

KOSCIUSKO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY  
WHITE PAPER PROJECT

APRIL 24, 2001

FUNDING FOR A COUNTY PARK

Ron. W Davis, Sponsored by Cardinal Center  
Jeff Grames, Sponsored by Dalton Foundries  
Craig A. Haecker, Sponsored by Lake City Bank

## **Introduction**

Kosciusko County is a great place to live. Like most residents of Kosciusko County, we feel comfortable in saying that from a recreation standpoint we very seldom cannot find an activity to amuse ourselves with, especially in the warmer months. An outsider looking in may feel that the residents of Kosciusko County lack little in the area of recreation, unless of course that outsider comes from a larger metropolitan area such as Indianapolis or Chicago. It may also appear that Kosciusko County has more area developed for recreation than most of the surrounding counties in Indiana. However, according to the Department of Natural Resources, Kosciusko County only utilizes 1.1% of its' land for recreation, whereas the state average per county utilizes almost 4% of all land for recreation purposes (see Exhibit A and B).

In discussing and researching this project, we found that a county park is listed as a potential project in the Kosciusko County Comprehensive Plan. It is our opinion that this is a project which can only enhance Kosciusko County. It will attract outsiders and become a valuable asset for recreation and education alike for all county residents.

## **Why a County Park?**

Most of the communities in Kosciusko County do have their own park system along with a park board. Kosciusko County does not have a park system or a park board. Many of the communities have nearby lakes which further enhance their recreational potential. This allows them to offer activities which are not usually standard park offerings. Because of this they can incorporate many water activities, such as swimming, boating, and fishing into their own park system, along with the activities most parks already have, like picnicking and a playground. According to a poll taken in 1998 by the Department of Natural Resources called the "Strategic Outdoor Recreation Plan" (SCORP), 38.6% of all residents who responded feel that it is the duty of the County to provide recreation for the residents (see Exhibit C). However, only 8.7% of those same people participated because of lack of activities provided at the county level (see Exhibit D).

The intent of a county park would not be to eliminate the current park system in each community or even mirror the current park systems. The purpose would be to differentiate itself from the community park systems and offer activities that may not be available in the smaller community parks. The primary objective of a county park would be to give our residents an alternative to what we already have. Most residents of Kosciusko County can drive a maximum of ten minutes to find an area where they can swim, boat, or fish. Thus, the county park would probably not offer those activities in the initial phase. It should also be remembered that not everyone enjoys swimming, boating, or fishing. There are some activities that are not offered in the small communities that people do enjoy, and in order to enjoy those it may require them to drive several miles in order to have access to those activities. Also according to the "SCORP", 43% of the people polled do not like to drive more than 1 hour for any recreational activity (see Exhibit E).

Parks in general play a vital and supportive role in any community. Parks are aesthetic, green space areas that contribute to the well being of a community and its' residents. They provide recreation opportunities for the young and old alike. Parks can help add color and spark to a community. They tend to draw people and businesses to the community, as well as increase property values. Parks are for people and people make a community.

### **Obstacles to County Park**

When looking at a proposal for a Kosciusko County park there are two major factors the county government takes into consideration. These are the two obstacles our group, as well as any group in the future, would face in attempting to have the county officials investigate the viability of such a project.

First, because this is not an existing project, there are no funds available at the present time for this endeavor. There are many hidden costs that must be looked at in order to realize what would be necessary to get the project started. Initially there would be funds needed to develop the actual park itself. This would include the possible excavation of the ground, developing parking facilities, purchasing playground equipment, developing picnic areas, building pavilions, and creating trails for hiking, jogging and biking. These are just a few of the initial costs to be considered.

Also, it would be necessary for the county government to appoint a Kosciusko County park board to oversee the development and maintenance of the park once completed. Funds would need to be budgeted for the yearly maintenance and improvements that would be needed for such a project. In addition to the costs mentioned above, it would be necessary to have at least one full time salaried employee to oversee the year round maintenance of the park. There would also be salaries to be paid to those part-time employees working to maintain the grounds during the summer months when the park would experience the heaviest usage.

The second obstacle to look at from the county government's point of view is that some feel there simply is no need for a Kosciusko County park. The residents of Kosciusko County are spoiled when it comes to recreation. Many of the communities in the county have developed their own park system and offer nice parks to their residents. Such communities as Warsaw, Pierceton, Syracuse, and Mentone, already have very nice public facilities for their residents to use and enjoy. With the many lakes located in our county there are numerous public beaches and picnic areas available for family enjoyment.

## **Proposed Funding For a County Park**

Funding for this endeavor could be derived from a variety of sources.

