

2023

SAYLORVILLE LAKE IOWA

FREE!
TAKE ONE

Area Recreation Guide

COMPLETE MAPS

- SAYLORVILLE
- BIG CREEK
- JESTER PARK

Events | Campgrounds | Attractions | Activities

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Welcome

Area Recreation Guide

SAYLORVILLE LAKE

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

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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 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.

get out & ride

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Saylorville Lake

Facility Schedule 2023 Recreation Season Saylorville Lake

CAMPGROUNDS	Number of Sites / # Reservable*	Dates of Full Service	Site Fee with Electric	Site Fee Non-Electric	Fee Booth Telephone #'s
Cherry Glen*	124 / 121	CLOSED	\$20-24	N/A	515-964-8792
Bob Shetler*	69 / 63	15 April — 16 Oct.	\$20-22	N/A	515-276-0873
Acorn Valley **	92 / 63	15 April — 16 Oct.	\$14-22	\$14 (tents only)	515-276-0429
Prairie Flower*	245 / 234	CLOSED	\$20-22	N/A	515-984-6925

Fee Booth Hours: 9-10 a.m. and 3-7 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 Administration office or 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. Acorn Valley and Bob Shetler Campgrounds DO NOT sell or distribute passes of any kind.

*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 & 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.

ONLINE:

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

PHONE #'s

Administration Office:

515-276-4656

Visitor Center:

515-964-0672

Lake Info (recording):

515-276-0433

Call Before You Go (area closures):

515-509-2015 #30

R1S Camping & Shelter Reservations:

877-444-6777

PICNIC AREAS	Number of Shelters	Special Use Fee w/Reservation	Dates of Availability
Bob Shetler**	2	\$50/Shelter	15 April — 8 Oct.
Cherry Glen*	6	\$50/Shelter	CLOSED
Cottonwood*	9	\$50/Shelter	15 April — 8 Oct.
Oak Grove*	2	\$50/Shelter	1 May — 8 Oct.
Walnut Ridge***^	3	\$50/Shelter	15 April — 8 Oct.
Sandpiper	1	\$110/Shelter	1 May — 8 Oct.
Lakeview	1	Non-Reservable	March — November

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

All picnic areas open 6 a.m. - 10 p.m. May—Labor Day

*Open 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. April and Labor Day—October

**Open 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. the day after Labor Day—September

^Eighteen-hole disc golf course located at Walnut Ridge

VISITOR CENTER Dates	Days	Hours of Service
March 1-31	Saturday and Sunday	Noon to 4 p.m.
April 1 — May 26	Monday-Friday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
	Saturday and Sunday	Noon to 4 p.m.
May 27 — Sept. 4	Daily	10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sept. 5 — Oct. 15	Monday-Friday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
	Saturday and Sunday	Noon to 4 p.m.
Oct. 16 — Feb. 28	CLOSED	

BEACHES

Open Dates

Oak Grove

27 May — 4 Sept.

Open 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Beach fee is \$5 per private vehicle. \$20 per bus or commercial 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 & 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. to 7 a.m. April 15 to Oct. 16.

USACE Saylorville Lake

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

Three Saylorville Lake recreation areas to be closed in 2023 for upgrades

Saylorville Lake campgrounds and day use areas provide a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities for visitors throughout the summer. Over the past several years, some of the areas have received such heavy use that upgrades and repairs to water and sewer line systems have become a necessity. As a result, Prairie Flower and Cherry Glen campgrounds and the Cherry Glen picnic area at Saylorville Lake will be closed throughout the 2023 recreation season.

To help compensate for the temporary closures, Acorn Valley and Bob Shetler campgrounds will be open for an extended period during the recreation season from April 15 to Oct. 16, 2023. All other recreation areas at Saylorville Lake will be open during their regularly scheduled dates. Reservations can be made by visiting www.recreation.gov or calling 1-877-444-6777.


During the closures, the Prairie Flower and Cherry Glen fee booths will be closed. America the Beautiful (ATB) annual,



senior, access, military annual or lifetime passes, or USACE annual passes will still be available for purchase at the Saylorville Lake Visitor Center, open March 1 to Oct. 15 with varying hours, or the administration office, Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. (closed on federal holidays).

For more information, contact the Saylorville Lake Project Office at 515-276-4656.

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

<p>Pizza</p> <p>All your favorites and fresh toppings are available in pan or thin crust. Gluten-free and specialty pizzas are also available</p> <p>Appetizers</p> <p>Papa's Breadsticks, Chicken Fingers, Garlic Bread, Garlic Cheese Bread, Jalapeño Cheese Bread, Onion Rings, Fried Pickle Spears, Fries, Cheesy Fries, Nachos n' Cheese, Nachos Supreme, Mozzarella Cheese Sticks, Wings, Sampler Three, Nachos</p>	<p>Salads</p> <p>Side, Taco, Meatza, Chicken Bacon Ranch, Antipasto and more</p> <p>Sandwiches and Wraps</p> <p>Sausage, Meatball, Tenderloin, Papa's Bacon Cheese Burger, Taco Wrap, Buffalo Chicken Wrap and more</p> <p>Pasta</p> <p>Spaghetti and Meatballs, Fettucine Alfredo, Mac-N-Cheese</p> <p>Beverages</p> <p>All your favorites with FREE refills on soda (dine-in only) plus Iced Tea, Milk, Chocolate Milk, Apple Juice, bottled Beer, Craft Beer and Wines from Jasper Winery</p> <p>Children's Menu</p> <p>Perfect for kids!</p>
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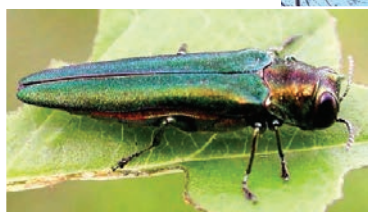
If you're planning on spending some days out on the lake boating or down at the beach this summer, then a USACE Annual Day Pass is right for you. Annual beach/boat ramp passes can be purchased for \$40 from a pay machine at the entrances to Cherry Glen or Lakeview Boat Ramps, Sandpiper Recreation Area, or Oak Grove Beach. Day Use Pass receipts **MUST** be exchanged for a pass hang tag within 14 days of purchase from the Visitor Center, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily, or the Saylorville Lake Administration Office, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday.

