

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 25, 2022

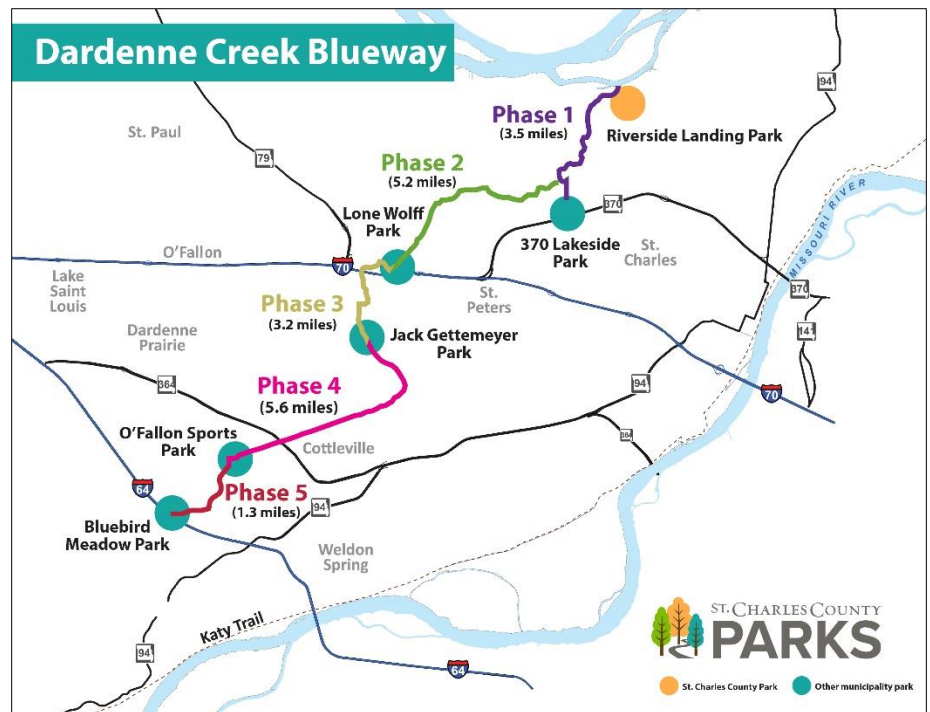
**JUST IN TIME FOR SUMMER:  
ST. CHARLES COUNTY PARKS OPENS NEW 3.5-MILE PORTION OF DARDENNE CREEK BLUEWAY**

**ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO** – St. Charles County Executive Steve Ehlmann couldn’t wait to go out in the boat yesterday. It was a trip he’d been waiting for years to take on what is now the completed first phase of the Dardenne Creek Blueway. This initial phase begins at 370 Lakeside Park in St. Peters and ends at Riverside Landing in St. Charles – a 3.5-mile trip by kayak or canoe.

“I’m happy to announce that the water trail is now open,” Ehlmann says, who was joined on the boat ride by St. Peters Mayor Len Pagano and District 6 County Councilwoman Nancy Schneider. St. Peters supported the blueway concept and the St. Charles County Parks Department’s newly formed Natural Resources Aquatic Division made the connection between the two parks a reality.

The Dardenne Creek Blueway is the first of several water trails planned for St. Charles County. Parks staff developed a long-term maintenance plan which includes creating habitat to protect wildlife and planting vegetation along the banks of the creek to filter water.

“This is just the beginning,” Ehlmann says, explaining that the second phase of the Blueway will go from Lone Wolff Park in St. Peters to 370 Lakeside Park; the third phase from Jack Gettemeyer Park in St. Peters to Lone Wolff Park; and the fourth phase from O’Fallon Sports Park to Jack Gettemeyer Park. The final phase is from Bluebird Meadow Park in Dardenne Prairie to O’Fallon Sports Park. The Dardenne Creek Blueway, when complete, will be approximately 19 miles.