First, according to Dan Richard the Kosciusko County Planner, there have been offers from individuals willing to donate land for a county park. They obviously felt that a county park was not a bad idea. However, because the county government did not feel a Kosciusko County Park was a viable project, none of the offers have been accepted.

Also, we have spoken with Tim Morgan, who is Director of the LaPorte County Park Department. Tim indicated that during the summer months they have several pavilions in their parks that are rented out to the public each and every weekend, as well as numerous weekdays. These are rented out for various occasions from a variety of sources, such as family reunions, class reunions, and church picnics, just to name a few. Funding could also be derived from charging families and groups who use the camp sites made available by the parks. These funds would be used to help offset funds needed for the day-to-day operations of the park.

There are several grants available through the State of Indiana's Department of Natural Resources. Those would include the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Indiana Waters, Wabash River Heritage Corridor Fund, Hometown Indiana, and the Recreational Trails Fund. At least two of these grants, the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Hometown Indiana Grants, would be available for a Kosciusko County park project.

The Hometown Indiana Grant Program is a state program that provides grants for 50% of the costs for acquisition and/or development of recreation sites. The grant will match funds for those already received. This would also include donated items, such as equipment, materials, land, labor and cash. For example, if land were donated and valued at \$200,000, the grant would pay cash in the amount of \$100,000 for development of that land (see Exhibit F). The Hometown Indiana Grant is not currently being used by any project in Kosciusko County (see Exhibits G and H).

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is similar to the Hometown Indiana Grant Program, except it is a federal program with funds provided through the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior. However, this grant is administered by the State of Indiana Department of Natural Resources. The grant will also match 50% for acquisition and development, and also includes donated items such as equipment, materials, land, labor and cash (see exhibit I). The Land and Water Conservation Fund is currently being used by Kosciusko County, but not nearly as extensively as some of the surrounding counties (see Exhibits J).

One point to remember is that if the county government would approve the development of a Kosciusko County park, park development does not have to take place immediately. Money could be set aside each year until sufficient funds are available to begin the project.

## **Anticipated Uses of a Kosciusko County Park**

Many of the communities within Kosciusko County have utilized the natural resources given them to develop their park systems. As we discussed earlier, our proposal is not to mirror their efforts, but to give our residents alternative choices. Our proposal is to give our residents a place to picnic, hike, camp, bike, observe nature and wildlife, play on playground equipment, as well as offer educational seminars for people of all ages.

It is understood that some of these opportunities are available to the residents of Kosciusko County, however, they are all not available at the same location. At the present time, according to the Department of Natural Resources, there is only one public location to go camping in Kosciusko County (see Exhibit K). The City of Warsaw is finalizing plans for its' bike trail from Winona Lake to the CCAC on Old State Road 30, which will eventually be a very nice facility. However, how many miles must the citizens of Syracuse travel in order to use this trail? Many of the park systems have a place to picnic, but during the peak months the smaller facilities become extremely crowded, thus making it very difficult for one to relax and enjoy themselves.

An example of a local county who does utilize the county park system is LaPorte County. LaPorte County is in the process of building their sixth county park. During the summer months they have programs for children in the elementary grades starting at Kindergarten. Some of their one day workshops include "Flower Power", "Terrific Trees", "Soil Sensations", "Amphibian Adventures", and "Wild Water". Not only does the county have these programs for children, they also have several one day workshops for teachers, groups, and scout leaders. Some of these programs include "Bug Fun", "Gone Fishing", "Tracking Animals", "Eating Like a Bird", and "Insect Insight".

The county park would also be available to service different groups and civic organizations. The local Boy Scouts currently have no traditional camping area in which they can go without leaving the county. Currently they use the Kosciusko County Fairgrounds for overnight camping trips, which does not have the camping amenities necessary. There is also a Master Gardener group in Kosciusko County that could possibly utilize the area for their projects. These are just a few of the many groups who would benefit from such a facility.

## **Conclusion**

As we have shown, there are many arguments for this and against this project. There are additional arguments that have not yet been discussed. This project was thought of as a viable project before we began our research as evidenced by the fact that it is a part of the Kosciusko County Comprehensive Plan. It is our hope that this report will help to publicize some of the issues we feel are important to the future of Kosciusko County.

