

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 19, 2023

5-PLUS MILES OF SCENIC WATER TRAIL ADDED TO DARDENNE CREEK BLUEWAY

Users can now travel more than 8 miles one way by kayak or canoe

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO – St. Charles County residents and visitors can add another water adventure to their list for this summer with today’s opening of a 5.2-mile expansion of the Dardenne Creek Blueway. The St. Charles County Parks Department is opening Phase 2 of the Blueway, connecting the City of St. Peters’ Lone Wolff Park to St. Peters’ 370 Lakeside Park. The 3.5-mile trek from 370 Lakeside Park to St. Charles County’s Riverside Landing Park opened in May 2022.

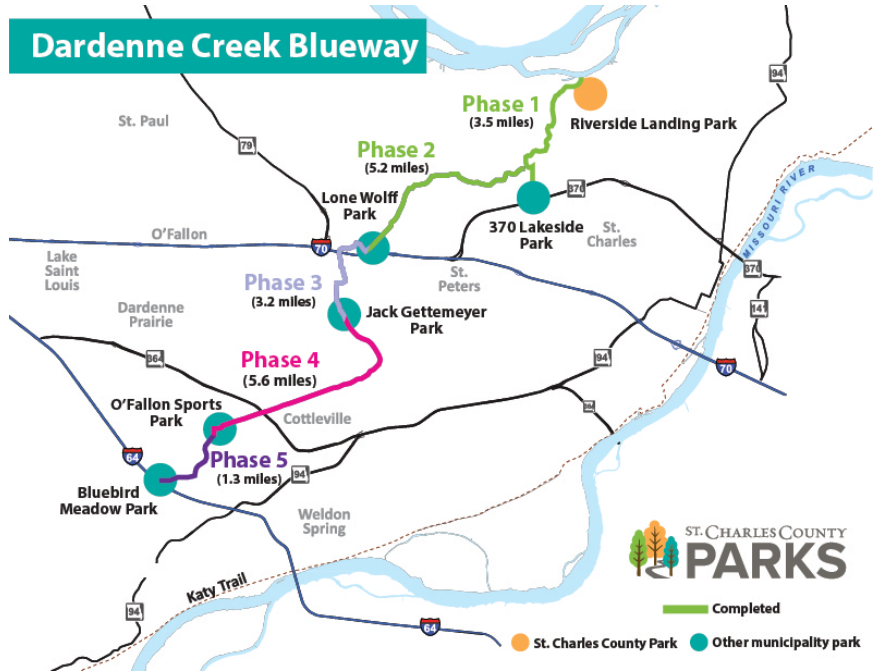
Thanks to the hard work of County Parks staff, this section of Dardenne Creek is clear of debris and can be navigated by kayak or canoe. Visitors can now enjoy a journey across northern St. Charles County’s scenic farmlands and wooded areas from just north of Interstate 70, to the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers – an 8.7-mile jaunt one way. Future expansions will eventually connect the Dardenne Creek Blueway to three more parks in St. Peters, O’Fallon, and Dardenne Prairie, with a final length of nearly 19 miles. [View video!](#)

“I am proud of the effort that has been put into opening this expansion of the

Dardenne Creek Blueway, and I hope residents and visitors will take advantage of this new and growing way to enjoy the outdoors in St. Charles County,” said County Executive Steve Ehlmann. “We’re grateful for the support of the City of St. Peters in establishing the initial phases of the Blueway, and we look forward to partnerships with the cities of O’Fallon and Dardenne Prairie.”

WATERCRAFT RENTALS

Visitors don’t need to have their own boat to enjoy the Dardenne Creek Blueway. Self-serve watercraft rentals allow guests to reserve a kayak or tandem kayak online and pick them up from automated storage units at participating parks.



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The cost to rent a kayak or paddleboard for a two-hour session is \$20, or \$30 for a tandem kayak. Each comes with paddles and life jackets to ensure a safe and fun time on the water. Guests must rent a watercraft in advance and can do so at sccmo.org/PaddleShare.

Kayaks are available for rent at Riverside Landing Park and 370 Lakeside Park. They are not currently available at Lone Wolff Park. Watercraft must be returned to the park where they were checked out.

KEEP THE BLUEWAY FLOWING

Before each phase of the Dardenne Creek Blueway is opened, the creek is cleared of fallen trees, natural debris, and a significant amount of trash. Before Phase 1 opened, four dumpsters of trash were removed from that section of the creek, and additional trash and debris removal was completed for Phase 2 of the Blueway, according to St. Charles County Parks Director Ryan Graham. As each section of the Blueway is cleared of litter and debris, Graham said the Parks Department is pursuing plans to restore and maintain natural habitats, foster wildlife, and protect the quality of the water.

Because Dardenne Creek receives stormwater runoff from nearby streets and subdivisions, Graham said the creek remains at risk of being polluted by litter that hasn't been disposed of properly.

"We hope that as more people take advantage of the Blueway as a recreational opportunity, they will see how great it is to have this natural feature in our community and will take steps to help protect it from pollution," Graham said.

For more information about how everyone can help keep local waterways clean, visit sccmo.org/StreamCareGuide.

FUTURE BLUEWAY

St. Charles County plans to continue expanding the Dardenne Creek Blueway in three additional phases. Phase 3 (3.2 miles) will connect St. Peters' Jack Gettemeyer Park to Lone Wolff Park; Phase 4 (5.6 miles) will connect the O'Fallon Sports Park to Jack Gettemeyer Park; and Phase 5 (1.3 miles) will connect Dardenne Prairie's Bluebird Meadow Park to the O'Fallon Sports Park.

In addition, the St. Charles County Parks Department is developing plans in partnership with the City of Wentzville to create a second blueway along Big Creek and the Cuivre River. The 12.3-mile Big Creek Blueway will connect Indian Camp Creek Park to Flatwoods Park, both of which are owned and maintained by St. Charles County.

For more information on St. Charles County Parks, visit stccparks.org or visit the St. Charles County Parks page on Facebook.

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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, it is the state's third largest county. It is home to 21 scenic county parks of which three are in reserve, encompassing 4,509 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.