

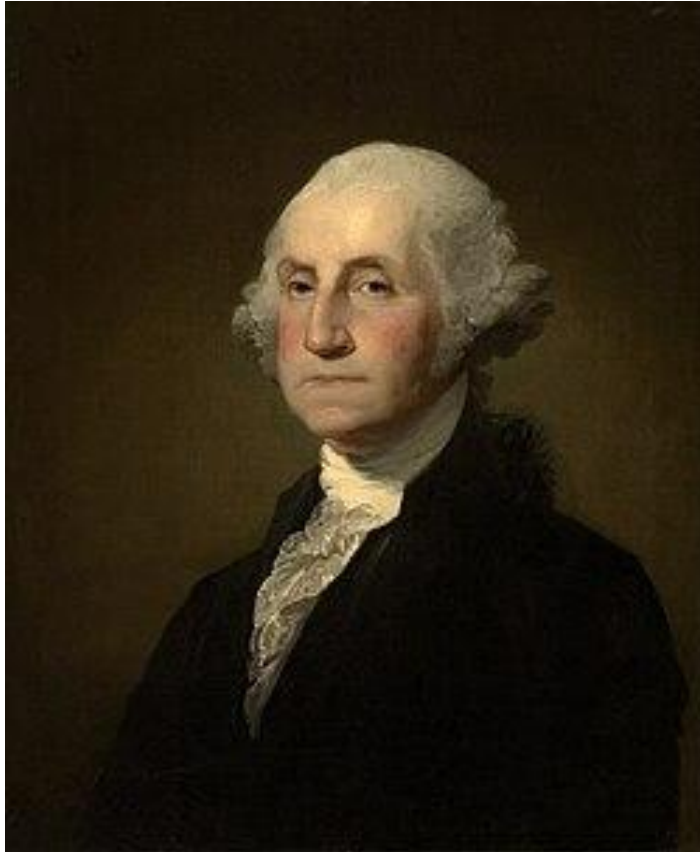
INDIANA CANALS

YESTERDAY / TODAY / TOMORROW

INDIANA LANDMARKS FOUNDATION

October 1, 2025

Washington's Vision



Viewing Maps during 1790's Indian Wars



Falls on the Ohio River – At Louisville KY

Falls /Rapids = 2 Miles- 26 Foot Drop

3 Channels

“ Indian Chute” 15 ‘ wide - Indiana Side

Indiana Attempts a Canal

1805 Indiana Canal Company

1817 The Ohio Canal Company

1818 Jefferson Ohio Company

Louisville & Portland Canal

1826 – 1831

Completed on Louisville side



New York's Erie Canal 1817 -1825 “From Buffalo to Troy”



Gov. Dewitt Clinton
1769 - 1828



Fort Wayne Portage Canal – 1823-24

Indiana Governor William Hendricks
Supports a Canal – Maumee - Wabash Rivers

Congressional Act May 1824
Donating a 90 ft strip on each side of canal

Indiana rejects offer



William Hendricks

Fort Wayne < -----? Huntington
25 Miles

Ohio Builds 2 Canals



New York Governor
Dewitt Clinton

Ohio & Erie Canal - July 4 1825

Licking Summit – Newark OH

Completed

1832 - Cleveland to Portsmouth

Miami Canal - July 21, 1825

Middletown, OH

Completed

1829 - Dayton to Cincinnati

1845 – Junction OH W&E



Ohio Governor
Jeremiah Morrow

Treaty of Paradise Spring



October 1826

Wabash, Indiana

Land acquired from Miami & Pottawatomie tribes

Survey for land sales & a canal

Congressional Land Grant

March 3, 1827

Alternate sections of land for Indiana to sell – for a canal
5 Miles on both sides of the selected route

