Environmental Profile: Steuben County, Indiana

Information & County Contacts

_Steuben County Visitor’s Center:_
(800) 525-3101

_Steuben County Soil & Water Conservation District:_
(260-665-3211 ext. 3)

Land, Water, & Biodiversity & Conservation Efforts:

Pokagon State Park/Trine State Recreation Area

Pokagon State Park is located near Angola, just off I-69. The park was originally called Lake James State Park when proposed to be the fifth Indiana State Park in 1925. The name was changed to Pokagon State Park to acknowledge the rich Native American heritage of the state and region. Leopold and Simon Pokagon were father and son and the last two most notable leaders of the Potawatomi. The park’s Potawatomi Inn takes its name from these Native Americans, who made their home in the area. The inn, with its up-north fishing-lodge theme, is one of the Midwest’s most popular resorts and conference centers.

Being one of the state’s original parks, Pokagon features the unique work of the Civilian Conservation Corps, whose members lived and worked at Pokagon from
1934 to 1942. The “boys of the CCC” built the beautiful stone and log structures that dot the park landscape and provide accent to the rolling wooded hills, wetlands and open meadows.

Natural lakes created by glaciers that melted 10,000 to 15,000 years ago, highlight Steuben County, which has more lakes than any other Indiana county. The park is framed by Lake James and Snow Lake, which offer abundant opportunities for boating, swimming, fishing and scenic sunsets.¹

**Endangered Species:**

**Prairie Fringed Orchid** *(Platanthera leucophaea)*

The orchids produce flower stalks up to 47 inches tall. Each stalk has up to 40 white flowers about an inch long. The western prairie fringed orchid’s flowers are somewhat larger than those of the closely related eastern prairie fringed orchid.

The greatest threat to the prairie fringed orchids is habitat loss, mostly through conversion to cropland. Competition with introduced alien plants, filling of wetlands, intensive hay mowing, fire suppression, and overgrazing also threatens these species.²

¹ http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2973.htm