

Lake Murphysboro

S T A T E P A R K



Illinois
Department of
Natural Resources

Lake Murphysboro State Park

Beautiful rolling hills and woods surround star-shaped Lake Murphysboro and provide a wonderful backdrop for boating, fishing, picnicking, camping and hiking. Located in Jackson County about one mile west of Murphysboro off Route 149, the 1,022-acre state park is the perfect place to enjoy the great outdoors.

History

Archeological evidence for both the Old Woodland and Paleolithic Native American cultures has been uncovered at the site. The Paleo people lived in small, temporary camps and were known as big game hunters. The Woodland culture left more evidence, since it was agricultural and is known for large settlements. By the early 1800s, there were no Native American settlements in the immediate area.

When Illinois was admitted to the Union in 1818, the

Federal government gave Illinois three saline lands. One of them, located less than a mile southwest of the park, was leased to Dr. Conrad Will, who served in both the Illinois House and Senate in the early days of statehood. Dr. Will operated a salt works at the site, and the town of Brownsville grew up around it. The salt works closed in 1840, and all that remains of the town is the cemetery.

Although the State of Illinois did not purchase the 1,022 acres that would become Lake Murphysboro State Park until 1948, interest in the area as a public recreational park began in the 1930s. Originally developed by the State's Division of Fisheries, Lake Murphysboro State Park was transferred to the Division of Parks and Memorials in 1955. Today, the park is maintained by the Department of Natural Resources.

The Lake

Built in 1950 by the Division of Fisheries, the 145-acre lake is a tributary of Indian Creek and has a watershed of approximately 4,500 acres. The maximum water depth is 36 feet, and the lake's 7.5 miles of shoreline are made up of rolling hills covered with a wide variety of trees. A 600-foot dam is located at the south end of the park. A smaller lake, appropriately called Little Lake, is located just north of Lake Murphysboro.

Soon after its completion, Lake Murphysboro was stocked with breeder-size and yearling-size largemouth bass. In the fall of 1951, redear sunfish were introduced, followed by bluegill the next spring. Channel catfish are also



frequently stocked. To maintain a healthy fish population, submerged vegetation and water draw-downs are used to keep the number of small panfish down.

Natural Features

Patches of native wild orchids may be found in the wooded areas of the park. Yellow lady's slipper, showy, purple fringed, twayblade, puttyroot, coralroot and ladies' tresses are just some of the varieties to watch for. The variety of orchids makes it possible to find blooming plants throughout the year.

The wooded hills include groves of majestic oak and hickory trees, as well as most other types of trees.

Picnicking

Whether you visit Lake Murphysboro State Park to fish, hike or especially for a picnic, you will enjoy the shaded picnic areas located in convenient locations around the lake.

For larger groups there are two shelter houses, one with drinking water and playground equipment. Parking areas are available at both shelters. Handicapped-accessible toilet facilities are located in the concession area and in the Big Oak and Water Lily camping areas. ADA restrooms are available at both shelters.

Concessions

A concession stand near the boat docks offers a variety of supplies and refreshments.



Hiking

A three-mile designated trail offers hikers the opportunity to enjoy the plant, animal and bird life of the park up close. For those who prefer to explore nature on their own, several paths criss-cross through the hills and woods of the park.

Archery

An archery range is located in the northwest section of the park. For more information about Lake Murphysboro State Park, contact the Site Superintendent, 52 Cinder Hill Drive, Murphysboro, IL 62966 or phone (618) 684-2867.

