

2022

# SAYLORVILLE LAKE IOWA

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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.**



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# Saylorville Lake

## Facility Schedule 2022 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	15 April — 17 Oct.	\$20-24	N/A	515-964-8792
Bob Shetler	69 / 63	1 May — 17 Oct.	\$20-22	N/A	515-276-0873
Acorn Valley **	92 / 63	1 May — 17 Oct.	\$14-22	\$14 (tents only)	515-276-0429
Prairie Flower	245 / 234	1 May — 17 Oct.	\$20-22	N/A	515-984-6925

\* Recreation One Stop, R15, will allow you to make individual & 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 R15 or to make your reservations online, download the recreation.gov app, or visit the web site [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov)

\*\* No Alcohol Allowed in Acorn Valley Campground. One youth group site is available for reservation at Acorn Valley Campground.

**Camping fees:** Check [recreation.gov](http://recreation.gov) for exact campsite pricing. Persons with America the Beautiful (ATB) Senior or Access Passes are entitled to 50% discount on camping & FREE day use at all USACE beaches & boat ramps.

Discount is NOT valid on group camping or shelter reservation fees.

**Passes:** USACE Annual & ATB passes can be purchased at the Administration office, Visitor Center, Cherry Glen or Prairie Flower Campgrounds. Receipt vouchers can be purchased at all boat ramp kiosks & redeemed for the USACE Annual Passes at designated locations within 7 days. Acorn Valley & Bob Shetler Campgrounds DO NOT sell or distribute passes of any kind.

### ONLINE:

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

[www.facebook.com/SaylorvilleLake](http://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

#### R15 Camping & Shelter Reservations:

877-444-6777

PICNIC AREAS	Number of Shelters	Special Use Fee w/Reservation	Dates of Availability
Bob Shetler**	2	\$50/Shelter	1 May — 9 Oct.
Cherry Glen*	6	\$50/Shelter	15 April — 9 Oct.
Cottonwood*	9	\$50/Shelter	15 April — 9 Oct.
Oak Grove	2	\$50/Shelter	28 May — 5 Sept.
Walnut Ridge**^	3	\$50/Shelter	15 April — 9 Oct.
Sandpiper	1	\$110/Shelter	1 May — 9 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 & 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
1 May — 28 May	Monday-Friday Saturday and Sunday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Noon to 4 p.m.
29 May — 6 Sept.	Daily	10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
7 Sept. — 17 Oct.	Monday-Friday Saturday and Sunday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Noon to 4 p.m.
18 Oct. — 28 Feb.	CLOSED	

BEACHES	Open Dates
Oak Grove	28 May — 5 Sept.

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

Beach fee is \$5 per private vehicle, \$2 per person for walk-in or bike-in, \$20 per bus or commercial vehicle. Children under 16 are free. Purchase a \$40 Annual Pass for unlimited nationwide use. Senior, Access, & 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-Oct. 17.

### USACE Saylorville Lake

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





## Important changes to payment options, reservations and pass availability in 2022

Due to the changing times, a few adjustments have been made at Saylorville Lake that we want to be sure everyone is aware of. First, and most importantly, cash and checks are no longer accepted at any campground or the administration office at Saylorville Lake. Debit and credit cards are the only forms of accepted payment for camping and day use fees. The gift shop at the Visitor Center will continue to accept cash, checks, and debit or credit cards for items purchased at the gift shop as it is operated by Saylorville Lake's cooperating association, The Iowa Academy of Science.

Campground operations at Acorn Valley and Bob Shetler Campgrounds will also be slightly different this year. These

locations will have limited entrance booth hours, will not be accepting any form of payment for reservations, nor will they be selling or distributing passes. To make camping reservations, visitors must use the website: [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov), download the recreation.gov app, or call the reservation help line at 877-444-6777. All Saylorville Lake campgrounds are 100% reservable, which allows you to make same day reservations if the site is available.

If you're interested in obtaining an America the Beautiful (ATB) Annual, Senior, Access, or Military Pass, or USACE Annual Passes, they are available for purchase at the Saylorville Lake Administration Office, Cherry Glen and Prairie Flower Campgrounds. And, new

for 2022, these passes will be available at the Saylorville Lake Visitor Center.

Another new addition is the ability to purchase a voucher for USACE annual passes at all boat ramp kiosks. These vouchers can then be redeemed for the USACE Annual Pass at designated locations within seven days. Designated locations include Cherry Glen or Prairie Flower Campgrounds, the Saylorville Lake Visitor Center, and the Saylorville Lake Administration office. As a reminder, Acorn Valley and Bob Shetler Campgrounds will NOT be selling or distributing passes of any kind.

For administration office, campground, and visitor center hours, please see the Facility Schedule on page 6.




