



United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

Hoosier National Forest
811 Constitution Avenue
Bedford, IN 47421
Web: www.fs.usda.gov/hoosier



Hoosier NF Highlights

Media Contact: Teena Ligman
Voice: (812) 275-5987
Cell: (812) 675-3826
tligman@fs.fed.us

Contact: Teena Ligman, 812-275-5987

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National Forest Partners with Scenic Byway to Promote Area



By Teena Ligman, Public Affairs Specialist

The new kiosks are complete, approach signs are in place, a celebration is being planned, and people are stopping to learn about the area. The hope is that the kiosks will translate to more interest in the byway and the surrounding area.

Indiana's Ohio River Scenic Byway received a grant for the kiosks in 2009 from Federal Highways. "The concept was to have these kiosks be the first of many along the 943-mile byway which spans three states," said Darrell Voelker, Chair of Indiana's byway board. The byway follows the north bank of the Ohio River and crosses a national forest in each state: the Wayne in Ohio, the Hoosier in Indiana, and the Shawnee in Illinois. The national forest link became the catalyst for the kiosk and the Forest Service took the lead in the design and development. The Ohio River Scenic Byway board in Ohio also received a kiosk grant.

The informational kiosks market the byway and its attractions for visitors. The grant was to develop prototype kiosks near the national forest that could be used for additional kiosks along the byway. A kiosk would be on the byway at the east and west edge of each national forest. The grant funds were also to be used for focus group meetings with local communities

to determine what information the kiosk should include, where the kiosks should be located, and what design elements should be considered.

Voelker noted that the kiosk design was challenging, and changed several times, but was finalized when the three state boards met. “The original design from the Forest Service was amazing, it was 3-dimensional and had elements kids could climb on and definitely had the WOW factor,” said Voelker. “However, as a group we ended up with a more traditional design, but we’re still very pleased with how they look and the content is great.” A similar design was developed for “pocket parks” so that communities along the byway could also put up small kiosks.

Forest Service employees Teena Ligman and Nancy Myers selected two Indiana sites for the kiosks based on the focus group criteria. They worked with Indiana Department of Transportation to provide a kiosk at the Lincoln Ferry Park Rest Area west of Troy. The second kiosk was built at the rest area near the Village of Leavenworth in cooperation with that community. The two sites bracket the Hoosier National Forest.

The panels interpret the history of the byway and sites along it and were a collaborative effort with many parties. Ligman worked with local convention and tourism offices, historians, the ORSB board, attractions, and other government agencies to compile the information. “My hope is, people who read the panels will enjoy the information a fraction as much as I did putting it together,” said Ligman.

Voelker agrees and hopes that the four kiosks, two in Indiana and two in Ohio, are the first of many kiosks that will soon provide information to travelers on the Ohio River Scenic Byway. The Forest Service and Ohio River Scenic Byway board is planning a celebration on April 5. The celebrations are open to the public. There will be a ribbon cutting at Lincoln Ferry Park at 10:00 a.m. CT followed by a second ribbon cutting at the Leavenworth Rest Area at 2:00 p.m. ET. These celebrations will hand the kiosks over to the local communities and the Ohio River Scenic Byway Board.

For more information on the Ohio River Scenic Byway or the kiosk project contact Teena Ligman at tligman@fs.fed.us or 812-276-4757.



The photo shows the back of the kiosk at Lincoln Ferry Park.



This picture shows the front of the Lincoln Ferry Park kiosk.



Approach signs on the highway alert motorist to turn in for information on the Ohio River Scenic Byway.