

FREE!
TAKE
ONE

Area Recreation Guide

2025 SAYLORVILLE LAKE IOWA

COMPLETE MAPS

-  Saylorville
-  Big Creek
-  Jester Park

Photo courtesy of Saylorville Lake Marina

Events | Campgrounds | Attractions | Activities

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Welcome!

SAYLORVILLE LAKE

*Come and explore
the treasures of
Saylorville Lake
and rejuvenate
your spirit!*

Saylorville Lake

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Big Creek Recreation Area

PAGE 14

Jester Park

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Recreation area maps

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Imagine captaining a sailing vessel on Saylorville Lake, reeling in the “big one” at Big Creek State Park, or hiking the trails surrounding the nature center at Jester Park. Golfing, camping, picnicking, paddling, shooting, birding, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, biking... all are possible in northwest Polk County. Jester Park, Big Creek State Park, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Saylorville Lake anchor a premier “Outdoor Family Zone” that brings federal, state, county, local and private partners together to create a magnificent destination for Iowans and beyond.

More than 800 campsites are available during the spring, summer and fall recreation season. More than 40 picnic shelters of various sizes can accommodate groups from 20 to 500 people. Numerous boat ramps provide access to 6,000 acres of water on Saylorville Lake and 950 acres at Big Creek State Park for both motorized and non-motorized watercraft. More than 50 miles of paved and natural surface trails accommodate a wide range of use including biking, hiking and equestrian activities. Saylorville Lake is also listed as a global bio-preserve and significant bird area for waterfowl that use the lake during their spring and fall migrations.

Welcome to Saylorville Lake! Spend the day or the weekend enjoying all that we have to offer.

Saylorville Lake

Facility Schedule 2025 Recreation Season Saylorville Lake

CAMPGROUNDS	Number of Reservable Sites	Dates of Full Service	Site Fee with Electric	Site Fee Non-Electric	Fee Booth Telephone #'s
Cherry Glen	121	15 April — 15 Oct.	\$24-\$26	N/A	515-964-8792
Bob Shetler	61	1 May — 15 Oct.	\$22-\$26	N/A	515-276-0873
Acorn Valley*	81	1 May — 15 Oct.	\$14-\$26	\$14 (tents only)	515-276-0429
Prairie Flower	234	1 May — 25 Oct.	\$22-\$26	N/A	515-984-6925

FEE BOOTH HOURS: Monday-Thursday, 3-7 p.m., Friday-Sunday 9-11 a.m., 3-7 p.m.

CHECK-OUT: Noon **CHECK-IN:** 2 p.m.

CAMPING FEES: Check Recreation.gov for exact campsite pricing. Persons with America the Beautiful (ATB) Senior or Access Passes are entitled to 50% discount on camping and FREE day use at all USACE beaches and boat ramps. Discount is NOT valid on group camping or shelter reservation fees.

PASSES: USACE Annual and ATB passes can be purchased at the Visitor Center. Receipt vouchers can be purchased at all boat ramp kiosks and redeemed for the USACE Annual Passes at designated locations within 7 days. Campgrounds DO NOT sell or distribute passes of any kind.

RESERVATIONS: Recreation One Stop, R1S, will allow you to make individual and group camping reservations for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service sites by calling one, nationwide, toll free number: 877-444-6777. To find out more about R1S or to make your reservations online, download the recreation.gov app, or visit the web site www.recreation.gov.

*One youth group site is available for reservation at Acorn Valley Campground.

PHONE #'s

Administration Office:
515-276-4656

Visitor Center:
515-964-0672

R1S Camping &

Shelter Reservations:
877-444-6777

ONLINE:

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/SaylorvilleLake.aspx>

 www.facebook.com/SaylorvilleLake



PICNIC AREAS	Number of Shelters	Special Use Fee w/Reservation	Dates of Availability
Bob Shetler*	2	\$50/Shelter	15 April — 12 Oct.
Cherry Glen*	6	\$50/Shelter	15 April — 12 Oct.
Cottonwood*	9	\$50/Shelter	15 April — 12 Oct.
Oak Grove	2	\$50/Shelter	24 May — 1 Sept.
Walnut Ridge*^	3	\$50/Shelter	15 April — 12 Oct.
Sandpiper*	1	\$110/Shelter	1 May — 12 Oct.
Lakeview*	1	\$75/Shelter	15 April — 12 Oct.

All shelters are available on a first come basis for free, when not reserved.

All picnic areas open 7 a.m. - 10 p.m., in May through Labor Day.

*Open 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. in April, and the day after Labor Day through October

^Eighteen-hole disc golf course located at Walnut Ridge

VISITOR CENTER

Dates	Days	Hours of Service
1 April 1 — 24 May	Daily	11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
25 May 25 — 1 Sept.	Daily	9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
2 Sept. — 15 Oct.	Daily	11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
22 Oct. — 31 March	CLOSED	CLOSED

BEACHES

Open Dates

Oak Grove 25 May — 1 Sept.
Open 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Beach fee is \$5 per private vehicle. Children under 16 are free. Purchase a \$40 Annual Pass for unlimited nationwide use. Senior, Access and Military Passes allow pass holders to utilize day use areas free of charge.

BOAT RAMPS

Lakeview and Cherry Glen are open all year (limited road maintenance); Sandpiper is open March through November. Day Use Fees are charged April through September, \$5/day or purchase a \$40 Annual Pass good for unlimited, nationwide use. Cherry Glen is closed 10 p.m. - 6 a.m. April 15 - Oct. 15.

Saylorville Lake

5600 N.W. 78th Ave.
Johnston, IA 50131-1941

A man with tattoos and a woman are riding bicycles. The man is in the foreground, wearing a white polka-dot shirt and a black backpack. The woman is behind him, wearing a blue denim jacket and a black helmet. They are both smiling. In the background, a young girl is also riding a pink bicycle, wearing a blue jacket and a black helmet. The scene is set outdoors on a city street.

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Bob Shetler Campground improvements

In the summer of 2024, the Bob Shetler Campground at Saylorville Lake was temporarily closed to facilitate upgrades and repairs to its water and sewer systems.

During the closure, significant infrastructure work was completed, including the installation of 17,000 feet of new water lines, with a new line bored under the Des Moines River. Additional upgrades included the installation of new water valves, yard hydrants, and fire hydrants. Four new water meters were also installed and will help isolate and detect leaks in the future. More than 1,000 feet of sewer lines were replaced, and new

lift stations were installed to pump waste to the sewer lagoons. The fish cleaning station's septic tanks were also rehabilitated.

These upgrades and repairs are vital to park operations and will serve the public for years to come.

Bob Shetler campground will open for the recreation season on May 1, 2025. Standard electric sites are available for \$22-26 per night. Reservations can be made 6 months in advance by visiting www.recreation.gov or calling 1-877-444-6777. For more information, please contact the Saylorville Lake Project Office at 515-276-4656.

2025 events

April 12, 1-3 p.m.: Easter Egg Hunt at Saylorville Lake. Help Park Rangers find what the Easter Bunny left behind! Location: Saylorville Lake Visitor Center

April 26, Noon to 3 p.m.: "Celebrate Earth Day" Saylorville Lake Visitor Center. "Green Fire Video" Explore the life and legacy of famed conservationist Aldo Leopold. Trash Bash: spring cleanup at various locations around Saylorville Lake. Location: Saylorville Lake Visitor Center

June 12: Junior Ranger Camp. Camp for 4th and 5th graders. Location: Saylorville Lake Visitor Center

July 17: Junior Ranger Camp. Camp for 4th and 5th Graders. Location: Saylorville Lake Visitor Center

Sept. 15 - Oct. 1: Prairie Maze

Oct. 25: Halloween Prowl

Volunteering with us

Do you enjoy the outdoors? Are you craving a sense of community and desire to connect with the people and world around you? Consider volunteering at Saylorville Lake!

