

## Decatur County Parks Rules & Regulations

By the authority granted unto the Decatur County Conservation Board by the laws of the State of Iowa, the following Rules and Regulations were adopted on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of April 1971. Reviewed and amended on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

### Definitions:

*“Board”* shall mean the Decatur County Conservation Board.

*“Beach” or “Beach Area”* means that portion of the county parks or recreation areas designated for swimming activity, including the water area contiguous to the beach.

*“Director”* shall mean the Director of the Decatur County Conservation Board

*“Authorized Representative”* shall include all Decatur County Conservation Board employees and other persons designated from time to time

*“Area”* shall mean all or any part of the land and/or water owned, leased, managed or by other means controlled by the board

*“Camp” or “Camping”* shall mean the use of a shelter such as a tent, trailer, motor vehicle, tarpaulin, or sleeping bag for temporary residence at a campground. This includes the use of rental cabins.

*“Campground”* shall mean any area designated by the board for camping

*“Campsite”* shall mean a segment of a campground designated by the board for camping by a camping unit or camping party

*“Camping Unit”* shall mean the portable shelter used by one to six persons

*“Camping Party”* shall mean any individual family or informal unorganized group of not more than six occupying one campsite

*“Family”* shall mean a parent or parents with their children and/or lineal residents

*“Special Use Permit”* shall mean any use permit issued and signed by the director or their authorized representative pursuant to authority issued by the board.

*“Official Signs”* shall mean signs provided for in the Iowa State Highway Commission Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Iowa Streets and Highways and other signs designated from time to time by the board.

*“Noise”* shall mean any loud, confused, senseless shouting, outcry, or a loud and raucous noise which causes unreasonable distress to others or disturbs the peace.

*“Metal Detector”* means a portable electronic device carried by an individual used for detecting metal above or below the surface of the ground.

### 1. PROHIBITED DESTRUCTIVE ACTS:

It shall be unlawful for any person to use, enjoy the privileges of, destroy, injure, or deface plant life, trees, buildings, or other natural or material property, or to construct or to operate for private or commercial purposes any structure, or to remove any plant life, trees, buildings, sand, gravel, ice, earth, stone, wood, or other natural material, or to operate vehicles within the boundaries of any county park, preserve, or stream or any other lands or waters under the jurisdiction of the board, for

any purpose whatsoever except upon the terms, conditions, limitations, and restrictions as set fourth by the board.

## 2. NOISE PRODUCING DEVICES:

Creating or sustaining any unreasonable noise in any portion of all county parks and recreation areas is prohibited at all times. The nature and purpose of a person's conduct, the impact of other users, time of day, location, and other factors which would govern the conduct of a reasonable, prudent person under the circumstances shall be used to determine whether the noise is unreasonable. This shall include the operation or utilization of motorized equipment or machinery such as an electric generating plant, motor vehicle, motorized toy, or audio device such as a radio, television set, sound system, public address system, or musical instrument, or other device causing unreasonable noise. Between the hours of 10:30 PM and 6 AM noise which can be heard at a distance of 120 ft or three campsites shall be considered unreasonable.

## 3. SPEED LIMIT:

The maximum speed limit of all vehicles on county park and preserved drives, roads, and highways shall be 15 MPH, except where otherwise posted. All vehicles shall be driven on designated roadways.

## 4. EXCESSIVE LOADS:

No vehicle exceeding the restriction of class A license as defined by the motor vehicle law shall be permitted upon any roadway or drive in the areas without written permission by the board.

## 5. PARKING:

All vehicles shall be parked in designated areas, and no vehicle shall be left unattended on any county park or preserve drive, road or highway, except in case of emergency.

## 6. HITCHING TO TREES:

No horse or other animal shall be hitched or tied to any tree or shrub, or in such a manner as to result injury to any property whatsoever.

## 7. FIRES:

No fires shall be built, except in a place provided therefore, and such fire shall be extinguished when site is vacated unless it is immediately used by some other party. Moving of fire pits or rings is prohibited.

