



INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT

2010-11-0275

August 31, 2010

INSPECTION OF BROWN COUNTY STATE PARK & T.C. STEELE STATE HISTORIC SITE

Inspector General David O. Thomas, after an inspection by Director of Administration Melissa Hauger, reports as follows:

On Thursday, August 26, 2010, an unannounced inspection by a member of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) was made of Brown County State Park and the T.C. Steele State Historic Site in Nashville, Brown County, Indiana. Both properties are managed by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR). This inspection was conducted to observe the effectiveness of the recent American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds that were used for various projects within Indiana State Parks.

The OIG is responsible for addressing fraud, waste, abuse, and wrongdoing in agencies. IC 4-2-7-2(b). The OIG is also charged to recommend policies and carry out other activities designed to deter, detect, and eradicate fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, and misconduct in state government. IC 4-2-7-3(2).

Upon arrival at the West Gate of Brown County State Park, the West Gatehouse was staffed with one person, who was friendly and helpful. The Nature Center was clean and three staff people were observed interacting with visitors. While driving through the park, the grounds appeared to be mowed and well maintained. The Camp Store was clean, stocked, and staffed with one individual. The outdoor swimming pool, although not open on the day of inspection, appeared to be clean and well maintained for use for the upcoming weekend.

Upon arrival at the Saddle Barn, several horses were outside within the holding area and appeared healthy, with ample food and water available. Three staff people were observed: one returned with patrons from trail riding and tended to the horses, one was assisting families with pony rides, and another appeared to be power-washing stalls inside the barn.

The front desk of the Abe Martin Lodge was staffed with two people who were assisting customers. The first and second floor common areas and restrooms were clean and the landscape outside was well-maintained. The aquatics center appeared to be clean and busy with patrons.

Regarding the inspection of the use of ARRA funds within the Park, the state website www.invest.in.gov states that ARRA funds were used by the Young Hoosier Conservation Corps to repair a collapsed bridge on Trail 4 (other projects were listed, but information was too vague to find the various locations). While hiking Trail 4, the repair of the collapsed bridge on Trail 4 was confirmed (see

Exhibit A).

Finding nothing further, inspection was completed at Brown County State Park.

The T.C. Steele State Historic Site is located approximately seven miles west of Brown County State Park. Upon arrival to the site, the grounds were mowed and landscaped, per State Contract E14-9-28006. A staff person in the visitors' office provided ample information about the site and offered suggestions on what to see and do while visiting. The guided tour of Steele's studio and home was informative. The property appeared to be well preserved. During the visit, a maintenance/grounds employee appeared to be repairing/building a ramp or similar structure on the north front porch of the house.

Finding nothing further, inspection was completed at the T.C. Steele State Historic Site.

Dated this 31st day of August, 2010.

APPROVED BY:



David O. Thomas, Inspector General

EXHIBIT A:
Evidence of bridge repair (new lumber) on Trail 4, Brown County State Park

