ST. PATRICK’S COUNTY PARK

St. Patrick’s County Park was established in 1976 with the purchase of 105 acres, known as “St. Patrick’s Farm,” from The Sisters of the Holy Cross. The Sisters owned and managed the farm for the production of food for the Congregation and students at Saint Mary’s College. Dairy cows and swine were housed in two of the existing original barns on the site.

Built in the late 1920s, the Red Barn is considered one of the oldest and largest Wisconsin-style dairy barns in Indiana. The adjacent White Barn and surrounding structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Today, the Red Barn is a popular venue for weddings and community special events. The White Barn (the former swine barn) serves as the administrative headquarters for St. Joseph County Parks.

The Park has expanded to its current size of 398 acres through additional land purchases and donations. A 65-acre parcel was deeded to the County Parks through a life-estate agreement with Clarence and Virginia Manion in 1979. A unique amenity on this parcel is the Manion Cabin built in 1919. Volunteers and donors converted the cabin into a weekend rental facility available to the public.

St. Patrick’s County Park is home to ND-LEEF (Notre Dame Linked Experimental Ecosystem Facility), a 33-acre site for aquatic and terrestrial research. The facility is open to park visitors. The partnership with the University of Notre Dame also generates outreach programs for schools and the public.

A half-mile of St. Joseph River frontage borders the park to the east offering wildlife habitat and recreational access. St. Patrick’s County Park is a regional park providing facilities for hiking, cross-country skiing, fishing, canoeing/kayaking, and picnicking.