*Region*  
2  
*Supply*  
*Data*

Percentage of land-base for recreation

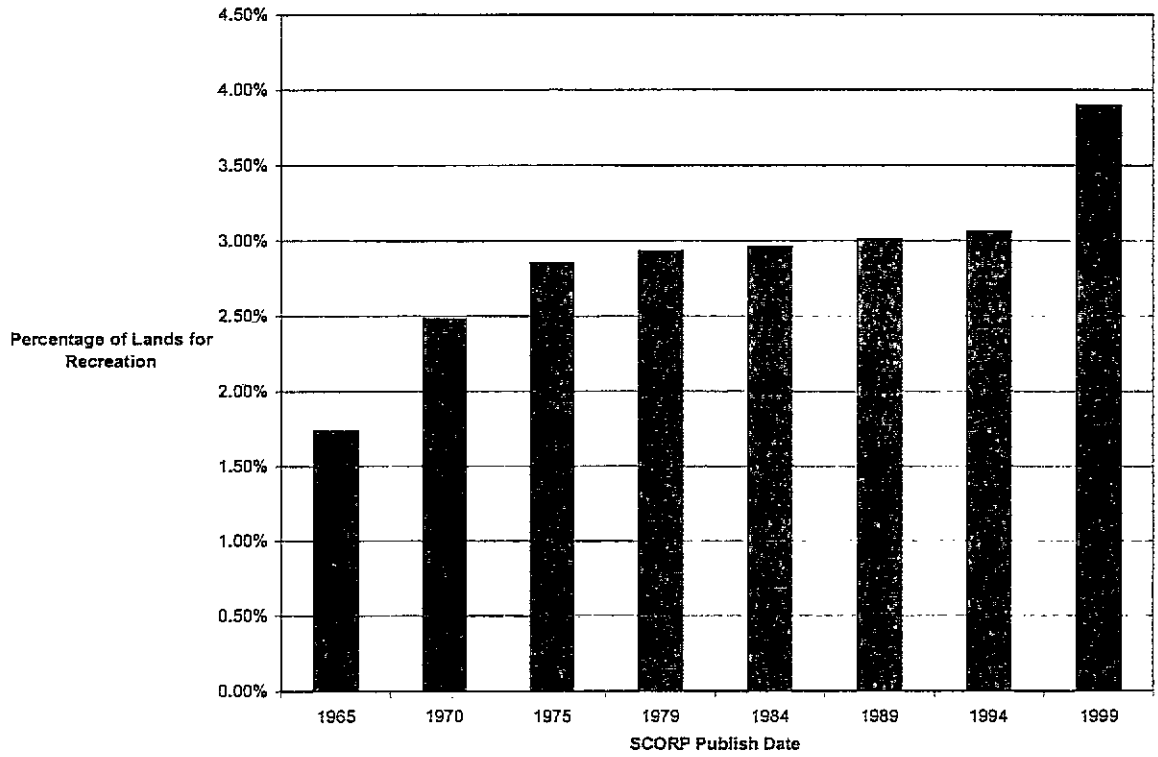
<b>County</b>	<b>Total Acreage in County</b>	<b>Total Recreation Acreage in County</b>	<b>Percent of Land Base for Recreation</b>
Elkhart	299,520	2,934.10	0.98%
Kosciusko	344,320	3,801.00	1.10%
Marshall	284,160	1,356.86	0.48%
St. Joseph	298,880	6,953.08	2.33%
<b>Region 2 Total</b>	<b>1,226,880</b>	<b>15,045.04</b>	<b>1.23%</b>

