

Sugar Creek Scenic River Designation and other DNR Files

1985-2001; 2004

Finding Aid

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Summary Information

Agency Name: Natural Resources, Department of. State Parks and Reservoirs.

Collection Name: Sugar Creek Scenic River Designation and other DNR Files

Collection Dates: 1985-2001; 2004

Extent: 1.7 cubic feet; 27 oversized folders

Restrictions: Open

Accession Number(s): 2024265

Record Series Number: 14849

Biographical/Historical Note:

In 1997, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) attempted to redesignate the Sugar Creek River as a "scenic river." This redesignation would allow the DNR to manage and conserve the river for public use. Those in favor of the redesignation complained that pollution and sewage was often dumped into the river and the littering problem around the riverbanks. They hoped the redesignation would make the State of Indiana maintain the river while also building features for activities like canoeing, hiking, and fishing. There was a much larger negative reaction from homeowners and private landowners who owned land along the river. Due to the river not being treated as a public utility, many parcels of land included sections of the river as a part of their deed. As a result, hundreds of people and landowners participated in a letter writing campaign and signed a petition to prevent the redesignation in fear of eminent domain being used to seize parts of their property. Landowners also feared that increased visitation to Sugar Creek could result in increased crime and littering.

The State Park division of the DNR began in 1916, with the help of Colonel Richard Lieber, who went on to establish state parks in other states. Lieber was a proponent of all state parks should charge small fees to allow themselves to be more self-sufficient and this practice is carried on today, with Indiana's State Park system leading in self-sufficiency.

Scope and Content Note:

This accession pertains to a 1997 attempt to redesignate the Sugar Creek into a "scenic river." These records include DNR studies on the plant and wildlife in the Sugar Creek area. Other records document community outreach efforts about the redesignation, including correspondence, memos, photos, minutes, newspaper clippings, negatives, projector slides, etc.

Records in this collection also includes miscellaneous agency records. These include brochures for hiking, bicycling, and snowmobiling. Additionally, there are maps that are associated with each type of trail. Also included are lease and contract agreements with private landowners who provided their land to be a part of the snowmobile trails from December through April each year. Oversized folders contain planning maps of different routes that were added to or expanded. There are slides of Walnut Creek and a cleanup operation being done at Wildcat Creek. There are examples of signage the DNR utilized on their bicycling and snowmobiling routes.

Arrangement:

Record Series 1: Sugar Creek Scenic River Designation. These records primarily detail internal documents inside of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) pertaining to different studies, memoranda, and email communications about the river designation. There are some maps in oversized that go with this series.

Record Series 2 are folders pertaining to the public perception and reaction to the DNR's attempted redesignation of Sugar Creek. The primary documents include a letter writing campaign against the redesignation citing fears of eminent domain and crowds of tourists ruining individual's private property located along the riverbank.

Record Series 3 are the various brochures and other public-facing information sheets the DNR used to

talk to the public about snowmobiling, bicycling, canoeing, and hiking. Included in this series are signage artifacts.

Record Series 4 is about various programs for conservation of various rivers that the DNR generated between the 1980s-2000s. The majority of the records pertain to the Wabash River Heritage Corridor and its various iterations. This series also contains projector slides.

Record Series 5 contains miscellaneous documents.

Box and Folder List:

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| Box 1 | Sugar Creek Designation files, correspondence, plans and studies, and misc. Brochures, 1974-2004 |
| Box 2 | Miscellaneous Files, 1974-2000 |
| Slide Box 3 | Big Walnut Creek and Wildcat Creek North Field Crew Cleanup, 1996 |
| Oversized Folder 4 | Transparencies Depicting Topographic of Sugar Creek, "Map of Flood-Prone Areas"; Montezuma, IN, Proposed Path bestriding Goshen, Bristol, and Middlebury, Buffalo Run Standing Sign Design and Instructions to Install, Blue River Signage Transparency, 1955, n.d. |
| Tube 5 | "Blue River Topography Maps," 1976 |
| Oversized Folder 6 | "Hoosier Bikeway System" Brochures Print Samples, Hiking Brochures and Information Sheets, "Hoosier Riverkeepers" Brochures and Information Sheets, Warren County Maps depicting potential bike paths, 1977, n.d. |
| Oversized Folder 7 | "An Analysis of the Recreation Potential of Wildcat Creek" Linear River Maps, 1978 |
| Oversized Folder 8 | "The Recreation Potential of the White River-Anderson-Muncie" Linear River Maps, 1979 |
| Oversized Folder 9 | "Property Maps of Big Blue River," 1979 |
| Oversized Folder 10 | "Little Calumet River Indiana" Design Plans, Three County (Lake, Porter, La Porte) Region Study Area Map, Snowmobile Trails Brochures Print Samples, 1981, n.d. |
| Oversized Folder 11 | Auditor's Plat Book w/maps and ledger, Missola Access Map and Information Poster, "The George Palmiton River Consultant Company" River Map, 1983; 1992; n.d. |

