

North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release, Thursday, June 7, 2012

For more information, contact Cross Ranch State Park, 701-794-3731

Cross Ranch hosts Missouri River Bluegrass Festival

After a year's hiatus due to Missouri River flooding, the Missouri River Bluegrass Festival returns June 15-16 to Cross Ranch State Park providing family entertainment among the towering cottonwoods.

The 2011 Missouri River flood brought to an end the 20 consecutive years the festival was held, but a new streak starts in 2012 with a great lineup of groups performing Friday and Saturday. The festival's headliners include Colorado's High Plains Tradition, Minnesota's Kimmel & Kjellberg, and Tennessee's Fire Drill Bluegrass. Also performing are area favorites Cottonwood, The Roughriders, Moose Creek, The Pfliger Sisters and the Center Community Band.

High Plains Tradition is a bluegrass band based in Denver, Colorado. The group styles its music after the forefathers of bluegrass, with a little Rocky Mountain flair. High Plains Tradition has performed extensively from the Pacific Coast through the Rocky Mountains to the High Plains all the way to Kentucky. Doug Elrick's fine lead singing and songwriting are at the core of the band's performance.

Dick Kimmel and Jerilyn Kjellberg play in the style of the pioneers of traditional bluegrass and country music from the south-central Appalachians during the early 1900s. Trading lead and harmony vocals on stage, Kimmel and Kjellberg weave their voices and instrumentation into a blend that is at times poignant, at times exhilarating, and always compelling.

Performances are held June 15 from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Ticket prices are \$15 for Friday's performances, \$20 for Saturday or \$30 for both days. Children age 16 and younger are admitted free.

Camping is available at Cross Ranch State Park and the nearby Sanger camping area. Reservations can be made by calling 800-807-4723 or by going online at parkrec.nd.gov. Smoking is allowed in designated areas only; no pets, alcohol or unruly behavior is allowed.

Additionally, there is the Young Children's Festival on Friday evening and Saturday. There will be games, races, movies and more. Sign up is at the Visitor Center and there is no charge for participation.

This year is also seeing the return of the Missouri River Bluegrass Camp on June 14-15, preceding the festival.

"Don't just get away from the grind this summer, get away with your instrument," says Festival and Camp planner John Andrus. "How about two days of immersion into bluegrass music in a beautiful state park setting?"

The central thread of the instruction is six hours of group instruction on playing an instrument, learning instrumental breaks and back-up techniques, learning traditional and

cutting-edge approaches to improve musicianship and provide inspiration. Band lab sessions help participants apply what they've learned in a bluegrass band ensemble. There will be a lot of time to jam leading up to the Missouri River Bluegrass Festival. Cost of the two-day instruction is \$140 except for bass players who will have only one day of instruction for \$80. Those enrolling prior to the camp's start will receive a \$20 deduction in charges.

Instructors are members of Tennessee's Fire Drill Bluegrass Band. David Rich will teach flat-picked guitar; Dillon Rush the mandolin; Evie Andrus the fiddle; Blaine Gilliam the five-string banjo; and Tyler Riddle the bass. For more information or to sign up for the camp contact John Andrus at jandrus.60@gmail.com.