Tippecanoe River Indiana – Auglaize River Ohio

Start in 5 years and complete in 20 years

Lafayette, IN -----→ Defiance, OH
160 Miles

1827 - Ohio & Illinois – also received similar grants

Canal vs Railroad

1831-32

Indiana studies: Canal vs Railroad

CONCLUSION

Canal most cost Effective

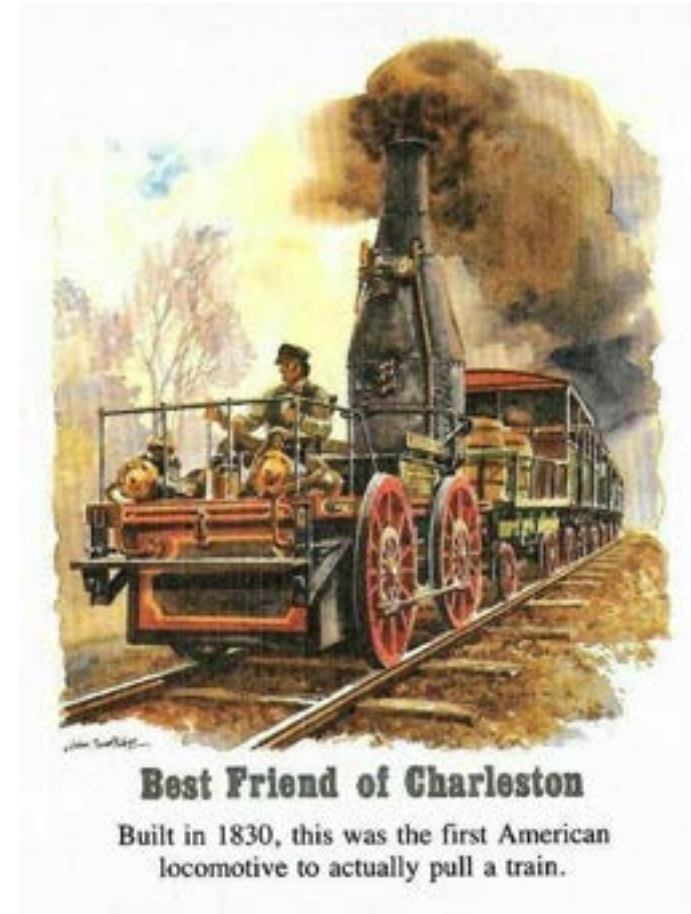
Wabash & Erie Canal

Feb 22 – 1832 Groundbreaking

FT Wayne Summit

1835 – Ft Wayne to Huntington

