

Addison Oaks County Park Solar System Trail FAQs

June 20, 2024



June 2024, Oakland County Parks (OCP) debuted the Solar System Trail at Addison Oaks County Park. Located near the trailhead for the Buhl Lake Loop Trail, it can be utilized by day-use guests and campers.

An Ideal Location

- Addison Oaks is a popular gathering spot for those with an interest in astronomy. Situated in a more rural area of Oakland County, there is less light pollution, providing a semi-dark sky view of the nighttime sky. The day-use park closes before nightfall, but can be enjoyed at night through scheduled programs and events
- The Oakland Astronomy Club regularly meets here, bringing the club's 12.5-inch Dobsonian and 14-inch SCT telescopes out for scheduled public observing nights and offering educational programs for schools, parks and other organizations. Visit OaklandAstronomy.net for more information
- Addison Oaks hosts astronomy-themed events throughout the year, like its crowd-pleasing Saturn Star Party and Meteors & More events that combine kid-friendly recreation activities with educational sessions and nighttime viewing opportunities

An inclusive experience

- The Buhl Lake Loop is a paved, 2.5-mile trail that is accessible to the planet Saturn. It can be utilized by those with wheelchairs or mobility challenges. The remaining 1.9 miles of the trail, which includes Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, is not accessible grade
- Information engages guests of all ages, making it perfect for multi-generational use
- Audio information provided by OCP interpretive staff will be available later this year

Solar System Trail highlights

- There are two scale model displays of the solar system:
- A model based on planet size compared to the sun. An 8-foot diameter sun with the planets scaled to size is located near the Adams Lake Playground
- A distance scale model of the solar system with the size of the sun and planets and their location scaled to the Buhl Trail. The sun is scaled down to 3-foot diameter
- Planet stops feature an interpretive sign and a three-dimensional planet scaled to size
- The trail proceeds counter-clockwise, the same as the planets orbit the sun
- Signs include QR codes that link to NASA for more information

General Trail Information

- The Solar System Trail is open year round during day-use park hours, which are 7 a.m.-9 p.m. during camping season and 8 a.m.-30 minutes after sunset from late-October-April
- Modern restrooms and rustic facilities are available along the trail
- The trail provides scenic views of Buhl Lake and the Buhl Estate, a historic Tudor-style home that serves as a wedding and banquet venue
- It takes approximately 45-60 minutes to walk the entire trail at a leisurely pace