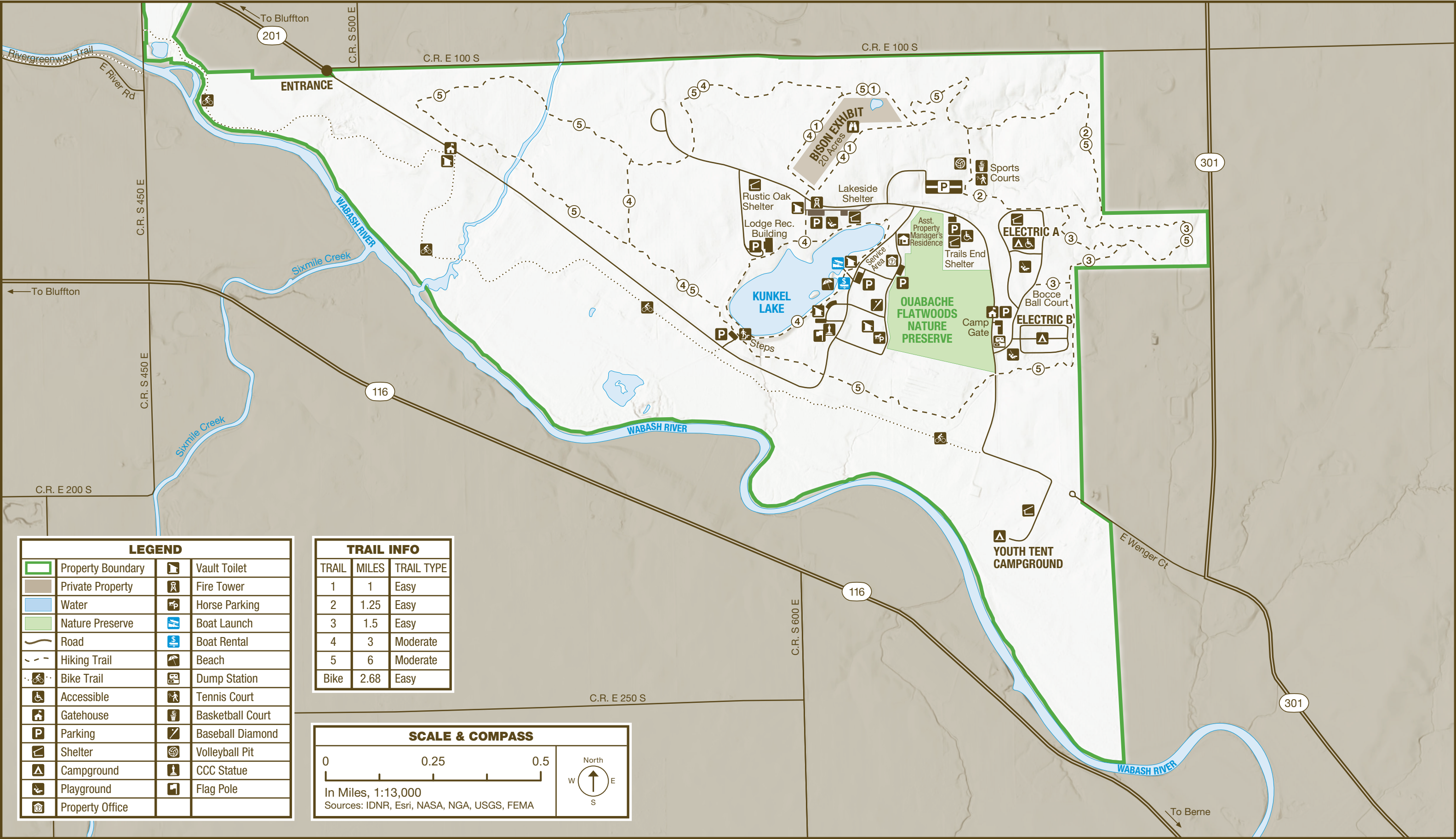


OUABACHE STATE PARK

4930 E. S.R. 201 | Bluffton, IN 46714 | 260-824-0926
1,104 Acres | Established 1962



WELCOME TO **OUABACHE** STATE PARK

 THE PARK STORY

Ouabache State Park tells the story of receding glaciers, historic wildlife, and the people who lived in the area.

