

Flint Hills Frontier Military Glacial Hills Gypsum Hills Native Stone

SCENIC BYWAYS OF KANSAS



Post Rock Prairie Trail Smoky Valley Wetlands & Wildlife



Kansas





Expand your scenic horizons.

Like apple pie and baseball, there's something very American about hitting the road and taking in the scenery. It's a genuine sense of freedom as you meander through the beautiful landscapes, the historic settings, the man-made panoramas and more. Each scenic byway tells a story, and the stories in Kansas are as fascinating as they come.



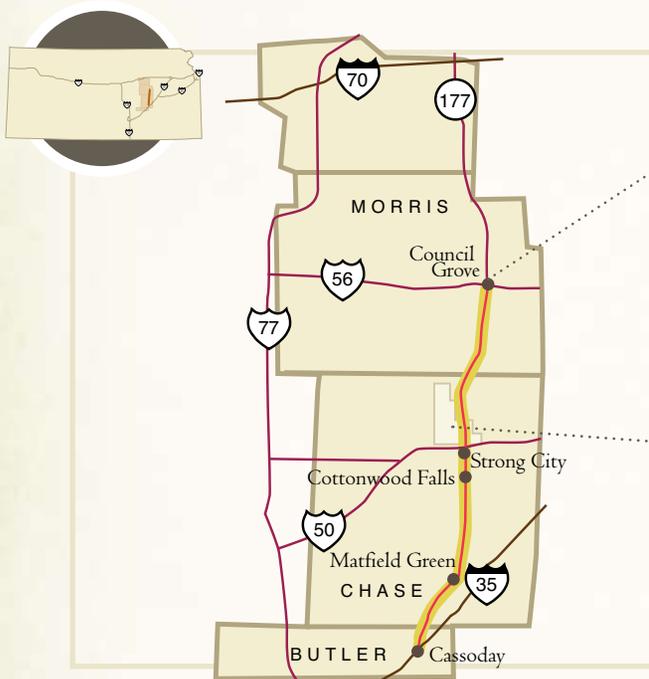
Kansas is home to nine scenic byways, two of which are officially designated National Scenic Byways. In addition to the breathtaking surroundings, you'll enjoy an abundance of activities and a variety of incredible terrain, wildlife and living styles. This book offers a glimpse into each of our unique byways, along with maps and destinations to experience along the way. We look forward to seeing you on the road!

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Flint Hills

Across the Grassland Sea

With its sweeping grasses and tawny limestone bluffs, the Flint Hills just might be the most famed landscape in Kansas. It's certainly the most revered, as the area represents the largest remaining tract of tallgrass prairie in North America.



Kaw Mission State Historic Site

—Council Grove

The Kaw Mission reveals the story of a building that served as home and school to 30 Kaw boys from 1851 to 1854. It's also a tribute to the Kaw (or Kansa) Indians, who gave our state its name. They lived in the Neosho Valley when, despite an impassioned plea by Chief Allegawaho, the U.S. government relocated the Kaw to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma).



Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve

—Strong City

The 10,984-acre reserve is an amazing combination of unspoiled prairie and rare wildflowers. Discover more than 400 species of plants, 40 species of grasses, 200 species of birds, 30 types of mammals, plus reptiles and amphibians.

SCENIC PLACES



- Cottonwood River Bridge, Cottonwood Falls
- Schrupf Hill Overlook, Cottonwood Falls
- Allegawaho Memorial Heritage Park, Council Grove
- Guardian of the Grove, Council Grove
- Neosho River Walk, Council Grove