If your receipt for the annual pass expires before getting the hang tag, you may be issued a citation for "failure to properly display applicable receipt, permit or pass" per Title 36 Rules & Regulations CFR 327.23 (C).

Ash Tree Removal



Campgrounds and recreation areas at Saylorville Lake may look a little different this recreation season due to the removal of ash trees killed by the invasive Emerald Ash Borer beetle, also known as EAB. Emerald Ash Borer is an exotic beetle that was discovered near Detroit in the summer of 2002. The larvae of this species feeds on the inner bark of ash trees, which disrupts the trees' ability to transport water and nutrients, causing the tree to die over time. As of June 2022, EAB is now found in 36 states and areas of Canada. It was discovered in Iowa in 2010 and has killed thousands of trees across the state. It is important to look for signs and symptoms in ash trees, such as crown die back, exit holes in the tree, and woodpecker "flecking," meaning the areas that woodpeckers pick away at the outer bark of the tree.



Park rangers at Saylorville Lake have been working to remove trees killed by EAB in public use areas to prevent them from becoming hazards to people and property. Public safety is a top priority for the rangers and staff at Saylorville Lake, and while the removal of trees may seem like a bad thing, it is vital to our mission and key to keeping visitors safe in our recreation areas. In less accessible areas, some trees have been left to serve as habitat for birds, mammals, and insects, and, over the next few years, a diverse mix of tree saplings will be planted throughout the parks to replace removed trees.



Prescribed burns

Fire is a vital part of habitat restoration efforts at Saylorville Lake. Prescribed fire, also known as prescribed burns, is a natural and effective tool used to restore prairies and woodland areas around the lake. Historically, Iowa's prairies and woodlands have experienced periodic fires, set naturally or by Native Americans. Fire prevents invasive species as well as unwanted brush and trees from taking over. It also encourages new growth and improves habitat for many species of birds, butterflies, insects and mammals.

Rangers at Saylorville have been conducting prescribed burns each fall in various locations. The conditions must be just right when burning, when winds are at a good speed and in a good direction, and low relative humidity. This past fall, rangers and maintenance staff had the perfect weather to conduct a prescribed burn on Red Feather Prairie. It has been several years since Red Feather has been burned, and woody plants, cedars and other invasive species were encroaching. This prescribed burn was essential in restoring the health of Red Feather Prairie by providing nutrients and keeping invasive species and woody plants at bay.



Life jacket loaner stations

At Saylorville Lake, we take water safety seriously, and that's why life jacket loaner stations are now available at all U.S. Army Corps of Engineers designated boat ramps and beaches at the lake. Accidents can happen to anyone, at any time, and it is our goal to make water safety simple for those recreating at the lake.

Over the winter, an Eagle Scout offered to build seven new life jacket loaner stations to help improve water safety at Saylorville Lake. The new loaner stations are much nicer than the previous plastic stations. They have wooden frames, large hooks to hold the life jackets, and a large, easy-to-read, bilingual sign explaining how to properly fit a life jacket and the guidelines for using loaner station life jackets.

Life jackets housed on these stations are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and parents/guardians are responsible for making sure children are in the correct sized jacket. Remember, it only takes an average of 60 seconds for an adult to drown and 20 seconds for a child. If a life jacket doesn't fit, it can't work properly to save a life. As with all life jackets, loaner or not, it is important to inspect them before each use to be sure they are in proper working condition. Rips or tears can significantly reduce the effectiveness of the jacket. Borrowed



jackets should always be returned to the loaner station when done being used so others can stay safe.

Saylorville Lake's life jacket loaner stations can be found at Lakeview High Water Boat Ramp, Lakeview Main Boat Ramp, Sandpiper Boat Ramp, Oak Grove Beach, Cherry Glen High Water Boat Ramp, and Cherry Glen Main Boat Ramp.

For questions concerning proper fit of a life jacket or use of the life jacket loaner stations, feel free to contact a park ranger at 515-276-4656.

LIFE JACKET LOANER STATION

RULES & REGULATIONS:

- Life jackets are available on a first-come-first-serve basis.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for making sure their children are in the right sized life jacket. If the size is incorrect, the life jacket will not work effectively.
- Borrower assumes all responsibility and liability of life jacket use/non-use.
- Borrower will not hold liable any party involved in the distribution of life jackets.
- Borrower must inspect life jacket prior to use to make sure life jacket is in good working condition.
- Return life jackets to this station before leaving the park!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

CHOOSING THE RIGHT JACKET:

- CHECK THE LABEL**
The label will tell you:
• Whether the life jacket is Coast Guard approved
• The size of the jacket
• How the jacket can be used
Jackets run from infant to extra extra large. Adult life jackets will not work for children until they weigh about 30 pounds. Children's life jackets should have a loop on the collar and a strap between the legs.
- CHECK FOR DAMAGE**
Check that there are no broken parts and no mold or rips in the fabric.
- FASTEN UP**
Fasten up all buckles, straps and straps. Adjust straps so that the jacket fits snugly.
- CHECK FOR PROPER FIT**
• Sit the shoulders of the life jacket on the shoulders.
• Make sure it does not slip down the chest or arms.
• It should feel snug, not uncomfortable. A properly fitted life jacket keeps your head and shoulders above water. You will be able to swim with it on.
- WEAR IT!**
A life jacket only works if it's worn. Take the time to be prepared. Make sure you have and wear the right life jacket before you go out in the water.

