



Wetlands & Wildlife NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY

Everywhere you look, you see evidence of motion and change!

The Wetlands & Wildlife National Scenic Byway takes visitors through Barton, Stafford, and Reno counties in central Kansas. The road moves through radiant wetlands exploding with wildlife; prairie vistas with immense blue skies; and seven rural communities shaped by nature and the entrepreneurial spirit. The marshes that anchor this drive, **Cheyenne Bottoms** and **Quivira National Wildlife Refuge**, are international treasures nestled in the heart of America and the Central Flyway.

Motion and Change

Along the byway, you'll encounter landscapes and communities shaped by the powerful forces of motion and change. You're entering a region formed by ancient and ongoing geological movement, a land of stunning bird migrations, of wild winds and weather, and of richly layered human history. Everywhere you look, you'll see evidence of motion and change – from rippling wheat fields to the grand spectacle of a hundred thousand shorebirds alighting in the Byway wetlands.

Wetlands That Anchor the Byway

Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area, **The Nature Conservancy Cheyenne Bottoms Preserve**, and **Quivira National Wildlife Refuge** provide the anchors at the north and south ends of the byway. They showcase the diversity of prairie marsh habitat with one being a fresh water marsh and the other a salt water marsh.



Communities Along the Byway:

Hoisington. Stroll Main Street and view 62 award-winning, locally-crafted metal art pole banners depicting wildlife and history of the area and appreciate work of depression era craftsmen featured in the Post Office Mural and High School Sundial.

Clafin. Visit the six WPA Post Rock Bridges on the National Historic Register while standing in the geographic center of Kansas.

Ellinwood. Tour the Ellinwood Underground Tunnels and shop the seven antique stores located on Main Street. You will find vintage furniture, jewelry, gifts, collectibles, toys, artwork, and quilts at these stores.

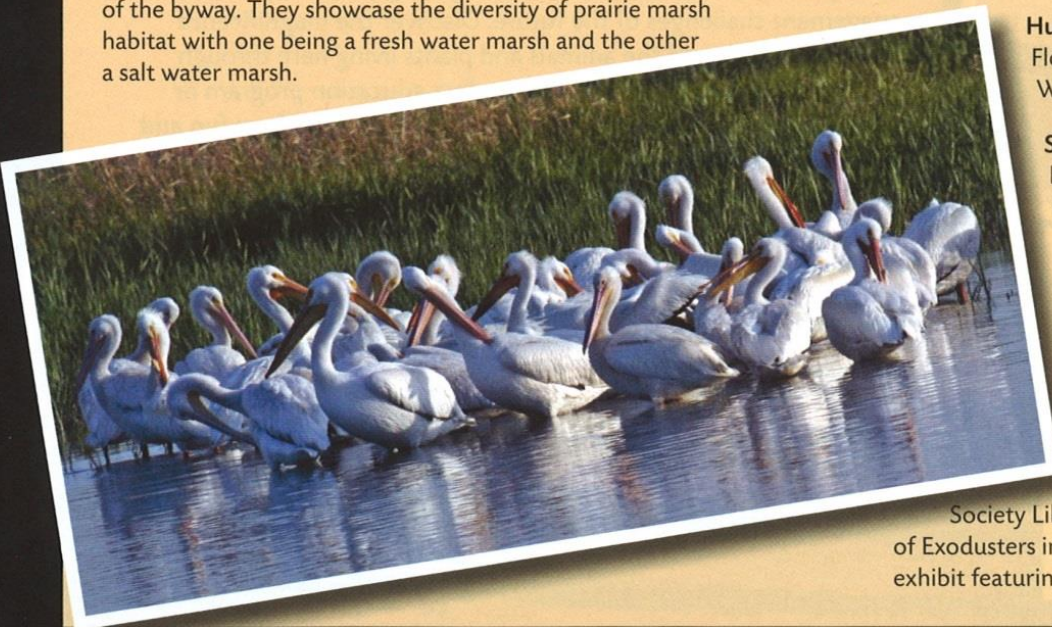
Great Bend. Take a GPS Video Tour of Cheyenne Bottoms & the Wetlands & Wildlife National Scenic Byway, watch treatment of an injured raptor at the Raptor Center, and visit the historic downtown area for coffee or lunch and unique shopping.

