

MISSISSIPPI RIVER STATE PARK

Mississippi River State Park exists to provide quality access to the St. Francis National Forest and to inspire personal connections with the River, Delta, and Crowley's Ridge.

Mississippi River State Park is located on the southern end of Crowley's Ridge and borders the Mississippi River. Operating through a special use permit from the U.S. Forest Service within the 23,000-acre St. Francis National Forest, the state park encompasses 536 acres in six recreation areas. The visitor center and Bear Creek Lake Recreation Area are in Lee County, while the confluence of the St. Francis and Mississippi rivers, St. Francis River access, Hornor Neck Lake access, and Storm Creek Lake Recreation Area are in Phillips County.

Park visitors enjoy fishing for largemouth bass, bream, crappie, and catfish as well as hiking, birding, and wildlife watching.

The park is located on two National Scenic byways, the Great River Road and the Crowley's Ridge Parkway. The Great River Road is a 10-state byway stretching along both sides of the Mississippi River from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. Crowley's Ridge Parkway features the dramatic and beautiful scenery of eastern Arkansas, especially the unique hardwood forest and steep hills of the ridge. Portions of both byways are gravel.

OUR STORY

This region has been home to humans for millennia. American Indians used Crowley's Ridge as a refuge from high water and hunted its forests. Some of the earliest European explorers were here since the Mississippi River was used as a major travel route. In 1815, the confluence of the St. Francis and Mississippi rivers was the starting point for the land survey of the Louisiana Purchase. By the early 1900s, much of this was cleared for agriculture and grazing.

In the 1930s, the area came into public ownership under the Resettlement Administration when the federal government bought the land from private owners. In 1938, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) built Bear Creek Lake, Storm Creek Lake, and the ridge road, during the Great Depression. The area was managed by the Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service until 1960, when the St. Francis National Forest was established.

Mississippi River State Park was authorized by state legislation in 1973, but it took several decades to secure funding and implement plans. Arkansas State Parks began management of Bear Creek Lake on May 1, 2009. Park development will continue in phases over several years.

In partnership, the recreation resources are managed by Arkansas State Parks, while the forest resources are managed by the U.S. Forest Service.

FACILITIES

Camping ♦ **Bear Creek Lake Recreation Area** offers three camping areas: **Beech Point Campground** is on a wooded peninsula. Campsites feature views of the lake and are surrounded by prime wildlife and birding habitat. Two courtesy docks provide additional lake access. The campground features 17 campsites [14 Class AAA with water/electric/sewer hookups and three Class D Walk-in Tent Sites]. Each paved site includes picnic table, grill, lantern hanger, and tent pad. A barrier-free bathhouse is centrally located. On the east side of the lake, **Lone Pine Campground** offers 14 primitive sites (no hookups) and vault toilets. For group camping, **Maple Flats Campground** (no hookups) includes a vault toilet.

Storm Creek Lake Recreation Area offers one campground with 12 primitive sites (no hookups) and vault toilets.

Camping fees at Beech Point campground and Maple Flats group campground are paid at the visitor center. Camping at Lone Pine or Storm Creek is paid at the visitor center *or* the self-pay station in the campgrounds. Reservations can be made for Beech Point campsites and Maple Flats Group Campground by calling the park office: (870) 295-4040. Arkansas State Parks camping rules and regulations apply to all campsites.

Picnicking ♦ There are picnic tables near the visitor center (no grills). Day-use picnic areas with tables and grills are also along the entrance road to Beech Point and adjacent to the swim beach. Beaver Point Picnic Area on the east side of Bear Creek Lake has picnic tables and grills as well as a vault toilet. Storm Creek Lake Recreation Area has picnic tables and grills by the bath house.

Swimming ♦ Swim beaches are available on both Bear Creek Lake and Storm Creek Lake. Open Memorial Day to Labor Day.

Pavilion ♦ Storm Creek Lake Recreation Area offers a small pavilion (rental fee applies) for group gatherings.

Boat Ramps ♦ On Bear Creek Lake, Storm Creek Lake, Hornor Neck Lake, and the access to the St. Francis River. Free for use for all park visitors.

Trails ♦ **Trotting Fox Trail** is a 1/2-mile, barrier free path. **Bear Creek Lake Nature Trail** is a one-mile loop. **Hornor Neck Lake** is a short wildlife viewing trail. **Base Line Trail** is four-miles roundtrip.

Visitor Center ♦ Observe, study, and explore the Arkansas Delta, the Mississippi River, and Crowley's Ridge. Interactive exhibits connect visitors to the park.

Hunting ♦ No hunting is allowed within the state park areas. Contact Arkansas Game and Fish Commission for hunting regulations on St. Francis National Forest.

