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Oakland County Parks and Recreation program earns statewide recognition

OAKLAND COUNTY – Oakland County Parks and Recreation (OCPR) has been recognized with an Innovative Recreation Programming Award from mParks for its Disability Dirt Day program aimed at expanding opportunities in the parks for guests with cognitive, developmental or physical disabilities.

During the inaugural Disability Dirt Day on Oct. 24, 2021, volunteer drivers of all-terrain vehicles were paired with registered participants for rides around the 106-acre Holly Oaks ORV Park. Everyone explored the park's attractions like the Sandbox, the Big Easy and Holly Glen Track while rolling over hills and splashing through water.

"It was a one-of-a-kind event that provided opportunities to individuals with disabilities who traditionally may not have been able to participate. It was a team effort that made the event a success," Recreation Program Supervisor Sandy Dorey said.

She added that the response received was overwhelmingly positive for a first-time event and a series of four events is planned for this year. Sponsored by LaFontaine Auto Group, Disability Dirt Days will be held May 15, June 12, Sept. 25 and Oct. 23. In addition to the rides, there will be music and family activities to enjoy.

Each year, mParks honors exemplary park and recreation departments and professionals through its annual awards. The award was presented March 7 at the mParks Conference & Trade Show held in Traverse City March 6-9.

Holly Oaks ORV Park is a joint State-County project, operated by OCPR in partnership with the MDNR via a 20-year operating agreement (with a 10-year renewal). It opens for the 2022 season on April 23. The park is open to all types of ORVs, including full-size vehicles, side-by-sides, all-terrain vehicles or ATVs and motorcycles. It is located off I-75 at the Grange Hall Road exit, with the entrance at Shields Road and Dixie Highway about a quarter mile north of the entrance to Groveland Oaks County Park and Campground.

For information on other events, visit OaklandCountyParks.com. Join the conversation on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).