The volunteers at Saylorville Lake experience a unique and rewarding opportunity to connect with nature, foster a sense of community, and contribute to the stewardship of our outdoor spaces. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Saylorville Lake relies on the dedication of our volunteers to maintain, enhance, and create memorable experiences for visitors. Volunteers also have access to quality outdoor recreation while helping to preserve and protect our natural resources for the future.

Campgrounds and recreation areas often serve as hubs that help to build a sense of community among

outdoor enthusiasts of all different backgrounds. You will have an opportunity to engage with the public, staff, and fellow volunteers.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO?

Full-time volunteers are required to "work" 21 hours per week, and there are many options to choose from. We offer a wide range of duties including fee booth attending, mowing, campground hosting, custodial duties, and more. In exchange for this service, volunteers receive a full hookup campsite in a corresponding campground or "Volunteer Village." Other perks include special gatherings with staff and fellow volunteers, the ability to gain lifelong friends at the parks, and the gratification of knowing you've become a good steward of the land.

Becoming a volunteer at Saylorville

Lake is a fulfilling experience that goes beyond routine tasks. It is an opportunity to immerse oneself in the beauty of nature, connect with a vibrant community, and make a lasting impact on the environment.

Volunteers will be provided the following benefits:

- Full hookup campsites
- Gatherings with staff and fellow volunteers
- Free rental of a reservable shelter for family or social gathering
- Uniforms and safety shoes provided

DISCOVER OPPORTUNITIES AT:

- www.volunteer.gov/s/global-search/saylorville%20lake
- www.workamper.com
- www.facebook.com/SaylorvilleLake
- www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Saylorville-Lake/

Practice water safety this summer

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Saylorville Lake urges visitors to consider the importance of practicing safe and thoughtful behaviors in, on, and around open water. Tragically, people lose their lives at USACE-managed areas every year, and Saylorville Lake is no exception. Most of these fatalities are water-related, and the public's help is crucial in reducing these incidents. People of all ages are strongly encouraged to practice water safety this summer. Before entering or spending time near open water at Saylorville Lake, keep the following tips in mind — they could save your life or the life of someone you care about.

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

Accidents can happen in an instant, so always be prepared. Stay aware of your surroundings, including water conditions, and wear a life jacket at all times. While boating, use the engine cutoff device to stop the engine in an emergency. Be mindful of cold-water temperatures; falling or jumping into cold water can be a shocking experience for your body and lead to dangerous consequences.

WEAR A LIFE JACKET

A life jacket can provide critical time for rescue and greatly increases your chance of survival in the event of an unexpected fall into the water. It's also vital if you become exhausted while swimming or if you are caught in a current. Statistics show that many drownings could have been prevented if a life jacket had been worn. Saylorville Lake offers free life jackets to borrow through the Life Jacket Loaner Station program, which can be found at any boat ramp on the project. Remember: Life Jackets Worn, Nobody Mourns.

KNOW YOUR SWIMMING ABILITIES

Swimming in open water is different from swimming in a pool. It's never too late to take swimming lessons to improve your skills. Every year, people drown while attempting to retrieve items from the water, such as boats, hats, or toys. Let these items go; they are not worth risking your life.



ALCOHOL AND WATER DON'T MIX

Alcohol affects the inner ear, which can cause disorientation when submerged in water. If you jump or fall in, you may become confused and swim in the wrong direction — down instead of up to safety. Also be aware of “boater’s hypnosis,” which is a condition caused by the combination of sun, wind, noise, vibration, and motion, experienced during a day of boating. These effects can slow your reaction time, making it similar to being legally intoxicated. Adding alcohol to this condition can significantly intensify the effects.

BE AWARE OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless toxic gas that is produced when carbon-based fuels, like gasoline, are burned. It can be deadly, even on open motorboats. Carbon monoxide poisoning can occur while you are on or near a boat in the water. To reduce the risk, use a marine carbon monoxide detector, ensure proper ventilation, seat children in the forward-most seating area of the boat, turn off the engine when not in use to avoid unnecessary idling, and be aware of emissions from other boats. If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, seek medical attention immediately.

WATCH YOUR CHILDREN

Always supervise children when they are in or near open water. Keep them within arm's reach, and make sure they wear properly fitted life jackets at all times during water activities. Your vigilance helps ensure their safety.

For more water safety tips, visit www.PleaseWearIt.com and follow Please Wear It on **Facebook** and **Instagram**.

Prairie reconstruction at Saylorville Lake



Tallgrass prairie once spanned across 14 states in the Midwest, covering about 85% of Iowa. Today, less than 0.1% of the original tallgrass prairie in Iowa remains. Tallgrass prairie plants have extremely deep roots, reaching more than 12 feet below the surface and offer many benefits. These roots created the rich soil Iowa is known for, which has in turn produced valuable crop land. The deep roots also improve soil composition and prevent erosion.

Some common grasses of the tallgrass prairie include big bluestem, Indian grass, switchgrass, and little bluestem. But prairies are much more than just grasses. A diverse variety of forbs — or wildflowers — are vital members of the tallgrass prairie, too. Common Iowan prairie wildflowers include prairie violet, pale purple coneflower, false sunflower, lead plant, white prairie clover, prairie blazingstar, stiff goldenrod, heath aster, and many others. During the growing season, each flush of blooms tends to be taller than the previously blooming species. Spring begins with small, delicate violets, and the season usually finishes with the tallest members of the sunflower family in the fall.

The staff at Saylorville Lake has been hard at work the past several years to re-establish the prairies that once covered Iowa's landscape. Today, park rangers actively manage around 400 acres of reconstructed prairie around the lake. They continue to implement procedures that target invasive species within these areas. Invasive species aggressively compete with desired native flora, and, if left untreated, many of the native plant communities would quickly be overwhelmed and eliminated.

Common invasive species in Iowa include crownvetch, wild parsnip, birdsfoot trefoil, musk thistle, autumn olive, and bush honeysuckle. Herbicide applications are most effective during the growing season, but other mechanical methods of management can be beneficial prior to and during the flowering of these plants. Annual treatments are often necessary to fight the spread of these prolific species, which produce large amounts of seeds that are viable in the soil for several years. Rangers use selective herbicide techniques to remove invasive species and manually remove some plant species from the areas they are trying to restore. This may include cutting woody species by hand or spraying individual plants with herbicide.



