



## NEWS RELEASE

Desiree Stanfield  
Chief Marketing and Communications  
248-705-4108 | stanfieldd@oakgov.com

### **Oakland County Parks to participate in free fishing, ORV weekend** *Activities include a Fishing Derby at Independence Oaks County Park*

**OAKLAND COUNTY – May 29, 2025** – The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) is hosting a Free ORV and Summer Free Fishing Weekend June 7-8 and there are plenty of opportunities to join in these fun activities at Oakland County Parks (OCP).

As part of the Summer Free Fishing Weekend, a Fishing Derby will be held from 9-11 a.m. June 8 at Independence Oaks County Park in Clarkston. During this catch-and-release event, there will be prizes for the longest fish caught in each session.

“The Fishing Derby promises to be a lot of fun. This year we’ve split it into two sessions, one for ages 15 and under and the other for ages 16 and older. We’re looking forward to the friendly competition,” Recreation Program Coordinator Nathaniel Brech said. “Participants can bring their own equipment to use or borrow some of ours and no fishing experience is needed.”

Since this is a free fishing weekend, fishing licenses are not required, but there is a \$10/person program fee for the Fishing Derby. The event will be held weather permitting and all ages and abilities are welcome. Adaptive fishing equipment will be available for individuals with disabilities. Preregister by calling 248-858-0916 during business hours.

In addition, Oakland County Parks offers close-to-home fishing at six parks: Addison Oaks near Rochester, Groveland Oaks in Holly, Highland Oaks in Highland, Independence Oaks in Clarkston, Orion Oaks in Orion and Rose Oaks in Holly. Park entry is free for Oakland County residents.

Addison Oaks County Park has two fishing lakes that offer an array of fish for anglers to enjoy, Park Supervisor Kate Pardy said.

“We always spot anglers along the two lakes located at Addison Oaks. Fishing is a very popular activity with campers and local residents,” she said. “Adams Lake is a smaller lake and people like to relax on the boardwalk, fishing from the shore. Buhl Lake is our 34-acre larger lake that offers both shore fishing and a boat launch for anglers who bring their own kayaks or boats. We do allow electric trolling motors on Buhl Lake.”

For those who do not have a kayak or boat, the park’s boathouse is open from 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Thursday-Sunday.

Independence Oaks-North's Upper Bushman Lake is designated catch-and-release-only by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The designation means that anglers can catch fish but must release them back into the lake to support the high-quality fishery.

It is the first and only public access lake in southeast Michigan with the catch-and-release-only special designation and only one of seven catch-and-release-for-all-fish-species lakes in Michigan. Large-mouth Bass, Bluegill, Pumpkinseed, Rock Bass, Bullhead, Northern Pike and Crappie are plentiful in the lake.

View a Map of Fishing Opportunities in Oakland County at [OaklandCountyParks.com](https://oaklandcountyparks.com).

### **Go off-roading at Holly Oaks ORV Park**

Holly Oaks ORV Park is also participating in the Free ORV Weekend. During these two days, Michigan residents and visitors can legally ride DNR-designated routes and trails without purchasing an ORV license or trail permit. The entrance fee for Holly Oaks ORV Park has been waived by the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission.

Although fees are waived, all ORV rules and laws still apply. This includes that all vehicles entering the park must have a 10' orange flag securely mounted and all ORV riders and drivers must also sign a waiver form before entry. No vehicles or rented vehicles are provided/available; guests must bring/provide their own off-road vehicle.

Holly Oaks ORV Park is considered a scramble area and offers nearly 200 acres of off-riding fun with old mining roads and extreme terrain that ranges from mud flats to 40' vertical cliffs. The park is situated in Groveland and Holly townships near Groveland Oaks County Park and Campground on Dixie Highway. It is operated by Oakland County Parks, in partnership with the MDNR's Recreation Division. It is open to all types of ORVs, including full-size vehicles, side-by-sides, all-terrain vehicles or ATVs and motorcycles.

"The free MDNR weekend is always great for introducing more people to this family-friendly activity," Park Supervisor Jamie Weasel said. "I look forward to seeing everyone at the park June 7-8. Holly Oaks ORV Park is open 10 a.m.-8 p.m. both days."

For more information, visit [OaklandCountyParks.com](https://oaklandcountyparks.com).

For more information about Oakland County Parks, visit [OaklandCountyParks.com](https://oaklandcountyparks.com). Join the conversation on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).