

Our Recreational Needs and Long-Ranged Potential Plans for Public Outdoor Recreation in Indiana

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It is becoming increasingly obvious to more and more people that Indiana today does not have sufficient public outdoor recreational facilities for its own citizens. What there is available cannot accommodate the expanding tourist industry. Present facilities are overused and deteriorating. If the present outdoor recreational accommodations now open to the public are not expanded, then the use of those now available will need to be restricted in order to save them from complete deterioration.

In spite of present limitations, Indiana does have many first-class potential recreational areas that remain neglected and undeveloped. Southern Indiana's Recreational Triangle contains assets which, if developed, would make this region not only the leading recreational area of the state but one of the chief ones in the entire Ohio River watershed (1).

Today, Indiana balances precariously on the horns of an unfortunate dilemma. While it needs additional public outdoor recreational facilities for its own citizens and for an expanding tourist industry, its recreational potentials remain primarily undeveloped.

Needs

Some of the primary reasons why demands for public outdoor recreation accommodations have skyrocketed far above the state's limited facilities are: (1) rapid increase in population, (2) urbanization and industrialization of a former agricultural state, (3) a boom in camping, (4) failure of Indiana's General Assemblies to provide adequate funds for (a) the development of accommodations on State-owned land or (b) for the purchase of desperately needed additional acreage and (5) the emphasis placed by both major parties' leaders on the need to promote a tourist industry.

Increase in population. In long-range planning, forecasting future population growth is hazardous, but failure to do so can be disastrous. Between 1950-1960, Indiana's population increased at the rate of 18.5 per cent. If this growth continues at the same rate for the next four decades, the state will have a population of 6.5 million by 1980, and over 9 million by 2000. To some forecasters, these statistics seem too conservative and they feel that the planners should estimate from 7 to 8 million people in Indiana by 1980 and over 10 million by the year 2000 (2). But to return to the more conservative estimate, if the population should double in the next four decades, then twice the amount of acreage and facilities that are now available would be needed by 2000. That is providing there were adequate acreage and facilities today. But since this is not true and since the population increase may be greater in the decades to come than it has been during 1950-1960, and

especially since the state policy is to develop a thriving tourist industry, shouldn't plans be made now to triple the public outdoor recreational accommodations and acreage between 1960-2000?

Urbanization. Perhaps the second most important factor to consider when making these long-range plans is the degree of urbanization. In 1960, over three-fifth's of Indiana's citizens lived within the political boundaries of cities, and many more occupied the unincorporated subdivisions and suburbs clustering around the major urban centers. Moreover, the industrial potential of the state may influence future population growth to exceed the present and national 18.5 per cent increase occurring between 1950-1960. Each new decade will find a higher and higher percentage of Indiana people living in the cities. And, it will be these people who will crowd the country-side in search of relaxation in state parks, forests, monuments, lakes and rivers and other recreational areas.

Boom in camping. During the past decade the growth of camping has far exceeded that of campsite accommodations in both Indiana's parks and forests. Between June 30, 1955 and June 30, 1961, the number of campsites in Indiana State Parks increased by 256 per cent (3).

"... This rapid increase of campground use is 26 times greater than the rate of increase in the number of people who entered the Indiana State Parks for the same period of time." (4).

With the construction of 253 campsites between 1959-1961, the Division of Parks by August 1961, was managing 920 sites while the Division of Forestry was managing 500. Yet during the summer months of 1961 all of these 1,420 campsites could not adequately accommodate the flood of campers who were crowding into these areas.

This congestion cannot be remedied by suggesting that campers take a room in the lodge or inn. Reservations here, especially in the months from May through September, must be made months in advance. Most of these lodges and inns constructed before the Second World War were large enough to serve the public at that time. But today even if the number of rooms available were doubled, it would still be necessary for one to make reservations in advance. What accommodations the state does have at present a tourist will find quite adequate since Indiana's system of park lodges and inns ranks among the best in the United States. There just aren't enough rooms at present for now or future needs.