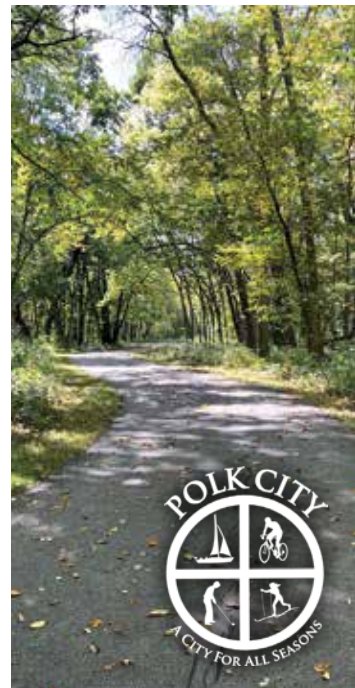
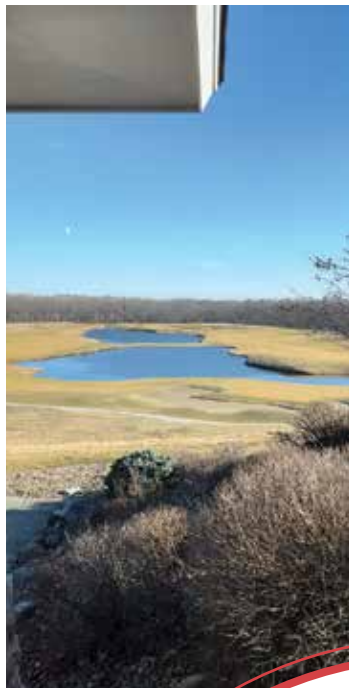
Fire is one of the most important forces on the prairie. Fire stimulates the growth of prairie plants by removing last year's dead plant material, allowing sunlight to reach the new shoots emerging from the ground. Fire promotes the sprouting of many prairie plant seeds by removing the outer seed coat. Frequent fires prevent trees from becoming established. Native Americans used to intentionally set fires to prairie to provide the best habitat for animals, reduce the danger and intensity of wildfires, ease travel, and increase visibility and safety. Today, refuge staff use prescribed fire on the prairie for similar reasons.

Fire isn't the only tool that is utilized at Saylorville Lake to promote prairie reconstruction. Frost-seeding is a process that involves placing prairie seed in the ground during the winter, while there is snow or moisture on the ground to hold the seeds in place. The seeds of many prairie plants even require cold stratification — a period of cold before the warmth of spring — to germinate successfully. This process can be done with equipment or by hand.

Environmental stewardship and ecosystem restoration are a priority for park rangers at Saylorville Lake. Habitats such as prairies support biodiversity and are vital to many species in the region. Prairie restoration continues to be an ongoing project, both at the Saylorville Lake Project and across the state of Iowa.

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Saylorville Lake's dam operation



Saylorville Lake, located 11 miles upstream from Des Moines on the Des Moines River, is a multi-purpose reservoir built and maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Rock Island District. The lake sits within a 5,823-square-mile watershed.

PURPOSE AND OPERATIONS

The primary mission of the Saylorville Lake Dam, as authorized by Congress, is to manage flood risk for areas downstream. However, the operation of the dam is a delicate balance, ensuring that its flood-storage pool does not negatively impact areas upstream. Beyond flood management, the dam serves several other critical functions. It provides a reliable water supply and maintains a conservation pool during the summer months to help sustain the Des Moines River's flow during drought periods. In addition, the lake raises its water levels in the fall to support migrating bird species and protect local wildlife.

THE DAM STRUCTURE

Completed in 1977, the earthen dam on the southern side of Saylorville Lake is an impressive structure, measuring 6,750 feet in length, 105 feet in height, and 44 feet in width at its top. Positioned 884 feet above sea level, the dam features a 430-foot-wide concrete spillway at its base.

Under normal conditions, water is released through a gated 22-foot diameter conduit located at the base of the dam. This conduit can release up to 21,000 cubic feet per second (CFS) of water. The outflow is adjusted frequently based on current reservoir levels and forecasts from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which collaborates with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) for real-time data.



To regulate water flow, park rangers and operators adjust three gates in the control tower, raising and lowering them as necessary to manage the reservoir's inflow and outflow. The gates are carefully operated to achieve the desired water levels in the lake and prevent downstream flooding.

MONITORING AND SAFETY MEASURES

To ensure the dam's integrity, the Corps uses piezometers — specialized instruments that measure internal hydrostatic pressure — at various elevations within the dam. These piezometers are inspected annually, with additional monitoring during high-water events. In flooding situations, park rangers monitor these instruments daily to ensure safety and prevent potential damage to surrounding properties.

In response to lessons learned from the devastating flood of 1993, the Corps added pneumatic crest gates (also known as inflatable dams) to the structure. When inflated, these gates provide an additional 6 feet of spillway elevation, allowing the lake's maximum pool to rise to 890 feet, further enhancing the dam's flood-control capabilities.

IMPACT ON THE REGION

Since its completion, Saylorville Lake and Dam have played a crucial role in protecting the Des Moines area from flood damage. To date, the structure has helped prevent more than \$181 million in property damage, safeguarding not only Des Moines but also nearby communities like Polk City. By managing water flow efficiently, the dam continues to shield these areas from potentially devastating floods, highlighting the critical importance of its operation.

Saylorville Lake high-water events

In May 2024, heavy rainfall led to rising water levels at Saylorville Lake. These levels receded back to the normal pool in mid-June 2024. However, not long after, heavy rain fell over portions of northern Iowa and southwestern Minnesota. This rainfall made its way into streams and rivers, resulting in significant and record river flooding in northwest Iowa, including the West Fork of the Des Moines River, which subsequently flows into the Saylorville Reservoir. Water levels continued to rise throughout June and into July, cresting at 879 feet above sea level — 43 feet above the "normal" conservation pool level at Saylorville Lake.

Saylorville Lake's pool is maintained at an elevation of 836 feet above sea level throughout the year. At this level, the lake has a surface area of 5,520 acres and stores 73,600 acre-feet of water, extending 24 miles upstream from the dam. This pool occupies approximately 11.5% of Saylorville Lake's total flood storage capacity. At full capacity (890 feet), Saylorville Lake has 16,100 surface acres and stores 641,000 acre-feet of water, extending 54 miles upstream from the dam. The maximum flood pool has been reached seven times in the history of Saylorville Lake, including 1984, 1991 (twice), 1993, 2008, 2010, and 2013.

There have been several significant high-water events in the history of Saylorville Lake, including the record-breaking floods of 1993 and 2008. In 1993, water flowed over the emergency spillway for a record 42 consecutive days, cutting a massive gorge 50 feet deep and 300 feet across. During all major flood events (when pool elevation reaches 884 feet), park rangers are on duty 24 hours a day to ensure public safety and monitor potential property damage.



In 1994, the Army Corps of Engineers added pneumatic crest gates to the emergency spillway. These gates allow the lake to rise an additional six feet before water overtops the spillway and flows uncontrolled downstream.

When massive flooding occurred again in 2008, water flowed over Saylorville Lake's emergency spillway for 12 days. This created another major event, but was significantly shorter in duration due to the addition of the pneumatic gates.

The dam has prevented an estimated \$181,932,300 in damages since its construction.

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Butch Olofson Shooting Complex

The Butch Olofson Shooting Complex offers pistol, rifle, shotgun and archery opportunities. Additionally, a classroom is open to hunting and firearm education



activities and a variety of audiences. We welcome shooters of all skill levels to hone their shooting skills either at our archery range, shotgun range (trap, skeet, or 5-stand), or at our 30-, 50-, and 100-yard rifle/pistol ranges.

HOURS & COST:

The range is open Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. (4 p.m. November through the end of February); Saturdays and Sundays 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. (4 p.m. November through the end of February); closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. Last check-in time is 30 minutes before closing time.

The cost to use Olofson Shooting Complex are as follows: \$12/hour per individual, \$18/hour per family/couple, \$8/round for shotgun range, \$10/daily archery for individual, \$16/daily archery for family. Annual passes can be purchased at the range (are not required) at \$320 family annual membership, \$260 for an individual membership, or \$60 annual archery membership. Memberships are valid at Banner Shooting Range in Indianola. "Family" refers to significant others and children younger than age 18 living at home.

Olofson Shooting Complex is open year-round with a few closures during holidays and unsafe weather. Stay up to date with the latest information about upcoming classes, closures, events, and general range updates at Butch Olofson Shooting Complex by following us on Facebook.