POINTS OF INTEREST

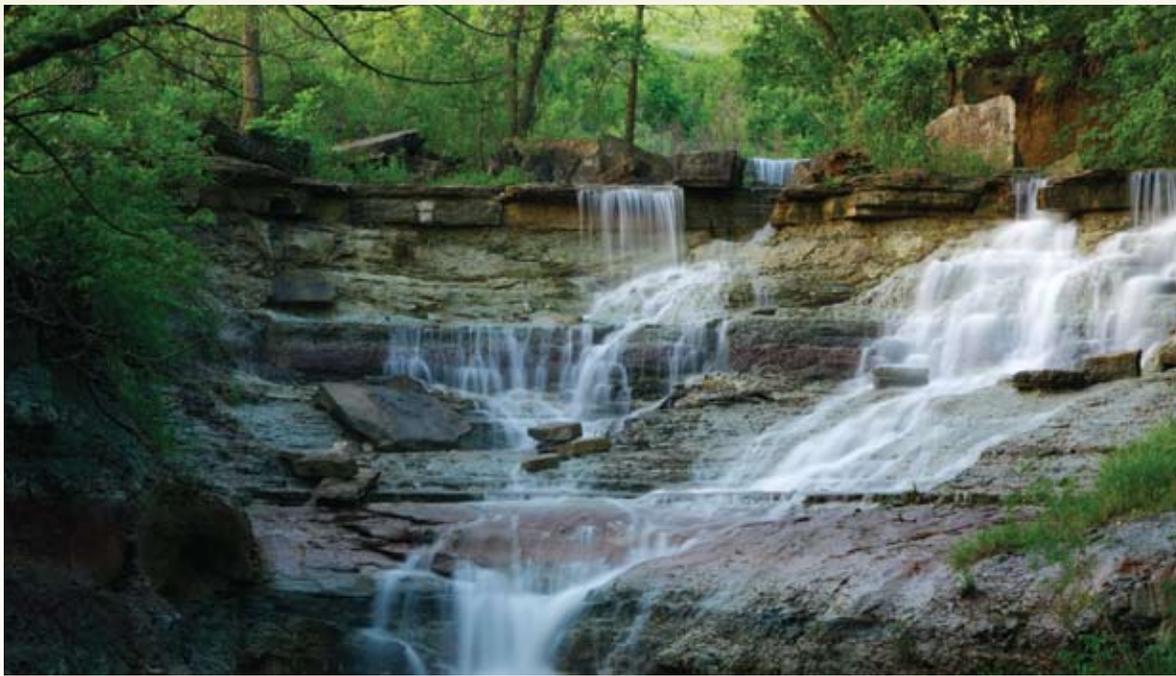


- Chase County Courthouse, Cottonwood Falls
- Chase County Historical Museum, Cottonwood Falls
- Hays House 1857 Restaurant & Tavern, Council Grove
- Madonna on the Trail, Council Grove
- Pioneer Bluffs Historic District, Matfield Green

FESTIVALS & EVENTS



- Cassoday Bike Run, Cassoday (March thru November)
- Prairie Fire Festival, Cottonwood Falls (April)
- Symphony in the Flint Hills (June)
- Wah-Shun-Gah Days, Council Grove (June)
- Flint Hills Rodeo, Strong City (June)



The endless vistas have remained unchanged for thousands of years, and a variety of people, plants and wildlife have called the Flint Hills home. The Plains Indians once lived here and used the chert (flint) they found for tools and weapons. These days, residents of the Flint Hills include red-tailed hawks, cotton-tailed rabbits, fox, coyote and even the occasional massasauga rattlesnake.

History abounds in Council Grove – the northernmost point of the byway. Explore the Kaw Mission State Historic Site, Council Oak and the Old Cowboy Jail. Further south is the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve and its limestone mansion, Fox Creek Schoolhouse and an enormous three-story barn. Down in Cottonwood Falls you'll find the Chase County Courthouse, two museums and the historic Cottonwood River Bridge.

WILDFLOWERS



Cobaea Beardtongue

Penstemon cobaea May-June



Carolina Anemone

Anemone caroliniana April-May



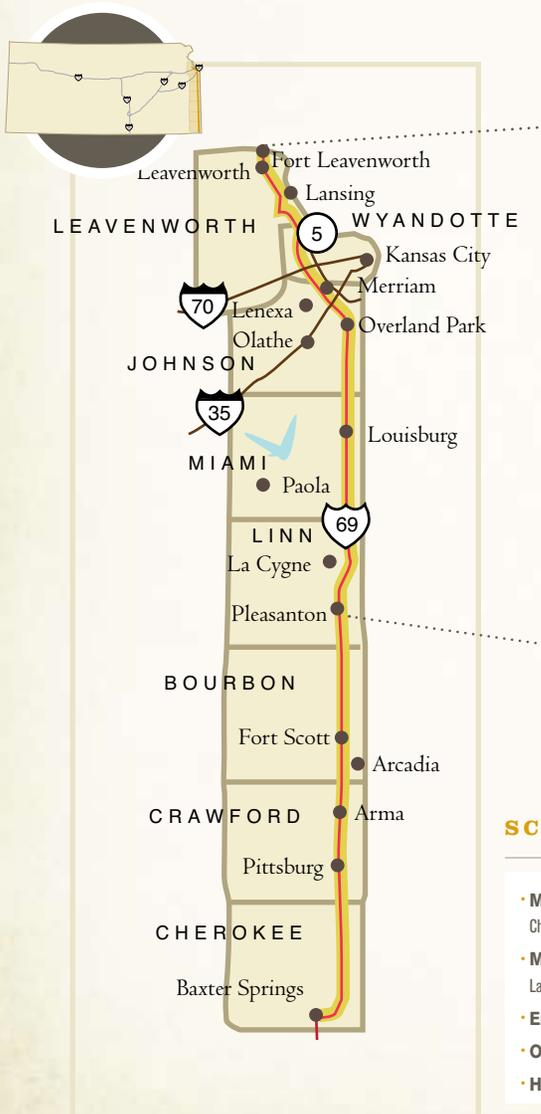
Blue Wild Indigo

Baptisia australis May-June

Frontier Military

Marching Through History

The Frontier Military Scenic Byway is a fascinating journey through pre-Civil War era history. The byway extends roughly 167 miles, tying Fort Leavenworth in the north with Baxter Springs in the south at the Oklahoma border.



Fort Leavenworth

—Leavenworth

Established in 1827, Fort Leavenworth is the oldest fort in continuous operation west of the Mississippi River. It was originally opened to protect fur trade, safeguard commerce and maintain peace among the inhabitants. Today, you can see a host of interesting things, including the Buffalo Soldier Monument – a tribute to the 9th and 10th Cavalry of Black Soldiers and the Permanent Indian Frontier.



Mine Creek Battlefield State Historic Site

—Pleasanton

Walk the battlefield and learn more about the events that took place in 1864. Prairie loop and timber loop trails are filled with informative signage, and a visitor center features displays on the Battle at Mine Creek, the Price Campaign of 1864 and other aspects of the Civil War.