Its topography formed 15,000 years ago at the end of the most recent ice age. The receding glaciers left a slightly rolling landscape of debris. Meltwater carved the path of the Wabash River.

The park lies within the homeland of the Myaamia (Miami). The river provided transportation, water, and a food source. They named the river Waapaahšiiki, meaning white river. The park’s name is the French fur traders’ spelling of that name.

In 1829, European settlers began arriving and building cabins near the river. By the 1840s, settlement was rapid, and land was cleared for farms.

In the mid-1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Work Projects Administration (WPA) began to convert farmland into the Wells County State Forest and Game Preserve. A 1,000-acre game farm was developed to raise wildlife for hunting.

In addition to building the game farm, the CCC constructed the fire tower and the Lodge recreation building; Trails End, Rustic Oak and Campview shelters; a hay storage barn; and the service building. They also planted trees to help fight erosion.

In 1961, the game farm closed and became Ouabache State Recreation Area. In 1983, it became Ouabache State Park.

Today, Ouabache maintains a bison exhibit. This herd allows visitors to observe a mammal that grazed the prairies of northern Indiana until the early 1800s. An asphalt bike trail runs through the park and connects to the River Greenway Trail, which follows the Wabash to the eastern edge of Bluffton. Kunkel Lake offers a swimming beach, boat rental, and fishing.

 RULES & REGULATIONS

• Please obey all property rules & regulations.

on.IN.gov/INStateParksRules

 ACTIVITIES & FACILITIES

- Look for these icons on the map.
-  **BEACH:** Free access beach open Saturday before Memorial Day to Labor Day.
 -  **BISON EXHIBIT:** A 20-acre exhibit consisting of American bison in a natural setting.
 -  **BOAT RENTAL:** Paddleboats, canoes, kayaks, boats, Day/hourly rental. Lifejackets available.
 -  **BOAT RAMP:** A lake permit is required to launch private boats. Only electric trolling motors, powered by no more than 12-volt batteries.
 -  **CAMPING:** Electric and primitive youth tent sites for approved groups only. Modern toilets, hot water and showers. Occupancy limited to 14 consecutive nights. Most sites will accommodate trailers. No full hookups. Waterfill and dump station available. Make reservations at camp.IN.gov.
 -  **FIRE TOWER:** A 100-foot tower offers scenic views. An adult must accompany children climbing the fire tower.
 -  **FISHING:** Bass (restricted size), bluegill, etc. State license required. Contact park office for license purchases.
 -  **HIKING:** Miles of moderate trails—no bicycle or vehicles of any kind permitted on hiking trails.
 -  **INTERPRETIVE NATURALIST SERVICE:** Interpretive and recreational programs available. Seasonal naturalist on staff. Program schedules at InterpretiveServices.IN.gov.
 -  **CCC STATUE:** The men of CCC Company 1592 lived and worked at the Wells County Game Farm from 1935–40. The game farm became an Indiana State Park in 1962.
 -  **LODGE RECREATION BUILDING:** Day-use rustic building with fireplace, kitchen facilities and parking. Reservations up to one year in advance. Make reservations at camp.IN.gov. Contact park office for details.
 -  **PAVED BIKE TRAIL:** Asphalt trail runs the length of the park and connects to Bluffton’s Rivergreenway Trail.
 -  **SHELTERS:** Two modern picnic shelters, one open shelter, picnic tables, and charcoal grills. Playground equipment throughout the park. Make reservations at camp.IN.gov.
 -  **SPORT FACILITIES:** Tennis/Basketball courts, both equipped with lights. Sand volleyball, softball diamond with backstop, playfield, bocce ball court. First-come, first-served.