LOCATION AND CONTACT:

Butch Olofson Shooting Complex is located at 11652 N.W. Nissen Drive, Polk City, IA 50226. We are right around the corner from Big Creek State Park, just four miles north of Polk City. Our phone number is 515-795-4000.

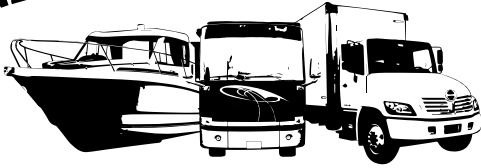
CLASSES AND EVENTS:

We offer classes throughout the year such as beginner level shooting, hunter education, and learn to hunt classes. We also host Skeet and 5-Stand leagues during the spring and fall. These classes and events will be posted on our Facebook Page or on our registration site at: <https://register-ed.com/programs/iowa>.

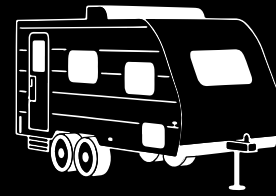
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Big Creek

Park Office

8794 N.W. 125th Ave.
Polk City, Iowa 50226
515-984-6473
big_creek@dnr.iowa.gov

Big Creek Marina/Beach

8550 N.W. 142nd Ave.
Polk City, Iowa 50226
515-984-6083
bigcreekmarina.com

Facilities and activities

Big Creek Lake was created as part of the Saylorville project to protect Polk City from floods. A diversion dam, which forms the 866-acre Big Creek Lake, was primarily developed as a flood control project but also offers a wide variety of recreation. Big Creek State Park and the adjoining public hunting areas provide recreation for visitors of all ages and interests. The focal point of the 3,550-acre complex is the lake.

Picnicking/shelters

Shelters and picnic areas, a beach, playground and several boat ramps provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities. Open picnic shelters, located in pleasant settings around the lake, can be reserved through the park reservation system. Shelters at the beach are handicap accessible.

Camping

Camping is not permitted at Big Creek State Park. However, there are several large federal and county camping areas about four miles away on Saylorville Lake.

Trails

A 26-mile paved multi-use trail allows bicyclists and pedestrians to travel from the beach south through the Saylorville Lake area all the way to Des Moines. A connection to the High Trestle Trail can be made by traveling east on 142nd Avenue for two miles. Eleven miles of snowmobile trails provide winter recreational opportunities. Big Creek is also popular with cross-country skiers.

Lake activities (swimming, boating, fishing)

Big Creek Lake's clear water provides great family swimming fun. Refreshments are available at the beach during the swimming season. A large wooden play structure is located at the beach. Disc golf and volleyball areas provide additional entertainment.

Big Creek Lake provides excellent fishing year-round. The lake's clear waters are stocked with crappie, bluegill, largemouth bass, walleye, channel catfish and muskie. The lake is popular for a variety of boating activities. Any size motor may be operated

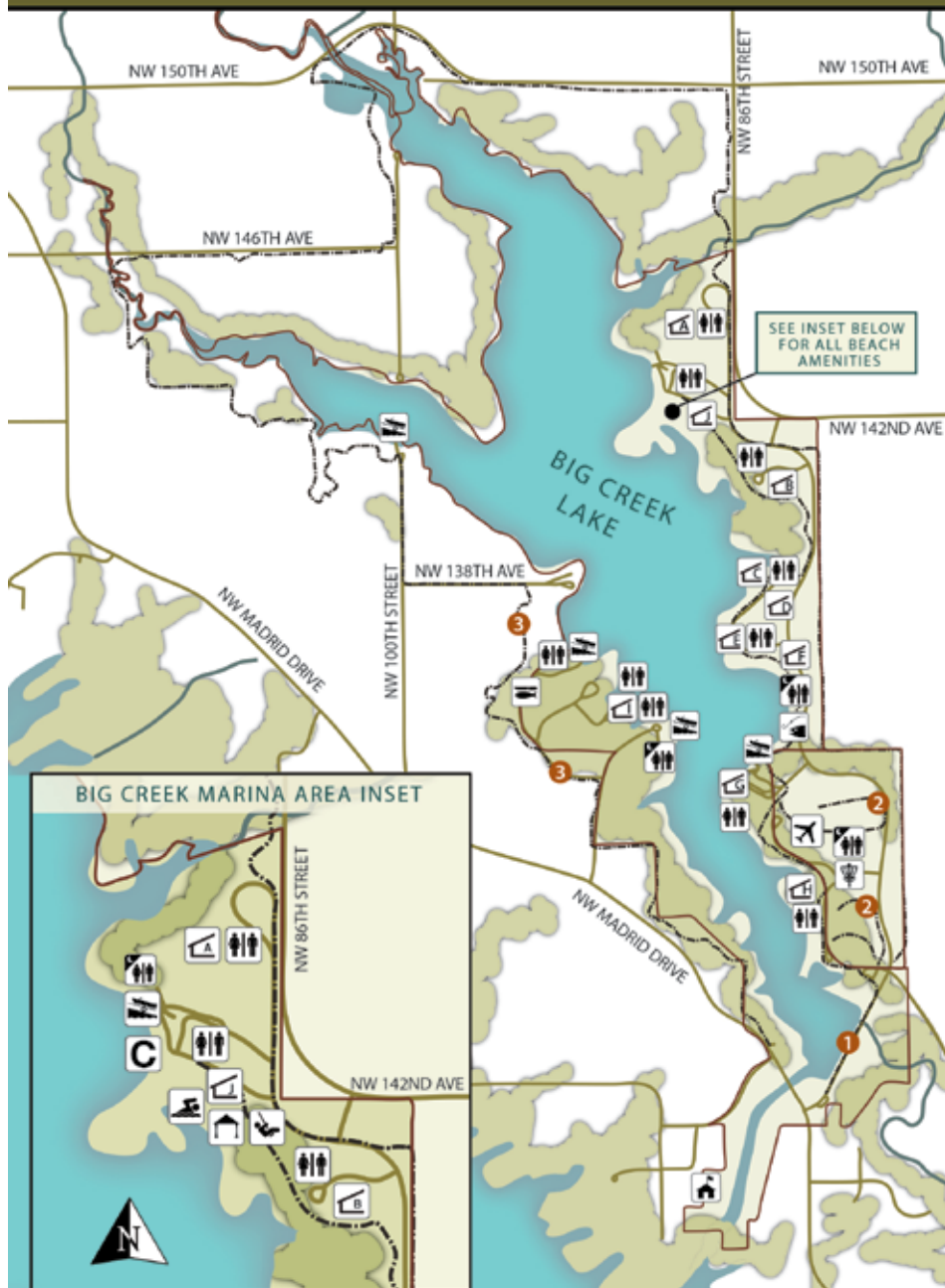
at "no wake" (5 mph or less) speeds on the lake. Five modern boat ramps, three on the west side and two on the east, provide excellent access to the lake. A gravel ramp is located on the upper end of the lake. A fishing pier is accessible to the mobility impaired. Big Creek has a concessionaire that offers pontoon boats, kayaks, paddle boards and more. To contact the concessionaire, call 515-984-6083 or visit their website at bigcreekmarina.com.

Hunting

The state park is a wildlife refuge where hunting is not permitted. However, hunting is allowed on the lake itself and in designated public hunting areas around the lake. Upland areas open for hunting are marked with public hunting signs. Favorite game includes pheasants, rabbit, deer and squirrel. Waterfowl hunting is popular on the lake. Information on hunting regulations can be found at: www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting.