Working for us

Have you ever looked around Saylorville Lake's recreation areas and wondered what it takes to be part of the team keeping these areas enjoyable for all? It takes a dedicated team of staff, volunteers and contractors who are committed to providing quality outdoor recreation experiences while preserving and protecting our natural resources for the future. Full-time volunteers are required to "work" an average of about 21 hours per week, performing custodial, fee attendant, mowing, campground and Visitor Center hosting, as well as other position duties as assigned. In exchange for this service, volunteers receive a full hookup campsite in a corresponding campground or nearby volunteer village. Other perks include special gatherings with staff and fellow volunteers, the possibility to be chosen as a return volunteer in future years, the ability to gain life-long friends at the parks and the gratification in knowing you've become a good steward of the land.

Due to budget restraints, volunteers play a critical role in helping the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other federal agencies operate facilities like Saylorville Lake. If you or anyone you know is interested in joining our team, please consider volunteering for one of our more than 30 positions. These roles can be filled by couples or an individual, as long as the duties can be completed. Many positions require a volunteer to "work" a few hours, five days per week while others are needed seven hours, three days per week. Volunteers without full-time jobs are preferred. To learn more about the



many volunteer opportunities or to fill out an application, visit the Saylorville Lake website at: www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Saylorville-Lake/Working-for-Us. Applications can be emailed to saylorville.lake@usace.army.mil.

Contractors are another important part of the Saylorville Lake team so if you're looking for more of a business opportunity, contracting with us may be an option. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is committed to doing business with qualified small businesses in the contracting sector. Saylorville Lake uses contractors to fulfill several seasonal service positions including custodial, mowing, and fee attendant. Contractors are provided free campsites with full hookups during the duration of their contract. Many of the contractors are people like YOU who have an interest in working for the government and making the parks a better place. If you are interested in becoming a contractor for

the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, there are a few steps to take. First, obtain a D-U-N-S Number. Next, register your business with the System of Award Management (SAM). Then, identify contracting opportunities. And lastly, submit a bid to the desired contract. To learn more about contracting opportunities at Saylorville Lake, please visit our website at: www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Saylorville-Lake/Working-for-Us.



Olofson Shooting Range



The Olofson Shooting Range was completely renovated in 2017 by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. The range is operated by the Iowa DNR and staffed by range safety officers. It is designed as a public facility that allows an opportunity to shoot all types of firearms. We feature a new registration/classroom building, 33 shooting lanes on a 30/50/100-yard range, shotgun sports including trap and skeet, along with a 3D and static archery range. This satisfies almost any shooting need in a safe, welcoming environment.

Hours and cost: The range is open year round from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays (closed Monday and Tuesday). The basic charge is \$10 per hour for the range usage or \$6 per round of 25 for the shotgun sports. We do not rent firearms or sell ammunition, so you must bring your own, although we do have targets available.

Olofson Shooting Range is closed: Jan. 1 (New Year's Day), Easter Sunday, July 4, Thanksgiving Day, Dec. 24 and Dec. 25.

Location and contact: We are located at 11652 N.W. Nissen Drive, in Polk City, Iowa. This is conveniently located between Saylorville and Big Creek Lake, just four miles north of Polk City. We can be reached at 515-795-4000.

Classes: We offer classes throughout the year, such as beginning shooting, hunter education, concealed carry, and a variety of outdoor skills topics. These classes are listed on the DNR website at <https://register-ed.com/programs/iowa> and registration is usually required.

Learn more about Olofson Shooting Range at
iowadnr.gov/olofson



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SAYLORVILLE OFFERS:

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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, bicycles and more. To contact the concessionaire, call 515-984-6083 or visit their website at bigcreekmarina.com.

