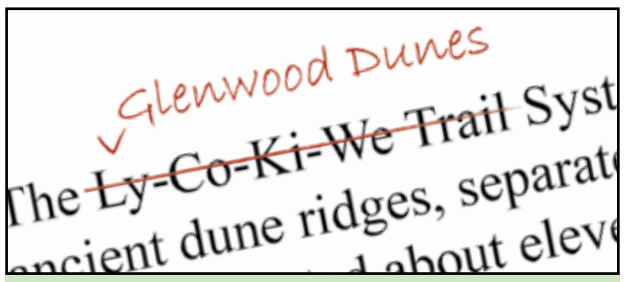
# Park Updates

**Cowles Bog Restoration**

Restoration in one of the park's rare habitats, a Lake Plain Wet-Mesic Prairie, continued this year in the Cowles Bog wetland complex. The work involves reducing tree cover and removing understory vegetation to allow native prairie species a chance to grow. A number of trees have been retained near historic structures and along Mineral Springs Road. Next steps include restoring the hydrology by removing ditches and planting native prairie plants.




**What's in a Name?**

Last October, two national lakeshore sites were renamed to help visitors better understand the geological and geographic resources of Indiana Dunes and why inland areas, away from the shore, were included within the park boundaries. Inland Marsh was renamed Tolleston Dunes and Ly-Co-Ki-We Trail was renamed the Glenwood Dunes Trail. Now the four major dune complexes preserved within the park are highlighted, starting with the most recent primary shoreline dunes, followed by Tolleston, Calumet and the older Glenwood dunes.

**Miller Woods Trail Expansion**

In April, the Miller Woods Trail extension was dedicated as part of the *Nature in My Neighborhood* initiative. This extended trail, developed by the National Park Service in partnership with the City of Gary, allows you to hike between the Douglas Center and Gary's Marquette Park / Lake Michigan. This four season trail guides you through a nationally rare oak savanna forest and past several lagoons. Stay on the narrow single-file trail to help the abundant lupine, a critical plant tied to the survival of the threatened Karner blue butterfly.

**Ride the Porter Brickyard Trail**

The Porter Brickyard Trail is part of a regional trail system that, when completed, will allow bicyclists to travel from Illinois to southwest Michigan. The new two-mile portion is paved and leads visitors past diverse landscapes and cultural sites within the national lakeshore. Highlights include the historic Bailly Homestead and Chellberg Farm, the Little Calumet River, Mnoké Prairie, and remnants of the Great Marsh. This new trail becomes part of the rich heritage of trails, routes and highways traversing this region since the footpaths of prehistoric peoples.

**New Campground Waterline**

A new municipal waterline was installed last year at the national lakeshore's Dunewood Campground and goes into service this camping season. The water will improve the quality and reliability of the water supply compared to the previous well system and increases the capacity of hydrants to provide fire protection. An increase in the camping fee from $15 to $18 per night was approved to cover the additional cost of municipal water.

**Century of Progress District Signs**

Two new signs are being installed along Lake View drive to mark the park's Century of Progress Historic District. The district is made up of five houses, originally displayed in the 1933 Chicago World's Fair, that were later moved to the Indiana lakefront in the hopes of promoting a new housing development. The signs were funded through a generous donation by the Dunes National Park Association. The association is a non-profit organization that supports Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore by building a community of supporters dedicated to conserving the park for current and future generations.

**Deer Management**

The National Park Service approved the Deer Management Plan last June allowing the park to take action to reduce the out-of-balance deer population. The abundant deer population, lacking natural predators, has over-browsed many rare and endangered plants, negatively impacting the exceptional biodiversity. The plan includes the reduction of the deer herd through sharpshooting by trained professionals. Other actions include a combination of fencing and use of repellents to protect rare plant populations or restoration areas. The first reduction of the herd took place in late winter and removed 84 deer.

**Controlled Burns**

The National Park Service conducted prescribed fires last year totaling over 600 acres. These carefully planned and closely monitored burns removed accumulated dead plant material under controlled conditions, reducing the threat of uncontrolled wild fires in the park and adjacent private property. These burns also promote the healthy growth of native plants and maintain the exceptional diversity of this national park. These fires are conducted by trained and experienced park fire personnel, helping to accomplish the management goals and objectives set before each burn.

**Bailly Cemetery Stewardship**

A group of volunteers cleaned and helped to repair the historic Bailly Cemetery that was overgrown with vegetation and damaged by vandals. As part of the park's monthly Stewardship programs, these volunteers helped to preserve and protect this historic location for the benefit of others. Stewardship programs, offered monthly on the third Saturday, allow visitors a chance to give back while enjoying some exercise and learning more about their national park. Check this guide or www.nps.gov/indu to learn how you can get involved.