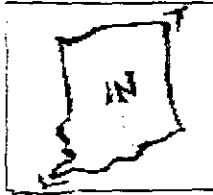
*Figure 8.15*



# SCORP 2000

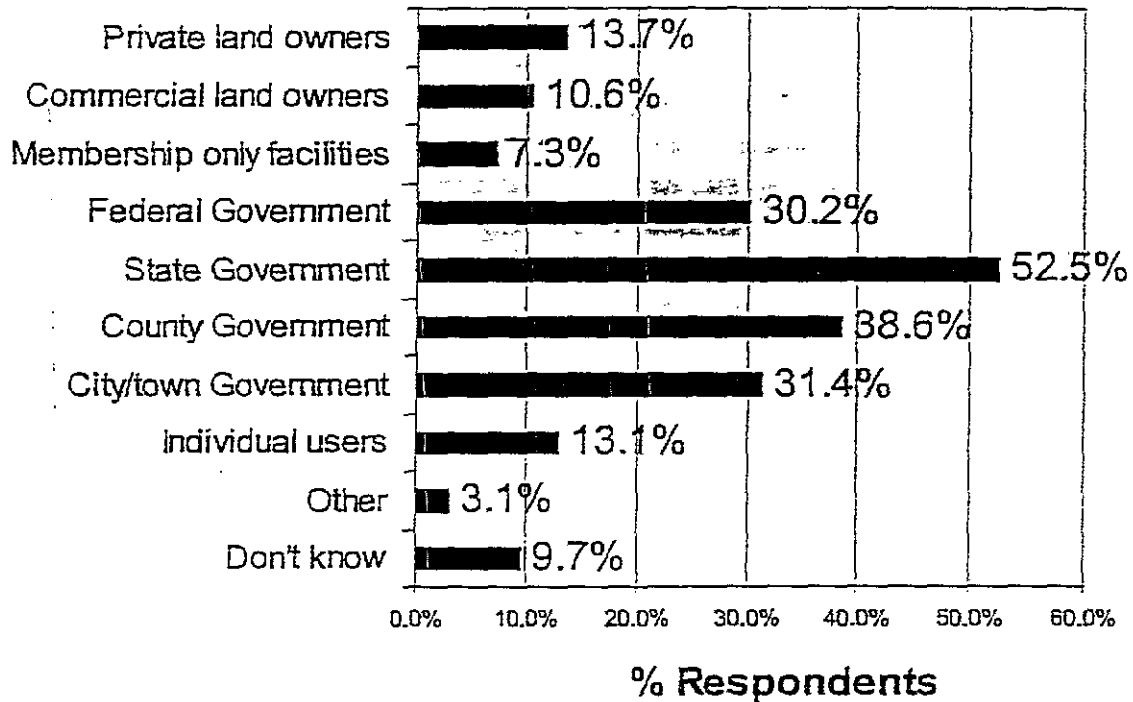
Percentage of Indiana's Lands for Public Recreation





# SCORP 2000

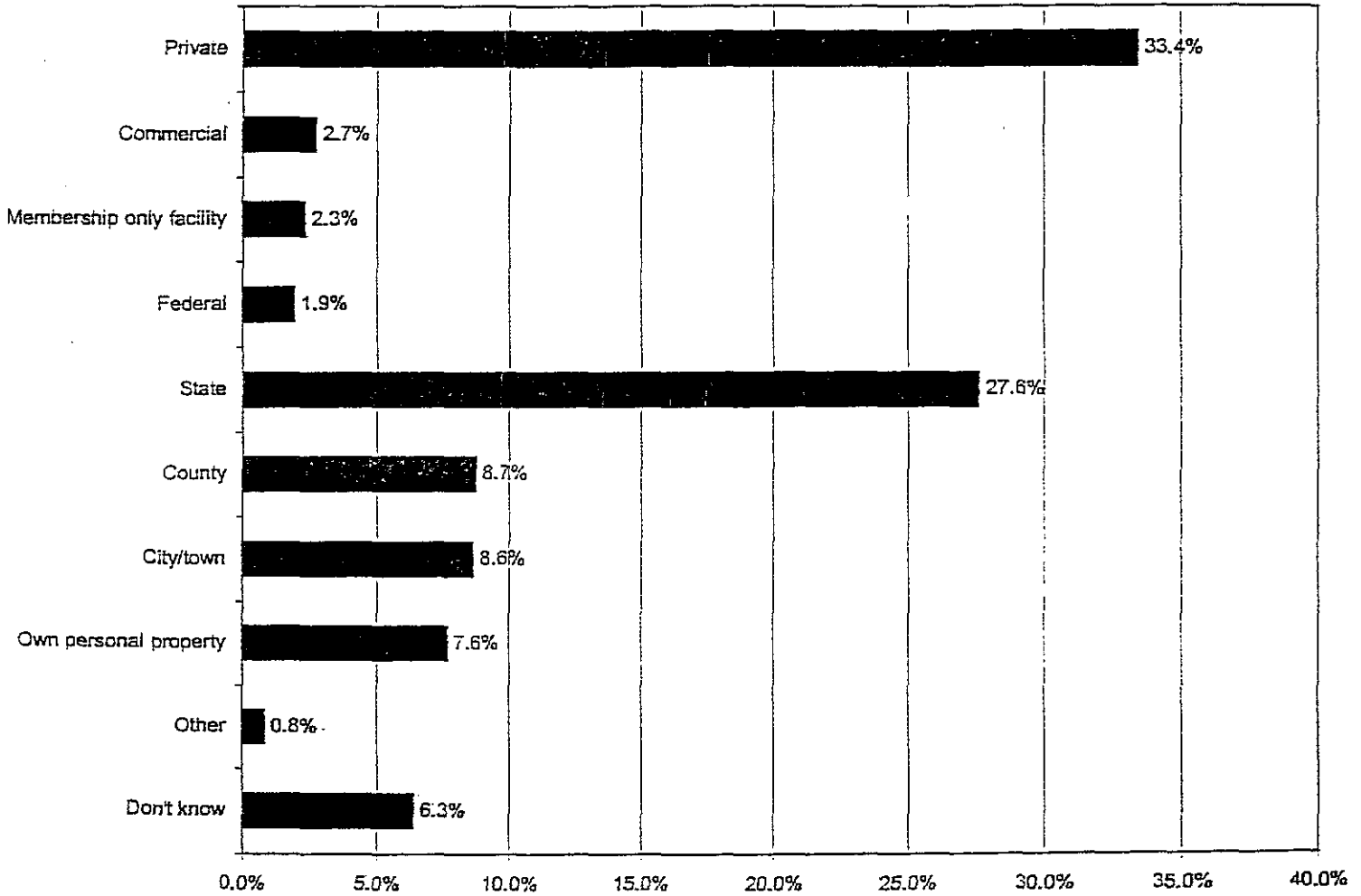
Who do you think should provide facilities for the activity you participate in most regularly?  
 (Multiple responses allowed)