# 20%OFF

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\*Excludes Memorial Day Weekend (May 27-30, 2022)

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THE CIRCLE OF BOATING

## 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, bi-lingual 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:

- 1) Life jackets are available on a first-come-first-serve basis.
- 2) 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.
- 3) Borrower assumes all responsibility and liability of life jacket use/non-use.
- 4) Borrower will not hold liable any party involved in the distribution of life jackets.
- 5) Borrower must inspect life jacket prior to use to make sure life jacket is in good working condition.
- 6) Return life jackets to this station before leaving the park!

ALWAYS SWIM  
WITH A BUDDY,  
NEVER ALONE!



THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR COOPERATION!



## Estación Para Prestar Chalecos Salvavidas REGLAS Y REGULACIONES:

- 1) Las cantidades de chalecos salvavidas son limitadas.
- 2) Los padres o guardianes tienen la responsabilidad de asegurar que sus niños tengan la talla correcta del chaleco salvavidas.
- 3) El prestatario asume toda la responsabilidad del chaleco salvavidas.
- 4) En caso de ocurrir un accidente, el prestatario no culpará ningún representante del gobierno involucrado en la distribución de los chalecos salvavidas.
- 5) El prestatario debe examinar el chaleco salvavidas para asegurar que el mismo esté en buena condición.
- 6) ¡Devuelva los chalecos salvavidas a esta estación antes de salir del parque!

¡Gracias por su cooperación!

¡SIEMPRE NADE  
CON UN AMIGO,  
NUNCA SOLO!



## CHOOSING THE RIGHT JACKET:

- 1 CHECK THE LABEL**  
The label will tell you:  
• Whether this life jacket is Coast Guard approved.  
• The size of the jacket.  
• How the jacket can be used.  
These are three labels on every rescue buoy. Adult life jackets will not work for children and then weigh about 18 pounds. Children's life jackets should have a strap on the collar and a strap between the legs.
- 2 CHECK FOR DAMAGE**  
Check that there are no broken parts and no mold or rips in the fabric.
- 3 FASTEN UP**  
Buckle up all buckles, straps and straps. Buckle straps in the correct direction.
- 4 CHECK FOR PROPER FIT**  
• Look the shoulders of the life jacket.  
• Make sure it fits over the shoulders.  
• It should feel snug, not comfortable. A properly fitted life jacket will hold your head and shoulders above water. You will still be able to breathe in, too.
- 5 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.

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# Walnut Ridge disc golf course improvements

Saylorville Lake rangers and volunteers have been hard at work improving infrastructure and aesthetics at the Walnut Ridge Disc Golf Course. With the growing popularity of the park and the sport of disc golf, Saylorville Lake staff thought it pertinent to implement some much-needed improvements. Improvements made in 2020 included: wooden picnic tables were replaced with new thermo-plastic-coated tables, trail surfaces routinely inundated by rain and runoff were re-graveled, a culvert was replaced just beyond hole #14 to improve access to the next hole, and access was improved across a waterway on hole #7 with the installation of a boardwalk. Following the historic derecho storm last August, park rangers also performed area-wide hazard tree pruning and removal for increased safety to users, and new trees were planted throughout the course to replace trees lost to the storm.

Another improvement to the course was the creation of fairways and throwing lanes which are designed to aid in determining hole orientation and visibility. These fairways were created by mowing specific areas at a lower height and leaving grass on the edges longer to serve as “rough” like that of a traditional golf course. With feedback from the public and the Des Moines Disc Golf Club, Saylorville Lake staff altered the cut height of the rough areas for ease of finding discs and modified the size of the fairways to create a unique experience for those using the course.

Plans for further improvements are in the works for the upcoming year, and the Saylorville Lake staff aim to continue making Walnut Ridge Disc Golf Course a place where individuals and groups of all skill levels can come to recreate and relax.



Installation of a boardwalk improved a walkway along the disc golf course in Walnut Ridge.

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# New archery range at Saylorville Lake hits the mark



The Saylorville Lake Archery Range, originally scheduled to open during the 2020 recreation season, officially opened for public use in July 2021 following postponement due to the COVID-19 pandemic and contract challenges. Since opening, the facility has been a big hit with local archers. The range is free for public use and is open sunrise to sunset year-round with temporary closures as needed for inclement weather. It can be reserved for youth groups and special events by contacting the Saylorville Lake Administration Office at 515-276-4656.

The facility, located in the Bob Shetler Recreation Area, just south of the administration building on the west side of the Saylorville Lake dam, offers a wide range of archery shooting options. A towering, six-station, elevated platform with three upper and

three lower shooting areas overlooks stationary targets at 20, 30 and 40 yards. This provides users with a “tree stand” feel and accommodates both experienced archers perfecting their precision and new archers learning to shoot from an elevated level. The range also provides five large stationary targets from ground level stations at 10, 20, 30, 40 and 50 yards and a bring your own target lane where targets can be set at distances of 10-50 yards.