Hudson. Tour the Stafford County Flour Mill and eat at the local favorite, Wheatland Cafe.

St. John. Walk the town square and begin a journey into the past with a tour of the post-civil war Exodusters at the historic African American Martin Cemetery located just south of town.

Stafford. Enjoy the architecture of six buildings on the National Historic Register and visit the Stafford County Historical Museum and Genealogical

Society Library where you will find the story of Exodusters in central Kansas as told through an exhibit featuring 29,000 glass negative photos.

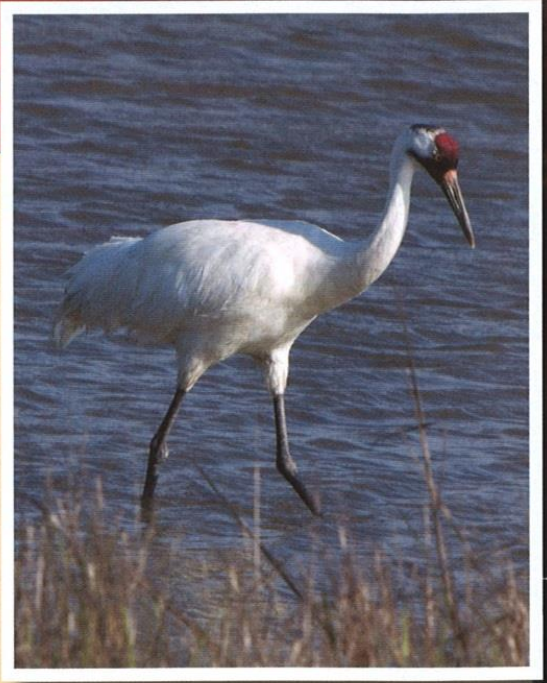


WETLANDS

A Natural Spot

Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area is one of three major wetlands in the state that have been designated as "Wetlands of International Importance". The other two are **The Nature Conservancy Cheyenne Bottoms Preserve**, and **Quivira National Wildlife Area**. These wetlands anchor the **Wetlands & Wildlife National Scenic Byway** in central Kansas. Cheyenne Bottoms is a 41,000-acre lowland area that hosts over 330 species of birds, 23 species of mammals, 19 species of reptiles and 9 species of amphibians.

The **Nature Conservancy Cheyenne Bottoms Preserve** is a 7,700-acre portion of the Cheyenne Bottoms basin. TNC's management goal for this land is to protect its native wildlife diversity by restoring and protecting the natural marshes, mud flats, and adjoining grasslands.



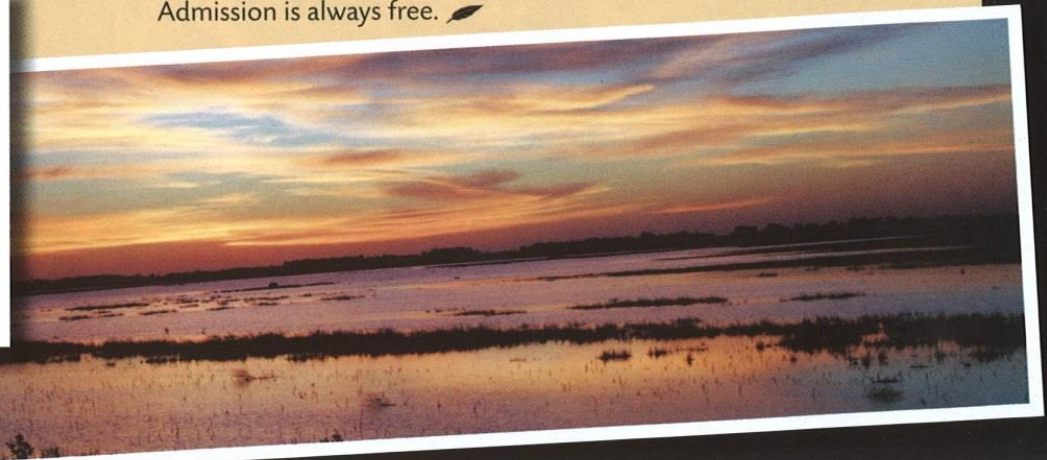
It's impossible to overstate the ecological importance of Cheyenne Bottoms. The country's largest interior marsh, Cheyenne Bottoms is the top shorebird staging area in the continental United States, a resting and refueling area for more than half of all shorebirds that migrate east of the Rockies.