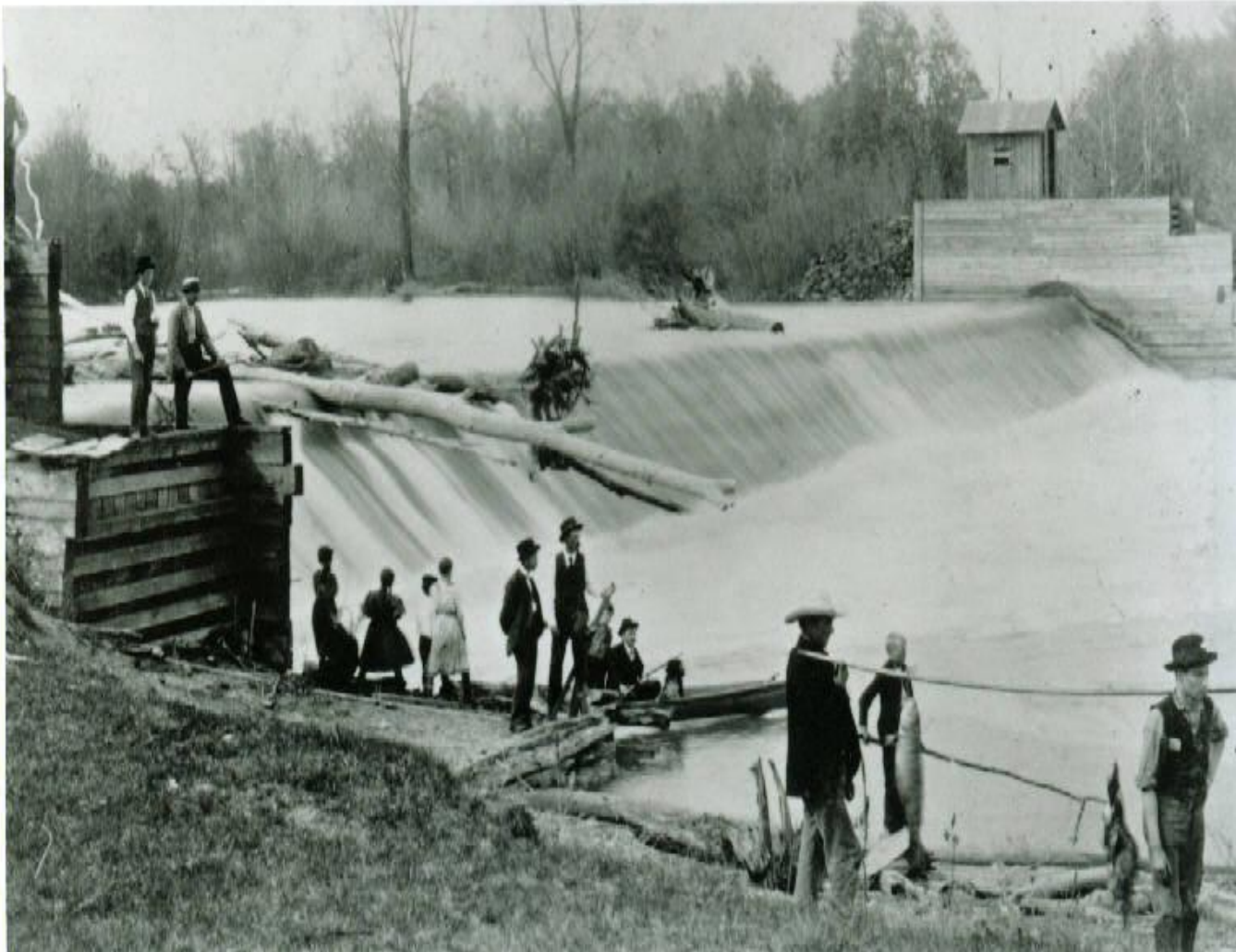
1840 Lafayette / 1843 Lake Erie



1830 Rail Road

Fort Wayne Feeder Dam

- 6 ½ Mile Feeder Provided water – Huntington / Defiance OH



1836 Mammoth Improvements

Background Perspective

1825 Erie Canal Opened & Ohio breaks ground for 2 canals

1827 Indiana Land Grant / 1832 -36 Construction on W&E Canal

Details of the 1836 Bill

Borrowed - \$10 Million at 5% interest Funding:

\$ 6.3 million for **3 Canals**

Whitewater \$1.4 / Central \$3.5 / W&E Lafayette to Terre Haute \$1.4

\$1.3 million - Railroad – Madison to Lafayette

\$1.1 million - Road – New Albany to Vincennes

\$1.3 million Other Projects

Improvements on Wabash River

Surveys for Erie & Michigan Canal & Road – Jeffersonville to Crawfordsville

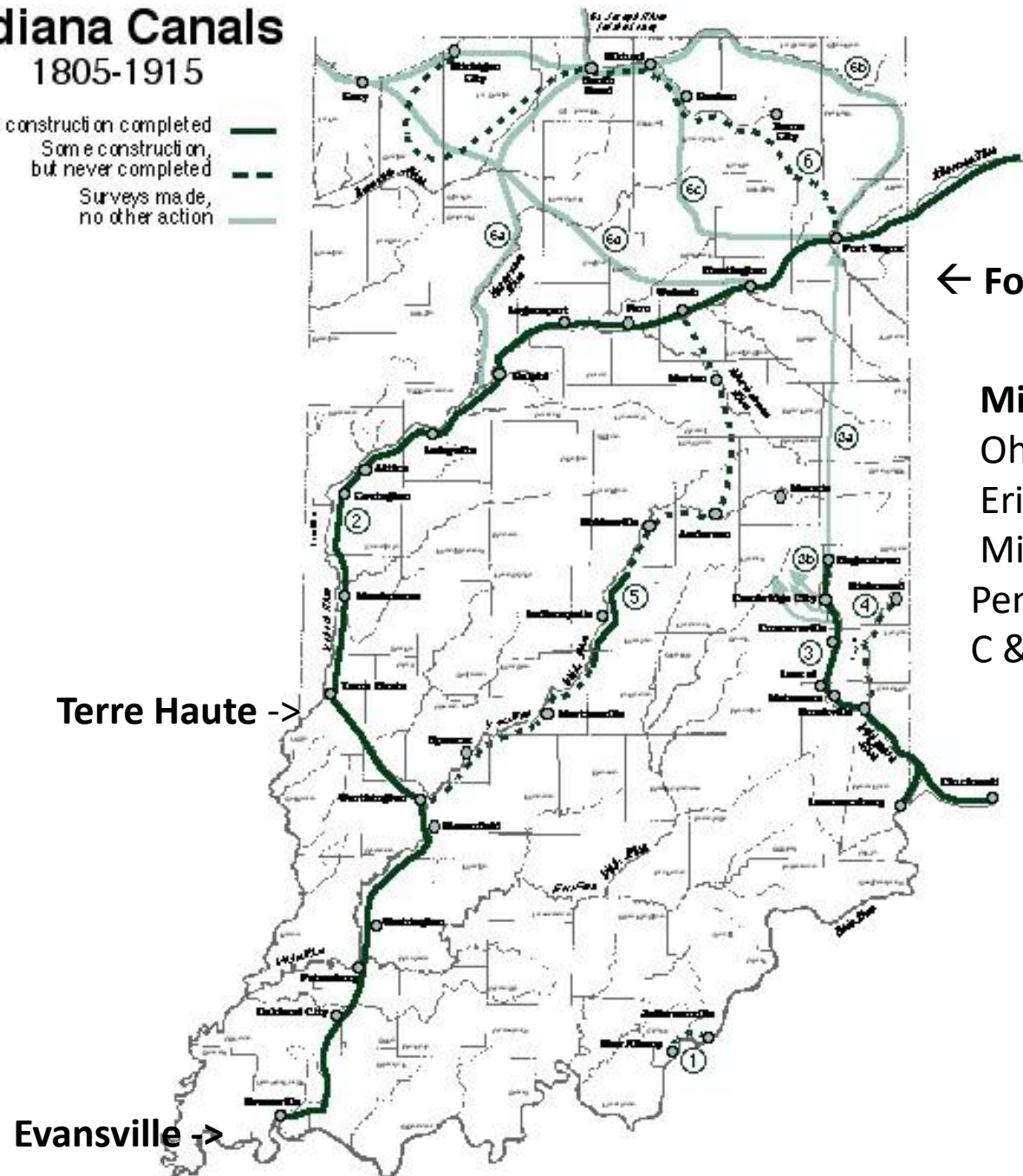
Indiana Canals 1805-1915

Canal construction completed
Some construction but never completed
Surveys made, no other action



Indiana Canals 1805-1915

Canal construction completed
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no other action



← Fort Wayne

Miles 380 IN 88 OH = 468

Ohio & Erie 308 miles

Erie Canal 351 miles

Miami & Erie Canal 246 miles

Pennsylvania Mainline 394 miles

C & O Canal 185 miles

Terre Haute ->

Evansville ->

Wabash & Erie Statistics

- Ohio 88 miles - Toledo (Manhattan)
- Indiana 380 miles – Evansville
- Total 468 miles – 2nd Longest in world

Plan – Terre Haute to Lake Erie 310 miles Cross-Cut 42 miles to Worthington (Central)

July 1847 - transferred from Indiana to Wabash & Erie Trust (Terre Haute)

