



ENJOY OUR OKALOOSA COUNTY PARKS THIS SUMMER

Spending quiet time with nature in an Okaloosa County Park by the water and the shade of trees will rejuvenate the spirit.

We are fortunate that Okaloosa County owns forty beautiful parks for our residents and visitors to enjoy. After Memorial Day, our thoughts turn to outdoor activities such as barbeques, swimming, biking, boating and camping. Without leaving Okaloosa County we have some of the nicest recreation areas that are hidden gems.

These parks are maintained by county recreation staff and in some cases volunteers. The parks offer a wide array of amenities.

The traffic from tourists can be challenging this time of year as everyone wants to visit our beautiful area. You can have a wonderful experience of a “staycation” without crossing the bridges. Whether you desire the beaches or the beauty of our rivers and forests, we have something for everyone in the family.

Type the following links into your browser to watch video about our parks.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bi8IWh47Nxxw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQAipH3WnF4>

Type the following link into your browser to visit the County webpage and a map of all the County parks.

<https://myokaloosa.com/pw/parks/map>

Let’s explore a few of our forty parks together.

Shalimar

Meigs Park, which is off of Meigs Drive, features a small boat ramp, multiple parking spaces, picnic table and a pavilion. It also has places for sunbathing and swimming.

Longwood/Poquito Bayou Park, located at 4 Bay Street, Shalimar. The park features a quiet space for family and friends to gather with a picnic table and boat ramp.

Fort Walton Beach

Marler Park located at 1275 Santa Rosa Boulevard has beachside picnic tables, playground equipment, and a dock for fishing.

Little Marler Park located at 1247 Siebert Drive, Ft. Walton Beach, nestled away from the busy traffic, is a lovely picnic spot and a place to watch boats.

Veterans Park features the one of a kind Women Veterans Park with handicap accessible walkways and a beautiful area to picnic or enjoy wildlife, such as turtles and nesting herons, or for fishing. Park in the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center lot and walk across the land bridge to begin the fun.

Mary Esther

The Colonel Bud Day Park, 185 Woodland Park Circle features playgrounds and outdoor basketball courts.

Niceville

Swift Bayou Boat Ramp 213 Edrehi Avenue, Niceville has a boat ramp that will provide access to a day on the water.

Woodlands Park, 333 Greenwood Way, Niceville is a classic neighborhood park with plenty of room for the children to run and play.

Crestview

Ray Lynn Barnes Boat Ramp allows easy access for kayakers located right off 3390 Hwy 90 E. Crestview

Cleo Park, 2099 Cleo Lane is tucked away in a residential area with plenty of playground space for children to explore with picnic tables for a meal or snack.

Baker

Wilderness Landing Park is one of my favorites. Located on the Blackwater River or by land at 5700 Wilderness Landing Road, Baker. It provides overnight camping and includes a bath house, picnic pavilions, a boat ramp and lots of room to explore the outdoors. If canoeing, **Cotton Bridge Park** is nearby on the river. This park features playground equipment, a boat ramp and picnic areas.

While in Baker, stop by the **Baker Block Museum** and learn of the history of Okaloosa County with the timber industry, farming and life in the 1800's in the Choctawhatchee Forest.

Laurel Hill

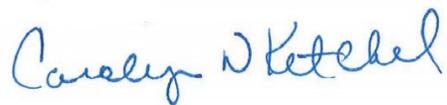
Oak Grove River Park, 2751 Hwy 2 Laurel Hill is a place to sit by the river and picnic and relax for a great get-a-way.

Blackman

Blackman Community Center, 7590 Hwy 189 N. Blackman provides a large space for community gatherings such as a family reunion. There is plenty of playground and open space for recreation.

This list is only the beginning of the many choices for recreation and fun. Challenge yourself to find the 40 parks that belong to Okaloosa County. There are many additional parks owned by municipalities. Secure an **Okaloosa County Parks Guide** by calling 850-651-7105 and learn where there are boat ramps, camping, picnic areas and beaches for everyone to enjoy. These beautiful parks are cozy places to enjoy a day in the sun without the crowds. You will feel restored and will be happy you took the road less traveled.

My Sincere Thanks,



Carolyn N. Ketchel
District 2 County Commissioner
Okaloosa County, Board of County Commissioners
1250 N Eglin Pkwy., Suite 100
Shalimar, FL 32579
850-651-7105
cketchel@myokaloosa.com