

CENTRAL RESERVATION SYSTEM



Reservations for all types of camping, family cabins, and shelters at state parks, reservoirs and forests can be made online or by calling toll-free.
Call: **1-866-6campIN** (1-866-622-6746)
Online: **camp.IN.gov**

Reservations for the Indiana State Park Inns and Inn-operated cabins can be made online or by phone.
Call: **1-877-lodges1** (1-877-563-4371)
Online: **IndianalInns.com**

FOR MORE INFORMATION



Write: Versailles State Park
Box 205
1387 East U.S. 50
Versailles, IN 47042

Call: (812) 689-6424
Online: **on.IN.gov/versaillessp**
Mapping Address: Versailles State Park
1387 E. U.S. 50
Versailles, IN 47042



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

@INDnrstateparks and **andreservoirs** **@indianadnr** **@INDNRstateparks**

See everything Indiana State Parks has to offer at **stateparks.IN.gov**.

OUTDOOR INDIANA Subscribe to Outdoor Indiana magazine today, Visit **OutdoorIndiana.org** or call **317-233-3046**.

The programs, services, facilities, and activities of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources are available to everyone. DNR prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information please write to: Department of Natural Resources, Executive Office, 402 W. Washington Street, W256, Indianapolis, IN 46204, (317) 232-4020.

DESCRIPTION OF HIKING TRAILS

TRAIL & DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE	DIFFICULTY
1. Old Forest Trail Circles upland woods and ravines along the eastern bluff of Laughery Valley, featuring oak, hickory, maple, beech, tulip poplar, black walnut and other native trees. Look for limestone sinkholes along the way. Trail can be accessed from below, from the Old Fire Tower Road or near Oak Grove picnic area. Parents, please watch children at road crossings.	2.25 miles	Difficult
2. Orchard Trail Makes a figure 8 along the hill of the southern edge of Fallen Timber Creek/ravine. The trail rounds Campground A to near the CCC-constructed Oak Grove shelter, where Trail 1 can be picked up. Encircling Campground A, access can be made near Oak Grove picnic area, behind Trailside shelter, from several points in the campground, and from Fallen Timber bridge at the lake.	2.75 miles	Easy
3. Fallen Timber Creek Trail Begins north of Fallen Timber bridge and goes east along Fallen Timber Creek. Crosses the creek three times before joining Trail 2. Numerous invertebrates inhabit the creek bottom.	1.5 miles	Easy
4. Otter Trail	1.5 miles	Easy

Mountain bike trail maps are available at entrance gatehouse and mountain bike trailhead.

PLEASE STAY ON MARKED TRAILS.

DNR PROPERTIES NEARBY

Pick up an Indiana Recreation Guide for more information.

- **Crosley Fish & Wildlife Area**—boating, boat ramps, dog training, areas, fishing, hunting, target ranges, trapping, wildlife watching
- **Splinter Ridge Fish & Wildlife Area**—hunting, wildlife area
- **Selmier State Forest**—fishing, hiking trails, hunting

DNR Indiana Department of Natural Resources

INDIANA

VERSAILLES STATE PARK

on.IN.gov/stateparks

As the sun tucks away behind the picture-perfect backdrop of red, blue and purple clouds, the loud squawk of a great blue heron breaks the silence as it glides effortlessly over Versailles Lake. Anglers cast glowing bobbers to prepare for a night of catfish excitement as a family of raccoons eagerly searches the banks of Laughery Creek for crawdads.

Another family lights its campfire near the tent to enjoy a night of marshmallows and ghost tales narrated by distant owls.

This is just another day in the making at historic and rural Versailles State Park.

In August 1934, during the Great Depression, the National Park Service announced plans to develop a federal park on 1,700 acres of marginal Ripley County farmland. By fall, land was secured for the Versailles Recreation Demonstration Area, the first federal park in Indiana. The following January, more than 200 young men known as Company 596 arrived to begin work. The first focus

For a full list of events, visit **interpretiveservices.IN.gov**