Johnson Creek Recreation Area

Shawnee National Forest | Mississippi Bluffs Ranger District | 2014

Located on a quiet northwest finger of beautiful Kinkaid Lake, Johnson Creek Recreation Area offers a variety of outdoor activities for everyone in the family, from camping and boating to hiking along the lake and biking the scenic roads.

Kinkaid Lake is one of the few large lakes (2750 acres) in southern Illinois and is a popular location for fishing, swimming, sunbathing, water skiing, boating, canoeing, kayaking and waterfowl hunting.

Camping

Johnson Creek group campground is one of two campgrounds in the forest that caters to equestrians. The campground features large sites with tables, fire rings, hitching posts, and highline poles. Several trails lead from the campground and link to the extensive Kinkaid Lake trail system.

Water Activities

A two-lane boat launch and trailer parking area is located in the day-use area and is open year-round (no fee). Water depth in the vicinity makes the launch suitable only for small motorboats or canoes and kayaks.

The launch is located approximately three miles (through a no-wake zone) from the main body of Kinkaid Lake. The quiet waters are bordered on both shores by national forest land, providing pleasant paddling and outstanding wildlife viewing, as well as excellent fishing locations.

Surrounding Area

Kinkaid Lake and trail system, Lake Murphysboro State Park, Big Muddy River, and Oakwood Bottoms Greentree Reservoir.

For More Information

Mississippi Bluffs Ranger District
521 North Main
Jonesboro, IL 62952
(618) 833-8576
www.fs.usda.gov/shawnee

Access: From Murphysboro: Take Highway 149 west 7 miles to Highway 3; then north 4.5 miles on Highway 3 to Highway 151. Turn right onto Highway 151 and go 4 miles to recreation area.
From St. Louis: Take either Highway 3 or Highway 4 south to Chester, IL. Then south 18 miles on Highway 3; turn left onto Highway 151 and go 4 miles to recreation area.

Facilities: Picnic area with shelter and grills, boat launch, trails, group campground, equestrian camping and trailhead parking which accommodates horse trailers. (No boat rentals available.)

Recommended Season: Spring, summer and fall
Campground open March 16th to December 15th
Boat launch is open year-round.

Fees: Single Campsite - $10/night
Double Campsite - $12 /night
Triple Campsite - $18 /night

Safety:
For your safety, the recreation area is patrolled by forest employees and law enforcement officers. Be aware that the waters of Kinkaid Lake become congested during the summer months; use caution while boating and recreating on the water.

Regulations:
1) Picnic area is open dawn to dusk.
2) Pets must be leashed.
3) Use trash receptacles in developed areas.
Pack It In, Pack It Out, along trails.
4) Camp only at designated sites.
5) No reservations, campsites are available on a first-come, first-serve basis.
6) No horseback riding is allowed in the day-use areas.

A complete list of site regulations is posted on each bulletin board and at fee stations.

Emergencies

The nearest hospital is St. Joseph's in Murphysboro.

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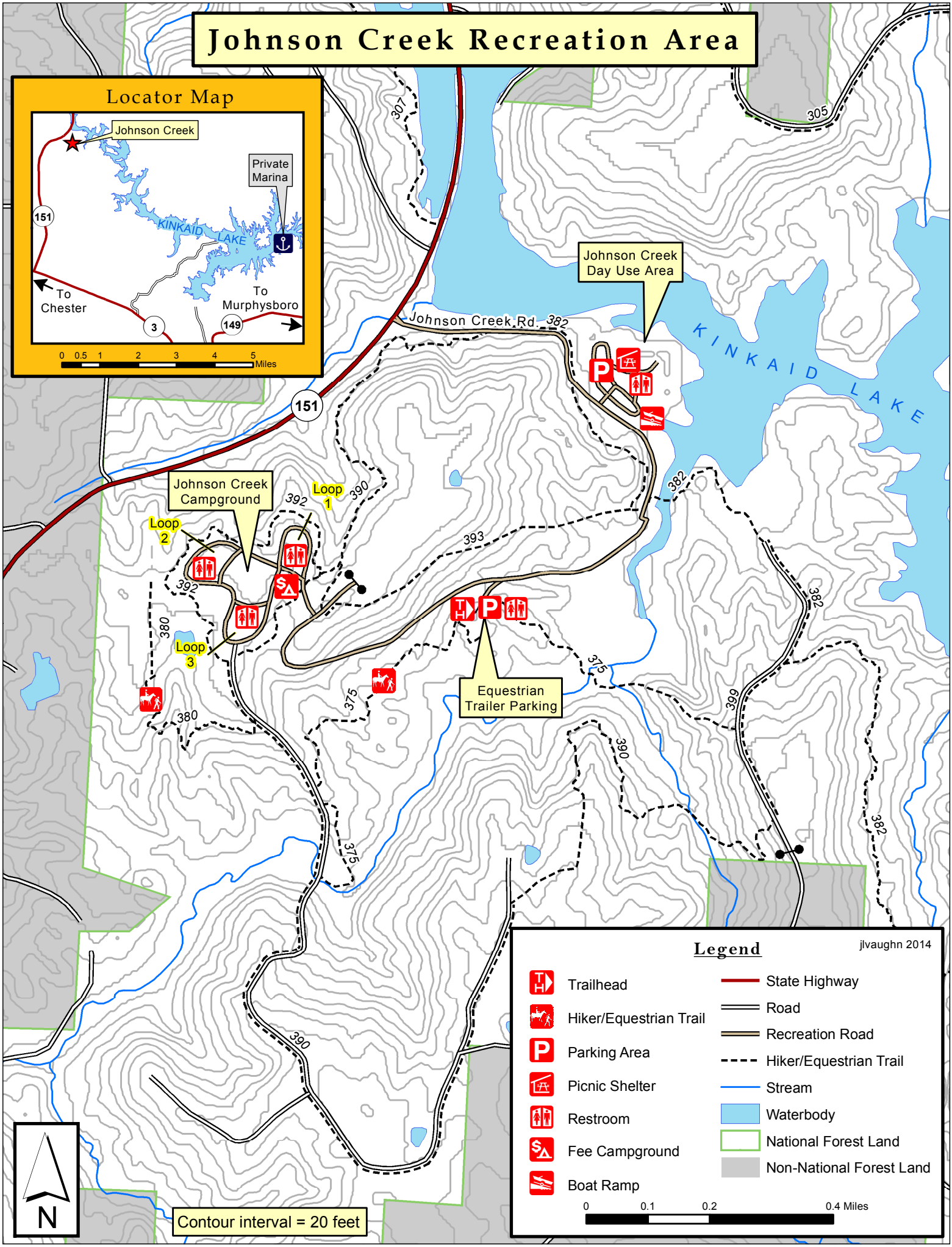
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