SCENIC PLACES

- Mined Land Wildlife Area, Cherokee & Crawford Counties
- Marais des Cygnes Wildlife Area, La Cygne
- Ernie Miller Nature Center, Olathe
- Overland Park Arboretum, Overland Park
- Hillsdale Lake, Paola

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Frontier Army Museum, Fort Leavenworth
- Fort Scott National Historic Site, Fort Scott
- Gordon Parks Center for Culture and Diversity, Fort Scott
- Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and State Historic Site, Olathe
- Pittsburg State University Veterans Memorial Amphitheatre, Pittsburg



FESTIVALS & EVENTS

- Little Balkans Days, Pittsburg (August)
- Frontier Days, Fort Scott (September)
- Spinach Festival, Lenexa (September)
- Cider Fest, Louisburg (September/October)
- Wild West Show & Bullwhacker Days, Olathe (September)





Drive along the byway, and you'll retrace the old military trail used by the Army to transport troops and supplies between the frontier forts. The forts themselves tell the stories of early military development to protect westward pioneers, and also touch on many of the incidents leading up to the Civil War.

You'll encounter a number of important historic and cultural attractions along the way, including Baxter Springs Heritage Center, Merriam Historic Plaza, the Cato School in Arcadia, Lansing Historical Museum, Scotty's Classic Cars in Arma and much more. But there are also plenty of recreational opportunities to enjoy, from the county and city parks to the beautiful native wildflowers and lush prairie grasses sprinkled along this historic route.

WILDFLOWERS



Rose Verbena
Glandularia canadensis May-June



Prairie Groundsel
Packera plattensis April-June



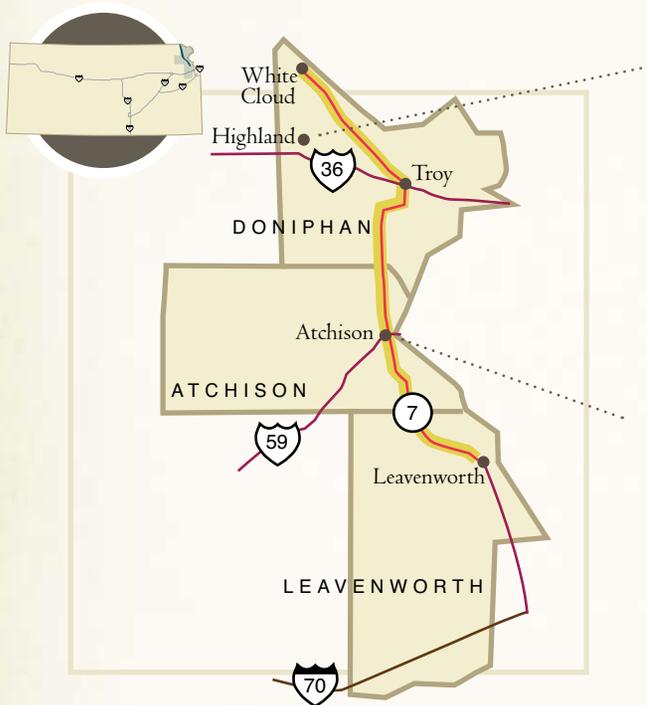
Lead Plant
Amorpha canescens June-August

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Glacial Hills

The Pioneering Spirit

Glaciers in Kansas? Obviously not any more, but millions of years ago our state was covered by ocean water and gigantic glaciers. As the formations receded north, they carved out the gorgeous rolling hills and rock-strewn valleys that we see today.



Native American Heritage Museum

—Highland

This cultural center shares stories of present-day Kansas tribes. You can share in the journey of those who were forced to emigrate to Kansas in the 1800s, as well as learn about family life, partake in workshops and enjoy tours with interactive exhibits.



Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum

—Atchison

Overlooking the Missouri River bluffs, this is the historic birthplace of the internationally famed aviatrix. See family heirlooms, displays, photos and more at this award-winning museum, which has undergone a number of impressive restoration efforts over the years.

SCENIC PLACES



- Amelia Earhart Earthwork at Warnock Lake, Atchison
- Independence Park, Atchison
- Leavenworth Landing Park, Leavenworth
- Four State Lookout, White Cloud

POINTS OF INTEREST

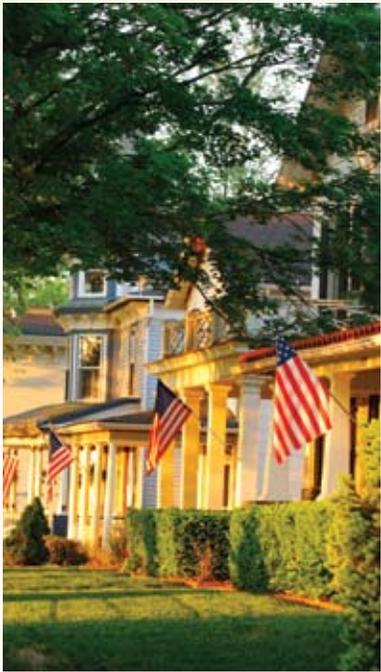
- Lewis & Clark Kiosks, Atchison, Kansas City, Leavenworth & White Cloud
- Santa Fe Depot, Atchison
- C.W. Parker Carousel Museum, Leavenworth
- Carroll Mansion, Leavenworth
- Tall Oaks Indian Monument, Troy



FESTIVALS & EVENTS

- White Cloud Flea Market, White Cloud (Spring and Fall)
- Amelia Earhart Festival, Atchison (July)
- First City Festival, Leavenworth (September)
- Pioneer Days, Troy (September)
- Oktoberfest, Atchison (October)





The receding glaciers also left behind some of the most beautiful and fertile land in the state, which attracted farmers and settlers from all over. Perhaps the most famous people to pass through were the explorers Lewis and Clark. On July 4, 1804, their expedition made camp and celebrated Independence Day in the area now known as Atchison.

