

PARK RULES

Otter Creek Lake & Park

Tama County, IA

1. **PROHIBITED DESTRUCTIVE ACTS.** It is illegal to destroy, injure, or deface anything within park boundaries including plants, buildings, trees, natural or material property. You cannot remove anything from the park either such as plants, trees, buildings, sand, gravel, ice, earth, stone, wood, etc. All vehicles must be kept on roads and operated as the County Conservation Board dictates.
2. **SPEED LIMIT.** The speed limit is 15 m.p.h.. All driving is restricted to roadways.
3. **EXCESSIVE LOADS.** Excessively loaded or overwide vehicles cannot be operated in the park. The determination of overloaded or overwide will be made by park staff.
4. **PARKING.** All vehicles must park in designated areas only. At the beach parking lot all vehicles must park facing into a railroad tie barrier. If none are available the overflow lot located two hundred yards to the south must be used.
5. **HITCHING TO TREES.** No horse or other animal may be hitched to a tree, or hitched to anything which may result in damage to property.
6. **FIRES.** Fires are allowed in fire rings provided by the county conservation board only. Fires must be contained within the fire ring. No portion of the firewood is allowed to rest on top of or extend beyond the walls of the fire ring. No firewood containing nails will be allowed to be burned in the park, which includes all wood pallets. Rangers shall have the authority to rule any fire a hazard and can request that the fire be extinguished. All fires must be extinguished when the site is vacated. **Buy local, burn local. No out-of-county firewood may be burned at facilities managed by the Tama County Conservation Board.**
7. **REMOVING PLANTS, FLOWERS, FRUITS.** No person can remove, injure, or destroy any tree, shrub, plant or flower, or fruit except mushroom and varieties of nuts, fruits or berries may be collected for food.
8. **USE OF FIREARMS PROHIBITED.** Use of firearms, fireworks, explosives, and weapons is prohibited.
9. **LITTERING GROUNDS.** Any waste, refuse, litter, glass, etc. must be placed in garbage cans only. It is illegal to dump household waste into park garbage receptacles.
10. **PROHIBITED AREAS.** Any area signed restricting use or entry cannot be entered without specific permission from the Ranger.
11. **ANIMALS ON LEASH.** Animals cannot be allowed to run at large in the park and must be kept on a leash not longer than six (6) feet.
12. **CLOSING TIME.** The park is closed to all between 10:30 p.m. and 4:00 a.m. the next day. The only exceptions are (1) a registered camper, and (2) for someone fishing if the person(s) is actively fishing, quiet, parked in an approved lot, and is not parked in the tent section or that area north of the striped barricades near the swimming beach.
13. **CAMPING AREAS.** Camping is allowed only in areas designated for camping. Tents are restricted to the tent section except when camping with an approved electrical unit (trailer, mobile home, fold-down, etc.) ANYONE WISHING TO PITCH A TENT IN THE ELECTRIC CAMP SECTION WHILE ACCOMPANYING AN APPROVED ELECTRIC CAMP UNIT MUST RECEIVE VERBAL PERMISSION FROM THE RANGER BEFORE SETTING UP! In such case they must camp alongside that electrical unit and not take up an electrical site. Fold-downs are the only unit allowed in either the tent or electric camp section.
14. **PROPER PARKING OF CAMPING UNIT.**
 - A. In the electric camp section all approved electric camping units must be parked with the outlet side of the electric pedestal facing the camping unit. (**IMPORTANT:** If any part of

your camping unit or motor vehicle extends behind the electric pedestal you are parked incorrectly.)

B. Please park your unit to allow another camping unit to use the pedestal. Our pedestals are supposed to be able to accommodate two camping units. (**NOTE: DOES NOT** apply to Sites 30- 40)

C. Also the camping unit must be parked in a manner so as to not block any portion of the access or camp loop roads.

15. **LENGTH OF STAY.** No camping unit may stay for longer than fourteen (14) consecutive days.

16. **REGISTERING, VACATING.** It is the responsibility of the camper to get registered and pay for campsite rental. All camping areas are SELF-REGISTRATION. Campers must register within thirty (30) minutes of their arrival and before 4:30 p.m. on any day they must re-register.

17. **VEHICLE RESTRICTIONS.** No trailer or mobile home longer than thirty-five (35) feet can use the facility. Motorcycles and mopeds cannot be in the camp area unless allowed by the Ranger. [Note The campground was designed in the 1970's for units 35' or shorter in length. At this time camping units slightly longer than 35' are allowed to camp.]

