



United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

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Hoosier NF Highlights

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Preservation50 and the Hoosier National Forest



By Angela Doyle, Heritage Program Manager/Tribal Liaison

Not only is 2016 Indiana's bicentennial year, it also marks the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 signed by President Johnson. Passage of the Act was a watershed event that marked a fundamental shift in how Americans and the federal government regarded the role of historic preservation in modern life. The Act established the legal framework and incentives to preserve historic buildings, landscapes and archaeology.

It is because of the Act that all federal and Indian lands are surveyed in an effort to identify the most significant sites. After 50 years of implementation, the Forest Service is a recognized leader. Go to <http://preservation50.org/> to learn more.

The Forest Service manages more than 380,000 recorded cultural resource sites on 193 million acres of national forests and grasslands for public use, enjoyment and education. Of these, 1,200 sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and 23 are National Historic Landmarks.

Right here in Indiana, the Hoosier National Forest manages over 203,000 acres containing over 2,000 recorded cultural resource sites of which 11 are significant enough to be listed or eligible for listing to the National Register of Historic Places. Only half of these federal lands have been surveyed so it is likely there are thousands more that remain unrecorded.

Significant architectural sites on the Hoosier National Forest include the Rickenbaugh House and the German Ridge Recreational Area, both in Perry County. The Rickenbaugh house is a two-story sandstone structure built in 1874 by Jacob Rickenbaugh, a tanner by trade. He chose the location due to the prevalence of chestnut oak trees whose bark was needed in his tanning process. It was later used as a post office for the rural community of Celina and Winding Branch. The structure is an excellent example of Greek Revival style and was expertly crafted by the same Belgian stone masons who built the second abbey at St. Meinrad. This structure is located on the shores of Celina Lake within the popular Indian-Celina Recreation Area. It was recently rehabilitated and is periodically open to the public for use and visitation.

The German Ridge Recreation Area consists of a campground, beach, trails, shelter house, toilets and storage buildings. This facility was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC's) in the 1930's using local materials- in fact many of the logs were salvaged from nearby farms. Rehabilitation needs exist and will be addressed as funding is secured. This area is a popular spot for horse-back riding, camping, hiking and swimming.

Significant archaeological sites on the Hoosier include Lick Creek African American Settlement, the German Ridge German-American Settlement, Cox's Woods 14th century Oliver Phase Village, several rockshelters, and the Buffalo Trace Trail which has been the subject of a large volunteer effort over the past two years. Most of the evidence of human use or occupation at these sites is not visible on the surface. Though archaeological site locations are kept confidential to protect them from disturbance, interpretive signs have been placed at many locations to highlight what we have learned.

Detailed information can be found at our Bedford or Tell City office locations, at the Brooks Cabin outside the Charles C. Deam Wilderness area and on our website <http://www.fs.usda.gov/hoosier/> and Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/US-Forest-Service-Hoosier-National-Forest-760531484005650/>.

National forests and grasslands contain some of the nation's best preserved heritage sites in some of the least disturbed natural settings. But the job of maintaining these sites is difficult. Volunteers and partners are keys to our success.

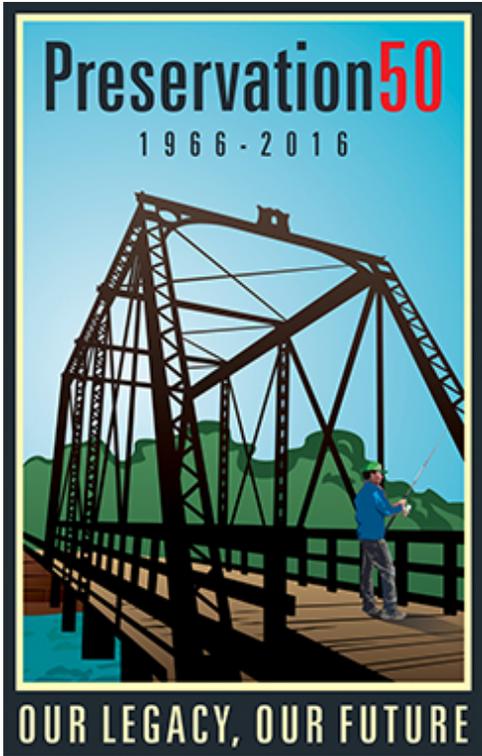
For more information on the heritage program for the Hoosier contact Angie Doyle at angelardoyle@fs.fed.us or 812-276-4748.



The Rickenbaugh House at Indian-Celina Lake Recreation Area. Photo by Micheall Reed.



One of the buildings at German Ridge Recreation Area constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. Photo by Micheall Reed.



Preserve50 Logo commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act.