Hunting

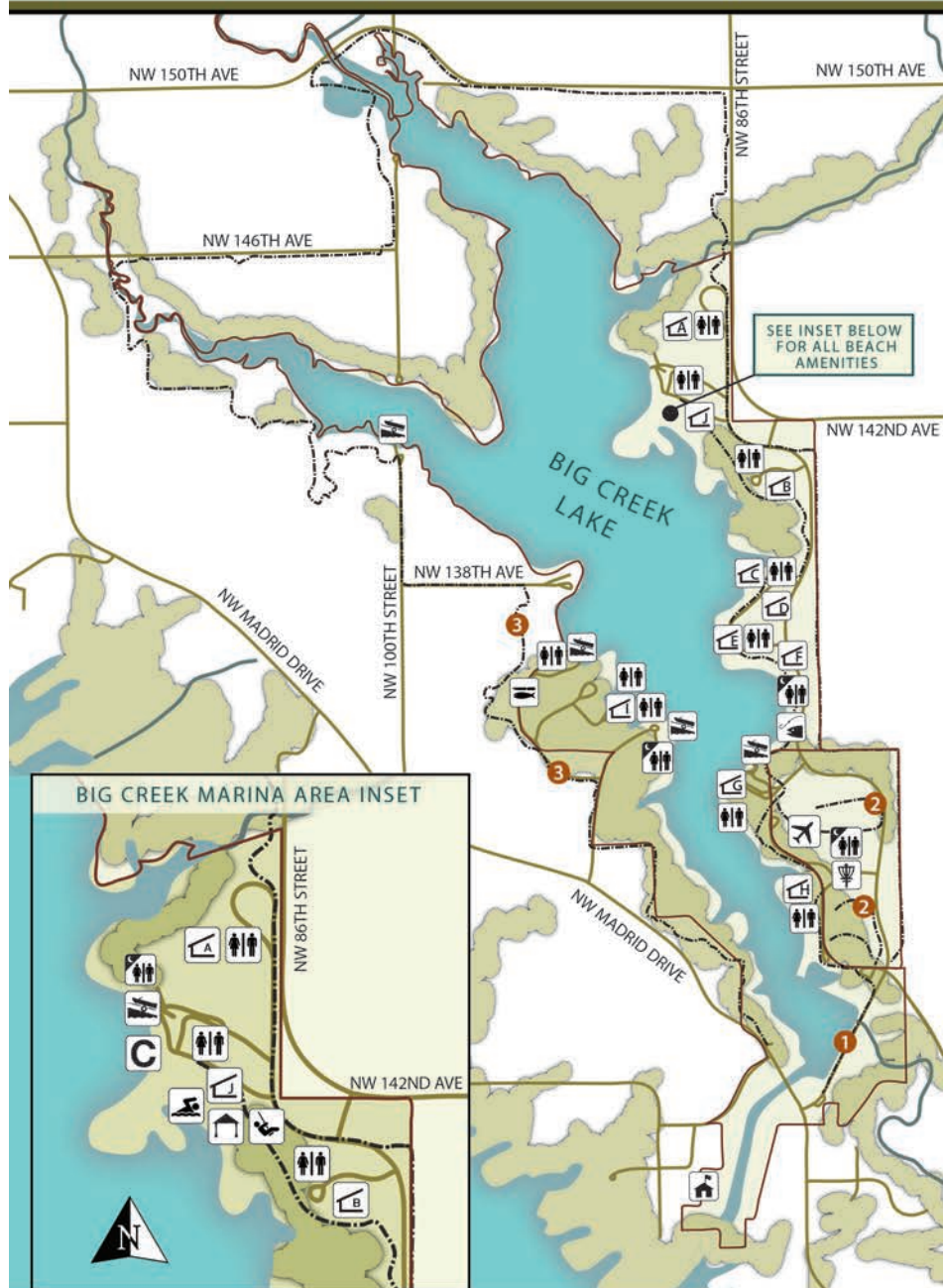
The state park is a wildlife refuge where hunting is not permitted. However, hunting is allowed on the lake itself and in designated public hunting areas around the lake. Upland areas open for hunting are marked with public hunting signs. Favorite game includes pheasants, rabbit, deer and squirrel. Waterfowl 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.