21 Years to Construct (Ft Wayne) 1832 – 1853 (Evansville)

Grand Canal of China = 1,000 miles

- Fort Wayne Summit-197' above Lake Erie
31 locks to reach FTW summit
- 73 Lift locks / 18 Aqueducts - Indiana

Whitewater Canal Statistics

Planned 76 Miles Hagerstown – Lawrenceburg
Constructed

1836-39 Brookville to Lawrenceburg –
17 miles (7 in Ohio)

1839-41 State financial collapse

1842-46 Whitewater Valley Canal Company – 51 miles

1847 Hagerstown Canal Company – 8 miles

Whitewater Canal = 76 miles

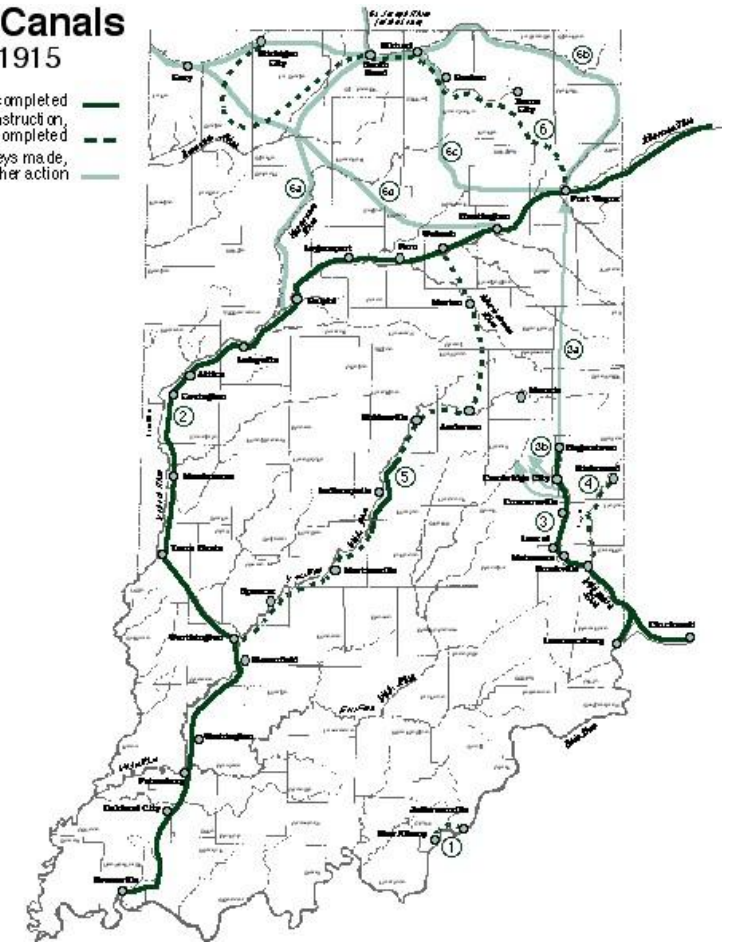
1843 Cincinnati & Whitewater Canal – 25 miles – from W Harrison IN

1849 Harrison – Lawrenceburg closed – flood damage

1862 WW Canal sold to Railroad

Indiana Canals 1805-1915

Canal construction completed
Some construction,
but never completed
Surveys made,
no other action