“The new addition has seen a constant flow of visitors on weekdays and weekends with many learning to shoot or practicing for the Iowa hunting season,” said Justin Edwards, Natural Resource Specialist at Saylorville Lake.

The range is open to standard bow and crossbow users but only “field tip” arrows are permitted at the range. Broadhead arrows are prohibited. Rules of the range and local hunting information are posted in a kiosk near the entrance of the range and can also be found on the Saylorville Lake website: <https://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Saylorville-Lake/>.

The new archery range was made possible through a partnership with several local organizations and businesses including the Carpenters Union – Local 106, Scouts BSA – Troop 202, Manatts, Martin Marietta, Sportsman’s Warehouse, Bass Pro Shops, and the National Wild Turkey Federation – Central Iowa Longspurs.

# 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: <https://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Saylorville-Lake/Working-for-Us/>. Applications can be emailed to [Saylorville.lake@usace.army.mil](mailto: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: <https://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Saylorville-Lake/Working-for-Us/>.



For questions regarding volunteer or contract opportunities with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Saylorville Lake, email us at: [SaylorvilleLake@usace.army.mil](mailto:SaylorvilleLake@usace.army.mil) or call the administration office at 515-276-4656 option 0.





## 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.

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# Big Creek

## Park Office

8794 N.W. 125th Ave.  
Polk City, Iowa 50226  
515-984-6473

## Big Creek Marina/Beach

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

## Facilities and activities

Big Creek State 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, a multi-purpose sports field 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. The brown picnic tables located at the shelters are handicapped 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)

There are several construction projects that will affect boat ramp access for 2022. Construction can be expected April through October. All the boat ramp roads and parking are to be replaced during this process, and it's anticipated that this will improve access to Big Creek Lake users.

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, accessible to the mobility impaired, is located at the beach. Disc golf, model air, softball 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](http://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: [http://www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/HuntingLicenses & Laws](http://www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/HuntingLicenses&Laws).