BIG CREEK STATE PARK



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

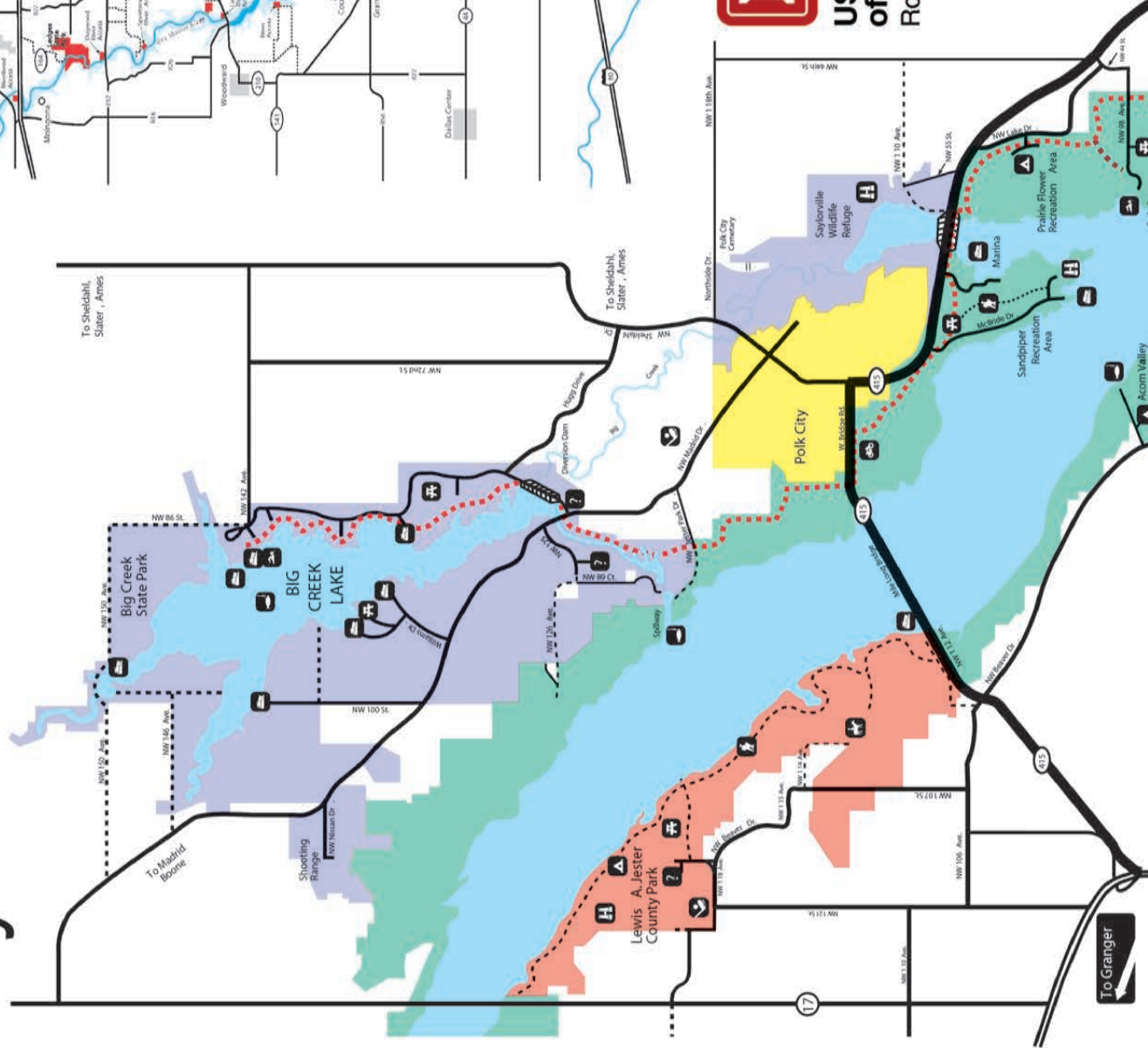
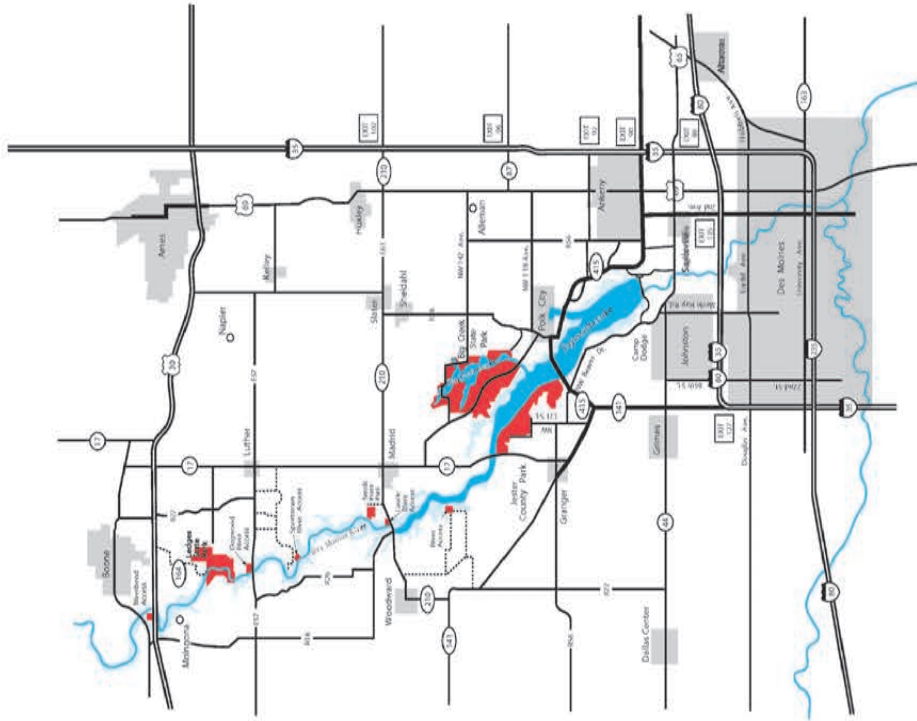
- Trail
- Road
- Park Boundary
- Multiuse Trails
- Water