Shelters

To reserve the shelters at the park, visit <https://iowastateparks.reserveamerica.com> or call 1-877-427-2757.



MAP KEY

- Beach Area
- Beach Cabanas - 9
- Boat Ramp
- Concession
- Disk Golf
- Fishing Pier / Jetty
- Fish Cleaning Station
- Park Office
- Playground
- Model Airfield
- Restroom - Modern Seasonal
- Restroom - Nonmodern Year-round
- Shelter

SHELTERS

- A. Atlantic Shelter
- B. Beverly Dinghy Shelter
- C. Cadet Shelter
- D. Duster Shelter
- E. Ensign Shelter
- F. Firefly Shelter
- G. Gannet Shelter
- H. Hampton Shelter
- I. Inland Cat Shelter
- J. Beach Shelters 1,2,3

- Trail
- Road
- Park Boundary
- Multiuse Trails
- Water

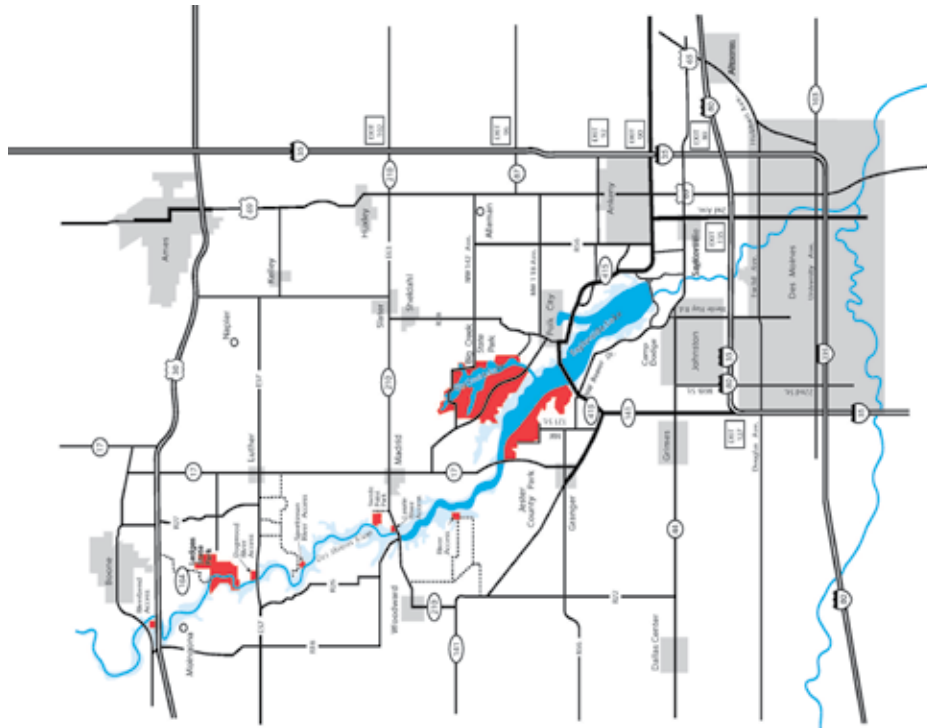
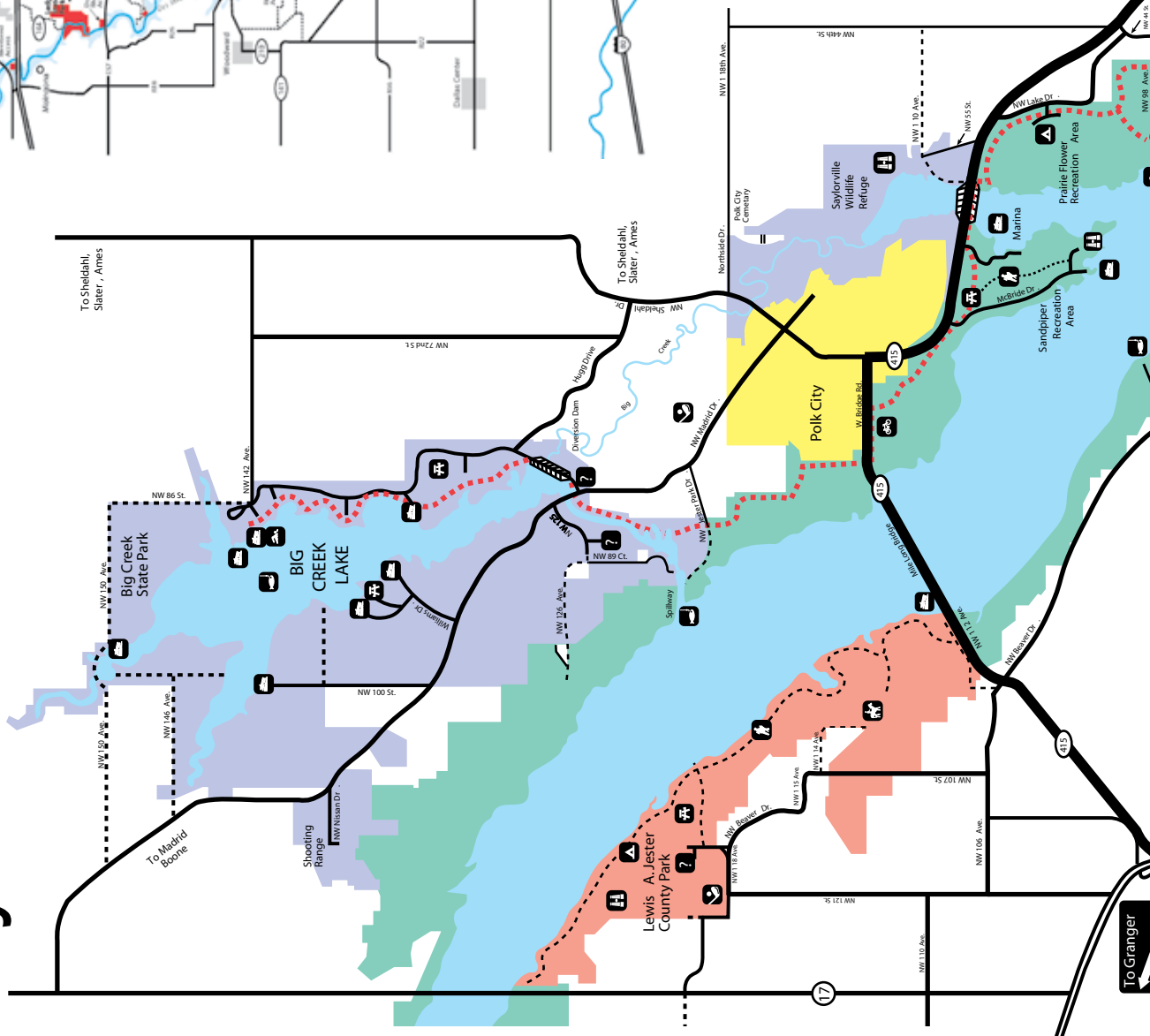
TRAIL INFORMATION

Trail Name	Trail Activity	Length	Level of Difficulty	Estimated Hike Time
1 Neal Smith - Big Creek Portion	Hiking, Biking, Mountain Biking	3 mi	Easy	1.25-1.5 hr
2 Cross-country Ski	Cross-country Skiing	2.5 mi	Easy	1-1.25 hr
3 Snowmobile (Seasonal)	Snowmobiling	10.8 mi	Moderate	6 hr

Walking times are figured at a rate of 2 mph.

