

2017 State of the County Report



2017 County Parks Board

Larry Catanzarite, President
 Donna Pfeil, Vice President
 Virginia Calvin, Secretary
 John Ferrettie
 John Gleissner
 Thomas Panzica
 Phil Sutton

2017 County Commissioners

Andrew Kostielney, President
 Deb Fleming
 Dave Thomas

2017 County Council

Rafael Morton, President
 Mark A. Catanzarite
 Dianna Hess
 Robert Kruszynski, Jr.
 Robert J. McCahill
 Corey D. Noland
 James O'Brien
 Mark Root
 Mark Telloyan

2017 Parks Foundation Officers

David Deahl, President
 Matt Kahn, Vice-President
 Andrew Szczechowski, Treasurer

The St. Joseph County Parks

Bendix Woods County Park
 Ferrettie-Baugo Creek County Park
 St. Patrick's County Park
 Spicer Lake Nature Preserve

Partnered sites:

Chamberlain Lake Nature Preserve,
 Jasinski Canoe Launch
 Beverly D. Crone Restoration Area

Our Mission

The St. Joseph County Parks Department enriches the community and the lives of St. Joseph County residents. We

- ▲ Conserve and care for significant natural areas.
- ▲ Promote stewardship of our natural and cultural heritage through quality programs and services.
- ▲ Enhance visitor experiences through well-maintained park facilities.



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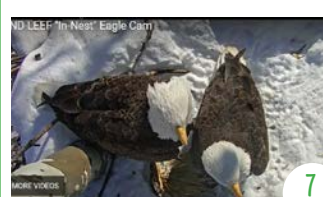
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What We Do...

The County Parks provide benefits to community public health and economic development by managing over 1,300 acres of public access greenspace, river and stream corridors, wetlands and woods, and providing space for walking, biking, canoeing, paddling, skiing and learning.

2017 visitation at the County Parks and offsite events reached **317,000**.

We Are Proud of these 2017 Highlights!

▲ The St. Joseph County Parks Foundation participated in Give Local St. Joseph County with 72 other area non-profits. Funds raised benefited the Parks Endowment Fund and the LaSalle Trail. We ranked fifth overall in the number of gifts received. (1)

▲ The next phase of the LaSalle Trail was completed between Auten and Darden Roads with lead support from Bike Michiana Coalition, Give Local St. Joseph County and the County Hotel-Motel Tourism Development Fund. (2)

▲ The interpretive team launched *Tales to Trails*, a literacy-environmental ed program for 1st-graders with 7 visits in the classroom incorporating a book and a hands-on habitat activity, and culminating in an outdoor session at Bendix Woods County Park. Multiple lessons with students effectively re-enforces science principles, and builds appreciation for our local natural resources. (3)

▲ A record 4,000 people participated in canoe/kayak or paddleboard rentals based out of St. Patrick's County Park. (4)

▲ Thanks to a grant from I/N Tek I/N Kote, our construction team built an elevated walkway to Lancaster Lake within Spicer Lake Nature Preserve. (5)

▲ St. Joseph County Parks received the *Parks, Program and Facilities Award* from the Great Lakes Park Training Institute for the partnership with the University of Notre Dame-Linked Experimental Ecosystem Facility (LEEF) at St. Patrick's County Park. (6)

▲ A new eagle cam linked to the Internet was installed at St. Patrick's County Park above the active bald eagle nest. (7)

▲ The Red Barn at St. Patrick's County Park and the Van Paris Shelter at Bendix Woods County Park were re-roofed in conjunction with a settlement with GAF. (8)

▲ We hosted and participated in several community events such as The Mayor's Ride, Indiana Dunes Birding Festival and Bike Michiana for Hospice.

▲ Parks director Evie Kirkwood received the Community Sustainability Award from the Center for a Sustainable Future at IU South Bend.

▲ The St. Joseph County Parks Foundation awarded 2017 Oak Tree Awards to Del and Nancy Meyer and Bike Michiana Coalition for their contributions to the County Parks.

Here's Some Happy Numbers...

The County Parks coordinated **13** special events and hosted or partnered in **31** community events. Volunteers contributed **3,039** hours for park programs and projects. **16,100** school children and individuals participated in hands-on Interpretive programs to learn about local cultural and natural history. **22,500** people participated in Leisure Services workshops and programs. **19** schools received support through the Donna Pfeil Scholarship Fund to participate in our interpretive programs in the parks. In addition, we provided reduced cost programming to **13** other community social service organizations serving children and older adults.