Inadequate funds. The men responsible for providing adequate recreational opportunities have been painfully aware of the avalanching demands. The Division of Parks in its 1961-1963 budget included a request for \$296,000 for campground expansion but the amount allocated by the 1961 Legislature fell far short of the proposed budget (5). Yet, every year the number of campers increases about 40 per cent, more than the state's water and sanitation facilities can handle (6). Health dangers and human frustrations multiply on weekends when often as many as three times the number of people occupy campsites intended for a much smaller number—this fact endangers health and ruffles tempers—doing the opposite of what the word recreation implies.

Just at a time when Indiana wants to expand its tourist industry, its state parks and forests personnel may be compelled to turn away many who seek rest and recreation.

Administrators in Indiana's Department of Conservation have tried to avoid the dilemma of having public officials promote a tourist industry while public outdoor accommodations are still totally inadequate. To improve these conditions, Indiana's Division of State Parks prepared and submitted, under the efficient management of Director Kenneth R. Cougill, a modest request of \$2.5 million for the 1961-1963 biennium (7). The 1961 General Assembly chopped \$2.1 million from this request (leaving only \$400,000) and added a special \$200,000 grant for buying land at the new Chain O'Lakes Park near Ft. Wayne. Granted that land should be bought for the Chain O'Lakes Park, yet to appropriate only \$400,000 for 21 parks is not realistic nor is it in keeping with good park management. This fact could be a major roadblock to the development of a tourist industry in Indiana. In contrast with the action taken in Indiana, Kentucky through a bond issue made ten million dollars available in 1961 for park development.

Administrators interested in recreational expansion in the state forests received the same discouraging treatment from the 1961 General Assembly as had the Division of Parks. In Bedford, on December 17, 1960, at a joint meeting of (1) representatives of Southern Indiana Incorporated and (2) a committee devoted to the improvement of recreational facilities in Indiana State forests, it was estimated that:

“. . . needed public improvements in Indiana state forests during the biennium of July 1, 1961-June 30, 1963 would cost \$860,500" (8). Despite the fact that this group had cut this request of what the Division of Forestry actually needed in half, the 1961 session of the Indiana General Assembly appropriated only \$400,000 of new money for all expenditures in the Division of Forestry (9). What part of this amount will be spent for recreational facilities during the biennium is not known.

A few months after the legislature adjourned, Director Foltz estimated that:

“. . . The state Division of Forestry, which administers state forests, needs to double its present 500 campsites merely to meet current demand.

"Development of a campsite includes laying roads, running water and sewage facilities to the site and, often, installation of an electrical system. All this may cost from \$50 to \$500, depending on how close the campsite is to existing facilities.

"The average cost is about \$300 . . ." (10).

Consequently \$180,000 will be needed if the 500 additional campsites in state forests and the 100 other state parks are constructed and put to use in 1962.

In September, 1961, Mr. Wilcox reported that about 10,000 of the 118,000 acres in state forests were used primarily for recreation (exclusive of hunting) (11). Looking into the future he estimated that by 1975 Indiana will need to utilize 25,000 acres in state forests chiefly

for recreational purposes. And that by 2000 he feels 50,000 acres of Indiana's state forests will be turned into recreational areas and used for picnicking, bathing, boating, etc., exclusive of hunting, on almost every acre (12).

But can administrators justify the using of approximately half of the land in state forests for recreation? Hasn't the state maintained an adequate parkland acquisition program on its anticipated increase in population?

Lag in land purchase. In their recent sessions the Indiana General Assemblies have not only failed to provide adequate funds for the development of facilities in state parks and forests, but they have also failed to maintain an adequate land purchase program (Refer to Table 1).

Table 1. Acquisition of Land in Indiana State Parks and Indiana State Memorials (13).