Lifeline for Migratory Birds

In the late 1800s there were twelve large marshes in Kansas. Three remain today, and two are here along the **Wetlands & Wildlife National Scenic Byway**. **Cheyenne Bottoms** and **Quivira National Wildlife Refuge** are critical stopover sites for migratory birds. Many arrive with little fat for continuing migration. Once here, they may double their body weight. These wetlands, and others along the Central Flyway migration corridor, are like stepping stones across a stream, allowing birds to complete their long migration journey.

Kansas Wetlands Education Center

The **Kansas Wetlands Education Center** is located on the Wetlands & Wildlife National Scenic Byway at the eastern edge of Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area and The Nature Conservancy Cheyenne Bottoms Preserve. Strolling through the Center's exhibits will tell you the story of Cheyenne Bottoms from its geological formation to the management challenges of the future. Discover the magnificence of these wetlands and the animals and plants living here through interpretive learning stations. The perfect education program or event is available for all ages, whether you are looking for a fun and educational activity to do as a family, or a group seeking to discover the magnificence of the bottoms. Tours and programs are provided daily. There is a gift shop, traveler information and nature trails. Admission is always free. 🍃



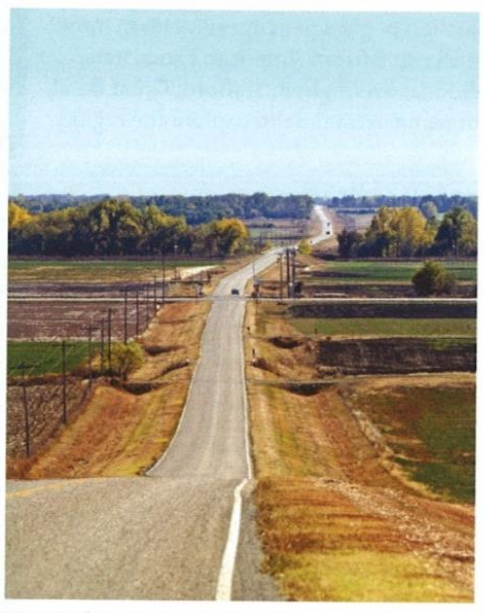


Wetlands & Wildlife

NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY

Hidden Treasure in the Heartland.

Tour the Wetlands & Wildlife National Scenic Byway and discover something unexpected. The byway reveals a surprise hidden in the flat plains of Kansas. Cheyenne Bottoms & Quivira National Wildlife Refuge are international treasures nestled in the heart of America and the communities that line the byway are charming, hospitable and iconically Midwestern. What you discover here will change your view of Kansas.



1. Early Bird.

Arrive early so you will have time to truly explore Great Bend. Take in the birdhouse art tour, vibrant downtown area, Raptor Center and Great Bend Brit Spagh Zoo. Get a copy of the Great Bend itinerary to help you plan your day. After your stay in Great Bend overnight, get up early for a spectacular morning at Cheyenne Bottoms. Grab breakfast & some great coffee at Perks or Great Bend Coffee Company in downtown Great Bend on your way to the Kansas Wetlands Education Center at Cheyenne Bottoms. *(Insider's Tip: Great Bend Coffee is inside a historic Masonic Lodge. Look for the gargoyles.)*

2. Kansas Wetlands Education Center/Cheyenne Bottoms.

The crescent-shaped museum building curves around the marsh, offering great wildlife viewing. Guided tours of Cheyenne Bottoms are available.