LOCATION

From Marianna, follow Ark. 1B to Ark. 44 (Great River Road/Crowley's Ridge Parkway) and go three miles southeast to the visitor center or six miles to Bear Creek Lake Recreation Area.

For further information on park hours and fees, contact:

Mississippi River State Park
2955 Arkansas 44
Marianna, AR 72360
(870) 295-4040
MississippiRiver@Arkansas.com

For further information on Arkansas's other state parks, contact:

Arkansas State Parks
1 Capitol Mall, 4A-900
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 682-1191
ArkansasStateParks.com



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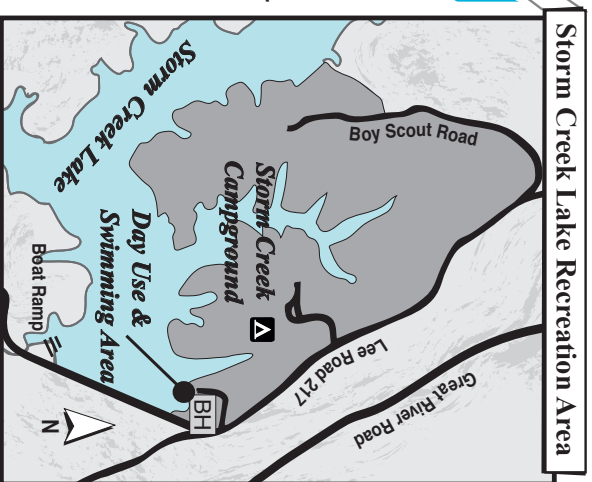