Several other people who helped shape American history have been a part of this region. Abraham Lincoln practiced his renowned Cooper Union speech in 1859 in Atchison, Doniphan and Leavenworth Counties, and Amelia Earhart's childhood home is also found on this byway. But it's not just the people who are fascinating. You'll be enchanted by the towering river bluffs, sharp-edged ridge crests and clear running streams.

WILDFLOWERS



Pitcher Sage
Salvia azurea July-October



Rosinweed
Silphium integrifolium July-September

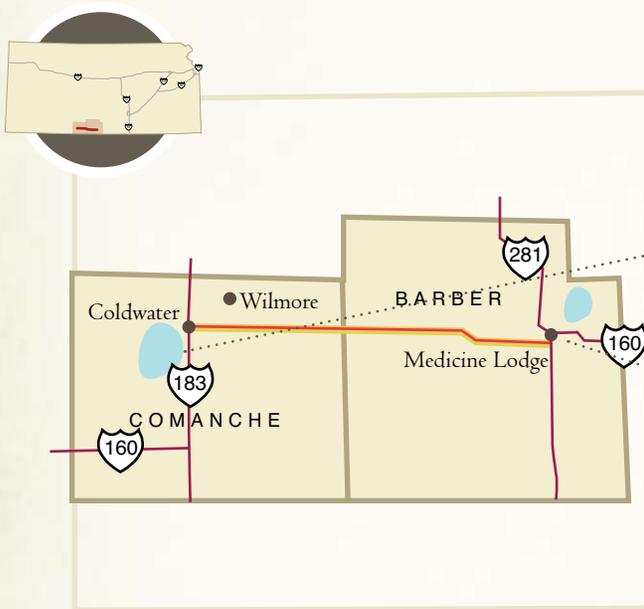


Stiff Goldenrod
Solidago rigida August-October

Gypsum Hills

A Colorful Heritage

Named for the underlying layers of gypsum, this unique byway boasts an incredible variety of geographic features. Also known as the Red Hills, you'll see flat mesas, deep canyons, sharp high hills and caprock formations, all within a 42-mile drive.



Lake Coldwater

—Coldwater

The only lake in southwest Kansas that allows water-related sports, Coldwater is a 250-acre area for boating, swimming, fishing, bird watching, camping and hiking.



Carry A. Nation Home & Stockade Museum

—Medicine Lodge

The infamous Carry Nation lived in Medicine Lodge, where she embarked on tirades against alcohol and smashed saloons. A museum replica of an 1873 stockade includes historical artifacts of dinosaur bones, a 130+ year-old Smith Log Cabin and even a jail in the courtyard. The home is a National Historic Landmark.

SCENIC PLACES



- Barber State Fishing Lake, Medicine Lodge
- Flower Pot Mound, Medicine Lodge
- Red Cedar Nature Trail, Barber County Lake, Medicine Lodge
- Scenic Byway Overlook and Turn Out, Medicine Lodge
- Twin Peaks, Medicine Lodge

POINTS OF INTEREST



- Comanche County Historical Museum, Coldwater
- Heritage Memorial Park, Coldwater
- Stan Herd Murals, Coldwater & Wilmore
- Memorial Peace Park, Medicine Lodge
- Wisner Fountain, Medicine Lodge

FESTIVALS & EVENTS



- Gypsum Hills Trail Rides, Barber County
- Spring Wildflower Tour, Barber County (May)
- Indian Summer Days, Medicine Lodge (September)
- Kansas Championship Ranch Rodeo, Medicine Lodge (September)
- Peace Treaty Pageant, Medicine Lodge (Fall, every 3 years)



The Gypsum Hills area is known for its abundance of spring and summer wildflowers, which provide a blanket of color to complement the naturally flowing springs, red soil, mixed green prairie and green cedar trees. Wildlife also populates the region as a number of deer, coyote, turkey, pheasant, quail and prairie chicken abound. You may even catch a glimpse of beaver, bobcat, porcupine and armadillo!

Interestingly enough, it was the bison herds from centuries ago that originally attracted people here. Everyone from prehistoric cultures to Plains Indian tribes to Wyatt Earp himself came for the stellar hunting. Fifteen thousand Indians camped here in 1867 to sign peace treaties, and Medicine Lodge commemorates the event every three years with the Peace Treaty Pageant.