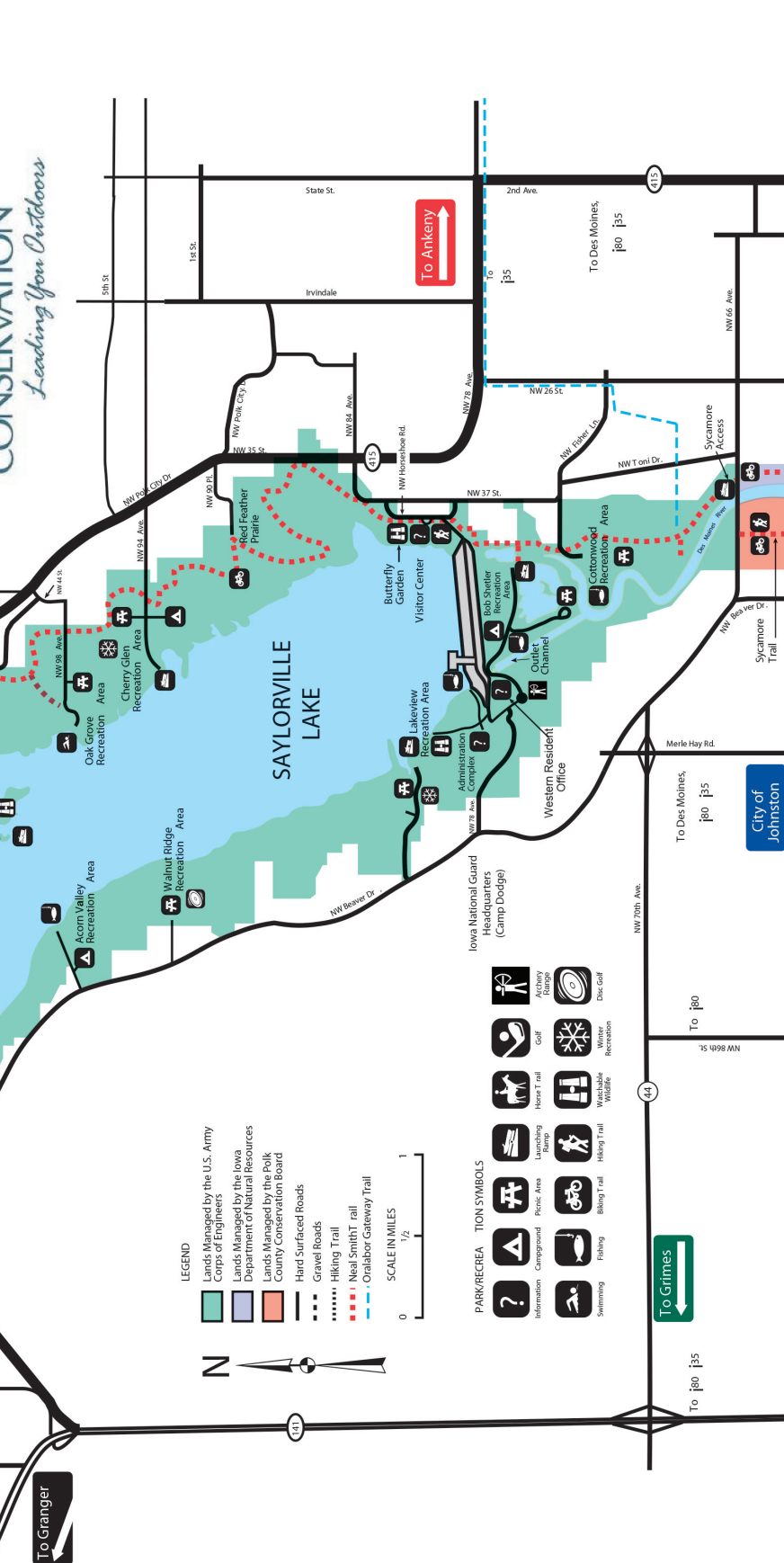
TRAIL INFORMATION

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





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
Lake Information, Recording..... 515-276-0433
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
 Angie Jansen..... 515-238-5006
 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 County 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!

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.

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.



New in 2023

- **Native American Artifact Exhibit:** This permanent exhibit honors the people and wildlife that inhabited this area thousands of years before Polk County Conservation became stewards of the land. Explore fossils, or pottery and tool remnants — all found on park lands.

- **Educational Ambassadors:** Luna, a Great Horned Owl, and Millennium Blue, a Peregrine Falcon, now call Jester Park home. Both raptors were rescued after injury and can no longer live in the wild. They're still settling in, but you can visit them at the raptor enclosure near the nature center.





explore during the day. **JESTER PARK
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JesterParkNatureCenter.com | 515-323-5300



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 artists 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.

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+, the organic play area features boulders, earth mounds, logs, and a bubbling rock and 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!

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.

Jester Park's Annual Events

The Galleries – Art Exhibit Opening Receptions

May 11 | 6-7:30 p.m.

Sept. 14 | 6-7:30 p.m.

Prairie Stomp Summer Music Series

June 15 | 6-8 p.m.

July 20 | 6-8 p.m.

Aug. 3 | 6-8 p.m.

Glow Wild

Sept. 16 | 3-8 p.m.

Makers Market

Nov. 19 | 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Sleep Under the Stars

Setup camp at one of the park's nearly 150+ 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 full hook-up 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](https://www.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?



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](https://www.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 Appaloosa (to name a few), or 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.

