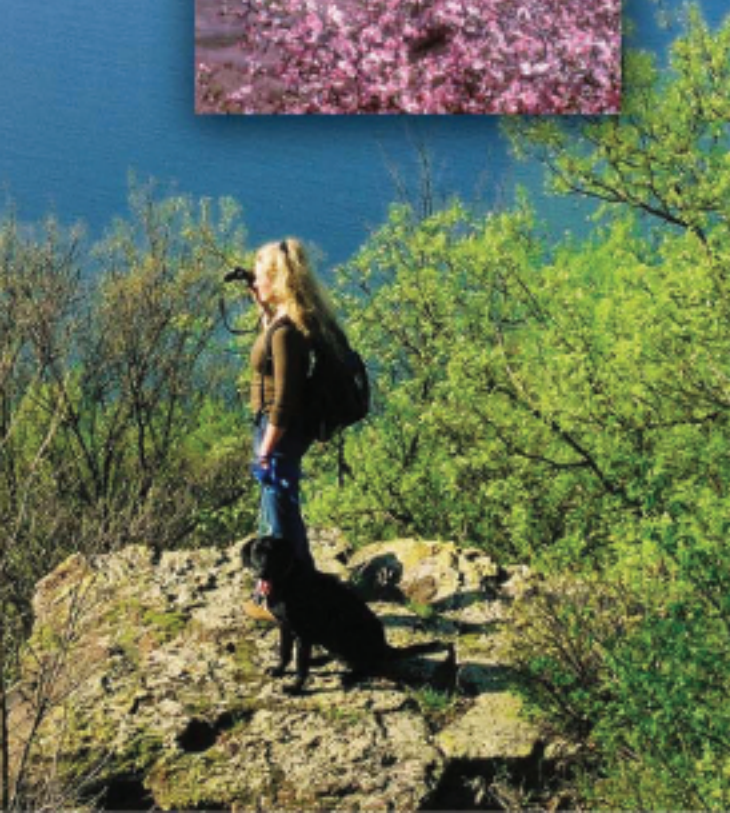


WILSON LAKE

The Clearest Lake In Kansas



Welcome

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks welcome you to Wilson Lake, "The Clearest Lake in Kansas," located in Russell County of Northcentral Kansas. Set amongst the Smoky Hills, which is a rolling landscape of hills, buttes and hazy valleys, grand in scale, yet possessing a delicate and subtle beauty. We hope you enjoy the area's geologic formations, mixed grass prairie, and water quality. Additional information is available at the Corps of Engineers Visitor Center below the dam, or the Park or Area Office in Hell Creek State Park.

Lake Benefits and Data

The Wilson Lake Dam cost \$20 million when it was completed in 1964. Since then, Wilson Lake has saved \$1.4 billion in property losses by preventing downstream flood damages to farmlands and developed areas. The substrate of the Saline River is limestone, creating water high in salt content that restricts it from being used for drinking water and irrigation. This has proven beneficial in stocking the ocean native Striped Bass.

The grassland drainage basin of 1,917 square miles filters sediments resulting in Kansas's clearest lake.

Recreation

Set in a region with few large bodies of water, Wilson Lake offers a diversity of recreational opportunities. A major benefit of the lake is the outdoor sports that attract a quarter million visitors participate in every year. Activities include picnicking, camping, swimming, boating, skiing, wind surfing, sailing, scuba-diving, fishing, hunting, trail hiking, Mountain bike riding, and remote controlled model sailplane racing.





The Corps of Engineers and the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks have developed 5 parks around Wilson Lake.



Corps of Engineer Parks Lucas Park

Located on the north shore of Wilson Lake, Lucas Park contains developed campgrounds with hills that drop off steeply to the shoreline. The updrafts along the shore have made Lucas Park one of the top 10 remote-controlled model sailplane racing sites in the United States. The Midwest Slope Challenge holds an annual racing event every May.

The 305-acre Rocktown Natural Area, a registered Natural and Scientific Area by the Kansas Biological Survey, has a rich diversity of mixed prairie grasses and plants. Unique 15-30 foot Dakota sandstone pillars carved by wind and rain are natural landmarks of Rocktown. A 3-mile hiking trail allows foot access to the area. Grab your camera wildlife watchers!



Horned Lizards can be found sunbathing on the rocks and sandy areas!

Lucas Park contains 103 campsites, 62 of which are electric. The group camp provides electric sites that are great for large reunions and retreats. The non-developed areas of Lucas Park provides a great hunting experience for winter sportsmen.

Sylvan Park

Sylvan Park boasts shaded , most with water and electric. A group camp and picnic shelter overlooks several beaver dams on the old Saline River channel. The handicap accessible shower building is climate controlled and open year round for winter sportsmen. Fishing is accessible from the Saline River or by boat launched from the Spillway Boat Ramp.

