

KANKAKEE RIVER STATE PARK

5314 West Route 102
Bourbonnais, IL 60914
815-933-1383



The Adult Tent Row for Troop 14 at a Group Camp Site in Kankakee State Park.

Kankakee River State Park is convenient, close and loaded with amenities: camping, hiking, biking, canoeing, and horse back riding. The youth group campsites are large and well maintained. Campsites are mowed and partially wooded. There are some nice open fields for sports. Latrines are clean and modern. Potable water is near camp sites. Reservations are required May through October until Columbus Day Weekend. However, you can often just show up and the rangers will collect fees from you in the morning.

If your Outings Chairman failed to plan, just run down to Kankakee. Call them first and they'll work with you. The rangers are flexible with youth groups and more concerned in seeing that the park is utilized and less concerned with procedure. In winter, if there is a nice snowfall during the week, throw together a quick winter campout and head down to Kankakee River State Park. This location is close enough to be a short drive, but far enough to feel like you're really camping.

Nearby attraction:

Reed's Kankakee River Canoe Trips
907 North Illinois Street
Kankakee, IL 60901
815-932-2663
www.reedscanoetrips.com

Campfire Rules/Water: No imported fire wood, but fire rings at each site. Potable water is available at youth/group sites. The latrines are clean and modern.

Seasonal information: Open year-round. Reservations May through October. Call the park and work with the ranger on reservations.



Interesting facts about the area: The Kankakee River State Park Web Site states that there are several prehistoric sites within Kankakee River State Park which is located in an area used by Illini and Miami Indians in the 1670's. By 1685, there were so many Miami living along the river that this waterway was called the River of the Miami. By the 1770s, the Pottawatomie, Ottawa and Chippewa Nations, known as "The Three Fires" (sound familiar?) dominated the region. The most extensive Native American Village was "Rock Village" or "Little Rock Village" inside the present-day park near the mouth of Rock Creek. In 1830 this was the site of one of the last great Indian Councils. After the 1832 Black Hawk War, the Pottawatomie Tribe surrendered all of their land along the Kankakee and Illinois Rivers to the United States. The Pottawatomie Chief, Shaw-waw-nas-see, is buried in this state park and his grave is marked and commemorated by a boulder along the nature trail at Rock Creek.

Authored by John Lorenzen