<i>Decade</i>	<i>Acres</i>
1911-1920	3,414
1921-1930	21,238
1931-1940	1,576
<i>Decade</i>	<i>Acres</i>
1941-1950	14,497
1951-1960	9,803
	50,528

During the thirty-year period 1930-1960, the state acquired 25,876 acres for parks, an average of only 863 acres a year. About the same amount of land was acquired for state parks and memorials during the fifteen-year period of 1916 to 1930 as was acquired between 1930-1960 (14).

Moreover, the General Assemblies cannot say that they have neglected to acquire land for state parks because they were accelerating land purchases for state forests. In the five-year period preceding July 1, 1960, the Division of Forestry had increased the acreage in the state forests by only 4,751 or an average annual purchase of only 950 acres (15). This rate is lower than that which existed before the Second World War.

The purchase of land by the state for recreational and forest utilization need not take good farmland out of cultivation or off the tax rolls. Forest surveys show that four million acres in Indiana are best suited for growing trees and for recreation facilities and not fit for crop production. In spite of these studies, the state has failed to expand and develop adequately public-owned land for such purposes (16).

Tourism. In spite of the fact that Indiana's outdoor recreational accommodations had been woefully inadequate, in 1961 the political leaders in both Democratic and Republican parties announced that the tourist industry in the state had been neglected. In July, 1961, Lieutenant-Governor Richard O. Ristine (17), after returning to Indianapolis from attending a 12-state Midwestern Regional Council of State Government at Rapid City, South Dakota, announced that:

“Competition for the tourist dollar is getting stiffer all the time. Every state but Indiana is concentrating more and more on the tourist industry

“Tourist business brings in four billion dollars a year for the 12 state area and Indiana would be getting \$330,000,000 a year if the business was divided equally among the twelve states” (18).

In September, 1961, Governor Matthew E. Welsh at a Ripley County Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner stressed that:

“. . . Indiana’s income from tourists should be increased from \$250 million to \$500 million. He said the importance of such a step ‘increased employment opportunities, higher levels of business activity and greater state and local governmental revenues are obvious.

.....
“He said that increasing tourist business ‘is not a partisan matter, it is an effort in which Hoosiers of both parties can and should be interested’” (19).

To summarize. An examination of city, county, state and federal-owned public recreational facilities in Indiana indicates that existing accommodations are totally inadequate for the present population and could not satisfactorily support an expanding tourist industry (20).

Mr. Clawson has estimated that based on anticipated population growth Indiana will need 640,000 acres of state park land (outdoor recreational land) by the year of 2000. In 1960, Indiana owned about 200,000 acres of recreational land (21). Where and how can it get an additional 440,000 acres today?

Suggestions for Outdoor Recreational Expansion

Having presented the *need* for expanding Indiana’s public outdoor recreational facilities, the author now asks: “What can and should be done to accelerate expansion?”

Suggestions for improvements may be grouped under the following four headings: (1) surveys and plans, (2) expansion of acreage, (3) expansion of accommodations and (4) administrative changes.

Surveys and plans. Unfortunately, there still is a lack of adequate scientific information on which to base a sound long-ranged expansion program. Some of the surveys that should be made as soon as possible are:

1. A scientific survey of the state forests should be made by recreational specialists. They should prepare a written inventory and appraisal of sites and areas that could be developed. At present, pressure is being brought to bear upon the Department of Conservation and its Division of Forestry to spend thousands of dollars on recreational accommodations before such a survey is made. To build such facilities before such a study cannot be justified. An expansion program based upon guesswork is at best inefficient and wasteful and could prove disastrous.

2. The Division of Parks should make a survey to determine what additional acreage it needs and to locate and appraise potential recreational lands which could be purchased for either state or national parks.

3. A survey should be made of the potential recreational assets which will become available after the construction of a "Chain-of-Lakes in the Ohio River" (22).