## Shelters

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



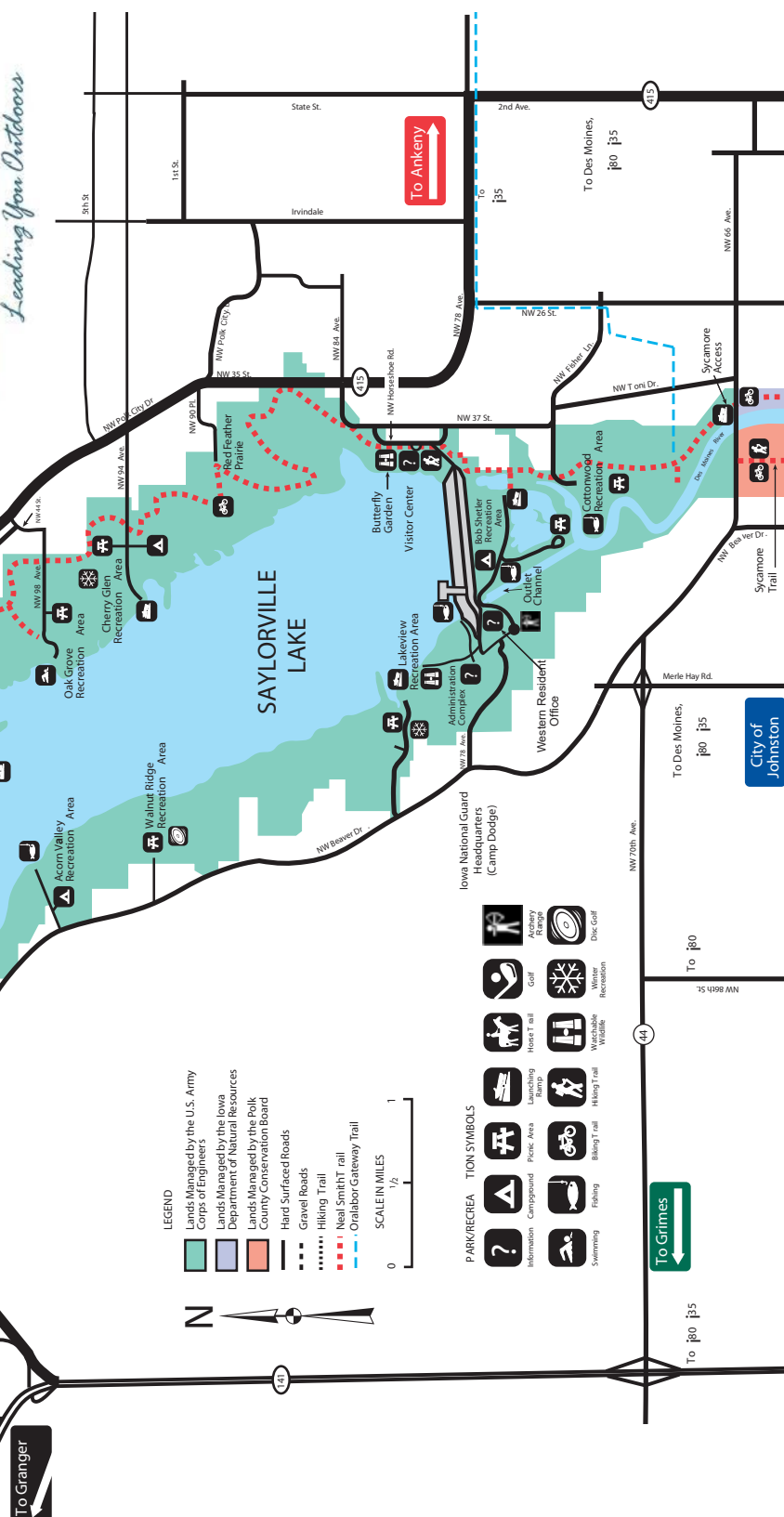




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## How to Contact Us

## US Army Corps of Engineers Saylorville Lake

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

<http://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](http://www.recreation.gov)..... 877-444-6777

## Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Big Creek State Park • [www.iowaDNR.gov](http://www.iowaDNR.gov)  
8794 N.W. 125th Ave., Polk City, Iowa 50226

Big Creek State Park.....	515-984-6473
Big Creek Boat & Bike Rental .....	515-984-6083
Wallace Building .....	515-281-5918
Conservation Officer	
Dustin Eighmy .....	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
(www.reserveiaparks.gov)	

## 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

## Find Your Wild Place

Let us lead you outdoors to Jester Park, one of Central Iowa's favorite outdoor areas. Nestled in the northwest corner of Polk County, Jester Park is located five miles west of Polk City, across the lake from the Army Corps of Engineers and Big Creek State Park. Jester Park welcomes people of all ages and interests. Younger visitors are especially attracted to the nature center and bison/elk area, while their adult counterparts take to the nature trails or bird blind with binoculars. Grab your fishing pole and catch the big one in one of our ponds or Saylorville Lake, pack a lunch and bring your family to the Jester Park Nature Center, or take a leisurely drive through the park — enjoying its refreshing sights and sounds.

## Learn More About Nature

Make Jester Park Nature Center the first stop on your next outdoor adventure! Explore hands-on exhibits of wetlands, prairie, and woodlands or join us for a wide variety of indoor and outdoor programming. Immerse yourself in the local art that can be found inside the nature center, or take a hike on the Prairie Sculpture Trail beginning just outside the front door. While adventuring, experience all Jester Park has to offer, from the natural playscape, bison and elk exhibit, Outdoor Recreation & Wellness Center, Equestrian Center, restored prairies and woodlands, and over 8 miles of trails to explore. Visit [www.JesterParkNatureCenter.com](http://www.JesterParkNatureCenter.com) to see hours of operation and a full calendar of events. Admission to the nature center is FREE.

## Outdoor Adventures Await You

The Jester Park Outdoor Recreation and Wellness Center, adjacent to the nature center, offers a wide range of outdoor programming such as an air rifle and archery range, a bouldering wall, and outdoor rental equipment such as canoes, kayaks, snowshoes, cross-country skis, and more. Access to outdoor adventure and fun has never been easier! For program information and more, visit the nature center online at [www.JesterParkNatureCenter.com](http://www.JesterParkNatureCenter.com).







# JESTER PARK **RELAX**

explore during the day.

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rentals • hunting • picknicking • mini  
golf • public art • programs • & more!



[www.LeadingYouOutdoors.org](http://www.LeadingYouOutdoors.org) | 515-323-5300

## Sleep Under the Stars

Whether by tent or a camper, Jester Park offers 148 campsites along the lakeshore and throughout the wooded hills overlooking Saylorville Lake. There are 80 electric sites, 68 primitive sites, including 4 walk-in sites, and 1 youth area. Camping rates are \$25 for electric, \$20 for non-electric sites and youth group sites are \$25. During off-season, camping rates drop \$5 from April 1 – April 14 and October 16 – November 30. Online reservations are available for reservable campsites from April 1 – November 30, and can be reserved in advance through the reservation process at [www.mycountyparks.com](http://www.mycountyparks.com). Two shower houses are open from mid-April through mid-October. Those using first-come, first-served sites can set up and then register at the campground registration booth. Firewood is available for purchase within the park.