WILDFLOWERS



Compass Plant

Silphium laciniatum July-September



Black-Sampson Echinacea

Echinacea angustifolia June-July



Indian Blanket Flower

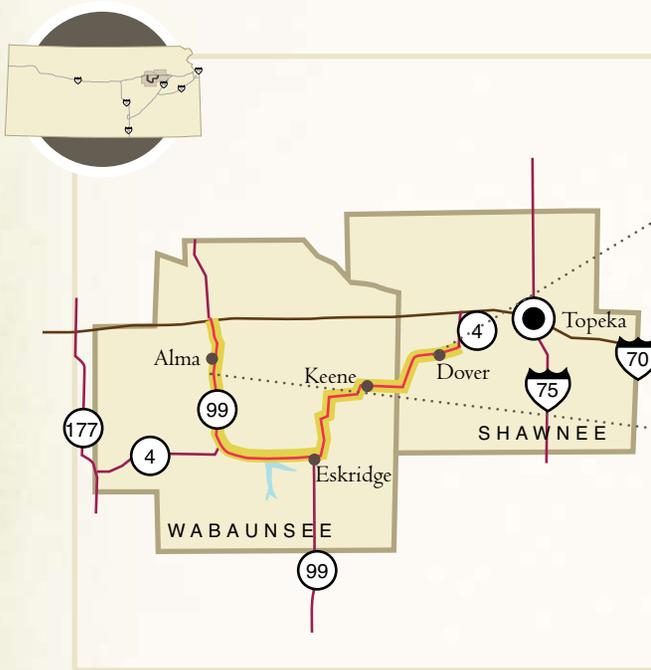
Gaillardia pulchella May-September

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Native Stone

A Slice of American Landscape

All the elements of nature, including sun, wind, fire and rain, helped lend a hand in shaping this scenic byway. The limestone from which the route gets its name was formed from the sediments of shallow seas that existed 240 million years ago.



1878 Sage Inn & Stagecoach Station

—Dover

Originally built in 1865, the Sage Inn opened its doors to travelers on the Southwest Trail. The inn was expanded to present-day size in 1878 to include a livery, a corral for horses and a blacksmith shop. The stagecoach carried freight, mail and passengers to other destinations. Today it is found on the National Register of Historic Places.



The City of Native Stone

—Alma

Alma contains 26 historical Native Stone structures built between the 1880s and 1930s. In fact, 98% of the business district is constructed with native stone. Enjoy a walking or driving tour of the area, and you'll be reminded of the superior craftsmanship of years past.

SCENIC PLACES



- Skyline Mill Creek Scenic Drive
- Alma City Lake, Alma
- Echo Cliff Park, Dover
- Lake Wabaunsee, Wabaunsee County

POINTS OF INTEREST



- 1905 Henry Sump Barn, Alma
- Underground Railroad Sites, Alma & Keene
- Wabaunsee County Courthouse, Alma
- Wabaunsee County Historical Museum, Alma
- Security State Bank & Waugh Law Office Building, Eskridge

FESTIVALS & EVENTS



- Native Stone Festival, Alma (May)
- Dover Heritage Days, Dover (June)
- Labor Day Rodeo, Eskridge (September)
- Fall German Meal, Alma (October)
- Veteran's Day Celebration, Eskridge (November)



Today, you can see examples of limestone usage in the stone fences, barns, homes and buildings that dot the roadway. Alma, one of the communities along the byway, is actually called the City of Native Stone. Many of the limestone structures were built by pioneer stonemasons who hailed from Sweden and Germany.

Of course, there are plenty of other cultural influences. Paleo-Indians harvested clams and mussels from the local creeks. Osage, Kansa, Shawnee and Potawatomi tribes lived here and enjoyed the remarkable views. And Free-State immigrants from the Old Northwest and New England came and voted to make Kansas free from slavery. These days, a cowboy spirit seems to reign through as the inhabitants include farmers and ranchers.

WILDFLOWERS



Missouri Evening Primrose

Oenothera macrocarpa May-July



Sweet Joe-pye Weed

Eupatorium purpureum July-September



New England Aster

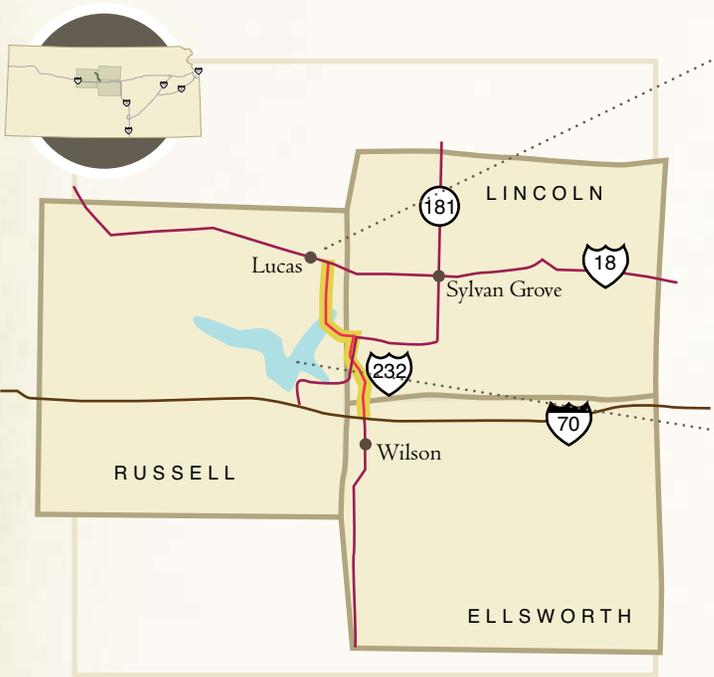
Symphotrichum novae-angliae
September-October

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Post Rock

Nature's Roller Coaster

Sweeping around Wilson Lake and over the geological formations of the Saline River valley, Post Rock Scenic Byway offers a picturesque pathway you won't soon forget. The endless sky is a favorite of photographers, and a number of interesting sites are found throughout.