4. Surveys need to be made to lay out the routes of potential regional, state and interstate hiking, bicycling and horseback trails, and to determine what additional facilities will be needed before the proposed routes are put into operation. Perhaps one of the first interstate trails could be the old Buffalo Trace or Lincoln Trail which was followed by wild animals, Indians and early white pioneers. This trail leading from Louisville to Vincennes could link with the Kentucky and Southern Indiana trails and those of the Southern Illinois Ozark area. Another trunk trail might be established along the Ohio River between the Markland Dam (upstream from Madison) and Cairo, Illinois. If these two trails were established, a third one might be routed north from Cairo to one now in operation in Illinois which crosses the state from west to east following the Shawnee Hills. By extending the latter trail to Vincennes, a person could make a circle trip through parts of three states. Adequate hostels and horse barns would need to be planned at convenient stops along these trails.

5. The Tourist Assistance Council of the Department of Commerce, Agriculture, Industry, and Public Relations should make available, as quickly as possible, its basic current project—an inventory of Indiana's tourist attractions. This council does plan to issue a series of bulletins with the masthead "What to See in Indiana" about seven sections of this state (23).

6. A team of "Wilderness Area" experts should be appointed to investigate and turn in a written report concerning the possibilities of legally establishing and protecting remaining "Wilderness Areas" in Indiana.

7. An investigation should be made to evaluate the need for and potential location and development of a state outdoor museum. Such a museum should not be limited to a zoo or standard type "city museum" built in a forest.

8. After the necessary surveys have been made concerning the various phases of the state's conservation problems (which is the wise management of our natural resources), a comprehensive but elastic plan of development (not a straight-jacket one) should be outlined and presented to the public.

Expansion of recreational acreage. Regardless of what criterion one follows, Indiana does not own sufficient land on which to build adequate outdoor recreational facilities. In order to secure several times as much land as the state now owns for such purposes, the writer recommends that:

1. Between 1963-1973, the Indiana General Assemblies should provide at least \$2.5 million to be used by the Department of Conservation in creating new parks and enlarging the ones now in operation.

This new money (not money earned by the parks) should be appropriated at the rate of at least \$0.5 million per biennium. The money should be spent as opportunities present themselves and need not (but could) be spent before 1980.

2. During this same ten-year period (1963-1973), the Indiana General Assemblies should provide \$0.5 million land-purchase fund to be used by the Department of Conservation to enlarge present state forests and/or develop new ones. This money should be appropriated at the rate of \$100,000 per biennium, with the understanding that none of it can be used on the purchase of stripped coal mine land or land pitted with quarries. There should also be an understanding that the money could (but need not) remain in the fund until 1980 rather than attempting to spend all of it every biennium.

3. The Indiana General Assembly should at each session pass a joint resolution (by both the house and senate) urging that:

(1) The United States Congress make available \$100,000 to \$150,000 a year for the purchase of land within the boundaries of the Hoosier National Forest, and,

(2) The recreational sites within the Hoosier National Forest be developed as rapidly as public needs justify them.

4. The Department of Conservation should accelerate its recently initiated program of securing access areas along major rivers and state-owned lakes.

5. The Department of Conservation in collaboration with other state agencies should plan and develop a system of parkways.

6. Officials of Indiana's Department of Conservation in cooperation with the United States Park Service should investigate the possibilities of establishing national parks, parkways and monuments in Indiana. Parkway might be established along the Ohio and Wabash Rivers; along stretches of the pioneer Michigan Road and the road followed by Abraham Lincoln from his Kentucky birthplace to Southern Indiana and to Illinois. United States Senator Vance Hartke introduced a bill in the 1961 Congress of the United States for the creation of a Lincoln Parkway (24).

7. The Indiana General Assembly should pass a bill giving Indiana's Department of Conservation the:

“. . . power to condemn and acquire land which a utility has taken over by condemnation for a reservoir, but which is left over after the reservoir is established.

“The leftover land now stays in the hands of the utility.

“If the Department of Conservation could acquire it, it could be used for state park, state forest, or other public recreation purposes” (25).

Expansion of accommodations. During the ten-year period (1963-1973) why shouldn't Indiana provide at least 7.5 million for the development of recreational facilities on state-owned land. Perhaps this should be done through the sale of bonds as Kentucky has done.