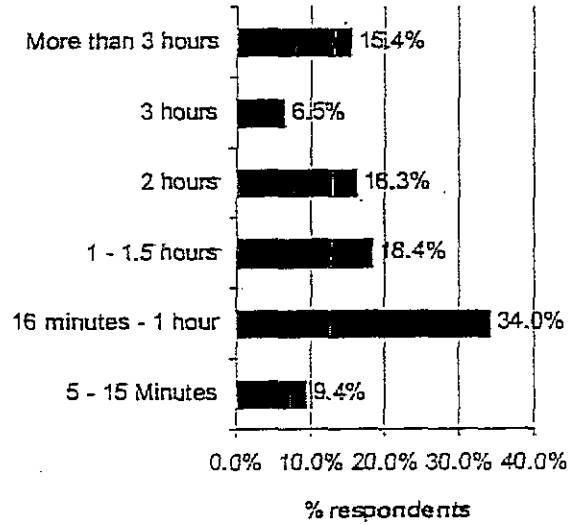


**SCORP 2000** **CHAPTER 4**

Think of the ONE outdoor activity that you participated in the MOST during the past year. What type of property did you use?



How far would you be willing to travel to participate in the outdoor recreation activity you participate in MOST?



# HOMETOWN INDIANA GRANT PROGRAM

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 since Sep 16, 1998.

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## **What is the Hometown Indiana Grant Program?**

The Hometown Indiana Program is a state matching assistance program which provides grants for 50% of the costs for the acquisition and/or development of recreation sites and facilities.

## **Who is eligible?**

To be eligible for the park and recreation part of the Hometown Indiana Grant Program you must be a Municipal Corporation as defined by Indiana Code and have an up-to-date five year park and recreation master plan or a comprehensive plan which includes parks and recreation, and meet the same criteria as a park and recreation master plan. Both park and recreation plans and comprehensive plans must be approved by the Division of Outdoor Recreation before grant applications are approved.

\* Beginning in 1999, all master plan drafts will be due January 15. Final plans will be due April 15.

## **How is funding received?**

Since Hometown Indiana is a reimbursing program, the project sponsor does not receive the grant funds at the time an application is approved. The sponsor must have the local matching 50% of the project cost available prior to application. The project sponsor is reimbursed 50% of the actual cost of the project. The Hometown Indiana billing procedures enable the participant to request the state share of costs incurred throughout the grant term.

## **What sources of funding may be used as the local match?**

State funds must be matched with at least 50% of the total project cost from the local sponsor. The local match may consist of: budget appropriation; bond issues; loans; private donations of equipment, materials, land, labor and cash; and force account contributions of equipment and labor.

### **What types of projects may be funded?**

Grant applications may consist of land acquisition and/or facility construction or renovation. Both indoor and outdoor recreation facilities are eligible for Hometown Indiana Program funding assistance. All facilities must be designed for universal access and the agencies facilities, programs and activities must be open to the public without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or disability.

### **Eligible types of projects**

Eligible development includes; natural areas, interpretive facilities, linear greenways and trails, sports and playfields, recreation centers, nature centers, camping, and support facilities.

The Division of Outdoor Recreation has guidelines for preparing master plans, submitting grant applications and administering projects.

Division of Outdoor Recreation  
402 W. Washington St., Rm. 271  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204  
Telephone: (317) 232-4070

### **Historic Preservation and Forestry Grants through Hometown Indiana**

The Divisions of Historic Preservation and Forestry also have Hometown Indiana funds available for local communities. Hometown Indiana grants may be used for the preservation of historic sites and buildings listed on the State Register of Historic Sites and Structures. Hometown Indiana funds may also be used for Urban Forestry projects.

Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology  
402 W. Washington St., Rm. 274  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204  
(317) 2321646

Division of Forestry  
9245 North Meridian St., Suite 118  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46260  
(317) 582-2410

Last updated on September 16, 1998.

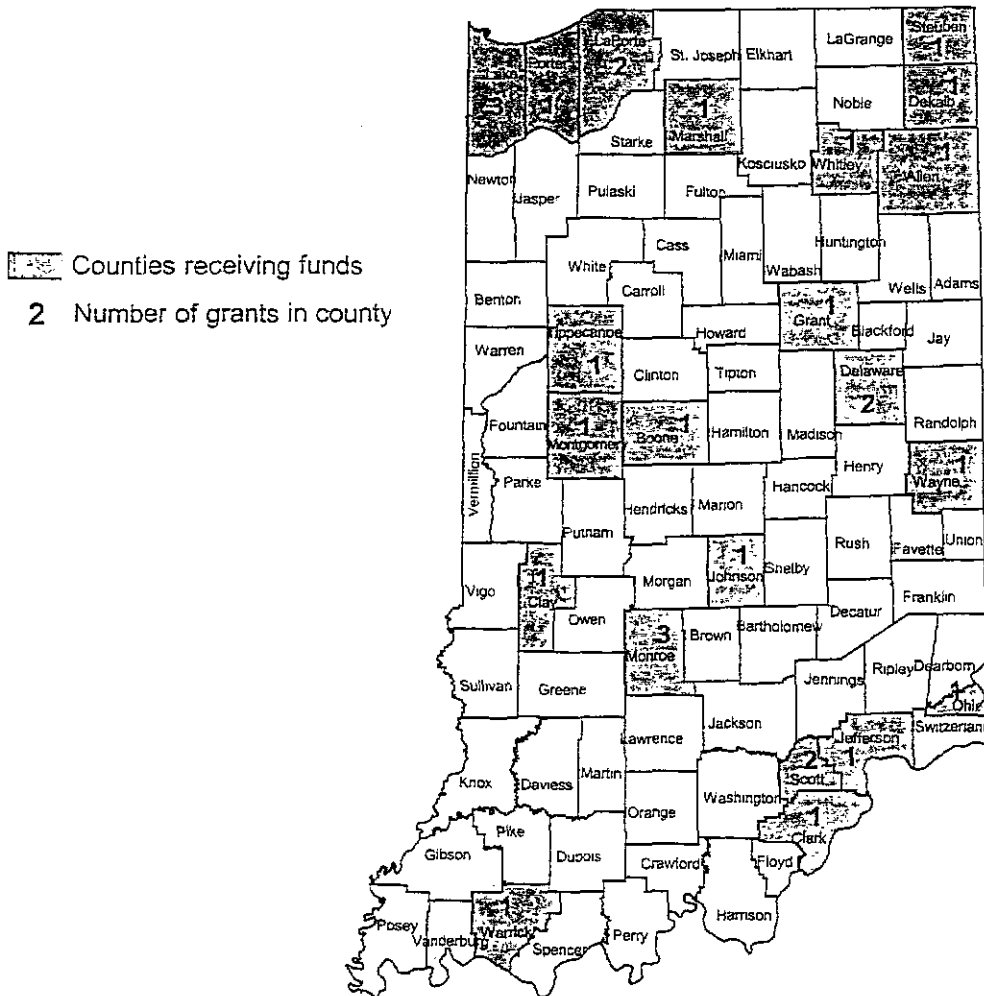
# SCORP 2000



## Hometown Indiana

In 1988, the Indiana General Assembly authorized the IDNR to create a new program to provide matching grants for local park and recreation projects, community forestry grants, and historic preservation projects. The Hometown Indiana program has grown to become a very popular program. The park and recreation component of the Hometown Indiana program has provided about \$4 million in grants to projects in 22 counties across the state.