## Year-Round Cabin Getaways

Nestled among the pine grove across from Discovery Pond, four modern cabins provide a cozy place to rest after partaking in the many recreational opportunities available at Jester Park. Accessibility to canoes, hiking, fishing, hunting, and bird watching is just right outside your cabin door. Open year-round; be sure to take full advantage of a beautiful Iowa winter during your stay at the cabins. Rent outdoor equipment at the Outdoor Recreation & Wellness Center like canoes and kayaks or cross-country skis and snowshoes and go explore Jester Park! Reserve your local getaway today by visiting [www.mycountyparks.com](http://www.mycountyparks.com).

## Hole-In-One

Situated within the beautiful Granger countryside, the Jester Park Golf Course is one of the premiere courses in Polk County. Players of all skill levels can try their luck



at the 18-Hole Championship Course, 9-Hole Par 3 Course, driving range, or 18-hole miniature golf course. Enjoy their full-service restaurant and bar or relax on the patio of the clubhouse. Schedule your tee time in advance by calling the clubhouse at (515) 999-2903 or sign up online at [www.jesterparkgolf.com](http://www.jesterparkgolf.com).

## Horsin' Around

The Jester Park Equestrian Center, located along the shoreline of Saylorville Lake, offers year-round outdoor recreational activities involving horses, including trail, wagon and pony rides, riding camps, weekend events, and lessons. People of all ages and abilities can come to enjoy quality horsemanship programs that are safe, fun, and effective in a welcoming environment. For more information on programs and recreational opportunities, please visit [www.jesterparkec.com](http://www.jesterparkec.com) or call 515-999-2818.


## Play, Naturally

Enjoy a traditional playground structure that is located between Shelter #3 and Camp Area #1. This accessible two-part playground is designed for children ages 2-5 and 5-12 years. Looking for a different kind of play experience? Venture to the back of the park near the bison/elk exhibit where you will find the Natural Playscape. Designed for ages 5+, this unique natural play area features boulders, earth mounds, logs, and a bubbling rock and waterfall.

## Lend a Helping Hand

Volunteer with us! Volunteerism with Polk County Conservation focuses on the restoration and preservation of high-quality natural areas, and participation in ongoing construction and maintenance projects in our parks and along our trails and waterways. Volunteers work alongside conservation professionals, learn about the





Iowa landscape, and participate in projects that yield immediate results.

Public events are held each month and can be found on the calendar tab at [www.leadingyououtdoors.org](http://www.leadingyououtdoors.org). Private events are available and can be tailored specifically to your group's wants, needs, and schedule. Long-term and individual stewardship opportunities also abound in any of our managed areas. No experience is necessary, and all training and equipment is provided. Contact the volunteer department at [ConservationVolunteers@polkcountyia.gov](mailto:ConservationVolunteers@polkcountyia.gov).

## Dinner for 4 or 40

Four open air picnic shelters, available on a first-come, first-served basis or reserved online at [www.mycountyparks.com](http://www.mycountyparks.com), are located within Jester Park. These shelters are ideal for family outings, reunions, birthday parties, and receptions. Shelters #3, #5 and #6 have electricity and water. In addition to our four picnic shelters, there are also many picnic tables and open grills for smaller groups.

## Launch into the Lake

Boat ramps are located on the west side of Saylorville Lake inside the Jester Park entrance near Campground #3 and at the Lincoln Access on the west end of the Mile-Long Bridge.

## Off the Beaten Path

Explore one of our eight hiking and multi-use trails. Immerse yourself in amongst shagbark hickory, hackberry, and black cherry trees; take in the sweet aromas and colorful sights of spring wildflowers; or sing along with the black-capped chickadees, cardinals, 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.