To repeat that “Indiana has one of the best park systems in the United States” borders on the ridiculous (if not worse) when one

learns about the huge park funds made available for this purpose in other states. To mention some of these states and their park funds, they are: (1) California with one hundred million dollars, (2) New York seventy-five million, (3) New Jersey sixty-five million and (4) Wisconsin with fifty million dollars "being raised over a 10-year period with a one-cent cigarette tax" (26).

Administrative changes and action. The efficiency of Indiana's Department of Conservation and in turn the expansion of public outdoor recreation facilities is severely handicapped by poor administrative practices established before 1960. Administrative changes are long overdue. Some of these are:

1. Land owned by the state and managed by the Department of Conservation should be managed by this department as a whole under a policy of *multiple use*, and serviced by the various divisions within the department. At the present time the Frances Slocum, Salamonie, Cagles Mill and Selmier State forests are managed by the Division of Forestry in spite of the fact that these so-called forests are used primarily as recreational areas (as of July, 1960, these four forests contained only 3,078 acres or an average of less than 1,000 acres each). Today these "park-used" areas, labeled state forests, are under the management of the Division of Forestry which does not have a park or recreational specialist on its staff. Would a careful evaluation of the past management show a wise use or misuse of these state-owned properties?

Of course within the department land can be transferred from one division to another. For example, on January 1, 1962, the Wells County State Game Preserve, located east of Bluffton, became Indiana's twenty-second state park and it is now called Ouabache State Park (27).

2. Why shouldn't all state created commissions, agencies, committees and other administrative machinery dealing with conservation be in the Department of Conservation where the activities could be coordinated? This is not true now. For example, few if any can deny that the Department of Conservation is and should be responsible for providing state-owned outdoor recreational facilities. Yet, apparently at first the personnel of this department was not given an opportunity to help plan for the potential recreational uses of Indiana's flood control reservoirs that have been constructed, are under construction, or in the planning stages (18). Why not? Apparently because in some governor's administration in the past the Indiana Flood Control and Water Resource Commission was created as a separate agency and is not a part of the Department of Conservation. Consequently, the Indiana Flood Control and Water Resource Commission's actions are still not subject to the review of the Director of Conservation nor have they been coordinated carefully with other state programs within the department.

For greater efficiency and harmony, the efforts of various well-meaning private and public agencies need to be coordinated so that money and individual time can be used more effectively. At the present time good intentions, energy and money are wasted in a maze of organizational chaos and political pressure politics which confuse rather than inform harassed elected officials attempting to manage almost insurmountable problems in 60 days.

3. The Department of Conservation needs to be placed under Civil Service.

4. The Director of the Department of Conservation should evaluate carefully the need for and the implementation of a new division within the department to be devoted to long-range planning based on surveys and cooperation with interstate pacts such as the Wabash Compact.

5. Well-trained and educated personnel should be given summer time apprenticeship experience and employment at the state's recreational areas. Director Donald Foltz is initiating such a program and this suggestion is simply offered in support of his action.

6. Pilot Summer Youth Conservation camps for non-penal youth (ages 16-25) who is now deprived of an opportunity for gainful employment should be established.

Each summer there is a tremendous reservoir of youth for which there is insufficient employment. If these youths develop lazy and indolent habits, is it not partly the fault of society which has closed so many doors on work opportunities?

7. Representatives from Indiana's Department of Conservation should meet with similar departmental representatives from Illinois, Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky to consider individual state water rights to a canalized Ohio River. Construction of high permanent dams is rapidly converting this river into a Chain-of-Lakes which spreads out beyond the river's natural channel. Should representatives from Kentucky continue to block an agreeable water rights settlement on the matter then the other four states should take the problem to the United States Supreme Court.

8. Correlate state outdoor recreational development with regional, county and city programs when opportunities are available. The city of Columbus, for example, has the finest city park program in the state. And just recently Jefferson County officers have initiated an expanding county recreation program.

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