

# KANSAS

## GYPSUM HILLS

*Scenic Byway*

The landscape of the Gypsum Hills is truly breathtaking. Two scenic overlooks have been provided for visitors to stop and absorb the grandeur of this land. No matter what season or time of day, viewers are rewarded. A 20-mile scenic drive off the Byway affords additional glimpses of the landscape. The area is noted for its abundant wildflowers in spring and brilliant foliage in autumn.

Such landmarks as Twin Peaks and Flower Pot Mound dot a landscape marked by mesas and canyons. The names of creeks reflect the region's heritage: Cedar, Little Bear, Mule, Indian and Nescatunga. At the Byway's western edge, the landscape changes. The rolling grasslands and farms of Comanche County mark the transition into the High Plains where wide-open spaces and endless skies offer inspiring sunrises and awesome sunsets.



Harland J Schuster ©2004

For further information contact:  
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 Stockade Museum at Medicine Lodge 1-620-886-3553  
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 Kansas Scenic Byways website: ksbyways.org

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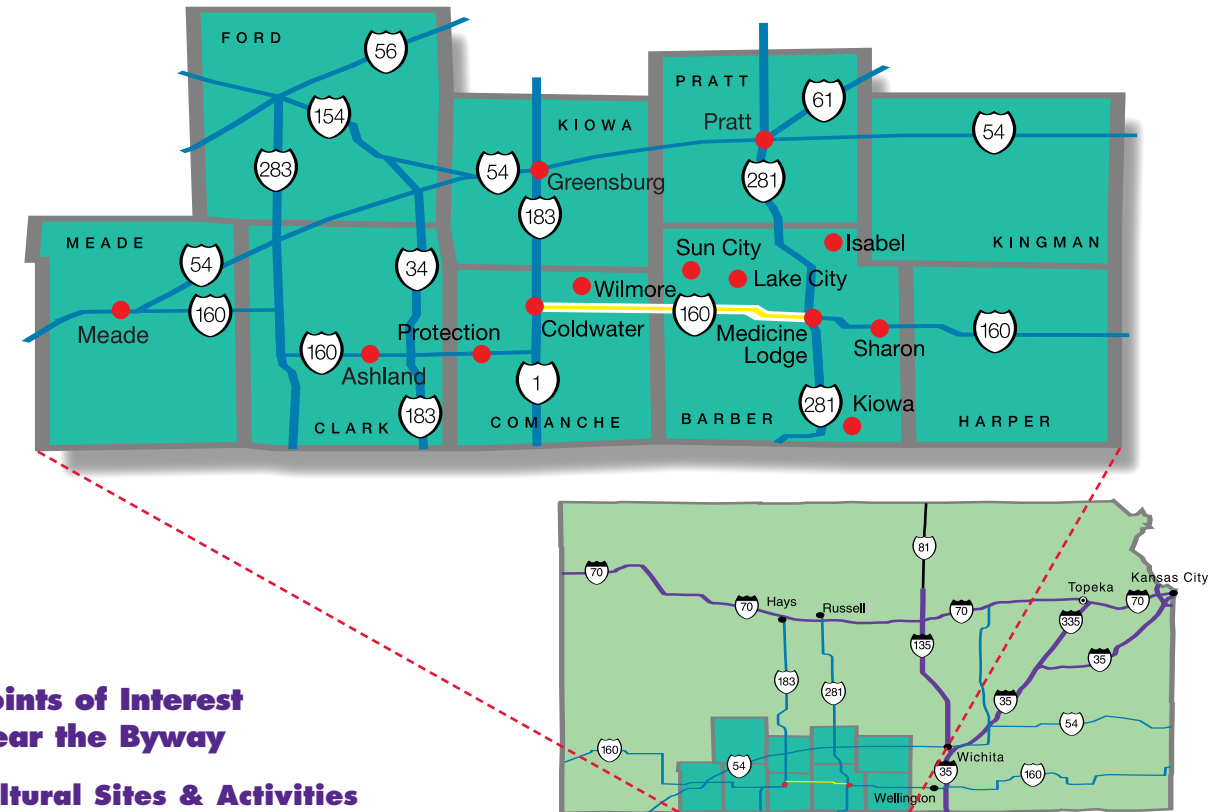
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### GYPSUM HILLS AREA MAP