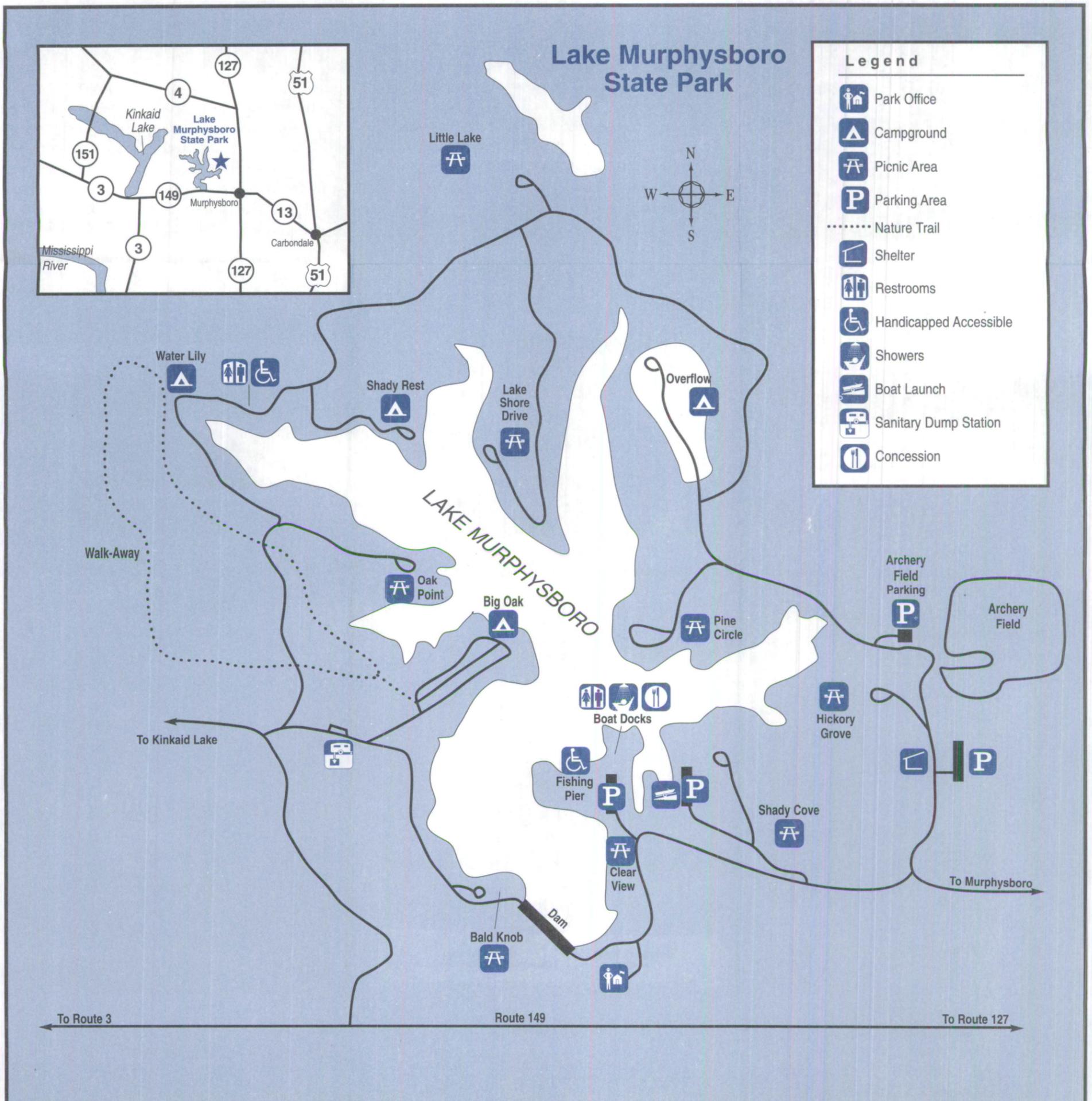


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Fishing and Boating

With its gentle hills and shady shores, Lake Murphysboro is a popular retreat for bank fishing. No matter what form of fishing one prefers, anglers will appreciate the variety of fish available: largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, channel catfish and crappie.

A fishing pier with facilities for the handicapped is available, and there's a handicapped-accessible boat transfer station.

Boaters can bring their own boat or rent one near the boat launch. The outboard motor limit is 10 H.P.

Bank and boat fishing are also available on Little Lake, but no motors are allowed.



Camping

Well-equipped campsites located in scenic areas of the park provide the perfect opportunity to extend your stay at Lake Murphysboro. Campers who want to truly experience nature will appreciate the 20 tent sites. Those who love nature, but like the comfort of home, will prefer the 54 trailer sites that are equipped with electricity. Three Class A handicapped sites and one Class B/S handicapped site are available. A sanitary disposal station is located near the trailer area. All campers must obtain a permit from the site superintendent.



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#52 Cinder Hill Drive

Murphysboro, IL 62966, (618) 684-2867

- 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.
- We hope you enjoy your stay. Remember, take only memories, leave only footprints.
- For more information on state parks, write to the Department of Natural Resources, Office of Public Services, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271, call (217) 782-7454 or visit our website at <http://dnr.state.il.us>.
- For more information on tourism in Illinois, call the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs' Bureau of Tourism at 1-800-2CONNECT.
- Hearing-impaired individuals may call the Department of Natural Resources' TTY number, (217) 782-9175, or use the Ameritech Relay Number. 1-800-526-0844

Rod R. Blagojevich
Governor

Joel Brunsvold
Director

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