

Rains, Flooding Affect Some State Parks

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) reported today that frequent heavy rains are impacting some state parks in eastern Kansas. High water levels at many reservoirs have flooded campgrounds, overtopped roads, closed boat ramps and beaches and dampened visitors' enthusiasm for any outdoor activities. Most state parks in western Kansas have been largely unaffected.

In eastern Kansas, Elk City State Park is closed, all campgrounds and day-use areas at Fall River State Park are closed and Perry State Park remains open but with very limited services. Most other state parks in eastern Kansas are reporting various degrees of flooding issues.

Typically, Memorial Day marks the beginning of the busy season for Kansas state parks. The four months of the summer season – May through August – account for more than half of annual state park revenues.

“State park staffers are doing their best to accommodate visitors' needs,” Secretary of KDWPT Brad Loveless said. “At affected parks, staff are happy to work with visitors to change their reservations to a dry campsite if available, arrange for another date in the future, provide a gift card good for a future stay or issue a refund. We remind visitors, for their own safety, to avoid flood waters and never move or drive around barricades”

Visitors can go to kshuntnfishcamp.com to check on campsite and cabin availability and make reservations. For information about conditions at individual parks, go to <https://ksoutdoors.com/State-Parks/State-Park-Alerts> or visit KSOutdoors.com and click on State Parks for other information.

Kansas state parks do not receive any State General Fund monies and are almost entirely fee-funded. Revenues drop significantly when bad weather hits. Once the flood waters recede, the damage they leave behind can take months to repair, further limiting park hours and revenues during the summer months.