18. **CAMPING REFUSED.** Rangers can refuse or rescind camping privileges for cause.

19. **FISHING RESTRICTIONS**

A. **Bass.** Legal length limit on bass is currently 15”.

B. **Tiger Musky/Musky.** Legal length limit on tiger musky and muskellunge is currently 40”.

C. **Walleye.** An experimental walleye-stocking program is underway. We ask that fisherpersons do their part by returning all walleye less than 15” back into the lake.

19. **BOATING.**

A. No boats may be operated as to endanger life.

B. All vessels must be registered according to state law.

C. **NO WAKE.** Gas outboard motors of unlimited horsepower and operated at a no wake speed are allowed. We consider “no wake” a very slow troll!!

20. **CARRYING FIREARMS.** No person shall carry any weapon on his person while in the park unless broken down and contained in a case. The only exception being a peace officer while on duty.

21. **RESTRICTIONS**

A. **NOISE.** Quiet hours are enforced between the hours of 10:30 p.m. and 8 a.m.. Unreasonable noise is to be determined by the ranger. Also, as part of quiet hours, all visitors to the park must vacate the park by 10:30 p.m. each evening (see #12 for exceptions).

B. **CHAINSAW/FIREWOOD.** Chainsaws can be used by permission of the Ranger. Only trees that are dead and down can be used for firewood. This firewood is for use only while the visitor is at the facility.

C. **AUTHORITY TO EVICT.** Rangers have the authority to evict anyone from a county conservation facility for cause.

D. **GARBAGE.** It is illegal to bring in refuse from outside the park for deposit into park garbage cans (i.e. household, commercial or industrial refuse.)

E. **ANIMALS.** For other restrictions on animals please refer to #5 and #11.

i. **HORSES.** Use of horses is restricted to roads while in the park.

ii. **BEACH AREA.** No animals are allowed on the sand at the beach.

iii. **LIVESTOCK.** No livestock is permitted to graze within park boundaries.

F. **KEG BEER.**

i. The use of keg beer shall be restricted to shelter houses.

ii. A signed “responsibility agreement” must be on file before any keg beer can be served on premises under control of the Tama County Conservation Board.

G. **BEACH HOURS.** The beach area is open to swimming from 9 a.m.- 9 p.m. daily. During these hours swimming is at your own risk. **SWIMMING IS ALLOWED AT THE BEACH ONLY!**

22. **NATURE CENTER- NO ALCOHOL.** It shall be unlawful to possess, distribute or consume alcoholic beverages in the Nature Center or within 200 yards of the Nature Center.

23. FISHING POND- PARCEL A- HANSEN ADDITION The following are rules that apply to the fishing pond lying NE of the SE bay of Otter Creek Lake.

- i. **Boats-** No watercraft or flotation device of any type will be allowed on the pond. Only exception is use by park staff for maintenance of the pond, to perform fisheries work, or for special environmental education programs of the board.
- ii. **Fishing-** Fishing is allowed in the pond as per rules and restrictions of the Tama County Conservation Board and state law. **NOTE: Initial fish stocking of fingerling bluegills occurred the spring of 2013. Largemouth bass and catfish will be stocked in the fall of 2013. It is anticipated that good fishing will not occur until late 2014 at the earliest.**
- iii. **Swimming-** no swimming allowed.
- iv. **Parking-** All vehicles must be parked in interior parking lots of Otter Creek Lake & Park and access gained via foot trails provided.
 - a. **No Parking** is allowed along N Ave.
- v. **Field Dog Training** The pond can be used for training of dogs for water retrieves if the following is met:
 - a. No one is fishing in the pond
 - b. Dogs cannot be allowed to run at large and must be kept on a leash not longer than six (6) feet if not actively engaged in water retrieves. Trainer must be in full control of dog at all times while training and off leash.

23. FIREWOOD- RESTRICTIONS

- i. To stem the spread of firewood borne pests, officials are asking lowans to not move firewood and instead **buy and burn locally.**
- ii. That in accordance with State and Federal guidelines, the Conservation Board hereby **prohibits the importation of firewood from outside TAMA County onto any properties under the jurisdiction of the Tama County Conservation Board** unless it meets the State of Iowa and USDA firewood labeling requirements.
- iii. Should proof of certification be absent, unauthorized firewood in the parks may be removed and destroyed by agency staff according to regulations.



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