

PALISADES-KEPLER STATE PARK

Palisades-Kepler State Park lies along the beautiful Cedar River in Linn County. The 840-acre park has dramatic river bluffs, deep ravines, majestic hardwood trees, a large variety of wildflowers and an abundance of wildlife and bird life. Palisades-Kepler State Park is also important for its prehistoric past. A molar tooth of a mammoth was once found here and the exposed rocks along the Cedar River are laden with fossils of millions of years of history. The presence of Indian mounds reminds us that this was a favorite haunt of Native Americans hundreds of years ago.

HISTORY

In the late 1890s, James Sherman Minott acquired 160 acres of timberland on the Cedar River and built a spacious inn for the accommodation of visitors. He also established a boat rental and sold lots for the building of summer cottages. Many people took advantage of this and soon the population of the area numbered over 200. Afternoon outings on the Cedar River, capped by a quiet dinner at the combined log cabin restaurant, general store, and hotel, were common in the early 1900s. Noted American poet Carl Sandburg was a yearly visitor to the "Palisades" during the 1920s and 30s.

In 1923, Palisades-Kepler State Park was established. In July of 1934, a Civilian Conservation Corps company was organized at Palisades-Kepler. Three barracks and one mess hall were built; then, work started on the building of many park facilities. The roads, hiking trails, entry portals, stone cabins, and lodge still remain to allow visitors to see a glimpse at the park's past. Palisades-Kepler State Park truly has much to offer its visitors.

PICNICKING

Palisades-Kepler State Park is a beautiful place for a family cookout. Picnickers can enjoy themselves, while at the same time, enjoying views of the beautiful Cedar River and the tree-lined bluffs along it. A picnic shelter is available and may be rented for \$15.00 through the park ranger.

CAMPING

The campground at Palisades-Kepler is a fine place for a weekend outing or a two-week vacation. It has 76 campsites, 45 with electrical hookups. Modern shower and restroom facilities are available, as well as a trailer dump station. Camping permits are obtained by self-registration at the campground.

LODGE

The enclosed shelter or lodge at Palisades-Kepler is a beautiful stone structure built in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps. It makes a fine setting for group events such as wedding receptions and family reunions. Reservations may be obtained through the park ranger.

CABINS

Palisades-Kepler has six rustic family cabins available for weekly rentals. The cabins, which each accommodate four comfortably, feature shower and restroom features, stove, refrigerator, dishes, and cooking utensils. Reservations may be arranged through the park ranger. The cabins are a great place for an economical family vacation.

FISHING AND BOATING

The Cedar River offers some excellent fishing for a variety of species, including channel catfish, bass and bluegills. Anglers often try their luck by boat or along the shore above and below the old dam on the Cedar River. A modern boat-launching ramp is provided and provides convenient river access.

HIKING

Palisades-Kepler is a wonderful place to hike. On the trails, walkers can often see a variety of wildlife, including white-tailed deer and wild turkeys. Many species of trees, shrubs and flowers are also present along with innumerable species of songbirds. A nature trail which extends along the river provides walkers a chance to learn about some of the plant and animal communities of the park as well as about its geology and history.

NEIGHBORING TOWNS

Mount Vernon, home of Cornell College, is located 4 miles east of the park. **Cedar Rapids** is located 12 miles west of the park. Both cities provide a variety of shopping, recreation and church opportunities.

EQUAL RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

All persons are entitled to full and equal enjoyment of the recreational opportunities, privileges and advantages available in Iowa's great outdoors. The lodge breezeway and rest room are accessible to persons of varying abilities.

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Wallace State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0034

PALISADES- KEPLER STATE PARK



700 Kepler Drive
Mount Vernon, Iowa 52314
Telephone 319/855-6039

A Park User Permit is required. Annual permits are available at the park office. Daily permits are available at posted locations in the park.

-  PARK OFFICE
-  ASST. RANGER
-  ENCLOSED SHELTER
-  SHELTER
-  RESTROOM
-  PICNIC AREA
-  SCENIC VIEW
-  BOAT RAMP
-  NATURE TRAIL
-  MULTI USE TRAIL
-  HIKING
-  EQUESTRIAN