### Hometown Indiana Grants by County



# SCORP 2000


APPENDIX

Hometown Indiana

<u>Region</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Grant Amount</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Grant Amount</u>
1A	LaPorte	\$250,000.00	11		\$0
1A	Porter	\$199,175.00			
1A	Lake	<u>\$353,730.50</u>	12	Ohio	\$200,000.00
		\$802,905.50	12	Jefferson	<u>\$ 25,473.00</u>
					\$225,473.00
1B		\$0	13A		\$0
2	Marshall	<u>\$200,000.00</u>	13B	Warrick	<u>\$100,000.00</u>
		\$200,000.00			\$100,000.00
3A	Steuben	<u>\$105,465.00</u>	14	Scott	\$235,241.00
		\$105,465.00	14	Clark	<u>\$100,000.00</u>
3B	Allen	\$200,000.00			\$335,241.00
3B	Dekalb	\$200,000.00			
3B	Whitley	<u>\$155,575.00</u>	15		\$0
		\$555,575.00			
			Program Total		\$3,964,432.50
4	Montgomery	\$16,592.00			
4	Tippecanoe	<u>\$200,000.00</u>			
		\$216,592.00			
5		\$0			
6	Delaware	\$255,041.00			
6	Grant	<u>\$200,000.00</u>			
		\$455,041.00			
7	Clay	<u>\$38,388.00</u>			
		\$38,388.00			
8	Boone	\$170,300.00			
8	Johnson	<u>\$200,000.00</u>			
		\$370,300.00			
9	Wayne	<u>\$200,000.00</u>			
		\$200,000.00			
10	Monroe	<u>\$359,452.00</u>			
		\$359,452.00			

# ★THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND★

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 since March 20, 1997.

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## What is the Land and Water Conservation Fund?

Participation in outdoor recreation activities is expanding so rapidly that park agencies often face a real financial burden in attempting to provide enough facilities to keep up with the demand. The Land and Water Conservation Fund was passed by Congress in 1965 to assist eligible governmental units in the provision of new park areas.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is a matching assistance program which provides grants for 50% of the cost for the acquisition and/or development of outdoor recreation sites and facilities. Funds are provided through the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior, but the program is administered in the State by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources' Division of Outdoor Recreation.

Since the program began, Indiana has received approximately \$66 million in federal funds. In recent years Indiana has received an annual allocation of approximately \$1 million. The allocation is divided between Department of Natural Resources' projects and local government park projects.

Over \$32 million has been provided to local agencies through the program. More than 30,000 acres of land have been acquired in Indiana with Land and Water Conservation Fund assistance.



## Who may apply?

Only park and recreation boards established under Indiana law are eligible. The park and recreation board must have a 5-year master plan for parks and recreation, which is approved by the Division of Outdoor Recreation.



### **Where do the federal funds come from?**

Funds for the Land and Water Conservation Fund grants come from three sources:

1. federal offshore oil lease receipts,
2. net proceeds from the sale of surplus federal real property, and
3. entrance and user fees at federal outdoor recreation areas.



### **What local sources of funding may be used to match a LWCF grant?**

Local funding sources used to match the federal assistance may be derived from appropriations, tax levies, bond issues, gifts and in kind contributions of land, cash, labor, materials and equipment. Other federal funding sources cannot be used as the local share of a project, except revenue sharing, Community Development Act funds, and Farmers Home Administration loans.



### **What types of projects may be funded?**

Grant applications may consist of land acquisition and/or facility construction or renovation for local public parks. New parks or additions to existing parks may be funded.

The land acquisition or development may not be started until final approval is received from the Federal Government. All land to be developed must be controlled by the park board through direct ownership.

**ALL FACILITIES MUST BE DESIGNED TO ACCOMMODATE HANDICAPPED PERSONS AND THE PARK BOARD'S FACILITIES, PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES MUST BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, AGE OR HANDICAP.**



### **Eligible Types of Projects:**

- Picnic Areas
- Sports and playfields, such as playgrounds, ballfields, court game facilities and golf courses
- Water oriented facilities for boating, swimming, and access to lakes, rivers and streams
- Natural areas and interpretive facilities
- Linear green belt parks and trails
- Campgrounds



- Fishing and hunting areas
- Winter sports facilities
- Amphitheatres and bandstands
- Parks adjacent to schools for mutual use
- Outdoor natural habitat zoo facilities
- Roads, rest rooms, utilities
- Architectural/engineering and application costs



### **Ineligible Types of Projects:**

- Indoor recreation areas and facilities, except sheltered ice rinks and swimming pools in northern Indiana
- Historic preservation, museums
- Professional sports and arts facilities
- Housing, including lodges, cabins and employee residences
- Mobile recreation units
- Amusement parks
- Facilities for exclusive use, as for schools and sports leagues
- Costs for administration, operation and maintenance; legal and court fees; and land acquisition surveys and appraisals



### **How is the funding received?**

Since the Land and Water Conservation Fund is a reimbursing program, the project sponsor does not receive the grant funds at the time an application is approved. The sponsor must have the local matching 50% of the project cost available prior to application. The sponsoring park and recreation board is reimbursed 50% of the actual costs of the approved project. A billing procedure enables the participant to request the federal share of the cost incurred throughout the grant term.