## 2022 Jester Park FREE Programming

**May 3 – Older, Wiser, Livelier, Seniors** – 11 a.m. to noon – Jester Park Nature Center  
**May 5 – Toddler Tales** – 10-10:30 a.m. – Jester Park Nature Center  
**May 11 – Knee-High Naturalist** – 10-11 a.m. – Jester Park, Shelter #5  
**May 13 – Wild Night Life & Hike** – 8-9:30 p.m. – Jester Park Nature Center  
**June 1 – Nature's Story Hour** – noon to 1 p.m. – JP #6  
**June 2 – Toddler Tales** – 10-10:30 a.m. – JPNC  
**June 7 – Older, Wiser, Livelier, Seniors** – 11 a.m. to noon – Jester Park Nature Center  
**June 8 – Knee-High Naturalist** – 10-11 a.m. – Jester Park Nature Center  
**June 11 – The Art of Jester Park Hike** – 10-11 a.m. Jester Park Outdoor Recreation and Wellness Center  
**June 12 – Ecosystem Discoveries** – 10 a.m. to noon – Jester Park Nature Center  
**June 22 – Nature Playdate** – 10:30-11:30 a.m. – JPNC  
**July 5 – Older, Wiser, Livelier, Seniors** – 11 a.m. to noon – Jester Park Nature Center  
**July 6 – Nature Playdate** – 10:30-11:30 a.m. – Jester Park Shelter #5  
**July 7 – Toddler Tales** – 10-10:30 a.m. – JPNC  
**July 13 – Nature's Story Hour** – noon to 1 p.m. – Jester Park Shelter #6  
**July 19 – Knee-High Naturalist** – 10-11 a.m. – Jester Park Nature Center  
**July 22 – Wildflower Discovery** – 6-7 p.m. – Jester Park Nature Center  
**July 29 – Wild Night Life and Hike** – 8-9:30 p.m. – Jester Park Nature Center  
**Aug. 2 – Older, Wiser, Livelier, Seniors** – 11 a.m. to noon – Jester Park Nature Center  
**Aug. 4 – Toddler Tales** – 10-10:30 a.m. – JPNC  
**Aug. 17 – Knee-High Naturalist** – 10-11 a.m. – Jester Park Shelter #6  
**Aug. 25 – The Magic of Nature** – 10-11 a.m. – Jester Park Nature Center  
**Sept. 1 – Toddler Tales** – 10-10:30 a.m. – JPNC  
**Sept. 6 – Older, Wiser, Livelier, Seniors** – 11 a.m. to noon – Jester Park Nature Center  
**Oct. 4 – Older, Wiser, Livelier, Seniors** – 11 a.m. to noon – Jester Park Nature Center  
**Oct. 6 – Toddler Tales** – 10-10:30 a.m. – JPNC  
**Oct. 17 – Hike for Health** – 9:30-10:30 a.m. – JPNC

## Nature News

In addition to Jester Park, Polk County Conservation manages 22 other park and wildlife areas. Each area has its own special attractions and natural resources. Our staff presents hundreds of public programs per year. Subscribe to our free Nature News publication and receive Polk County Conservation news and public program information. Call to receive your free copy at (515) 323-5300 and ask to be put on our mailing list or pick up a copy at the Jester Park Nature Center. For the latest conservation news, you can also visit [www.leadingyououtdoors.org](http://www.leadingyououtdoors.org).

## Glow Wild

Hosted by Polk County Conservation and Cumulus Media, this family-friendly event is fun for all ages! Glow Wild 2022 will take place on Sept. 24, 2022, from 3 – 8 p.m. at the Jester Park Nature Center in Granger, Iowa. Join us for live music, exciting nature-based programs, horse-drawn wagon rides, free s'mores, our signature bonfire, canoeing and kayaking, and many more fun activities throughout the afternoon! Purchase your tickets online at [www.GlowWildIowa.com](http://www.GlowWildIowa.com).

## Jester Park Golf Course & Prairie Grass Bar & Grill

The Jester Park Golf Course is located in the heart of Jester Park in Granger, Iowa. A superior, full-service golf complex within one-half hour from downtown Des Moines, the Jester Park Golf Course offers an 18-hole championship course, 9-hole Par 3 course, an outstanding Learning and Practice Facility, an 18-hole miniature golf course, full-service restaurant and bar, and newly expanded and renovated clubhouse.

The Prairie Grass Bar & Grill, located inside the Jester Park Golf Course Clubhouse, offers a variety of delicious food and drinks, deliverable while you are out on the course. The grill is open to the public during normal business hours. For rates, or to view the grill's menu, visit the Jester Park Golf Course website at [www.JesterParkGolf.com](http://www.JesterParkGolf.com).



## Jester Park Miniature Golf Course

Located next to the Jester Park Driving Range, the Jester Park Miniature Golf Course is an 18-hole, nature-themed miniature course packed full of fun obstacles with the added bonus of a beautiful park view. The miniature golf

