

# NEWS

Champaign County Forest Preserve District  
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LAKE OF THE WOODS FOREST PRESERVE • HOMER LAKE FOREST PRESERVE • MIDDLE FORK RIVER FOREST PRESERVE  
HERON VIEW FOREST PRESERVE • SANGAMON RIVER FOREST PRESERVE • RIVER BEND FOREST PRESERVE • KICKAPOO RAIL TRAIL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Shelter to be Removed at Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve

Visitors will notice a change at Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve beginning in early January as the Swiss Valley Shelter is slated to be demolished due to its structural deterioration and its location in the Sangamon River floodplain.

“Originally constructed in 1958, the Swiss Valley Shelter has been a fixture at Lake of the Woods. For the last several years we have made repairs to ensure the safety of the structure. Each year those repairs become a little larger. With guidance from local engineers, we have determined that it is no longer sensible to continue on this course,” states Champaign County Forest Preserve District’s Construction Manager Mike Fry. Furthermore, building a new shelter in the current Swiss Valley location is ill-advised due to its location in the river’s floodplain.

In May of 2020, renovations began on the peninsula at Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, through an Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development grant from the State of Illinois, to improve accessibility to that area. Part of these improvements include two new shelters for visitor use. “We hate to lose an iconic piece of the preserve, but it is not all bad news. Through generous donations, the public’s support, and grant opportunities we are constructing new shelters on the peninsula area to more than offset the loss of picnic space. They will be fully accessible, parking/restrooms will be closer, and new native plantings will enhance the area. We hope these will become just as much a part of the preserve as Swiss Valley has been,” says Fry.

The Champaign County Forest Preserve District is a local, property tax-supported government agency charged with the stewardship of forest preserves covering more than 4,000 acres in Champaign County, Illinois. CCFPD protects and restores natural areas as well as provides cultural, historical, environmental, and recreational opportunities for current and future generations.



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