### **How may a park board apply for funding?**

- If necessary, establish a park and recreation board under current Indiana law.
- Submit a copy of the ordinance establishing the board to the Division of Outdoor Recreation for review.
- Complete a 5-year park and recreation master plan.
- Obtain local financing, prepare plans, specifications, appraisals, cost estimates, and other documents for the grant application.
- Submit the application to the Division of Outdoor Recreation.



### **What are the plan and application submission dates?**

Final drafts of master plans must be submitted to the Division of Outdoor Recreation by June 1. Final copies of completed master plans are due September 1. Upon completion of a master plan, a park board receives five years of eligibility to submit grant applications.

Grant application packets are available in late spring from the Division of Outdoor Recreation for agencies eligible to participate. Grant applications may be submitted between July 1- September 1 to be considered for funding in the next fiscal year. A point rating system is used to determine which projects will be funded when more applications are received than funds are available. Project sponsors are notified during late fall regarding the status of funding for their projects. Those projects which rate high enough for funding within the limits of the federal funds available are forwarded to the National Park Service for final approval, which is usually received the following spring.

### **Go to the LWCF Manual online**

You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader 4.0 to view and print the manual. Acrobat Reader software can be obtained FREE from



**If you want to know more...**

The Division of Outdoor Recreation has guidelines for preparing master plans, submitting grant applications and administering projects, along with other publications of interest to local park agencies. For more information contact:

Bob Bronson  
State & Community Outdoor Recreation Planning Section  
Division of Outdoor Recreation  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
402 West Washington Street, Room 271  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204  
(317) 232-4070

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This page was last updated by Dale Brier, Assistant to Mr. Bronson, on February 28, 2001.



DNR home-page

## EXHIBIT J

### Land and Water Conversation Fund

<u>County</u>	<u>County Project Total</u>	<u>Grant Amount</u>
Elkhart	16	\$1,263,352.25
Fulton	2	\$ 107,008.95
Huntington	2	\$ 83,893.40
<b>Kosciusko</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>\$ 479,941.65</b>
LaGrange	4	\$ 244,727.38
LaPorte	8	\$ 848,234.75
Marshall	7	\$ 683,989.50
Noble	9	\$ 736,078.39
Pulaski	1	\$ 609,831.50
St. Joseph	27	\$7,647,215.39
Starke	2	\$ 32,712.50
Wabash	3	\$ 17,814.94
Whitley	6	\$ 163,208.07

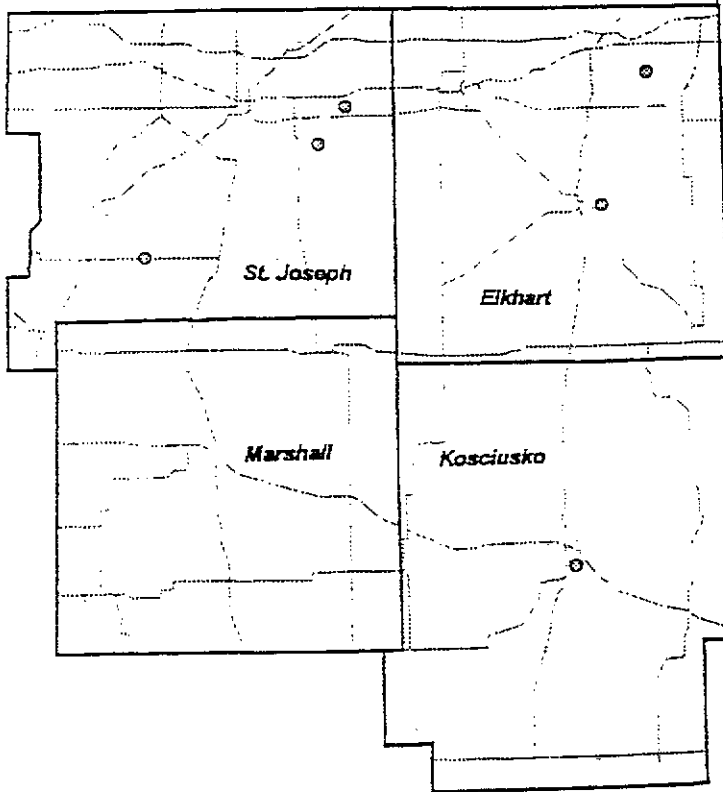
\*These figures were taken from the SCORP 2000



# SCORP 2000

## Camping in Region 2

### Public Camping Areas



 Publicly Owned Sites with Camping

## **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

1. Indiana Department of Natural Resources
2. LaPorte County Park Department
3. Dan Richard, Kosciusko County Planner
4. Jeff Noffsinger, Warsaw City Planner
5. Brad Jackson, Kosciusko County Commissioner

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