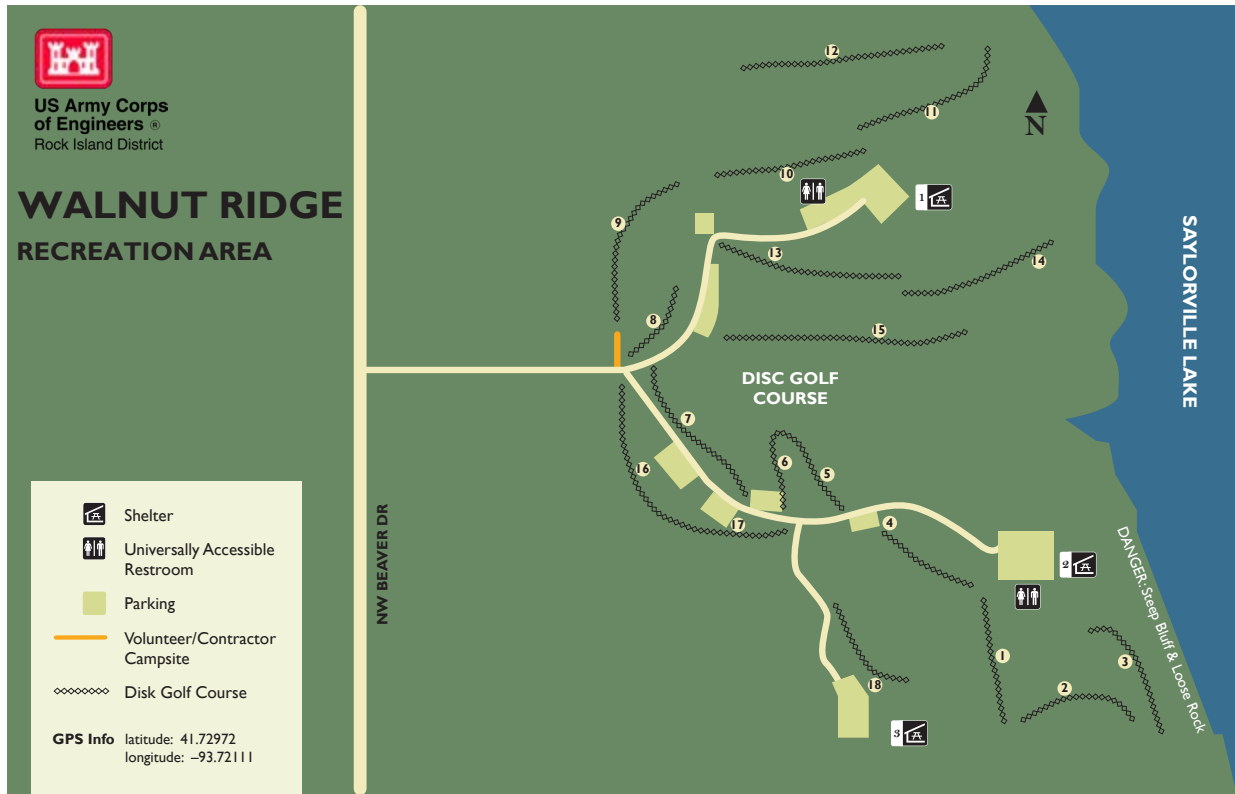
course is a fun, yet challenging game for players of all ages. The professionally designed course has multiple water features and beautifully manicured flowerbeds. The course is also lit for the after sunlight hours to provide nighttime fun! Birthday party and group packages are available. For more information, visit their website at [www.JesterParkGolf.com](http://www.JesterParkGolf.com).