Garden of Eden

—Lucas

Created by Civil War veteran Samuel Perry Dinsmoor in the early 1900s, the Garden of Eden is Kansas' only Visionary Sculpture Environment and stone log cabin.



Wilson Lake

—Russell County

Located in the heart of the Smoky Hills, the park is considered by many to be the most beautiful in the state. It's divided into two parts: Hell Creek and Otoe Park. Excellent fishing, hunting and hiking adds to the area's popularity.

SCENIC PLACES



- Mini Park Mural, Lucas
- Bur Oak Nature Trail, Wilson Lake
- Dakota Sandstone Rock Formations, Wilson Lake
- Overlook, Wilson Lake
- Red Cedar Trail, Wilson Lake

POINTS OF INTEREST



- Florence Deeble Rock Garden, Lucas
- Flying Pig Studio and Gallery, Lucas
- Grassroots Arts Center, Lucas
- Midland Hotel, Wilson
- Round Stone Jail, Wilson

FESTIVALS & EVENTS



- Wings Over Wilson, Lucas (June)
- After Harvest Czech Festival, Wilson (July)
- Poker Run, Wilson Lake (July)
- Adam's Apple Festival, Lucas (Labor Day Weekend)
- Oktoberfest, Wilson (October)



Miles of stone fence posts stand as a tribute to the ingenuity of the early settlers. Facing a lack of trees, the innovative farmers and ranchers quarried rock to create the fences they needed, which today have become a trademark of the Smoky Hills region. That creative essence certainly carried on, as the town of Lucas is considered the Grassroots Art Capital of Kansas.

In town you'll find the Grassroots Art Center, Florence Deeble's Rock Garden as well as the Garden of Eden and Cabin Home, which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Nearby, the town of Wilson is home to the Wilson Czech Opera House and Museum. And throughout the entire byway you may encounter more than 225 species of birds, including waterfowl and bald eagles.

WILDFLOWERS



Yucca
Yucca glauca May-June



Resinous Skullecup
Scutellaria resinosa May-July

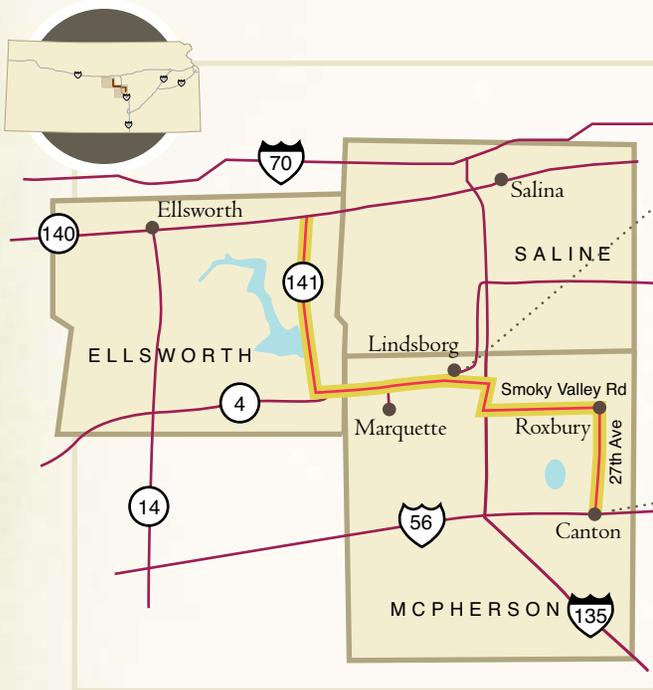


Prairie Spiderwort
Tradescantia occidentalis May-August

Prairie Trail

A Trail of Adventure

Spanning 56 miles in north central Kansas, *Prairie Trail Scenic Byway* has a little bit of everything. You'll discover scenic, historic, natural, cultural, archeological and recreational sites and activities just about everywhere you turn.



Coronado Heights

—Lindsborg

Located just outside Lindsborg, Coronado Heights was named after the legendary explorer who is believed to have passed through the area in the 1500s. You'll encounter a castle, which affords breathtaking views of Lindsborg and the Smoky Valley.



Maxwell Wildlife Refuge

—Canton

Explore 2,800 acres of native prairie complete with guided tours of buffalo herds. The refuge also features roaming elk, more than 100 species of birds and a bluebird trail.

SCENIC PLACES



- Kanopolis State Park
- McPherson State Fishing Lake, Canton
- Millennium Legacy Trail, Kanopolis State Park
- Valkommen Walking Tour, Lindsborg
- Mushroom Rock State Park, Marquette

POINTS OF INTEREST

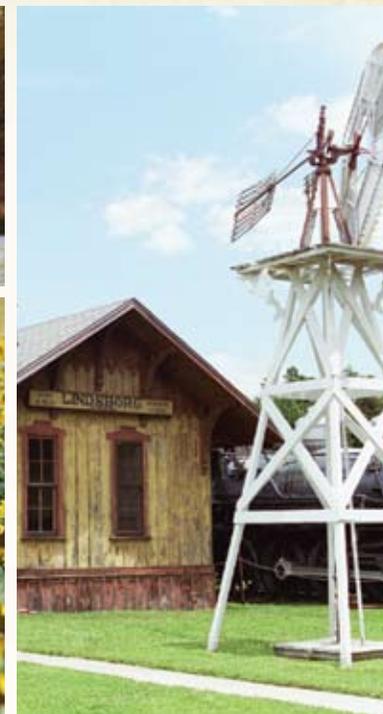
- 1883 Pioneer Jail, Canton
- Birger Sandzén Memorial Gallery, Lindsborg
- Old Mill Museum, Lindsborg
- Faris Caves, Marquette
- Kansas Motorcycle Museum, Marquette