www.iowadnr.gov/Places-to-Go/State-Parks

Saylorville Lake Area



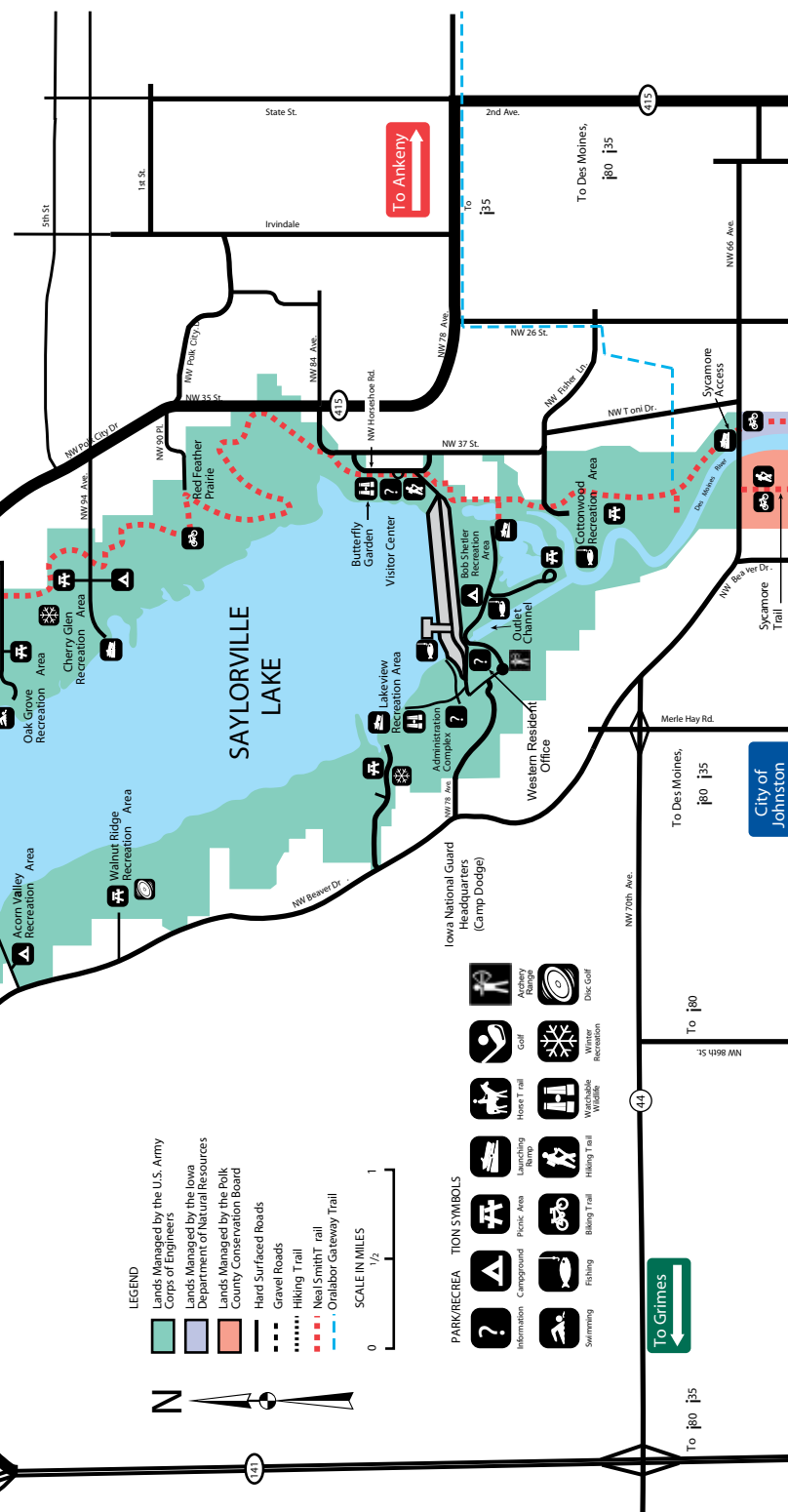
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IOWA DEPARTMENT OF
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HOW TO CONTACT US

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Saylorville Lake

5600 N.W. 78th Ave., Johnston, Iowa 50131

www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/SaylorvilleLake.aspx

Administration Office..... 515-276-4656
Administration Fax..... 515-276-2088
District Office, Rock Island 309-794-4200
Park Rangers/Sheriff 515-286-3333
Saylorville Lake Marina 515-984-6541
Visitor Center/Park Information .. 515-964-0672
Shelter and Campground Reservations
www.recreation.gov..... 877-444-6777

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Big Creek State Park • www.iowaDNR.gov

8794 N.W. 125th Ave., Polk City, Iowa 50226

State Park Beach Monitoring..... 515-725-3434
www.iowadnr.gov/things-to-do/beach-monitoring

Big Creek State Park..... 515-984-6473
Big Creek Boat & Bike Rental 515-984-6083
Wallace Building..... 515-281-5918
Conservation Officer

Nate Anderson..... 515-238-4849
Turn In Poachers (TIP)..... 800-532-2020
Fishing Information 800-ASK-FISH
Shelter Reservations 877-427-2757
iowastateparks.reserveamerica.com

Polk County Conservation at Jester Park

12130 N.W. 128th St., Granger, Iowa 50109

www.leadingyououtdoors.org

Polk County Conservation 515-323-5300
Jester Park - Weekend..... 515-249-3229
Jester Park Equestrian Center..... 515-999-2818
Jester Park Golf Course..... 515-999-2903
Jester Park Nature Center..... 515-323-5350
Outdoor Rec & Wellness Center... 515-323-5330

Jester Park



Make your experience at Jester Park exactly what you need it to be. **Looking for adventure?** Ride, hike, paddle or run here. **Want peace and quiet?** The park's chirping birds can be the only sound you hear for hours. **Seeking to reconnect with friends and family?** Jester Park has time and space for you to create memories with the people who matter most. **So, plan your visit already!**



Learn from experts

You are never too old or young to feed your natural curiosity! Each year, a team of incredible naturalists leads hundreds of hikes, programs, workshops and classes. Visit LeadingYouOutdoors.org or scan the QR code to view the full calendar of events.



Jester Park Nature Center: Gateway to the outdoors

The nature center is part-classroom and part-community center, but 100% yours to enjoy! Read a book by the cozy fireplace of the great hall. Enjoy a picnic on the patio overlooking the prairie. Or, enrich your understanding of local ecosystems through the hands-on exhibits of wetlands, prairie and woodlands. Admission to the nature center is **FREE**. Stay as long as you please.

New this year: The west side of the nature center now features a sensory trail. This accessible feature is designed to help all engage the natural world. Stop at interactive stations that ignite the senses. Smell the flowers, listen to the sounds, look for a variety of colors, and touch the water, rocks and plants.



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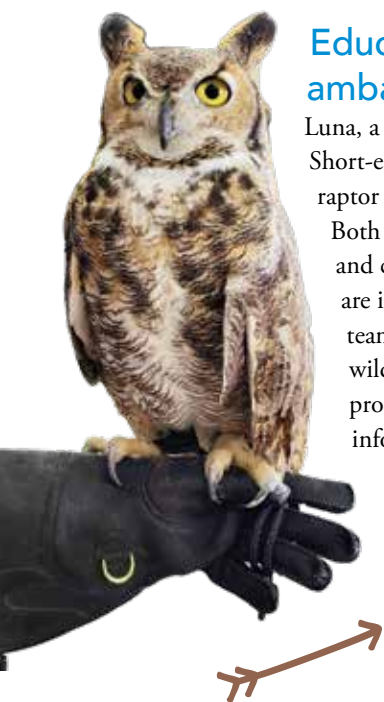
JESTER PARK
NATURE CENTER

good
natured



Step back in time

The permanent Lithic and Historic Artifact Exhibit located inside the nature center honors the people and wildlife that inhabited this area thousands of years before Polk County Conservation became stewards of the land. See fossils, or stone and ceramic artifacts — all found on parkland.