Central Canal Statistics

Planned: 206 miles Peru – Indianapolis – Worthington – Evansville

Constructed

1836-39 8 miles in Indianapolis plus some diggings N & S

1839 State financial problems / All work stopped

1847-53 42 miles of Cross-Cut Canal to Wabash & Erie Trust

111 miles Worthington – Evansville built as Wabash & Erie

2025 Indianapolis Water Company – Broad Ripple to Downtown

Today –

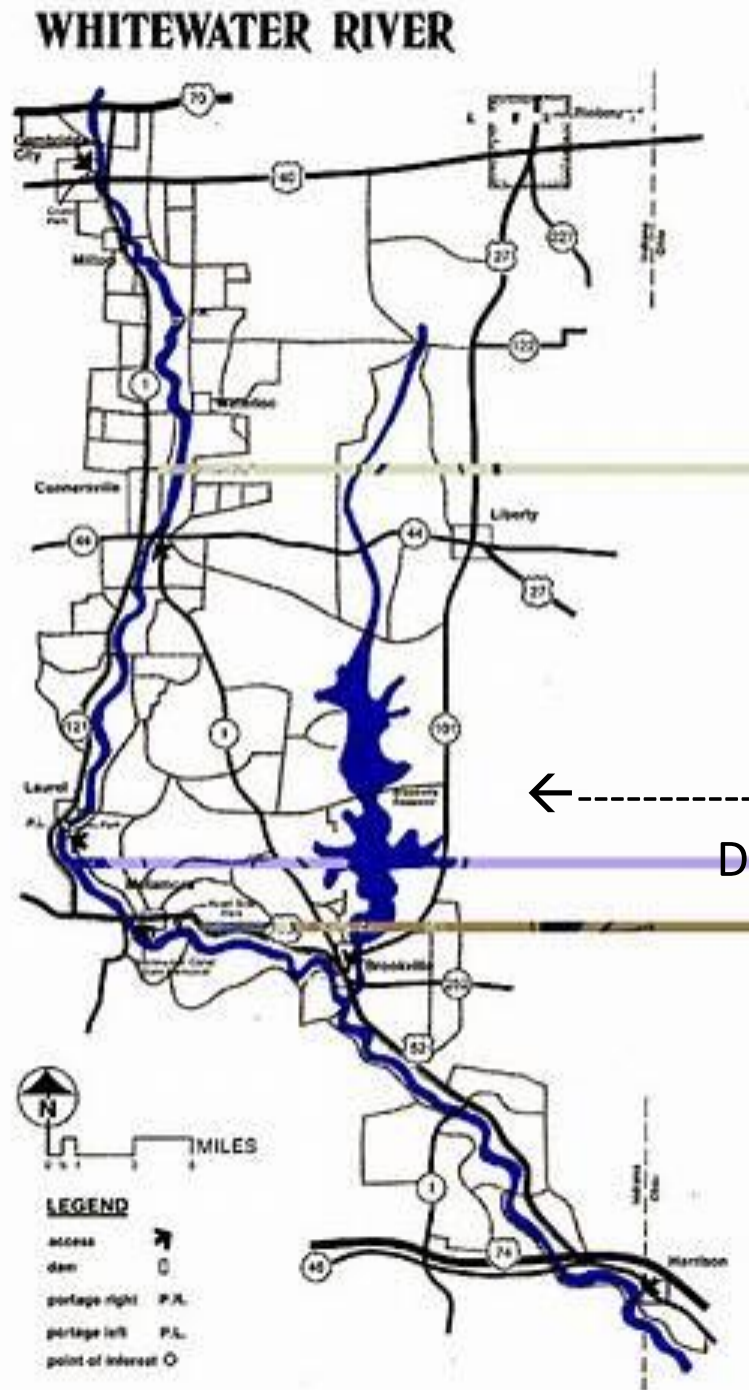


1913 Brookville Flood

1930s DNR Plans to Flood
West Branch of Whitewater

1940s Community Action to
Preserve WW Canal

1946 Indiana Creates
Whitewater Historic Site



Resurrected Canal

←----- 1970 Brookville
Dam & Reservoir

Today – Canal History Revived

1946 – Indiana establishes Whitewater Historic Site

1956 – Canal Society of New York State - Buffalo

1961 - Canal Society of Ohio - Cleveland

1970 – Carroll County organizes to Save local Wabash & Erie Canal

1982– Canal Society of Indiana (CSI) – Fort Wayne

501 (c) (3) 100% Volunteer / Privately Funded

1991 – Gronauer Lock Uncovered New Haven

1992 - Whitewater Trails

2020 - Whitewater Canal Byways

Trail development in Lafayette, Peru, Terre Haute

2025 – Whitewater Historic Site abandoned by State Museum

Tomorrow – Change with the Times

1847 – Terre Haute Hdqs – W&E Canal



2024 - New Headquarters



Terre Haute Historical Museum
Junction - W&E Canal & National Road

The CSI Mission

To promote a better understanding
of Indiana's canal era

Its progress and its people

New CSI Leadership



Dr Ron Morris

Chairman of History Dept. – Ball State University

The CSI Program

CSI Major Activities

Signage Structures & Canal Bed Prism **Over 100 placed YTD**

Education – Symposiums Adult & School programs

Website – Indcanal.org = The Tumble all issues / Statistics Biographies
Videos “Indiana’s Canal Heritage” – 1 Hr

Other Areas of Support

Preservation of Canal Structures & Prism

Support Canal Archeological work - Gronauer Lock 1991-92

Statewide Trail development – follow old canal

Promote Indiana Canal Related Sites

Delphi Canal Park / Whitewater Canal Byways & WW Valley Railroad
Forks of the Wabash - Huntington

CSI Signage - Statewide



Terre Haute – Generic Sign

Huntington – Specific Sign ->



<- Connersville Smaller Sign

Adult Educational Programs



Tours of Local Canal Sites Logansport



Symposiums - Fort Wayne

Education Programs - School Children



Lowell & Margaret Griffin
Forks of the Wabash Huntington