The Bur Oak Nature Trail located in Sylvan Park is a ¾ mile National Recreation Trail. The trail offers 23 interpretive stops explaining the geology and ecology of the area.



The Purple Coneflower or Kansas Snakeroot, a prairie native, was the Plains Indians' most sacred healing herb. The roots' numbing quality was used to

treat toothaches, snakebites, burns, and to boost the immune system!

Minooka Park

Minooka Park, named from the Otoe Indian word Mi-Nook-A, meaning "Good Earth," contains 3 boat ramps, 2 shower buildings, a fish cleaning station, and 194 campsites. Several sites in the campground provide scenic lake views and excellent shoreline fishing.

The west end contains a reservable picnic shelter, swimming beach, west boat ramp, and a reservable group camp, with 12 utility sites.

Marshall Cove houses privately owned boat docks.



Entrance and User Fees

The Corps of Engineers and the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks are separate agencies. Regulations are different, therefore, user passes do not reciprocate. Please familiarize yourself with the rules governing park use.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks manages Otoe and Hell Creek State Park. A vehicle permit is required to enter the State Parks. A camping permit is also required for overnight camping. Permits can be purchased at park booths or self-pay stations. Reservations for State Park managed campsites can be obtained at the Park Office. All fishing and hunting licenses can be obtained at the Park Office.

The Corps of Engineers manages the Spillway Boat Ramp, Lucas, Sylvan, and Minooka Parks. User fees are charged for camping and boat launching permits. Permits at boat ramps can be obtained at the self-pay stations, and camping permits can be obtained from the Park Booths. Holders of the Golden Age or Golden Access Passports receive a 50% discount on all user fees. Reservations for Corps' campsites may be made through the National Recreation Reservation Service, by calling toll-free 1-877-444-6777 or through the Internet at www.reserveusa.com.

Fish and Wildlife Management

The Corps of Engineers manages 3,200 acres of native prairie and cropland for wildlife. An important tool is the agricultural leasing program where tracts of public land are leased to farmers who incorporate specific wildlife management practices in their farming. The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks manages 8,000 land acres for wildlife and manages for fish populations in 9,000 water acres.

Wildlife Area

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks manages the wildlife area using activities such as food plots, controlled burns, rotational grazing, forb management, tree and shrub plantings, and an agricultural lease program. The wildlife area is a great place for the sportsman's fishing, wildlife viewing, and limited hunting opportunities.

A 1,000 acre waterfowl refuge was established in 1996 to improve populations of waterfowl and other wildlife species and offers numerous opportunities for birdwatchers and hunters. Limited special hunt opportunities are available on the refuge. Applications and more information are available in the annual Special Hunt Brochure available in June of each year or from the KDWP Area Office.

Fisheries

Many an angler has visited Wilson Lake for fishing and boating fun, and it is well known for its white bass, striped bass, walleye, and smallmouth bass. It also contains good populations of largemouth bass, white perch, and channel catfish. Crappie, bluegill, flathead catfish, and drum are other species that make up Wilson's angling diversity.

Wilson has 2 state record fish, a 13.16-pound walleye and a 43.5-pound striped bass at the time of publication. It has held the smallmouth bass state record several times. Fishing success is often affected by things like water temperature, water level changes, weather conditions, abundance of food, habitat, and other factors. It is up to you to figure out how to make them bite! Fisheries management activities include fish sampling, creel surveys, habitat work, aquatic vegetation enhancement, stocking, and special studies. All activities are designed to monitor the fish population and to improve fishing opportunities.





Post Rock Country

The thousands of miles of stone fenceposts surrounding fields and pastures in this area stand as a tribute to the ingenuity of early settlers. They solved their fencing problems on treeless plains by quarrying rock to use as posts. These stone posts have become a trademark of Post Rock Country.

The stone was quarried from a layer found near the surface. This limestone, of 8-9 inches thick, is soft enough to be sawed and shaped with hand tools when quarried. After prolonged exposure to air it hardens and becomes weather resistant.



The communities surrounding the lake have many interesting buildings constructed of stone posts quarried in the area. One-room schoolhouses, churches, homes, barns, businesses, jails, and bridges may still be found standing as architectural heirlooms to the early settlers.



This cast of a fish spine dates back to 90 million years ago!

Lake Wilson Area Association

The Lake Wilson Area Association was formed in 1967 to improve and promote the newly built Wilson Lake. Today, this is all done through volunteer work from its membership of 130 individuals, organizations, and businesses.

The Association has participated in special events such as the Lake Cleanup, ECO Meet, Boat Poker Run, 4th of July Fireworks, Great Kansas Whale Hunt (Carp Derby), and Wichita Boat, Sport, and RV Show. The Association funded a new fish cleaning station and highway billboards. Future projects include the lighting of Hell Creek Bridge, planting wildflowers around the lake, and the rebuilding of the Cedar Creek Bridge.