## 8. REMOVING PLANTS, FLOWERS, AND FRUIT:

No persons shall, in any manner, remove, destroy, injure, or deface any tree, shrub, plant or flower, or the fruit thereof, or disturb or injure any structure of natural attraction, except that upon written permission of the board, certain specimens may be removed for scientific purposes. It shall, however, be lawful to collect the fruit of all nut and berry producing plants and mushrooms for non commercial home use, provided that the collector does not otherwise damage the parent plant.

## 9. METAL DETECTING:

The use of metal detectors is permitted in areas during open hours. Metal detecting at the beach of permitted during sunrise to sunset. All metal detecting shall comply with section (1) and Iowa DNR administrative rules. No digging of soil or other forms of disturbance of any area will occur while metal detecting.

#### 10. USE OF FIREARMS:

The use by the public of firearms, air rifles, fireworks, explosives, and weapons of all kinds is prohibited in all county parks and reserve, except in areas hereafter designated by the board as hunting areas or specifically set apart as a firing, archery, or trap shoot range.

#### 11. LITTER GROUNDS:

No person shall place any waste, refuse, litter, or foreign substance in any area or receptacle except those provided for that purpose. Using government refuse receptacles for dumping household, commercial, or industrial refuse, brought as such from private property is prohibited.

#### 12. PROHIBITED AREAS:

No person shall enter a upon portions of any park or preserve in disregard of official signs prohibiting same, except by permission of the board, its director, or their authorized representative.

#### 13. ANIMALS ON LEASH:

No privately owned animal shall be allowed to run at large in any county area except by permission of the board or its director. Every such animal shall be deemed as running at large unless the owner carries such an animal or leads it by a leash or chain not exceeding 6 feet in length or keeps it confined in or attached to a vehicle or cage. It shall be lawful to permit dogs to run at large (except where otherwise posted) for the purpose of training, hunting, or exercising them in or on all areas designated as hunting areas by the board. The use of equine animals is limited to roadways or to trails designated for such use. All animals are prohibited within designated beach areas.

#### 14. CLOSING TIME:

All areas shall be closed to public use between the hours of 10:30 PM and 5:00 AM during summer hours unless otherwise specified by the board, in which case official signs will be erected giving the public notice of such change. Winter hours are in effect from November to March whereas all areas shall be closed to public use between sunset and sunrise. The board, its director, or their authorized representative may issue special use permits to allow groups or person to observe other hours. The provisions of this section shall not apply to authorized camping by registered guests in the designated camping area. Registered campers must remain in their designated campsite during closing hours.

#### 15. CAMPING:

The board is hereby authorized to fix fees for camping and other special privileges which shall be in such amounts as may be determined by the board upon the bases of the cost of providing same and the reasonable value of such privileges.

- A. Violation of any state law or county park rule and regulation by any member of a camping party is cause for revocation of the camping permit and the entire camping party shall be required to leave the area.
- B. Camping sites are not reservable.
- C. No camping party or camping unit of any kind shall occupy any campground for more than 14 days in a 21 day period unless otherwise permitted by the director and their authorized representatives.
- D. No campsite or camping unit shall be left unoccupied by a camping party for more than 24 hours. Unattended camping equipment still in place beyond the 24 hour limit is subject to impoundment.
- E. It shall be unlawful for more than one camping party or camping unit to occupy a campsite.
  - a. One small children's tent will be permitted per campsite under adult supervision. Occupants of children's tent must be minors.
- F. Not more than two license vehicles are permitted to any one campsite. Vehicles parking on the grass or in non-designated areas is prohibited.
- G. All campers shall maintain quiet and avoid excessive noise in the campgrounds between the hours of 10:30 PM and 6 AM. These quiet hours are in effect of all Decatur County Conservation areas.
- H. Campers shall restore their campsite to the same approximate condition or better than when they found it.
- I. Check out time at all campgrounds is 3:00 except as follows; the director or their authorized representative has authority to extend the checkout time when it is in the public interest and furthers the orderly management of the facility.