Sam & Jo Ligget
Fowler Park – Terre Haute

Blue Dog Canal Scrip

Kids love getting a Blue Dog
to take home



Original Canal Scrip – Terre Haute Museum

Website : Indcanal.org

CANAL SOCIETY OF INDIANA

EST. 1982

Established as a not-for-profit corporation to provide the interpretation of an era, preserve canal bed and structural remains, and to support the restoration of historic canal related sites while bringing together those who share a common interest in Indiana's historic canals.



Statistics and Maps
All Indiana's Canals



The Tumble – Journal of Canal Activities & Information

Canal Biographies

1991 Gronauer Lock Uncovered



CSI Membership Swells to over 200

Statewide Trail Development



Fort Wayne Feeder

Other Indiana Canal Sites

Delphi Canal Park Boat Rides



<- Forks of the Wabash

Metamora Historic Site -->



← Connersville to
Metamora

Work With State & Local Officials



Other State organizations

INDOT Indiana Dept. of Transportation

DNR Department of Natural Resources
Outdoor Indiana Magazine

Local Trails Organizations

Ball State - History Students
- Dept of Archeology

State Senator : Jean Leising State Rep Linsay : Patterson
Connersville's Meeting on the Whitewater Canal

Whitewater Canal Developments

1946 – State (DNR) purchases 14 miles

1947–49 Repairs: Aqueduct / Laurel Dam / Mill

Yellow Bank Twin Culvert destroyed (plans rebuild)

National Register District & Aqueduct National Landmark

Indiana State Museum Ownership

2023 – Engineering Study - \$14.4 Million needed

Aqueduct / Dam / Mill / Canal Boat

2024 - Indiana Legislature pledges \$7 million for a match

Jun 2025 - State Museum announces closure

New - **Lilly Foundation provides \$7 million matching funds**

Future of site still under development

The CSI Goal

For Hoosiers to understand:

How our canal era influenced
Indiana's development
&

Preserving Our Canal Heritage

The End

Yesterday – Historical Perspective

Indiana's Need for Transportation of Goods

- 1819 Jefferson Ohio Falls Canal – Indiana Shute
1st State Lottery
 - 1824 Land Grant – Maumee to Wabash Rivers - 90 ft path - 25 miles
 - 1827 Land Grant – Alternate Sections – 10 miles path / 844 sq miles
From **Tippecanoe River IN** to the **Auglaize River OH – 40 ft wide**
Start in 5 yrs and must complete in 20
- 1831-32 Comparison of railroad vs canal costs
- Feb 28 1832 – Ft Wayne Groundbreaking – Summit Level
- 1835 – Ft Wayne to Huntington 1840 Lafayette / 1843 Lake Erie