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| Oversized Folder 12 | Map of St. Joseph County, Map Depicting Trails near Bristol, IN, Maps Depicting Trails in Warren County and Clinton County, "Bridge over Geyer Ditch" Bridge Blueprint for Snowmobiling Trail, Printed out Transparencies of the Hoosier Bikeway System, "Exhibit B" Map depicting new trail connecting two old trails together near Goshen, IN, "Lakeville-Wakarusa Trail Master Plan," Large, Folded Topographical Map of Sugar Creek, 1983; 1989; n.d. |
| Oversized Folder 13 | Terre Haute Map w/proposed Bike Path Highlighted, Bicycle Roadmap, Map of Elkhart County w/red outline for trail, Map of Elkhart County w/red and blue markup depicting new trail, 1985-1987; n.d. |
| Oversized Folder 14 | "On the Banks of the Wabash," Hoosier Bikeway proposed by Stephen, Carolyn, and Jim Tucker, 1987 |
| Oversized Folder 15 | L'Esprit De Ouabache Print Samples, Heritage Snowmobile Trail Maps, "Wildcat-Wabash Recreational Waterways" Print Samples and Transparencies, 1986; 1993; n.d. |
| Oversized Folder 16 | Wabash River Heritage Corridor Plan, DNR Snowmobile "Regulations" Transparency for Signs, 1993; n.d. |
| Oversized Folder 17 | "Indiana Greenways Conference" Poster, 1999 |
| Oversized Folder 18 | Wildcat Creek Trails and Waterways Maps and Plans and Blueprints for Canoe Launch Area at Wildcat Creek, 2000 |
| Oversized Folder 19 | Snowmobile Brochure Transparencies, Wabash River Heritage Corridor Transparencies, 2004, n.d. |
| Oversized Folder 20 | "Outdoor Recreation, W-271, 232-4070, Dale Brier;" Salamonie, Miami, Potawatomi, Buffalo Run, Heritage Snowmobile Trails, n.d. |
| Oversized Folder 21 | Wabash-Wildcat Waterways Project Maps, Blueprints, Info Sheets, n.d. |
| Oversized Folder 22 | Subaru-Isuzu Offsite Drainage Map; "Typical Channel Section," Wildcat Creek Plot Map, Burlington Corp. Plot Map, Unfolded "Wabash-Wildcat Region Recreation and Bikeways Map" |

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| Oversized Folder 23 | Brochure, Potawatomi Snowmobile Maps and Transparency Maps, n.d. |
| Oversized Folder 24 | Wabash River Heritage Corridor Print Sample |
| Oversized Folder 25, N.D. | Posters and Finished Posters, n.d. Topography Map of Blue River, n.d. "Tippecanoe River Clearance and Snagging Map." "This River is a Part of Indiana's Natural and Scenic River System," Sign Transparencies, Indiana State Map Featuring County Lines and All Waterways Transparencies and Previous Iterations. |
| Oversized Folder 26, N.D. | |
| Oversized Folder 27, N.D. | Topographical maps of Sugar Creek. |
| Oversized Folder 28, N.D. | Transparencies/Blueprints for Signage and Signage Placement for Snowmobiling, Blue River Transparencies for Guidelines and Location. |
| Oversized Folder 29, N.D. | Indiana Riverways Poster Print Samples, artwork, and transparencies. |
| Oversized Folder 30, N.D. | "Wildcat-Wabash Bikeways and Recreation Area" maps depicting new bike and recreational trails along the Wildcat-Wabash River area. |
| Oversized Folder 31, N.D. | White River Topography Map on Poster board |