3. Hoisington, Kansas.

Stroll Main Street, where award-winning, locally crafted metal art banners hang from streetlight poles. Stop at the Post Office for the WPA era mural inside, and the WPA constructed city auditorium with its



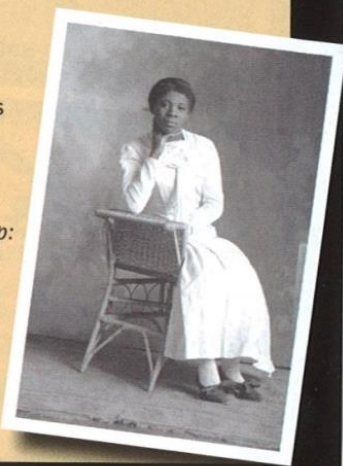
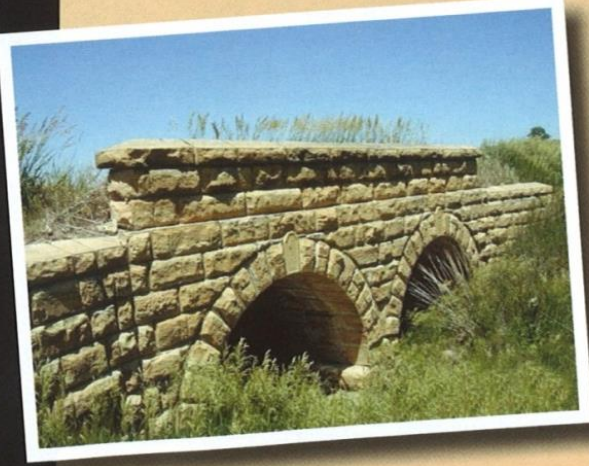
impressive Sun Dial. Hoisington sits in the Cheyenne Bottoms Basin and The Nature Conservancy's Cheyenne Bottoms Preserve is only minutes away (buffalo wallows are still visible here). *(Insider's Tip: Pick up lunch at Town & Country Market. Great fried chicken. Next door pick up a Dairy Queen treat. Both businesses were destroyed by a 2001 tornado and are now rebuilt.)*

4. Cheyenne Bottoms Scenic Overlook.

Stop here for the best view of Cheyenne Bottoms. From this vantage point it's easy to see that Cheyenne Bottoms is a giant 64 square mile depression in the prairie. *(Insider's Tip: Before you leave Great Bend, pick up a GPS tour and an audio tour CD. They will entertain and educate as you travel the byway.)*

5. Ellinwood, Kansas.

A tour of Ellinwood's Tunnels is a must. Built under the town's buildings, sidewalks and streets, the tunnels were home to a barber shop, a brewery, soiled doves, cowboys & gamblers. After the tour, shop in seven downtown antique shops and then enjoy supper at the American Legion in the town's Santa Fe Railroad station. Head to Great Bend or Hoisington for a hotel room. *(Insider's Tip: Dozier's Vineyard & Winery, near Ellinwood, has a beautiful picnic area and nature walk along with wine tasting & a retail store in a historic and possibly haunted depot.)*



DAY 2

6. Back on the Byway.

Today you will travel south on the byway through prairie grass, shelter belts, and cultivated farm land. Keep an eye out for hawks perching on fenceposts and wild turkeys in the fields. The byway GPS Tour & Audio CD will keep you company and explain some of the crops and sights you will see on the road.

