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Wolf Creek - State Park

East-Central Region

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In east central Illinois-just minutes from Springfield, Decatur, Champaign, Effingham and surrounding communities - the Wolf Creek/Eagle Creek sites, facing each other across the central portion of Lake Shelbyville, provide the perfect setting for outdoor recreation and natural relaxation for a day, a weekend, or even longer.

Eight miles northwest of Windsor, the sites encompass 11,100 acres of water, 250 miles of shoreline and large tracts of carefully maintained indigenous woodlands ideal for camping, horseback riding, snowmobiling, boat fishing, water skiing, pontoon boating, windsurfing or just plain bobbing and drifting on the glittering expanse of the lake itself.

In addition to visiting the small, friendly wooded campgrounds or taking part in the action on the lake, swimming is available from the beach. You can also take a leisurely stroll through nearby forests. An abundance of deer, pheasant, rabbits, wild turkey and songbirds are almost always visible.

Portions of the park have been cleared of physical barriers and are accessible to disabled visitors.

History

Like many other such areas, the Wolf Creek/Eagle Creek sites are perfect examples of the potential benefits of natural resource management. As a means of flood control, water supply and downstream water quality control, the Flood Control Act of 1958 authorized the Shelbyville Reservoirs Project, which involved construction of a dam and creation of a lake. These mundane necessities, however, would also allow for the actual conservation of fish and wildlife and the development of areas for all the recreational uses outlined above.

It was, of course, a monumental undertaking. Before actual work on the dam at Shelbyville could begin, several old mines in the area had to be completely relocated, two gas and oil pipelines and roads rerouted, the old Shelby Power Plant demolished and land cleared and leveled on the west side of the channel which hugs the bluff to the east of the river bottom. Construction of this \$56 million project began in May of 1963.

The dam itself is an earthen embankment towering 110 feet above the original stream bed. It's 3,025 feet long with a reinforced concrete, gate-controlled spillway to manipulate water level and manage the 25,300 acres of its flood control pool.

Most of this work was done by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and the land is now managed by the State of Illinois on a long-term lease from the federal government which began in 1968. By 1972, the area was open to the public and provided primitive camping facilities. In the years since then, the state has purchased additional surrounding lands and made extensive improvements in campgrounds, boat launches, day-use areas and hiking trails that make this a beautiful, well-tended and well-managed natural retreat in which to relax.

Picnicking

Family picnic areas are scattered throughout Wolf Creek State Park. Complete with grills, tables, water and sanitary facilities, you'll find everything you need to have a great outing. Two areas are equipped with shelters and facilities for disabled visitors. The Lost Shelter picnic area is an isolated, scenic area and is available by reservation.

Camping

There are 304 Class A campsites with restrooms and showers, electricity and picnic tables, and 78 Class C sites. In addition, there are two family tent camping areas, an organized group camp, and an equestrian campground.

A 140-site area in the Lick Creek section has also been designated for [reservations](#). Requests for reservations are accepted starting in January for sites to be reserved between May 1 and October 31.

Boating & Fishing

From the four-lane launching ramp (adjacent to a 175-car parking lot), you can set out for any variety of water sports. Rental boats and motors are available from several private marinas on the lake, which also provide a full range of boating and fishing supplies.

The miles of flood brush, timber and rock rip-rap shorelines, the many points with submerged ridges, and the hundreds of tributary streams emptying into Lake Shelbyville provide prime and productive fishing areas. The lake is teeming with black and white crappie, largemouth bass, walleye, channel and flathead catfish, bluegill, muskie, bullhead, carp and sunfish. Special size and creel limits are in effect for some species, so please check with the site superintendent's office for specific information on fishing opportunities and regulations.

Swimming

Treat your whole family to a day at the beach. A developed swimming beach, open from the middle of May to the middle of September, is situated in the southwest section of the park. No lifeguards are available, so please remain in the buoyed area and be careful. Alcohol is not allowed past the main gate into the beach area, and pets, food and drinks are not permitted on the sand. Picnic tables and grills are available nearby.

Trails

For refreshing walks in the forests, Wolf Creek contains seven hiking trails. For invigorating winter time activity there is a 16 1/2-mile snowmobile trail, and for the equestrian there is a scenic 15-mile equestrian trail.

- While groups of 25 or more are welcome and encouraged to use the park's facilities, they are required to register in advance with the site office to avoid crowding or scheduling conflicts.
- At least one responsible adult must accompany each group of 15 minors.
- Pets must be kept on leashes at all times.
- Actions by nature can result in closed roads and other facilities. Please call ahead to the park office before you make your trip.
- We hope you enjoy your stay. Remember, take only memories, leave only footprints.
- For more information on tourism in Illinois, call the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs' Bureau of Tourism at 1-800-2Connect.
- Telecommunication Device for Deaf and Hearing Impaired Natural Resources Information **(217) 782-9175** for TDD only Relay Number **800-526-0844**.