In 2000, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers presented the Association with The National Water Safety Congress Award for their promotion of water safety awareness.



Russell County, KS

Russell and Russell County was founded in 1871 as families migrated to Fossil Station, a water stop on the Union Pacific Railroad.

History buffs will want to check out the four museums in the county. Learn about the discovery of oil at the Oil Patch Museum, or find out more about Russell County and early Dorrance through displays at the Fossil Station Museum. The Bunker Hill Museum, housed in an early day church, contains many artifacts of historic life in Bunker Hill. While in Bunker Hill stop and see the first county jail.



Travel north to Luray and visit the first log cabin in the County, located in the park. Luray is also home to a challenging, nine hole golf course.

Perhaps your tastes are more artistic? Visit the Deines Cultural Art Center in Russell or the Grassroots Art Center in Lucas.

Perhaps one of the best examples of folk art is the Garden of Eden in Lucas. S.P. Dinsmoor, a retired schoolteacher, Civil War veteran, farmer, and Populist politician began his artistic



creations and construction of the Cabin Home in 1907 at the age of 64. The yard holds over 150 concrete statues that depict Political and Biblical stories. Mr. Dinsmoor's body is buried in the backyard, in his 40' high stone mausoleum for all to view.

The 16 mile Post Rock Scenic Byway takes travelers through the Smoky Hills. Experience the natural beauty of the Saline River Valley. Imagine Native Americans scanning the horizon from horseback or immigrants in covered wagons traversing the area for the first time to be greeted by a sea of rolling prairie.

There are more than twenty restaurants, six motels and five bed & breakfasts. For more specific information call the Convention & Visitors Bureau. Come explore Russell County!



Wilson, Kansas Czech Capital of Kansas

Six miles south of the lake, the town of Wilson offers camping supplies and dinner when the fish aren't biting.

Boasting a lodge, a bed and breakfast, and a turn-of-the-century hotel, Wilson is pleased to share its Czech heritage.

Wilson's restaurants offer a variety of menu selections for the most discriminating palette. Bowling, skating and a full service liquor store are also available.

Wilson is proud of its Opera House and "House of Memories" museum. The Opera House, which was



erected in 1901, still presents stage shows, dances, and pageants. The basement was the "SOKOL" Lodge gym which now is the Museum. Unique stone buildings include the round post rock jail and the Midland Hotel where "Paper Moon" was filmed in 1973. The renovated hotel now includes a restaurant and lounge.

Shoppers will find prize winning meats, sausages, ethnic foods, as well as assortments of arts and crafts, antiques, sculptures, ceramics, batik and kraslice eggs.

Wilson celebrates its heritage with the annual After Harvest - Czech Festival the last weekend of July. The Czech Festival is celebrated with a parade, arts and crafts, cultural displays, ethnic foods, and dances appealing to all ages.

Whether you stop for a visit, a summer home or a permanent residence, Wilson welcomes you and hopes you enjoy your stay.



KS Dept. of Wildlife & Parks Wilson State Park – Hell Creek Area

The Hell Creek Area provides a three-lane boat ramp, multiple shower houses, and modern campground. With 100 utility sites, reservable shelters and a group camp area, campers and day users alike return year after year. Wilson State Park also offers reservable individual campsites and the Rent-a-Camp program designed for the family wanting to “try out” camping for the weekend.

Recreational opportunities include all water sports and angling supported by the full service Lake Wilson Marina and centrally located fish cleaning station. Those wishing to take in self-guided interpretive walks or mountain bike riding will find the trails in Hell Creek to be a challenge.

The Switchgrass Bike Trail is a challenging 7.5 mile excursion through the Hell Creek Area over hills and through valleys rarely seen by the visiting public. Take plenty of water and sharpen your mountain biking skills.

The Dakota Trail, located in the Big Bluestem Campground, gives lake visitors one of the best views of the reservoir and State Park Areas. This interpretive trail is 1 mile in length and will identify many plants associated with the surrounding region. It also features a cut-through half way for those wishing to shorten the walk.



Wilson State Park – Otoe Area

The Otoe Area provides easy access to the lakeshore for swimming, fishing, and boating. There are eight reservable utility sites, and non-reservable utility sites available to campers year round. Day use facilities include a beach and reservable shelter house.

The hard surfaced Redcedar Trail, at the entrance to Otoe, provides parking at the beach area and allows wildlife viewing opportunities along the eastern edge of the park. This ¾ mile trail is ADA accessible with a switchback at the end of the trail.



**US Army Corps
of Engineers.**
Kansas City District

Contacts

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Wilson Project Office
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785-658-2551
www.nwk.usace.army.mil/wilson/wilson_home.htm

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Wilson State Park and Area Office
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