 HIKING TRAILS

TRAIL & DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE	DIFFICULTY
Trail 1	1.0 mi.	Easy
Circles the bison exhibit. Begins at exhibit parking lot by the fire tower.		
Trail 2	1.5 mi.	Easy
Begins at north end of campground. Winds north through pine plantation, then south along volleyball court and back east to campground.		
Trail 3	1.5 mi.	Easy
Begins at the north end of the campground, travels east through magnificent stand of oak and hickory, passes a woodland marsh and ends at the point of origin.		
Trail 4	3.0 mi.	Moderate
Accessible from levee. Runs throughout interior of property, traveling through pines and hawthornes. Allows access to fire tower, lake and northern section of bison exhibit.		
Trail 5	6.0 mi.	Moderate
The “Ouabache Trail” begins at the bison exhibit and circles the entire property, using portions of all trails. Trail 5 may be started and finished at any trail entrance. The trail will take you through virtually all types of trees and terrain available in the area. Several interesting footbridges dot the trail.		

 BIKING TRAILS

• For safety, please stay on marked trails.

TRAIL & DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE	DIFFICULTY
Bike Trail	2.68 mi.	Easy
Paved asphalt trail connects the east end of park, near the service area, to County Rd S 450 East. A quick ride south and over the bridge connects you to Bluffton’s Rivergreenway Trail.		

Memories made naturally.
INDIANA STATE PARKS

DISCOVER • CHALLENGE • EXPLORE

HOOSIER QUEST-Pin & Patch Program

Each state park offers you the opportunity to complete tasks to earn a patch or property pin.

 **on.IN.gov/hoosierquest**

BOOK YOUR STAY • RESERVE TODAY

GET OUT and GO CAMPING	STAY IN at a STATE PARK INN
Call or go online to make your reservation for all types of	Call or go online to make your reservation for a(n)
- Camping - Family Cabins - Shelters	- State Park Inn - Inns-managed Cabin
Includes state parks, reservoirs and forests.	Seven State Parks include Inns: Brown County, Clifty Falls, Fort Harrison, McCormick’s Creek, Spring Mill, Turkey Run and Pokagon.
 1-866-6campIN (1-866-622-6746)	 1-877-lodges1 (1-877-563-4371)
 camp.IN.gov	 IndianaInns.com

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

  Please carry out all trash you produce to help keep the property clean and beautiful for all to enjoy!

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 DNR PROPERTIES NEARBY

- Find more DNR properties at on.IN.gov/recfinder.
- J. EDWARD ROUSH FISH & WILDLIFE AREA**
- Boating, boat ramp, fishing, hunting, camping, wildlife watching, shooting range
- BATZELL-LENHARD WOODS NATURE PRESERVE**
- 3/4 mile hiking trail, parking, wildlife watching

 TRAIL CHALLENGE

- Try one of our challenges and earn merchandise to purchase. Participate in the CCC Challenge Course at Ouabache State Park. Visit the website and select your park of choice to learn more.
- on.IN.gov/parks-challenges**

 FRIENDS GROUP

Friends of Ouabache State Park

Join Friends Ouabache State Park to protect the natural and cultural heritage, and educate the public. For information, visit:

on.IN.gov/INStateParksFriends

 TRUE TALES

- **CREATURE FEATURE:** Early records show that herds of bison grazed on northern Indiana’s prairies. In the wooded southern regions, bison migrated to salt licks.
- **MILITARY FEATURE:** After the Civilian Conservation Corps left Ouabache, its camp housed WWII conscientious objectors.
- **ICE HARVESTING:** Blocks of ice were once cut from Kunkel Lake and stored until summer in layers of sawdust in the property’s icehouse.

DNR
Indiana Department of Natural Resources

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