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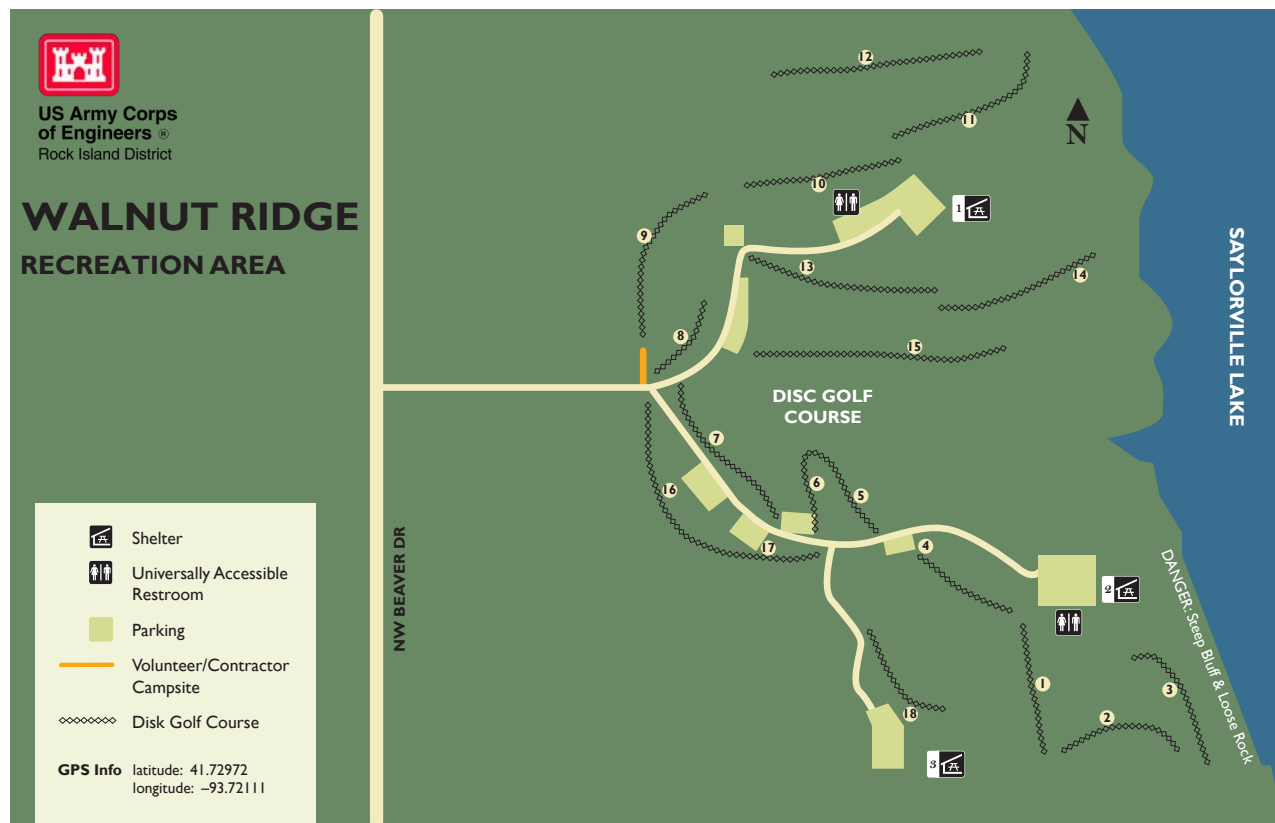
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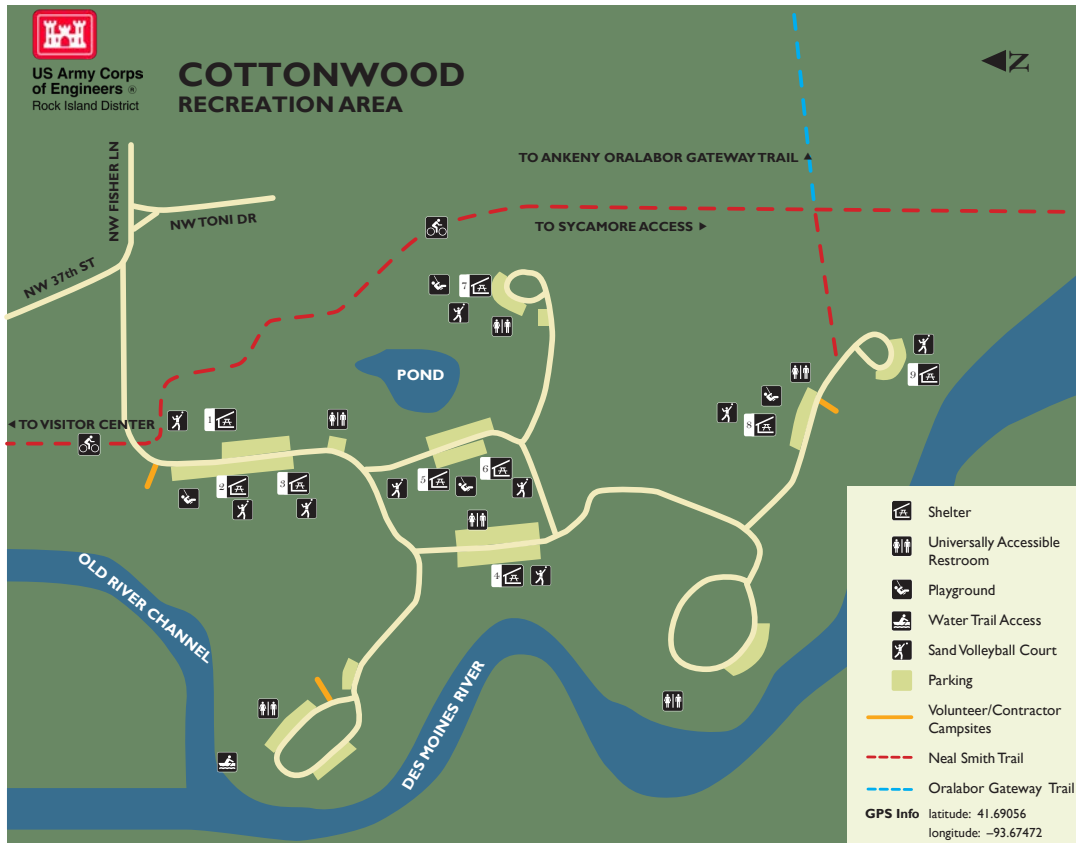
