**Laurel River Lake**

Located within the Daniel Boone National Forest, Laurel River Lake features 5,600 acres of deep, clear water and nearly 200 miles of tree-lined shore. As one of the most scenic lakes in Kentucky, visitors come here to enjoy boating, swimming, fishing and camping in the great outdoors.

The U.S. Forest Service administers the main body of the lake and most of its shoreline. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers oversees the operation of Laurel River Dam and recreation facilities at the dam site.

Laurel River Lake receives heavy use on the weekends during summer months. Week days and the months of September through March offer visitors more solitude.

**Recreation Permits**

A fee is required to use Flatwoods, Grove, Holly Bay, Marsh Branch and Laurel Bridge boat ramps. A permit must be displayed in your vehicle at these locations. Permits may be bought at local stores or Forest Service district offices. Call the London Ranger District for more information.

**Camping**

The Forest Service oversees two developed drive-in campgrounds on Laurel River Lake, at Holly Bay and Grove. These campgrounds provide electricity, drinking water, flush toilets and showers. Reservation, first-come, first-served and walk-in sites are offered.

**Boat-in Campgrounds**

Boat-in campsites at Grove and White Oak are first-come, first-served and are accessible only by boat or on foot. These campgrounds provide drinking water, vault toilets and trash bins.

**Group Campgrounds**

Craigs Creek Group Area is by reservation only and is designed for groups of 12 or more people. The area has three group sites, a picnic shelter, drinking water, flush toilets, shower facilities and trash bins. A trail leads from the campground to the lake.

**Lakeside Camping**

Primitive camping is allowed at least 300 feet from roads, trails, streams and shorelines.

**Marinas**

Two full-service marinas operate on Laurel River Lake. They are located near Grove and Holly Bay campgrounds. The marinas are privately operated under a special-use permit.

**Food Storage**

Food storage is required on the Daniel Boone National Forest.

**How to store your food and trash...**

- **Put it in a bear-resistant container.**
- **Put it in a closed vehicle with a solid top or a closed hard-body trailer.**
- **Throw trash away in a bear-resistant trash can provided by the Forest Service.**

**In the backcountry...**

- Store your food in a bear-resistant container or hang from a tree. Cook and eat at least 100 yards from your tent.

**Boating**

Most of the lake is open to motorized and nonmotorized boats. Laurel River Lake has seven public boat ramps for lake access. Holly Bay Campground offers an additional boat ramp for registered campers only.

The Goose Management Area on Cane Branch is closed to motorized boats but open to canoes, kayaks and rowboats. The area provides a unique opportunity to explore the lake at a slower pace.

**Wildlife**

The quiet coves and surrounding forest offer opportunities for wildlife viewing. The lake is home to Canada geese, bald eagles and other wildlife species. The Canada Goose Management Area in Cane Branch is closed to motorized boats.

**Fishing**

The lake provides excellent fishing for bass, rainbow trout, walleye, crappie, bluegill and catfish. Night fishing for trout is popular during the summer. Fishing licenses may be bought at county clerk’s offices, marinas and many local stores. State fishing regulations are enforced.

**Picnicking**

The Forest Service offers picnicking opportunities at Laurel Bridge and Bald Rock picnic areas. Laurel Bridge offers a picnic shelter that can be reserved through the London Ranger District Office. Bald Rock Picnic area, on KY 192, has vault toilets, a volleyball court, horseshoe pits and hiking trails. The Army Corps of Engineers maintains a picnic area and shelter near Laurel River Dam.

**Scuba Diving**

The clear waters of Laurel River Lake provide excellent opportunities for scuba diving. Be alert for flags that indicate divers below the water surface. Boats must stay 100 feet away.

**Hiking**

Hikers will enjoy miles of trails near the lake. The Sheltowee Trace National Recreation Trail skirts the western edge of the lake.

**Safety**

**Wear your lifejacket.**

- Wearing a life jacket at all times could have saved 80 percent of all drowning victims according to the U.S. Coast Guard.

**Do not swim at boat ramps or marinas.**

- Stay away from underwater hazards, such as power lines, rocks, trees, stumps and landforms. Be alert for flags and buoys indicating divers below the water surface.

**Watch for submerged hazards.**

- Water levels at Laurel River Lake vary. Rocks, trees, stumps and landforms may lie just below the surface when the lake level changes. Not all underwater hazards are marked. Be alert and reduce your speed.

**Alcohol is prohibited.**

- Kentucky law prohibits consumption and open containers of alcohol in public places, including national forest land and Kentucky waterways.

**Be aware of carbon monoxide poisoning.**

- Swim away from areas where engines vent exhaust fumes. Never sit or hang on the back deck of boats while engines are running.

**Avoid black bear encounters**

- Protect yourself and black bears by reducing odors that attract bears. Food and trash storage is mandatory.
- Make noise to avoid surprising a bear.
- Never approach or feed a bear or other wild animal.
- Do not hike in the dark.
- Carry EPA-registered bear pepper spray.
- If a bear is observed nearby, pack up your food and trash and leave immediately.
- If a bear approaches, move away slowly; do not run. Get into a vehicle or a secure building.

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To Bee Rock Campground,
Cumberland River
Rockcastle River
100

Some picnic shelters may be reserved
National Recreation Reservation
White Oak Boat-In Campground • 39 • •
Holly Bay Campground • 94 • • • • • •
Craigs Creek Group Area • 3 • • •

A fee is required to use some boat ramps. A permit must be displayed in your vehicle at these locations. Permits may be bought at local offices or Forest Service offices.

Craigs Creek Boat Ramp
Flatwoods Boat Ramp
Grove Boat Ramp
High Top Boat Ramp
Holly Bay Boat Ramp
Laurel Bridge Boat Ramp
March Branch Boat Ramp

To Rockcastle Campground by calling the district.

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