FESTIVALS & EVENTS



- Millfest, Lindsborg (May)
- Thunder on the Smoky, Marquette (May)
- Midsummer's Day Festival, Lindsborg (June)
- Prairie Days, Canton (June)
- Fort Harker Days, Kanopolis (July)



The byway begins in Canton, not far from where the Santa Fe and Chisholm Trails brought in travelers and cattle back in the 1800s. The town itself houses the Stars and Stripes Military Museum, an 1883 Pioneer Jail and the last Carnegie Library ever built in Kansas. Moving on, the Maxwell Wildlife Refuge spans 2,800 acres of native prairie and features guided tours among the roaming buffalo and elk.

Prairie Trail meanders into Lindsborg, known as “Little Sweden U.S.A.,” where you’ll be greeted by four-foot tall wooden “Dala” horses and a number of art galleries and museums. Another must-see stop on the byway is the unique Mushroom Rock State Park, where you’ll find some of the most interesting rock formations on the face of the earth.

WILDFLOWERS



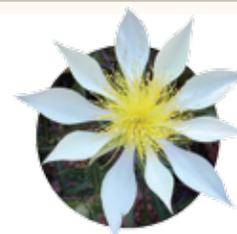
Common Sunflower

Helianthus annuus July-September



Wild Four-o'clock

Mirabilis nyctaginea May-August



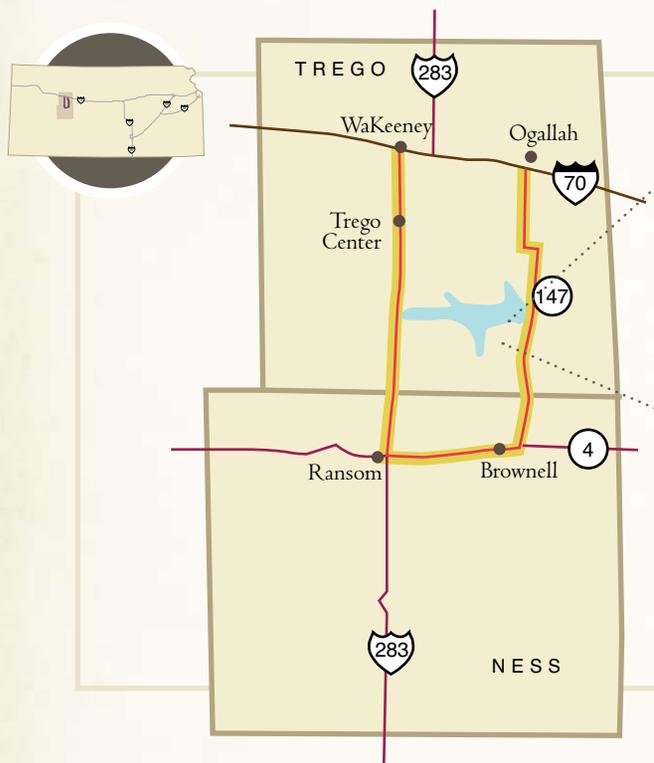
Ten-petal Mentzelia

Mentzelia decapetala July-September

Smoky Valley

Into the Valley

Named for their hazy appearance at sunrise and sunset, the Smoky Hills provide an interesting transition between the mixed-grass and short-grass prairie of the plains. Native wildflowers dot the region, including coneflowers, yucca and sky-blue pitcher sage.



Cedar Bluff State Park & Reservoir

—Trego County

A great place to camp, hike, fish, bird watch and boat. The reservoir hosts a number of fishing tournaments and other events throughout the year, including “Th’ Gatherin’” – a Celtic celebration with food, games and music.



Threshing Machine Canyon

—Cedar Bluff State Park

This historic site was the location of an 1867 Native American attack on a wagon train, which was transporting a threshing machine to Salt Lake City. The remains of the machine could be seen for years following the attack.

SCENIC PLACES



- **Agave Ridge Hiking/Biking Trail**, Cedar Bluff State Park
- **Scenic Overlook**, Cedar Bluff State Park
- **Butterfield’s Overland Despatch**, WaKeeney

POINTS OF INTEREST

- **Emanuel Lutheran Church**, Ogallah
- **Kansas Veteran’s Cemetery**, WaKeeney
- **Trego County Courthouse**, WaKeeney
- **Trego County Historical Museum**, WaKeeney
- **Wilcox Schoolhouse**, WaKeeney



FESTIVALS & EVENTS

- **Th’ Gatherin’**, WaKeeney (May)
- **Trego County Fair**, WaKeeney (July)
- **Christmas City of the High Plains**, WaKeeney (December)





Throughout the hills you'll be greeted by a multitude of picturesque windmills. The area's rich history is exemplified elsewhere too, from the limestone markers identifying Butterfield's Overland Despatch to the names carved into limestone bluffs, still legible after nearly two centuries.

The croplands provide a panorama of vegetation, from the emerald green of winter wheat to the rich reds of milo. Smoky Hill chalk is known the world over for the fossils of reptiles and other sea life that have been discovered in these formations. At Cedar Bluff Dam & Reservoir, a trip to the top of the 100-foot tall bluffs makes for a stunning view of the area below, and an ideal way to spot wildlife.