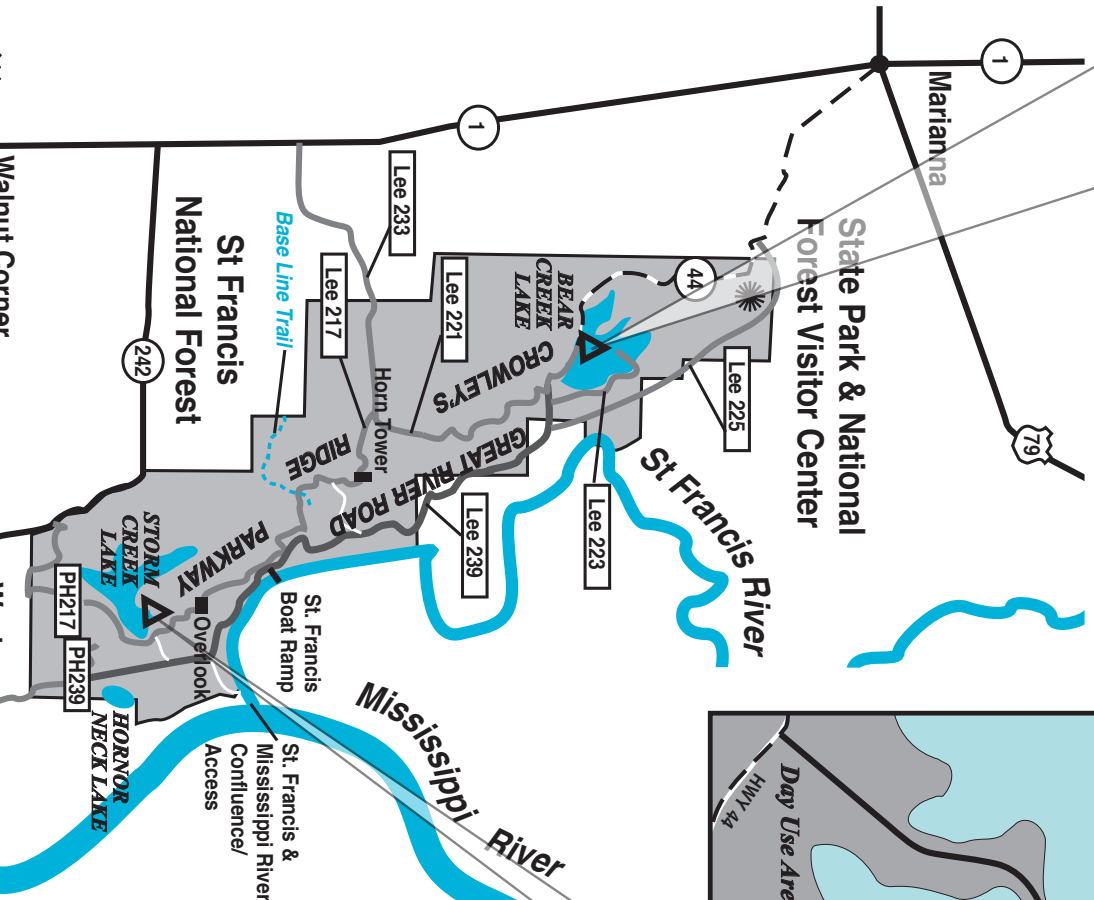
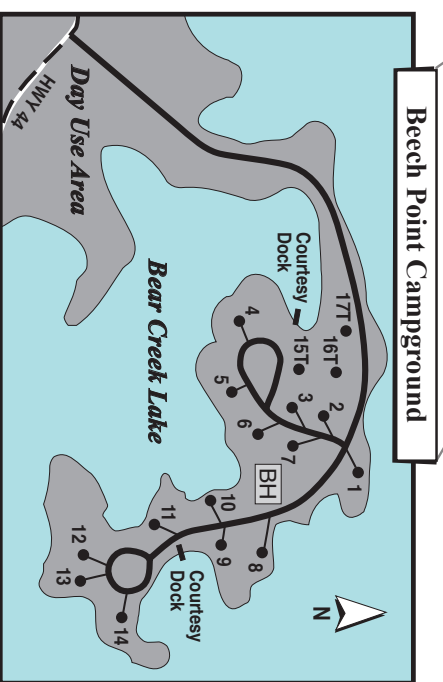
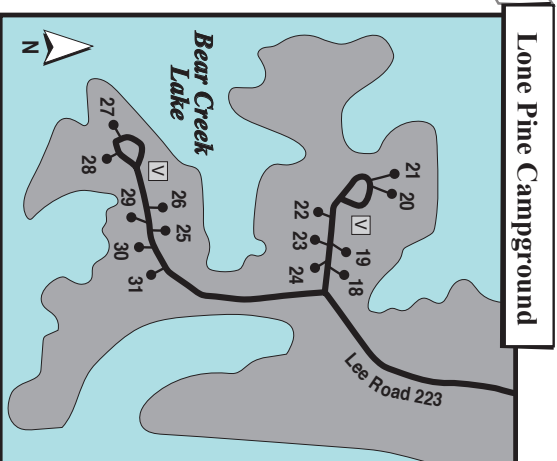
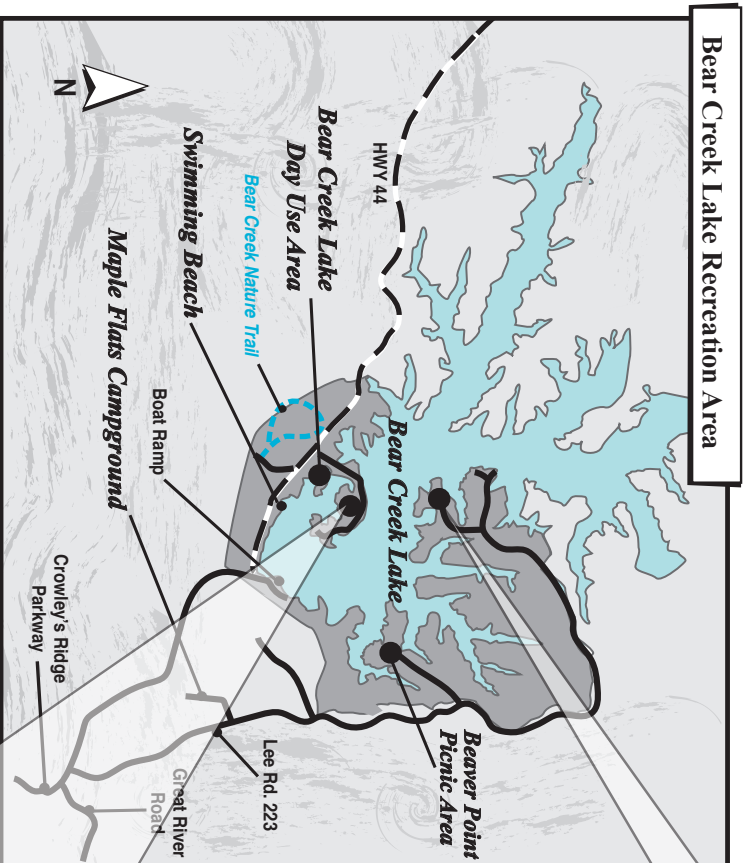
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ARKANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & TOURISM



EXPLORE THE BEAUTY & HISTORY OF ARKANSAS!



NOTICE: To preserve scenic beauty and ecology, fences and warning signs have not been installed in some park locations. Caution and supervision of your children are required while visiting these areas.



LEGEND

V VAULT TOILET
BH BATHHOUSE

MAP NOT TO SCALE

Some areas have been enlarged for easy reading.