#### Points of Interest Near the Byway

#### Cultural Sites & Activities

Boy Scouts of America Statue of Liberty, Medicine Lodge  
 Carry Nation Home – National Historic Site, Medicine Lodge  
 Comanche County Museum, Coldwater  
 Heritage Park/Comanche County Veterans Memorial, Coldwater  
 Kansas Championship Ranch Rodeo, Medicine Lodge (last week in September)  
 Medicine Lodge Indian Peace Treaty Pageant and Intertribal Pow Wow (fall 2003, 2006, 2009, etc.)  
 Peace Treaty Memorial Statue, Medicine Lodge  
 Stan Herd Gallery, Protection  
 Stan Herd Murals, Coldwater, Protection & Wilmore  
 Stockade and Carry Nation Museums, Medicine Lodge  
 Wilmore Opry, Wilmore (1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month)  
 Wisner Fountain, Medicine Lodge

#### Natural Amenities

Flower Pot Mound (viewed from the Scenic Byway)  
 Gypsum Hills Scenic Byway Overlook and Scenic View  
 Memorial Peace Park, Medicine Lodge  
 Twin Peaks (visible from the Scenic Byway)  
 Wildflower Tour, Barber County (late spring)

#### Recreational Opportunities

Barber State Fishing Lake, Medicine Lodge  
 Chief Theatre, Coldwater  
 Hiking, Birding and Backpacking  
 Lake Coldwater, Comanche County  
 Boating, Swimming, Fishing, Camping, Skiing  
 Red Cedar Natural Trail, Medicine Lodge  
 Trail Rides, Barber County

#### Nearby Attractions

Dalton Gang Hideout, Meade  
 Pioneer-Krier Museum, Ashland  
 Pratt Fish Hatchery, Pratt  
 Wildlife Education Center and Aquarium, Pratt  
 World's Largest Hand Dug Well, Greenburg  
 Antiques, Art Galleries, Drive-in Theatre, Lodging, Restaurants and Shops



*Peace Treaty Pageant  
Wagon Train Circle  
in Medicine Lodge*

*Breathtaking views  
abound from the buttes  
in the Gypsum Hills area*

## Enjoy the colorful heritage of the Gypsum Hills.



*Bill Krug ©2004*

### Settling the Land.

In the 1870s, young "Bat" Masterson and Wyatt Earp were among those who came to hunt the great bison herds of the Gypsum Hills. Other famous figures of history also left their mark on the region. Temperance leader Carry Nation lived in Medicine Lodge. She began her crusade in Barber County when she smashed a saloon in Kiowa. Visit her home and the Stockade Museum, replica of the original stockade in Medicine Lodge during the Indian Wars.

From the late 1870s to 1885, the Comanche Cattle Pool covered the Gypsum Hills. Fifteen cattlemen "pooled" their holdings into a herd of 80,000 head. It was the largest cattle operation in frontier Kansas with pool cowboys working some two million acres of land.

Today, ranchers tending chores on horseback still appear in the landscape. The total experience is one of serenity and relaxation. It fills the soul and spirit.

# See time and history exposed.

Traveling the Gypsum Hills Scenic Byway is a little like stepping back in time. The 41-mile route traverses through Barber and Comanche counties past the ancient red shale and sandstone formations of the rugged Gypsum Hills.

Named for the underlying layers of gypsum, the Gypsum or "Red" Hills are a phenomena unique in Kansas. Their distinctive color comes from the iron in the soil that "rusts" when exposed. The red bluffs and stark flat-topped buttes are capped with white gypsum and accented with dark green cedars to create a painted landscape of timeless beauty.

### Life on the Land.

Nature has populated the Gypsum Hills with a wide variety of residents. Deer, coyote, turkey, pheasant, quail and prairie chicken abound.



*Temperance leader Carry Nation lived in Medicine Lodge*

Beaver, bobcat, porcupine and armadillo are also at home in the Gypsum Hills. In earlier times, great herds of bison grazed freely.

It was the abundance of bison that attracted the first native peoples to the Gypsum Hills. From a prehistoric culture dating back 800 years to Plains Indian tribes in more recent centuries, the Gypsum Hills have been home to many fascinating peoples.

The Kiowa tribe held sacred sun dances along Mule Creek. In October 1867, the Kiowa joined Cheyenne, Arapaho, Comanche and Plains Apache tribal members in signing peace treaties with the Federal Government. Fifteen thousand Indians camped nearby during the council, among them the famous chiefs Satanta, Little Raven and Black Kettle. While the treaties did not bring immediate peace, they made possible the coming of the railroads and eventual settlement. Every three years Medicine Lodge commemorates the treaty signing with the Peace Treaty Pageant.

*Lake Coldwater  
is a popular  
area for boating,  
swimming, fishing  
and camping*



*Joyce Murphey ©2004*