Educational ambassadors

Luna, a Great Horned Owl, and Indigo, a Short-eared Owl, reside at Jester Park in a raptor enclosure near the nature center.

Both raptors were rescued after injury and can no longer live in the wild. They are important partners to the naturalists, teaming up to educate on Iowa's wildlife through public and school programs. Call 515-323-5359 for more information.



Play, naturally

Watch as your child climbs, crawls, or wades through the Natural Playscape, enjoying each opportunity to investigate the natural world. Designed for ages 5-plus, the organic play area features boulders, earth mounds, logs, and a bubbling rock waterfall. It is open mid-April through mid-October. While at the playscape, take a short walk to the nearby bison and elk exhibit. The small herd is a big hit with animal-lovers and history buffs!



Nature-inspired art

Experience art that educates, inspires, informs and arouses your curiosity in the natural world. The Galleries is located inside the nature center and features three different exhibitions each year. Alternatively, the Jester Park Sculpture Trail includes five permanent public works of art. Each sculpture is located along a beautiful loop trail that takes you past ponds and creeks, and through timber and prairie alike.





Your recreation hub

The Jester Park Outdoor Recreation and Wellness Center, adjacent to the nature center, is the place to start when planning your next adventure. Want to climb? Practice your aim? Paddle? Ski? Hike? At this hub of activity, you can rent outdoor gear or equipment — including kayaks and cross-country skis. If you want a shaded experience, try the indoor target range or bouldering wall. Plus, it's a cool place to hang out on a laid-back afternoon. JesterParkNatureCenter.com has operating hours and rates.

Sleep under the stars

Set up camp at one of the park's nearly 150-plus campsites situated along the lakeshore and throughout the surrounding wooded hills. Whether you're camping in a tent or camper, Jester Park has a great mix of primitive and electric sites, as well as first-come, first-served or reservation-required sites. Rates run \$20-\$25 per night based on amenities. Make reservations at MyCountyParks.com for the camping season which runs April through October. When you're ready to build your campfire, wood is available for purchase on-site. S'mores, anyone?



Annual Events

Prairie Stomp Music Series

June 26, 6-8 p.m.

July 17, 6-8 p.m.

Aug. 7, 6-8 p.m.

Makers Market

Nov. 23, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Foraged Feast

September Date TBD

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- Working navigation lights
- Know the vessel's capacity limits
- Obey all buoy markings



US Army Corps of Engineers
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www.facebook.com/SaylorvilleLake
www.pleasewearit.com

Gathering space

Many family memories have been made under the sturdy pillars of a park shelter house! If you're a planner, reserve one of the four open-air shelters at MyCountyParks.com. These spaces are ideal for family outings or birthday parties. If you're more spontaneous, snag one of the many picnic tables and open grills that are scattered throughout the park.

Jester Park Equestrian Center

Nestled into the tree line along Saylorville Lake is a best-in-class arena, stable and barn complex. This is where horse-lovers of all ages and abilities can engage with a diverse herd which includes Percheron, Quarter Horse, and a new set of Miniature Horses (to name a few). You can also participate in one of many educational programs or camps. Be sure to check out the seasonal trail or wagon rides. Visit JesterParkEC.com for more info.



Jester Park golf course and miniature golf course

Take a big swing or just putt-er around! The Jester Park Golf Course is a full golf complex offering an 18-hole championship course, 9-hole Par 3 course, practice facility, 18-hole miniature golf course, and full-service restaurant and bar. For rates or the restaurant menu, check out JesterParkGolf.com.

Walk in the wide-open

Exploring Jester Park's eight miles of hiking and multi-use trails is an adventure for your senses. Gaze at the native shagbark hickory and hackberry trees; take in the aromas and colors of spring wildflowers; or sing along with the black-capped chickadees and nuthatches. Horses and snowmobiles are invited to journey along the Lakeshore Trail only. Refer to the Jester Park map to view the trail system.

COME TO PAPA'S!

Papa's Pizzeria



At Papa's Pizzeria, you'll find delicious pizza (of course!) and also all of your favorite appetizers, salads, sandwiches and more!

Our menu includes

Pizza

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Appetizers

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or
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PLAY

Climb, splash and crawl through the Nature Playscape.



SEE WILDLIFE

Experience the animal exhibit of bison and elk, as well as a bird blind.



HIKE

Explore numerous trails through prairies and timber.



PADDLE

Take on Saylorville Lake or practice at Discovery Pond.



CAMP

Sleep under the stars. Campsite amenities vary to offer modern or rustic experiences.



GOLF

Take a big swing on the full course or create family memories at mini golf.



RECREATE

Build survival skills or rent recreation equipment at the Outdoor Rec & Wellness Center.



LEARN & RELAX

Enjoy education programs, art exhibits and a sensory garden at the Jester Park Nature Center.



SADDLE-UP

Attend programs, or take a trail or wagon ride at the Equestrian Center.