“We’re so excited about this beautiful new Blueway on Dardenne Creek and we’re proud to have the first section connect to the crown jewel of our St. Peters park system, 370 Lakeside Park,” Mayor Pagano says. “We’re really looking forward to the next segments to be completed through Lone Wolff Park and Jack Gettemeyer Park before proceeding to the O’Fallon Sports Park. What a wonderful, scenic way for our residents to enjoy our region while getting some exercise and playing close to home!”

-more-

## ***Dardenne Creek Blueway, page 2***

“When we purchased Riverside Landing in 2018, we began planning for this water trail,” Ehlmann says, “but debris and litter impeded the connection and flow between the creek and the river. Our Parks Department has been working diligently to clear tree and log jams, brush, trash, and other debris to provide an improved recreational opportunity for residents and visitors.”

The Dardenne Creek Blueway provides residents with a new outdoor recreational activity, but also is an important reminder that these waterways collect stormwater runoff from nearby subdivisions and that we all play an important role in protecting these vital waterways from litter and pollution. The County’s Parks Department has collected and disposed of four dumpsters, or about 16 cubic yards of floating plastic bottles and other trash from Dardenne Creek.

Blueways are defined as a network of approved and branded multi-activity recreational trails and sites closely linked with the water and often linked with access to other activities and experiences. Phase I of the Dardenne Creek Blueway offers not only the waterway, but access to other amenities at both Riverside Landing and 370 Lakeside Park.

Riverside Landing, located at 101 Riverport Lane where Dardenne Creek and the Mississippi River connect, is now open after months of park development. The Parks Department this week began taking reservations for camping sites starting Friday, May 27, and the park’s iPaddle station, where visitors can rent kayaks on-site, also opens Friday. The 7.73-acre parkland is a unique outdoor recreational area with a new entrance off Huster Road. It features 13 large and five small RV sites; a dump station for RV sanitary lines; six primitive tent campsites; a free, ADA-accessible boat ramp for access to the Mississippi River; an open play area with a scenic overlook plaza; and parking for 59 boat trailers.

Located at 1000 Lakeside Park Drive, 370 Lakeside Park is 500 acres with a 140-acre recreational lake for fishing and boating, RV park, group campground, sprayground, archery range, biking/hiking trails, and dog parks. Kayaks, canoes, paddleboats, bikes, and surreys are available to rent.

The St. Charles County Parks Department plans to also create the Big Creek Blueway, which will connect Indian Camp Creek and Flatwoods parks through Big Creek and the Cuivre River, or about 12.3 miles. Staff are in the process of designing a canoe/kayak landing for Indian Camp Creek along the Big Creek and have constructed a landing at Flatwoods Park on the Cuivre River. The City of Wentzville Parks and Recreation Department is developing an access point along Big Creek at Mette Road on property owned by the city.

Cleaning up these waterways is a big undertaking, and everyone can help. For information, visit [sccmo.org/StreamCareGuide](http://sccmo.org/StreamCareGuide). For more information on St. Charles County Parks, visit [stccparks.org](http://stccparks.org) or visit the St. Charles County Parks page on Facebook.

-end-

**Media Contact:** Mary Enger, Communications Director, 636-949-1856, or 636-443-1008, [menger@sccmo.org](mailto:menger@sccmo.org)

### ***About St. Charles County:***

*St. Charles County, Missouri, founded in 1812, is one of the fastest growing counties in Missouri. With a population of 405,262, is it the state’s third largest county. It is home to 21 scenic county parks of which four are in reserve, encompassing 4,197 acres.*

*With one of the largest economies in the state, St. Charles County is home to multinational companies including General Motors, Citi, MasterCard Worldwide and Boeing. It is ranked among the top 25 counties in the nation in high-tech job growth by the Progressive Policy Institute and consistently has the lowest unemployment rate in the Metropolitan St. Louis area.*

*St. Charles County Government has more than 1,170 employees in more than 30 departments and offices who work to make the county an excellent place to live, work and shop. For more information, please visit [sccmo.org](http://sccmo.org).*