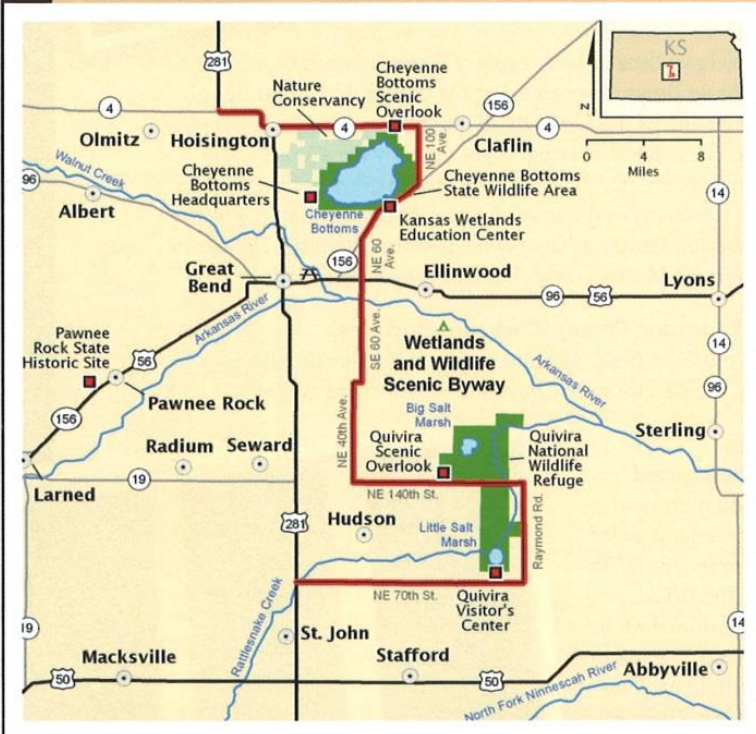
7. Quivira National Wildlife Refuge.

Stop at the Visitors Center to get your bearings and find out what's on the marsh. The Big Salt Marsh Loop Drive is a perfect way to do some wildlife watching from your car and the Migrants Mile and Birdhouse Boulevard trails will get you out of your vehicle and into the wetlands.

8. St. John, Kansas. The town square is a real retreat and the perfect place for a picnic lunch. A 100-year old fountain, miniature Statue of Liberty and beautiful buildings (including a striking Courthouse) make this an interesting stop. Plan to stop at the historic Martin Cemetery south of town and prepare to learn about the history of Exodusters in the area.

9. Stafford, Kansas.

Plan for some late afternoon birding at Quivira (just 12 minutes away) or a visit to downtown's Antique Mall, coffee at The Gathering Place and a tour of the Stafford County Historical Society & Museum to see their outstanding collection of glass negatives and learn more about the post-civil war African American Exodusters. Consider an additional overnight in Stafford, Great Bend, or Hoisington for some extra time to explore the region.



DISCOVER MORE

The Byway will continue to surprise you!

START YOUR DAY RIGHT

Great Bend's Granny's Kitchen serves breakfast & lunch.

UNIQUE SHOPPING IN HOISINGTON

Kindscher's Mule Barn farm & home store

STONE BRIDGES

Beautiful WPA-built stone bridges near Claflin

SUNDAY BUFFET IN HUDSON

The Wheatland Restaurant is a Sunday tradition.

GOT FLOUR?

Tour the Stafford County Flour Mill in Hudson

VINTAGE NEON

Curtis Cafe in Stafford has a great sign & great pie!

PLAY A ROUND

Ellinwood, Great Bend & Stafford have unique golf courses



**Barton County
Proud Supporter of the Byway**

The Wetlands & Wildlife National Scenic Byway will reshape your image of the Sunflower State

This Kansas Byway connects two of the world's most significant wetlands — Cheyenne Bottoms & Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. The wetlands host millions of migrating birds each year, including eagles & whooping cranes. The Byway offers more than wetlands & wildlife. You'll see native stone buildings, underground tunnels, WPA art & bridges, a flour mill, part of the Santa Fe Trail, & more. Travel the Byway & discover the unexpected.

