

WATERCRAFT FUN

Activity Level 3

Chester Woods Park is home to the Bear Creek Reservoir which is a 112-acre lake that is ideal for canoeing, kayaking, paddle-boarding, or paddle boating. The park offers these types of watercraft rentals seasonally for a nominal fee.

Activity: Rent one of the park watercrafts for two hours and enjoy the view of the park from the water!

Summer Hours: *(Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day)*

Monday - Sunday 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Off Season Hours: *(Weather permitting spring and fall)*

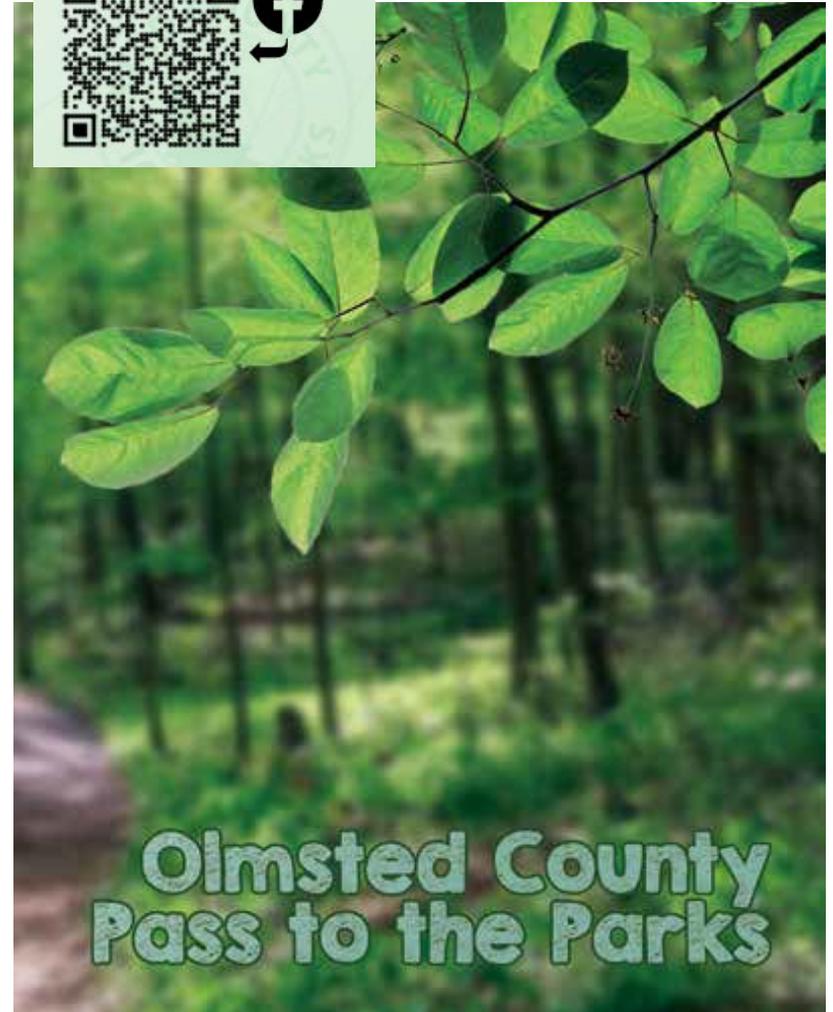
Sunday - Thursday 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Friday - Saturday 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Fun Fact: Kayaking is great for weight loss as it can burn an average of 400 calories an hour, as well as Mental health. Aerobic exercise, notes Harvard Health Publications, triggers the release of brain chemicals that can quickly improve your mood. If you're depressed, stressed, or just need to clear your mind, paddling a kayak can provide a relaxing workout.



ParkRxAmerica.org



Activity Level 1

VISIT ZOLLMAN ZOO

Zollman Zoo is dedicated to providing homes for animals unable to be released into the wild. These animals serve as an educational ambassador of their species for many visitors.

Which mammal is the only true hibernator in the

Zollman Zoo?

Fun fact: Several mammals of Minnesota will cope with cold temperatures by going into a deep sleep called torpor, which mimics some behaviors of hibernation, but the animal can awake if disrupted.

Stop by the Nature Center for a stamp in your booklet.



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Activity Level Varies

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Oxbow park and Chester Woods provide weekly educational, naturalist-led programs for people of all ages! Classes vary and are different every week! Some include animal feedings, hikes, nighttime stargazing, crafts, and many more!

Check our Facebook page or the Olmsted County website (under Olmsted County Parks→Park Programs) to see the schedules and times of offered park programs.

Find staff at the end of the program to stamp your Pass to Parks book to get credit for the activity!



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HIKING

Activity Level 2

One of the many delights of Olmsted County Parks is the trail system available for hikers to get exercise. You will find fresh air, the beauty of the trees, and the animals that live in Southern Minnesota.

You will find approximately 15 miles of primitive trails winding through a variety of inviting natural habitats in the undeveloped areas of the Chester Woods Park.

At Oxbow Park you will discover approximately 8 miles of primitive trails winding through the prairies and wooded hills. The trails are marked with signs at intersections and maps are available at the nature center.

A 2-mile looped hiking trail winds through the meadows and wooded hills along our Root River Park providing visitors with a variety of options of beauty and natural history. A hike any time of the year promises to be a delightful experience.

FUN FACT: Have you ever heard of Forest Bathing?

The practice of forest bathing, also called forest therapy, involves no bathing and isn't led by a therapist. In Japan, the practice is decades old and known as shinrin-yoku, which means "taking in the forest." Among the benefits, are relaxation, less stress, connections with nature and, perhaps, insights to take home. Source: WebMD

SWIMMING

Activity Level 2

Did you know the Chester Woods Park has a family beach that is open from Memorial weekend through Labor Day weekend? The Bear Creek reservoir is not only great for canoeing and fishing, but it is a great place to cool off on a hot summer day as well!

Activity: Visit Chester Woods' beach and enjoy an hour (or more) of swimming and splashing around! (Maybe even build a sandcastle while you are there!) Just don't forget your sunscreen!!!!

Swimming Beach Hours:

Monday - Thursday 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Friday - Saturday 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM

Sunday 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Chester Woods has a swimming beach with beach house, showers and dressing rooms.

Fun fact: Swimming provides an all-over body workout, as nearly all your muscle groups are used, during swimming.



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TREE ID SCAVENGER HUNT
Activity Level 1

How well do you know the native trees of Minnesota? Come on out to Chester Woods or Oxbow Park and take a shot at the Tree Id scavenger hunts. Chester Woods Park has it located along the beautiful Chester Lake Trail which is a leisurely 1.2-mile loop, while Oxbow's is located inside the natural playground area. You will not only have a good time trying to find your trees, but you may even learn a few fun new facts as well!



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Activity:

Locate the Tree I.D. sign at either of the parks and write down the ten listed trees on the page below. Then proceed on the path to locate each tree. Scavenger hunt instructions are printed right on the sign! Happy hunting!

Fun fact:
 When humans are exposed to chemicals released by trees known as phytoncides, research has shown results such as reduced blood pressure, reduced anxiety, increased pain threshold and even increased expression of anti-cancer proteins.