

Commonwealth of Kentucky
Office of the Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Governor, First Lady participate in ceremony to reopen Otter
Creek**

BRANDENBURG, Ky. (May 11, 2011)—Gov. Steve Beshear and First Lady Jane Beshear today participated in the official reopening of Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area in Meade County.

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources acquired the 2,261-acre area after the city of Louisville closed then Otter Creek Park in December 2008 due to budget constraints. At the time of closure, some 100,000 people visited the area each year.

Gov. Beshear said innovative thinkers found a way to reopen the area through a pay-your-own-way system modeled after one used by Kentucky Fish and Wildlife.

“Generations have enjoyed the outdoors at Otter Creek,” said Gov. Beshear. “Now, through this fiscally responsible plan, future generations will be able to enjoy it, too. Otter Creek is a place where all can come to appreciate Kentucky’s spectacular outdoors.”

The Governor and First Lady joined other state and local officials today to formally open the recreation area during National Travel and Tourism Week.

“Otter Creek will provide a great adventure tourism opportunity for residents of the Louisville area, Kentuckians and guests from around the country,” Mrs. Beshear said. “I look forward to seeing Otter Creek grow in popularity as a destination for great outdoor recreation.”

Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area is the first of its kind for Kentucky Fish and Wildlife, an agency of the Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet. In addition to traditional hunting and fishing opportunities, the area also is open for hiking, mountain bike riding, horseback riding and disc golf, among other activities.

“We envision Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area as a training ground for the adventure generation of hunters and anglers,” said Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Jon Gassett, Ph.D. “Families will be able to explore the woods, camp outside, practice their archery and marksmanship skills, fish in the creek and have a familiar place to hunt.”

Daily admission to Otter Creek is \$3 a person, with children under 12 admitted free. A \$30 annual pass is available online at fw.ky.gov. An additional fee of \$7 a day is required for all participants of special high-impact activities, including mountain bike riding, shooting or archery range use, or horseback riding. An annual pass is available online at fw.ky.gov for \$70.

Marcheta Sparrow, secretary of the Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet, said her cabinet worked to find a way to re-open Otter Creek after learning of its closing.

“Otter Creek has been a well-loved attraction by Louisville-area residents for generations,” Sparrow said. “Our cabinet is proud to see it re-open and I am confident it will grow in popularity as more and more people learn about the excellent recreational activities here.”

Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area includes 24 miles of trails for extended hikes, horseback riding or mountain bike riding. Kentucky Fish and Wildlife will stock rainbow trout in Otter Creek four times a year. The disc golf course, believed to be one of the oldest in the state, will be open. Plans call for the campground to open later this summer under contract with a private vendor.

Visitors familiar with the area will notice some changes. Work is currently underway on an archery range and a shooting range in a remote section of the area. Participants will shoot through large metal tubes at the range, ensuring that all shots will land in a safe area.

Some facilities in need of repair, such as the Nature Center, will remain closed. The conference center overlooking the Ohio River will not be open due to the need for extensive renovation and repair.

“Sportsmen and sportswomen made this day possible because of the dollars they spend on licenses and permits to support Kentucky Fish and Wildlife,” Gassett said. “We must spend these dollars carefully, not carelessly. We will consider upgrades and improvements if the funding is available.”

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Follow Governor Beshear on Twitter [@Govstevebeshear](https://twitter.com/Govstevebeshear), read the Governor's personal notes on his blog at <http://blog.governor.ky.gov/>, and view the Governor's weekly YouTube commentary at <http://www.youtube.com/governorbeshear>.

Otter Creek Outdoor Recreation Area Fact Sheet

- Operated by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.
- Fees will be charged for admission.
- Area first opened to the public in 1937.
- Campground will reopen pending the award of a contract to a private vendor to operate it. Campground includes 250 sites. Eighty sites have electricity. The campground has three renovated bathhouses.
- Trails include 12 miles of horseback trails and 12 miles of separate mountain biking trails. Hiking allowed on all trails.
- The YMCA's Camp Piomingo, centrally located in the area, remains open and independently operated.
- Work is still underway on the shooting and archery ranges.
- Not all trails or sections of trails are currently open due to heavy rains.
- Office telephone number: (502) 942-9171.
- Trail status hotline: (502) 942-5052.
- Check online for trail map and trail information at *fw.ky.gov*
- Annual entry and special activity passes are good from July 1 through June 30 every year. May and June are bonus months this year only. Annual passes purchased in May or June will not expire until June 30, 2012.
- Anglers and hunters must pay entry fee.
- Area includes five miles of Otter Creek. Rainbow trout will be stocked three times in the spring and once in October. Otter Creek will be a seasonal catch-and-release stream for trout from October through March.
- Spring squirrel hunting open under statewide regulations.
- Opportunities are planned for fall small game, furbearer, deer and turkey hunting.
- Two weekend quota firearms hunts are planned for deer, in addition to separate archery and crossbow seasons.
- Area currently includes significant numbers of deer and turkey.

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KRTA Resolution: 12.11.08

Whereas Otter Creek Park is a significant resource for recreational trail use to the residents of the Commonwealth and visitors

And

Whereas Otter Creek Park has been identified for potential closure by Louisville Metro Government

Whereas the KRTA is vitally interested in supporting programs for recreational trail development

Be it therefore resolved that the KRTA wishes to research issues relating to the future of Otter Creek Park, including the potential partnership with other private and public entities to promote continuation of operations at the park, recognizing the Commonwealths present inability to provide financial assistance and management oversight.

Motion Made By: Mr. McClain

2nd By: Mr. Burger

Approved: Yes No

Date: 12/11/08