WILDFLOWERS



White Beardtongue

Penstemon albidus May-July



Scarlet Globe Mallow

Sphaeralcea coccinea May-August



Curly-cup Gumweed

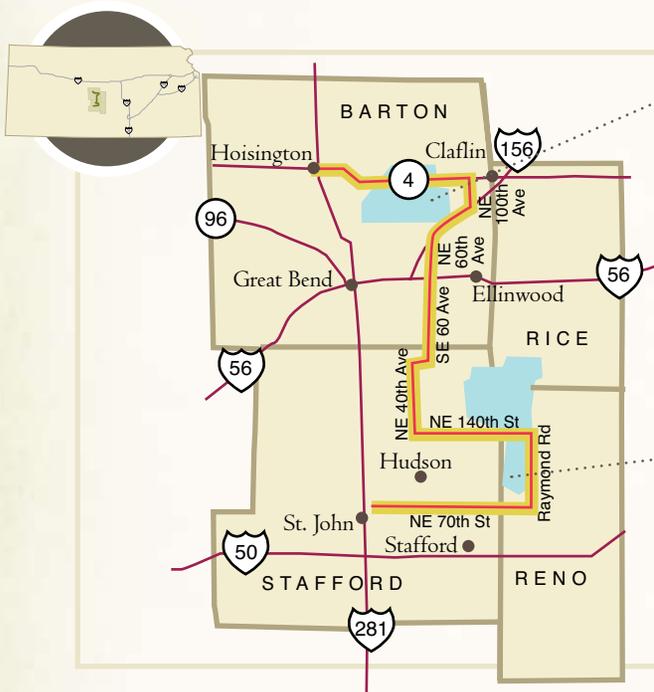
Grindelia squarrosa June-September

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Wetlands & Wildlife

Time to Fly

Stretching some 76 miles, the Wetlands & Wildlife National Scenic Byway brings you up close and personal with the Central Flyway – North America’s most important migration route. It’s undoubtedly one of the most subtly beautiful natural regions in the country.



Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area

Each year, Cheyenne Bottoms attracts anywhere from 45% to 90% of North America’s shorebirds during the spring and fall migrations. This 64-square-mile basin is a surprising interruption of the prairie landscape, as well as a critical resting and feeding place for migrating birds.



Quivira National Wildlife Refuge

Quivira National Wildlife Refuge is comprised of 22,135 acres of prairie grass, salt marshes, sand dunes, canals, dikes and timber. Little Salt Marsh and Big Salt Marsh are ancient basins that play host to more than 500,000 birds during spring migration. The refuge features a visitors center, as well as several hiking trails to bring you closer to nature.

SCENIC PLACES



- Scenic Overlook, Cheyenne Bottoms
- Prairie Walk at Dozier Winery, Ellinwood
- Arkansas River Hike/Bike Trail, Great Bend
- The Nature Conservancy Cheyenne Bottoms Preserve, Hoisington
- Scenic Overlook, Quivira National Wildlife Refuge

POINTS OF INTEREST



- Kansas Wetlands Education Center, Cheyenne Bottoms
- Underground Tunnels, Ellinwood
- Barton County Historical Society Museum and Village, Great Bend
- Kansas Raptor Center, Great Bend
- Street Light Metal Art Banners, Hoisington

FESTIVALS & EVENTS



- Wings N Wetlands Birding Festival, Cheyenne Bottoms & Quivira (April, odd number years)
- St. John Jubilee, St. John (May)
- After Harvest Festival, Ellinwood (July)
- Labor Day Celebration, Hoisington (Labor Day Weekend)
- Trail of Lights, Great Bend (November & December)



The byway is anchored by two of the largest wetland systems in the world – Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area and Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. These giant marshes host incredible numbers of sandhill cranes, avocets, pelicans, whooping cranes, sandpipers, ducks, geese and many more species full of sound, motion and color. In fact, many naturalists believe Cheyenne Bottoms is the most important migration stopover point in the Western hemisphere.

Birds aren't the only inhabitants you'll encounter. The Bottoms is home to 23 species of mammals, 19 species of reptiles and nine species of amphibians. At the Refuge, the marsh waters teem with crabs, crayfish and frogs, while prairie dogs are alert to coyotes, red foxes, bobcats and badgers.

WILDFLOWERS



Bull Thistle

Cirsium vulgare July-September



Common Spiderwort

Tradescantia obtusifolia May-August



Broom Snakeweed

Gutierrezia sarothrae August-September

Scenic Byways Etiquette

Scenic byways are home to some of the great natural landscapes in the United States. Please help us preserve this beautiful land of flowers and native grasses and refrain from disrupting natural geological features. These magnificent scenic lands are home to many Kansas residents who welcome you to their communities, shops and restaurants. Please respect their privacy by not straying onto private land, climbing fences or gates or photographing residents and their families. Stay out of the way of wild animals and please, help keep everyone safe by obeying posted speed limits and sharing the roadways with large vehicles.

Acknowledgements

This book has been funded in part by the Kansas Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration National Scenic Byways Program through the Kansas Scenic Byways Program.

For more information on the Kansas Scenic Byways, visit www.ksbyways.org.

For hunting and fishing opportunities, visit the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks at www.kdwp.state.ks.us

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