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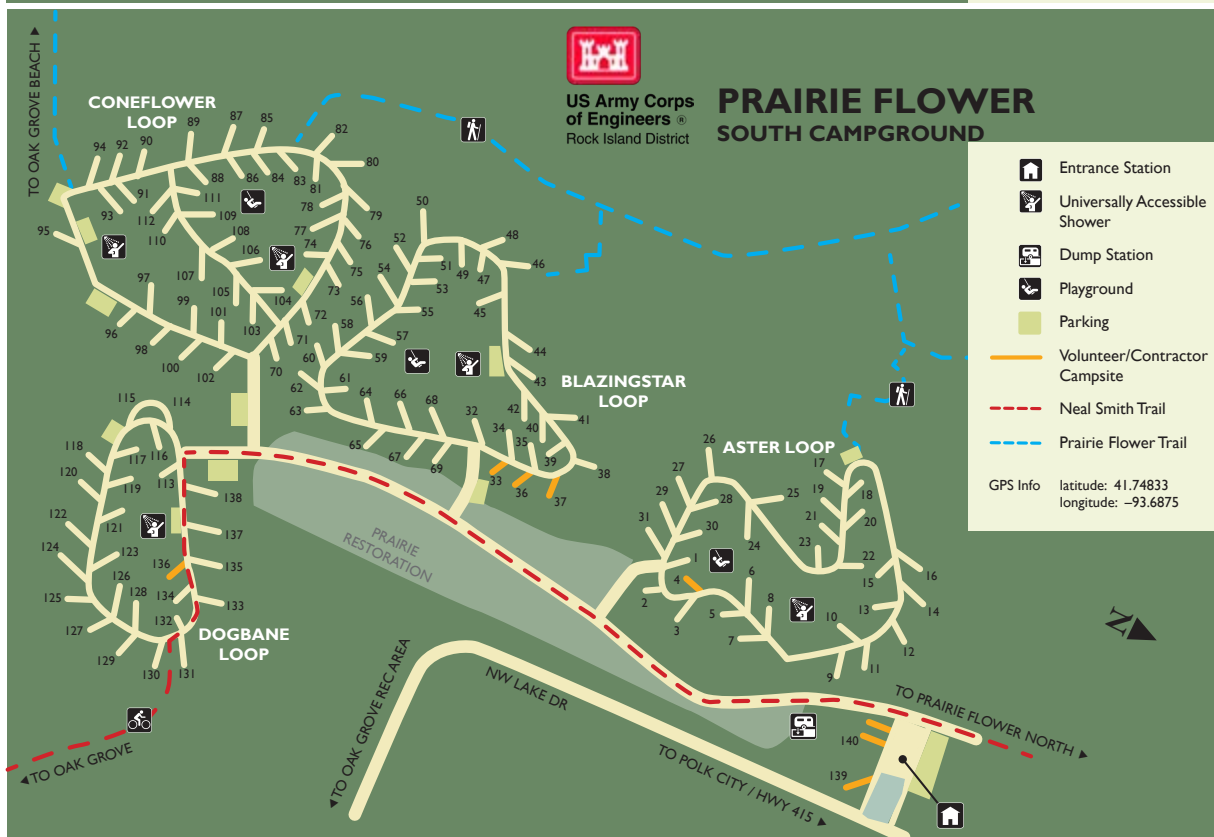
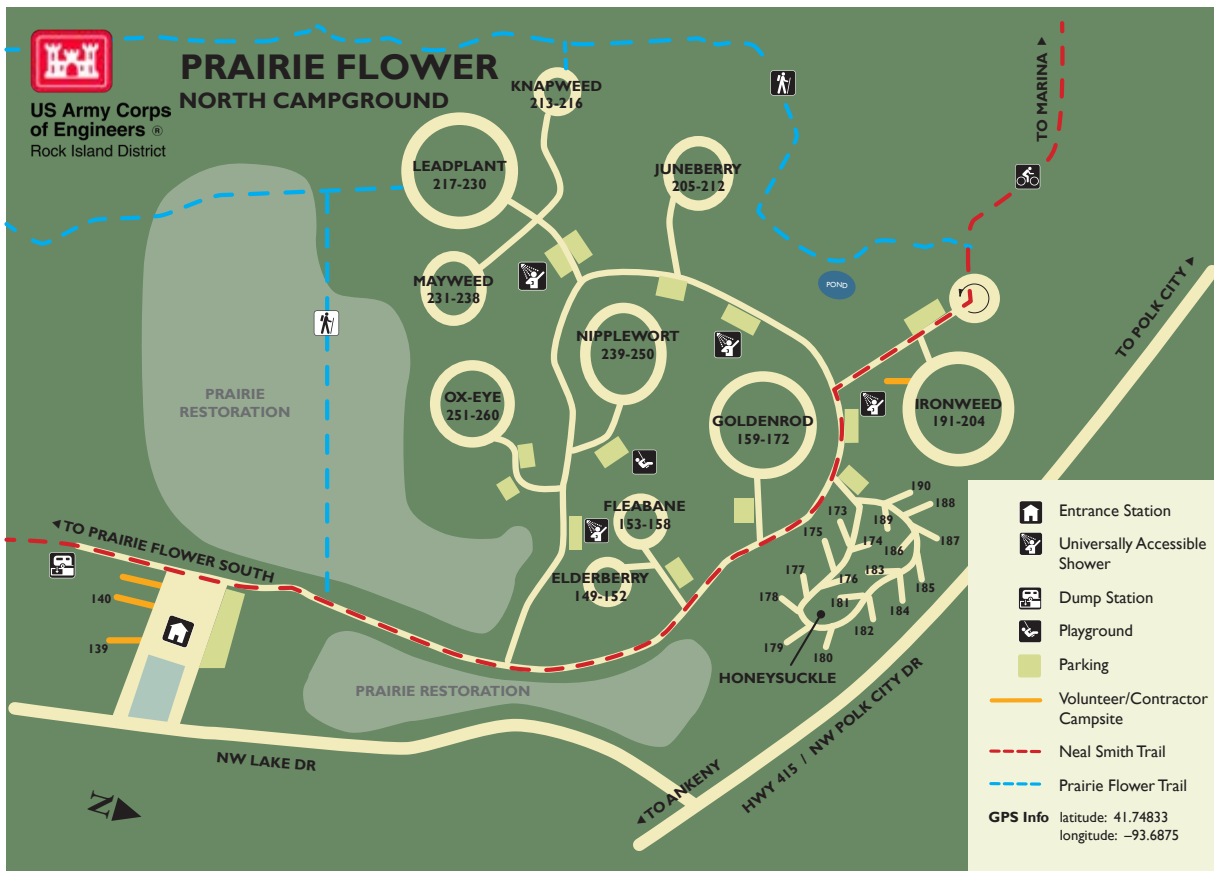
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