#### 16. CAMPING AREAS:

No person shall camp in any portion of a county area except in portions prescribed or designated by the board.

#### 17. SHELTER RESERVATIONS:

Shelter reservations are all day reservations. If there is a reserved sign, the shelter cannot be used by a person not in the reservation party. It shall be unlawful for any person to possess or consume beer or any alcoholic beverage between the hours of 10:30 PM and 6:00 AM in or on any shelter and the alcohol may not leave the shelter area. No person shall bring, use, or have in their possession in any shelter beer in a keg.

#### 18. PEDDLING AND ADVERTISING:

Peddling, hawking, soliciting, begging, advertising, or carrying on of business or other commercial enterprise within any area without written permission of the board or its director is strictly prohibited. No person shall post, paste, fasten, paint, or affix any placard, bill, notice, or sign upon any structure, tree, stone, fence, thing, or enclosure within any area unless written permission is obtained from the board or its director.

#### 19. POSSESSION AND CONSUMPTION OF BEER AND ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES:

It shall be unlawful for any person to possess or consume beer or any alcoholic beverage between the hours of 10:30 PM and 6:00 AM in or on any area, except within a camping unit by an adult member of any camping party. No person shall bring, use, or have in their possession on any area beer in a keg. It shall be unlawful for any person to possess or consume any beer or alcoholic beverage in or on any beach area under the jurisdiction of the board.

#### 20. SWIMMING:

It shall be unlawful to swim, wade, or engage in related activities in or on any ponds or waters in or on any area, except in those areas specifically designated by the board for swimming. Possession or use of breakable containers, the fragmented parts of which can injure a person, is prohibited in the beach area of county parks and recreation areas. Swimming in the beach areas is permitted from sunrise sunset.

#### 21. BOATING:

Where ramps are provided for launching of boats, the ramp is to be promptly cleared upon launching or recovering a boat to permit others to use the facility. Gas motors or engines shall not be allowed as a means of conveyance on any waters under the jurisdiction of the board except where otherwise posted. Jet skis and jet boats are prohibited. Swimming while boating Little River Recreation area is permitted within 20 feet of the vessel.

#### 22. ATV, UTV, AND SNOMOBILE RESTRICTIONS:

It shall be unlawful to operate any snowmobile, tote bike, air sled, swamp buggy, go kart, all terrain vehicle (ATV), or any other land conveyance propelled by gasoline or electrical engine and run on wheels, tracks, or runners, in or on any area except for those trails or roads which the board shall time to time designate.

#### 23. GOLF CARTS, ELECTRIC BICYCLES, ELECTRIC SCOOTERS, AND UTVs:

Golf carts and UTV (utility task vehicle) are permitted roadways as long as they meet certain age, registration, and safety requirements per state of Iowa law. Bicycles and scooters with electric motors less than 750 watts are permitted on roadways and paved trails only.

#### 24. HUNTING AND TRAPPING:

It shall be unlawful to hunt, trap, pursue in any manner, molest any birds or wild animals, except as otherwise provided by law, in or on any area not designated as a hunting area by the board.

#### 25. FEES:

The board reserves the right to require permits and establish fees and admission for any other facility, use, show, concert, demonstration, material or service without notice.

#### 26. EXCEPTIONS:

Nothing in these rules and regulations shall prohibit or hinder the board, its director, or their authorized representative or any other peace officers from performing their official duties. Refusal to issue or revocation of permits. The board, its director or their authorized representative reserves

the right to refuse to issue a permit or may revoke a permit for any group or individual for the use of all or any portion of any area for any purpose whatsoever.

**27. PENALTIES:**

Any person violating any of the provisions of the forgoing sections numbers 1-25 shall upon conviction be fined not to exceed \$100 or be imprisoned in the county jail not to exceed 30 days.