FERRETTIE - BAUGO CREEK COUNTY PARK

Located on the eastern edge of St. Joseph County, this Park opened to the public in 1987. Land acquisition began in the late 1970s and included the former Mishawaka municipal dump. Today the Park has grown to 214 acres through acquisitions by the Parks Board and efforts by former County Commissioner Henry Ferrettie.

Baugo Creek, a tributary of the St. Joseph River, meanders through the Park. A long-term lease by Indiana Michigan Power Co. to the County Parks protects 50 acres of marshland and island habitat within the creek. The creek’s name “Baugo” is a shortened version of “Baubaugo,” a name given to the waterway by early Native American inhabitants in the region. Roughly translated, it means “devil water” referring to the creek’s rapidly rising water levels following heavy rains, a characteristic it still maintains today.

Baugo Station, a large two-story rental facility, overlooks the creek and Lake Osceola. The building façade is reminiscent of a fur trade post, and provides a reference to Baugo Creek’s historical use as a trade route.

Park interpreters ply the creek in a replica 34-foot Voyageur Canoe during programs on the fur trade. “Pioneer Skills” programs teach 4th-graders how to spin wool and weave fabric on antique looms.

Recreational amenities include an 18-hole disc golf course and pro-shop, a small lake with accessible fishing access, hiking trails, picnic shelters, and a boat launch. In winter, the Park offers innertubing and snowshoe rental.