

# SCOTT

**H**istoric Lake Scott State Park is located west of Highway 83 between Oakley and Scott City on K-95. Hidden within a western Kansas prairie, the park is a startling oasis of natural springs, deep wooded canyons, and craggy bluffs. A 100-acre

lake, created by a dam constructed in 1930, is nestled among the picturesque hills. Groves of hackberry, ash, elm, willow, walnut, and cedar trees complement its banks, and several majestic cottonwoods as old as the lake also accent the area.

Rich in history and scenic splendor, Historic Lake Scott State Park and Wildlife Area provides a perfect recreational setting for boating, swimming, camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, and wildlife observation.

## STEELE HOMESTEAD MUSEUM

Herbert Steele first came to Scott County in 1888 and found the present state park area to be an ideal location for homesteading. He married Eliza Landon five years later. Their first home was a simple dugout, which they later updated to a four-room house using sandstone gathered from the surrounding bluffs. The Steele home has been preserved much as it was over a hundred years ago and serves as a museum displaying the furnishings and tools used by the early settlers.

The Steele's farm was the setting for many outings due to the unique canyons and the superb fishing and hunting.

The Steele's wanted their homestead to become a public park and recreation area. This dream became reality in 1928 when the Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission acquired the 1,280-acres, which is now the park, including the 640 acres of the Steele homestead.

## EL CUARTELEJO INDIAN PUEBLO

Nearly two centuries before the Steeles homesteaded the area, a group of Taos Indians fleeing Spanish rule migrated to the park region. In 1664 they constructed pueblos and cultivated crops using a system of irrigation ditches from a nearby spring. From the pueblos came the name El Cuartelejo, meaning "old barracks or building." It is the northernmost pueblo in the United States. They lived here for 20 years and then returned to their homes in the south.

El Cuartelejo was later reoccupied in 1701 when a group of Picurie Indians settled there for about two years.

The last known reference to the El Cuartelejo site was 1727, after which it was abandoned and left to the ravages of weather and erosion. It disappeared, leaving no scar on the Kansas plains except a slight mound and some irrigation

ditches, which were later used by Herbert Steele for his large truck garden enterprise.

In the mid-1890s, the pueblo ruins were discovered by Steele and excavated by H.T. Martin and Prof. S.W. Williston from the University of Kansas. The El Cuartelejo Ruins achieved National Historical Landmark Status in 1964. In 1970, the Kansas Historical Society carried out an extensive program of excavation and restoration of the area. The present site allows the visitor to see the pueblo site with its foundation reconstructed.

## THE BATTLE OF PUNISHED WOMAN'S FORK

In 1878, Chief Dull Knife and Little Wolf of the Northern Cheyenne escaped from the reservation near Fort Reno, Oklahoma. Their escape took them through western Kansas and on September 27, the men, women, and children of the Cheyenne Nation made a stand on the bluffs of Beaver Creek, just south of Historic Lake Scott State Park. This encounter with the U.S. Cavalry was the last Indian battle in

Kansas. During the battle the women and children hid inside a den, which is still visible today. Colonel William H. Lewis was wounded during the fighting and died enroute to Fort Wallace, making him the last white casualty of the Indian Wars in Kansas.

## THE STATE PARK TODAY

Historic Lake Scott State Park welcomes an average of about 150,000 visitors a year and continues to be very popular with fishermen. Travelers who visit the area enjoy surprising scenery.

The park has 55 utility campsites, including some with 50-amp service and water hookups. Two modern shower buildings are situated near the utility sites. 175 primitive campsites, an additional shower building and several vault toilets are also located at the park.

A swimming beach and playground area are provided with a privately-owned concessions building, which stocks camping and fishing supplies during the camping season. Canoe and paddleboat rentals are also available seasonally to visitors.

Nature trails have been designed to accommodate hikers, horseback riders, and naturalists. These trails provide an excellent opportunity to observe wildlife in its natural habitat. Many species of animals and birds, such as wild turkey, deer, bobcat, and beaver, are found in the park.

A horse camp area with a watering facility and hitching post is the designated location for unloading trailers. Horses are required to remain on the trail.

Public hunting is allowed on the wildlife area west of the park. Landowner permission is required to hunt on the nearby private land. Parks and public lands regulations are enforced at Historic Lake Scott State Park.



General Area Map

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs described herein is available to all individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliation, and military or veteran status. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to Office of the Secretary, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, 1020 S Kansas Ave., Topeka, KS 66612-1327. 06/18

# Historic Lake Scott

## State Park & Wildlife Area



El Cuartelejo Indian Pueblo

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# HISTORIC LAKE SCOTT STATE PARK & WILDLIFE AREA

