

Indiana Dunes

NATIONAL LAKESHORE PROJECT



THESE VAST DUNES

Along the southern shore of Lake Michigan between Gary and Michigan City are several sections of clean, sandy beaches backed by huge sand dunes, some covered with trees and shrubs, others continually reshaped by the wind. The beach was used as part of a trail system by Indians, the original inhabitants of the region, and later, in the early 1800's, by pioneers. Gradually, this trail was abandoned in favor of an inland route which was more adaptable to horses and carriages and stagecoaches. The inland route eventually led to the development of U.S. 12.

Most of the national lakeshore falls between the shoreline and U.S. 12, while another section, near Tremont, lies between U.S. 12 and U.S. 20. This land, totaling about 8,000 acres, will preserve some of the remaining dunes, bogs, and marshes, and provide recreational opportunities along the beaches and inland.

EARLY PROPOSALS

One of the first proposals to preserve the Indiana Dunes came in 1917 and called for a national park of 9,000 to 13,000 acres extending 20 to 25 miles along the shore of Lake Michigan. This proposal was suspended because of the costs of the war effort.

Except for small city parks, Indiana Dunes State Park is the only public area in the region preserving dunes and shoreline. The park was established in 1923 on land purchased mostly through private and public subscriptions. Today, only about 2,000 acres of dunes and marshland along 3 miles of shoreline are protected, far too little for a region growing so rapidly. No land has been added since 1926.

In recent years the Save-the-Dunes Council, a group of interested citizens, has worked diligently to promote the national lakeshore. Through their efforts and those of other individuals and organizations, such as the Izaak

Walton League, a bill was introduced in Congress. Public Law 89-761, passed in November 1966, authorized the Secretary of the Interior to establish Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore when sufficient lands and waters have been acquired to be effectively administered as a unit.

A REMARKABLE SHORE

One of the principal uses of the national lakeshore will be for recreation. Swimming and sunning on the beach will be centered mainly in the West Beach Unit between Gary and the community of Ogden Dunes. Almost ideal recreational possibilities will be available along about 1 mile of shoreline and extending inland for about 1 mile.

Camping and picnicking sites will be developed in the inland section near Tremont. The use of much of the rest of the national lakeshore will be limited to hiking, bicycling, and horseback riding.

NATURAL VALUES

The purpose of the national lakeshore will be to protect the remaining shoreline, dunes, marshes, and the ecology of plants and animals in an environment produced by the actions of glaciers, lakes, and wind.

Cowles Bog, near Indiana Dunes State Park, and Pinhook Bog, 6 miles south of Michigan City, are of particular interest for their variety of wetland plants and animals. They have remained in a nearly natural condition in a region of man-made changes, and were given national natural landmark status in 1966. The only development in these two areas will be limited nature trails and boardwalks to introduce visitors to this type of environment.

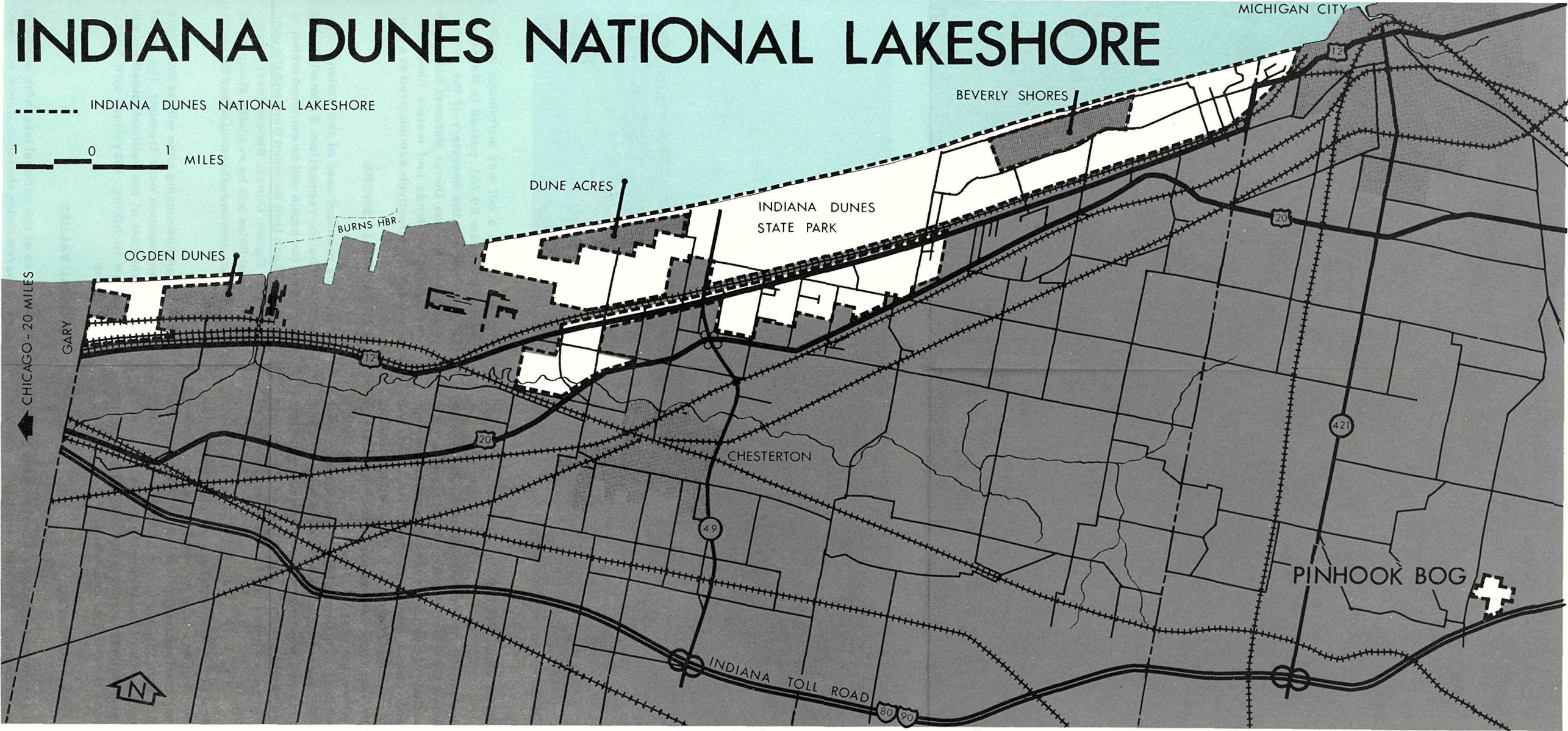
INFORMATION

Inquiries should be addressed to the Regional Director, National Park Service, 143 South Third St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19106.

Other than Indiana Dunes State Park, almost all land within the proposed boundary is privately owned and will have to be purchased. The Secretary of the Interior has delegated to the National Park Service the authority to acquire, develop, and administer this property. When sufficient land has been acquired, the Secretary will establish the national lakeshore by publication of a notice in the Federal Register.

No Federal lands are available for public use at present and no provisions for recreational use during 1967 are anticipated.

VISITORS SHOULD RESPECT THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE LANDOWNERS. When Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore is established, there will be both public and private lands within the boundaries. Thus private property, whether land or structures, should be given the same courtesy and consideration due personal property.



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THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR — the Nation's principal natural resource agency — bears a special obligation to assure that our expendable resources are conserved, that renewable resources are managed to produce optimum benefits, and that all resources contribute to the progress and prosperity of the United States, now and in the future.

U. S. Department of the Interior

National Park Service