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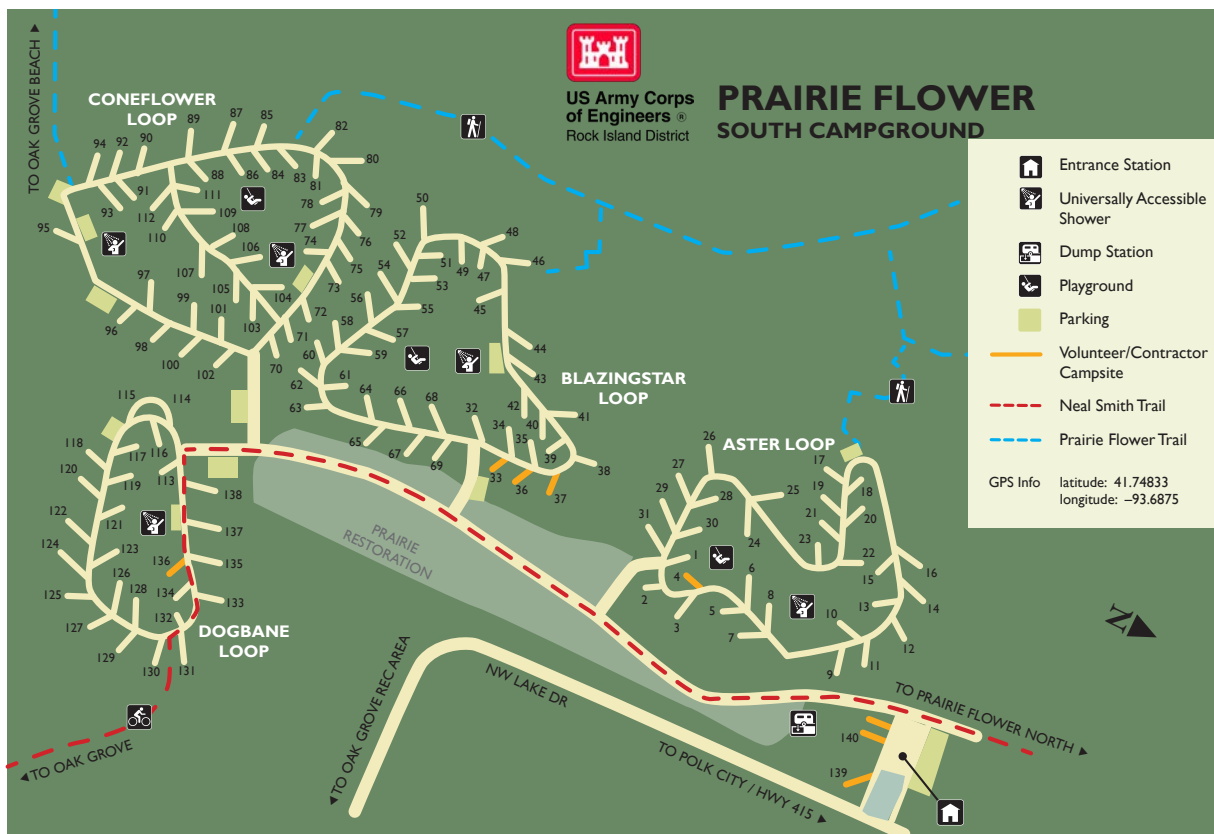
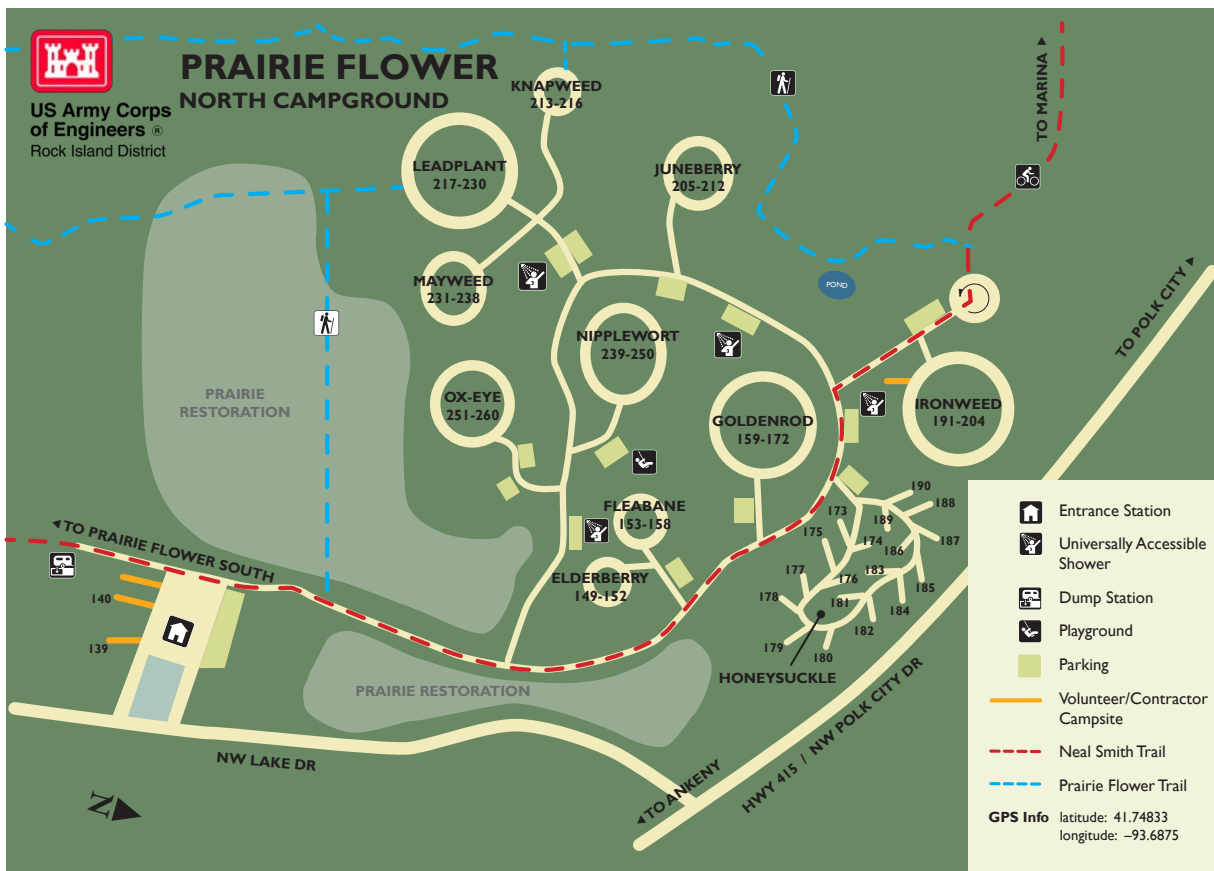
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