

An Interpretive Programmer and Educator

Interpret our natural and cultural resources through numerous talks, hikes, craft programs, slide shows and demonstrations.

- In 2003, staff presented 9,864 programs with a total attendance of 260,922 adults and children. (With a continued 40% reduction in seasonal staff due to the state fiscal crisis.)

An Interpretive Center Manager

Oversee cleaning, paid staff, volunteers, exhibits and visitor contacts.

- We have 14 year-round centers, 8 seasonal centers, 1 raptor rehab center and 6 facilities interpreting Indiana history.
- In 2003, Interp. Center visitation totalled 402,033. Visitation at historic/cultural interpretive facilities totalled 274,875.

An Exhibit Designer/Manager

Oversee development of exhibits in nature centers, offices, bulletin boards and conference displays.

- New visitor centers at Mounds State Park and Lieber SRA.
- Interpretive Master Planning underway for Brown Co, Mansfield Mill, Prophetstown, Lincoln, Fort Harrison and Shakamak
- Final design of exhibits for McCormick's Creek underway.
- Awaiting funding for Gus Grissom Memorial exhibits.

A Community Resource

Serve on community committees ranging from tourism to planning, host teacher workshops and answer phone calls and e-mails about everything from skunks in garages to baby birds.

A Natural/Cultural Resource Specialist

Inventory flora and fauna, assist in research, plan resource restoration projects and control exotic species. Also document history/artifacts of the property.

- In 2003, management efforts were concentrated primarily on garlic mustard and honeysuckle removal and deer management.
- Properties continued use of our artifact inventory and flora/fauna inventory.
- Interpreters participated in site evaluation for facilities, trail development and/or land purchase at several sites.

An Accountant

Manage petty cash & donations spending

- 1 site manages a separate budget.
- \$50,000+ endowment for Pokagon State Park Nature Center.
- Small grants received for specific projects.
- In 2003, instituted some fee programming.

2003 What is an Interpretive Naturalist?

Interpretation blends science with art to touch lives and inspire an awareness and appreciation for our natural and cultural resources. The staff who represent the Division of State Parks and Reservoirs in this role present many programs that share the unique stories of our properties, but they wear many other hats, too!

A Planner

Schedule programs up to a year in advance

- Functioning strategic plans for sites.
- 2003 is year 3 of the div. interpretive plan.
- Interpretive master planning underway in 6 locations.

A Marketing Specialist and Writer

Write media releases(80 in 2003), program schedules and other informational materials.

- In 2003, premiered Interpretive Services web pages.
- Produced *INdiana INterpreter* newsletter for staff. Interpretive sites around the state and country request and use this newsletter.
- Staff, in 2003 wrote articles for professional organization newsletters, local newspaper columns and a regular column called "Creature Feature" for the DNR magazine, *Outdoor Indiana*.
- In 2003, celebrated the 80th Anniversary of interpretation in the system with a variety of site and division-wide events.

A Technologist

Must be computer literate, able to use a variety of audiovisual equipment and often serve as a photographer for properties.

- All interpreters use computer for publications, reports, e-mail, research.
- Working to provide digital images and technology for presentations.

A Staff Leader/Supervisor

Train, lead and supervise seasonal staff and volunteers at each site.

- 19 full time interpretive staff including 1 historian & 1 rec. leader and 45-50 seasonal staff.
- Training program with annual training session, on-site support, winter in-service and conference attendance when funds permit.
- Property liaison or support of friends groups at Dunes, Spring, Turkey Run, Shades, Hardy, McCormick's, Falls of the Ohio.
- Full time interpreters serve as volunteer coordinators in most locations where available.

DNR

www.IN.gov/dnr/parklake/interpretiveservices

Mission of the Interpretive Services

The mission of the Interpretive Services is to provide information and offer interpretive experiences with Indiana's natural and cultural resources to visitors, staff and a diverse public.

Vision for the Interpretive Services

We will strive to be leaders in providing innovative, effective interpretation on our properties, in the Department of Natural Resources and for our peers in other agencies. We will instill an awareness and appreciation of our cultural heritage and our natural resources in as many individuals as possible. We will encourage all visitors to develop positive personal connections with our properties. We will provide leadership in practicing wise resource management and in promoting the value of responsible outdoor recreation.

Goals

1. To define, achieve and maintain a high degree of professionalism for all Division Interpretive Staff.
2. To provide support in establishing priorities for the Interpretive Services at the property level.
3. To facilitate communication between the Interpretive Services and all of its stakeholders.
4. To provide high quality Interpretive Services on properties with seasonal programs and /or intermittent interpretive staff.
5. To evaluate, maintain and strive to improve our services in personal interpretation.
6. To evaluate, maintain and strive to improve our services in nonpersonal interpretation.
7. To develop adequate fiscal and other resources for the Interpretive Services.
8. To play an integral, proactive role in stewardship of our properties' cultural and natural resources.

Defining Interpretation

Interpretation serves as an important bridge between people and our natural and cultural resources. Interpretation is defined by Ted Cable and Larry Beck as an informational and inspirational process designed to enhance understanding, appreciation and protection of our natural and cultural legacy. In our profession, we take technical information, hard-to-understand theories and the unique stories of our sites and make them relevant and personal for our visitors. Interpretation, when done well, is entertaining, educational, informative, recreational, inspirational and provokes further thought and/or action.

In Indiana, we interpret in a variety of ways. We use **personal interpretation** techniques such as talks, hikes, crafts, slide shows, roving, and one-on-one contacts through letters and phone calls to enhance visitors' experiences at our sites. **Nonpersonal interpretive techniques**, including brochures, web pages, signage, trails, and exhibits in interpretive centers, provide connections to our properties for those visitors with whom we may never speak.

Important Values

We value Indiana's natural and cultural resources, particularly those managed by the Division of State Parks and Reservoirs, and our role as stewards of these resources.

We value the unique stories we have to tell at each of our properties. We value our responsibility to share these stories in a variety of ways to inspire, inform and arouse the curiosity of our visitors.

We see each interpreter as a member of a property team working to provide a high quality experience for each visitor. We support efforts to ensure that our services blend with the overall financial, facility and staffing plans for the site.

We value our role as a unique corps of communicators, united by common interests and a common mission. We are committed to maintaining the connections between interpreters and achieving our mission.

We believe in the value of interpretation and convey this to the community, the groups we serve, property visitors and other DNR staff through our actions and programs.

We embrace the use of established and accepted principles of interpretation in all aspects of our Interpretive Services.

We value, as individuals, the same wise use and management of our resources that we encourage with our visitors.

We value the roles of all property staff and their daily contributions to each property's operation.

We value the records and artifacts connected with our natural/cultural resources and conserve them through appropriate methods.

We value our professional knowledge, our integrity and our understanding of the public's perception of policies and facilities. These attributes make us an integral part of our properties and our division. Our ideas, programs, exhibits and management skills provide valuable assistance in property planning and in implementing positive change where needed.

We value participation in research, training and professional organizations that help us expand our interpretive skills and our knowledge of natural and cultural history.

We recognize and respect the creativity, enthusiasm and unique skills of each individual interpreter, and encourage the full development of these attributes.

We value unique approaches to interpretation at each site in response to changing audiences, resources and management needs when these approaches support the mission, vision, goals and standards of quality established for the Interpretive Services.

We value the opportunity to work in an enjoyable and fulfilling environment.

We value technology and will use it to enhance but not replace the personal contact with visitors and with our natural/cultural resources that remain our primary sources of inspiration, information and interpretation.