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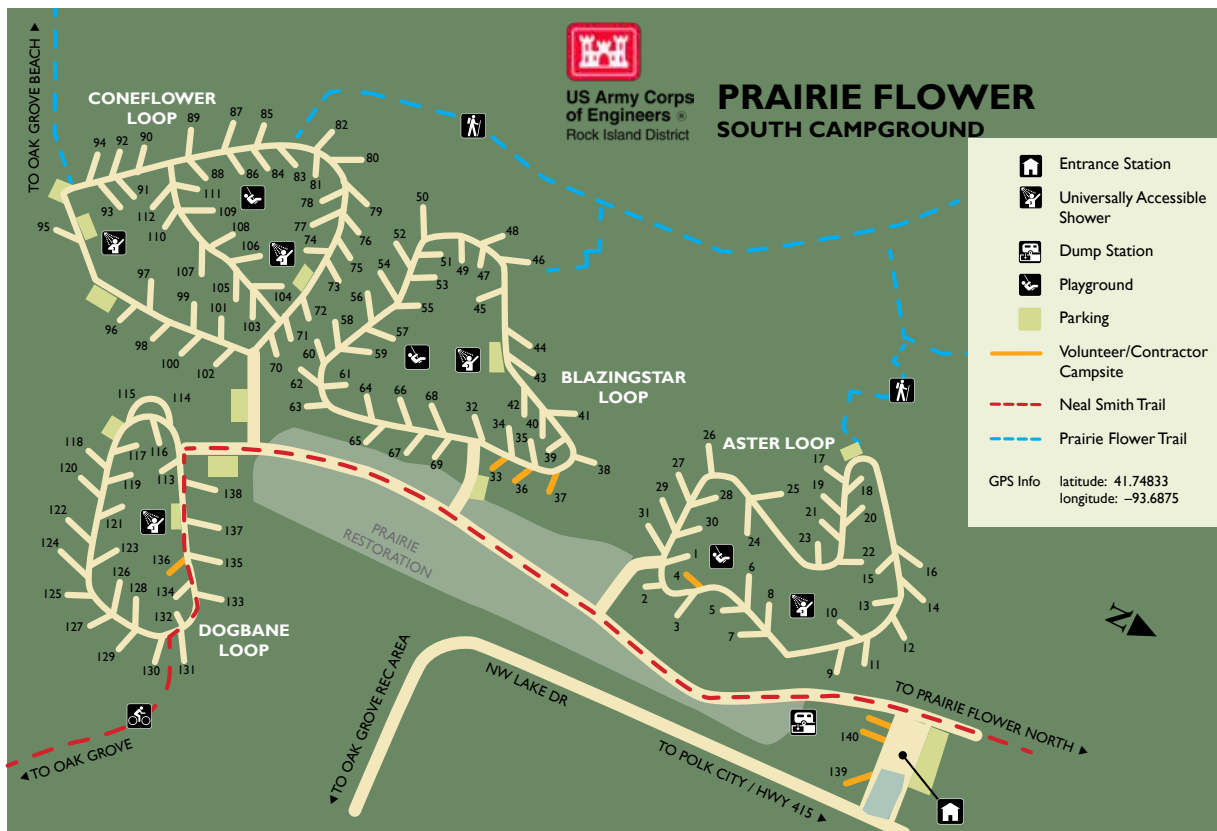
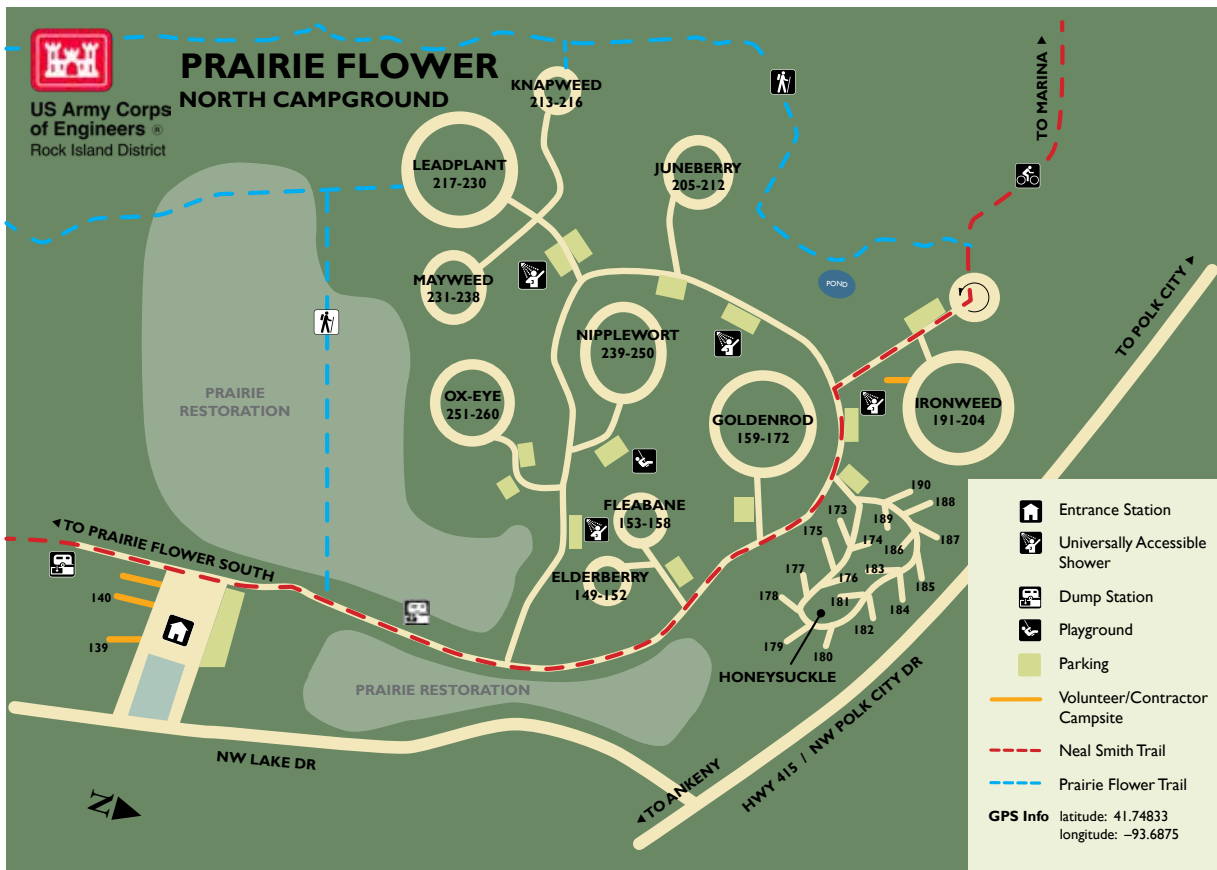
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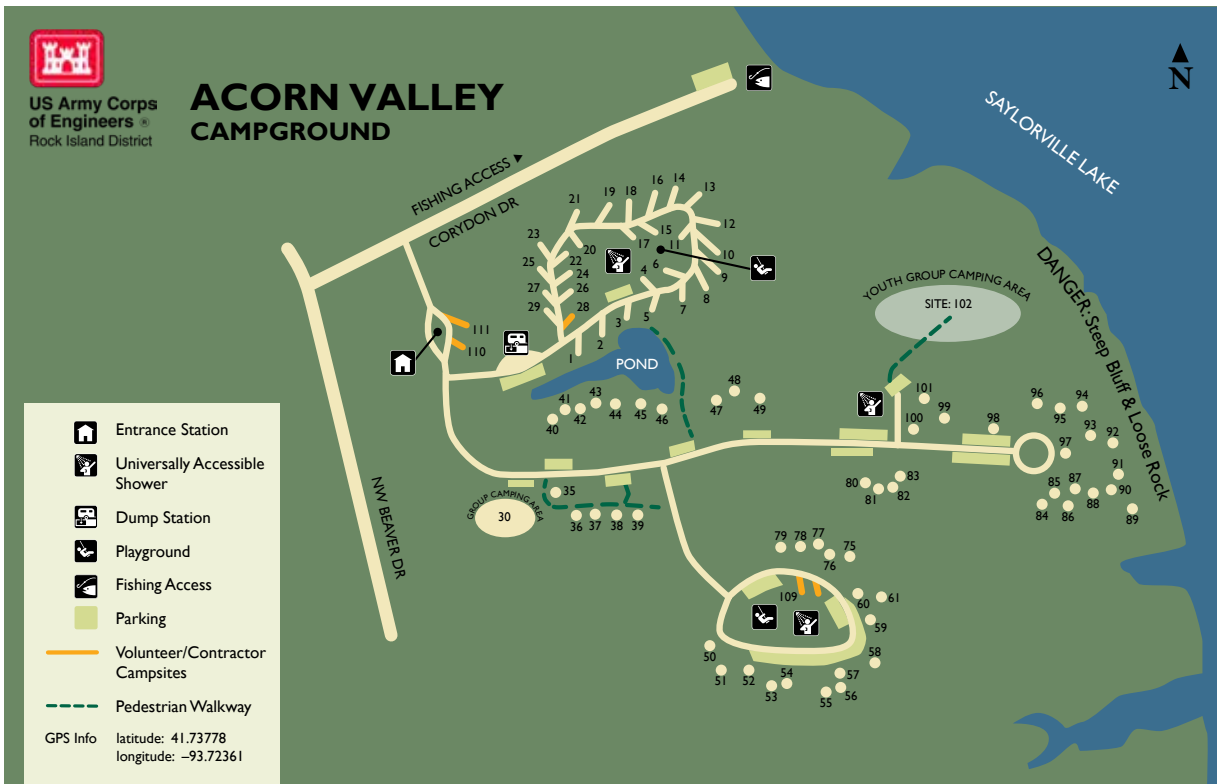


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