



Interpretive Guide to:
EISENHOWER
 STATE PARK



THINGS TO DO AT EISENHOWER SP

- ✦ Take a hike on the nature trail and explore the flora and fauna of the park. Pick up a trail guide at the office.
- ✦ Go fishing for bass, stripers and catfish in Lake Texoma. The park sponsors several fishing events for youth and adults during the year. You can even learn how to fly-fish.
- ✦ Go boating or sailing on Lake Texoma. Eisenhower Yacht Club rents canoes, kayaks and pontoon boats.
- ✦ Grab your binoculars and go birding. Bald eagles, great blue herons and osprey can be found along the shoreline. Painted buntings and scissor-tailed flycatchers frequent the wooded areas and grasslands. Ask for a birding checklist at the park office.

We hope you enjoy your visit to Eisenhower State Park. Please help us care for the natural and cultural resources of the park by leaving things as you found them. All of the animals, plants and fossils are protected so that everyone can enjoy them. Visit the State Park Store to find souvenirs of your visit.

Eisenhower State Park
 50 Park Road 20, Denison, TX 75020 • (903) 465-1956
www.tpwd.state.tx.us • espc@texoma.net



Proud Sponsor of Texas Parks and Wildlife Programs

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HONORING IKE

Eisenhower State Park opened with great fanfare on May 18, 1958 with bands playing patriotic songs and a water carnival featuring boat armadas, Navy frogmen and water-skiing exhibitions. President Eisenhower sent his younger brother Earl to represent him at the dedication ceremony.

On behalf of Governor Price Daniel, Bill Daniel opened with the following tribute to Ike: "I am sure that we know that the man in the White House is the finest soldier in our history and always is a fighter on and off the battlefield for the democracy and safety of our country."

Earl Eisenhower responded with Ike's message for the honor paid the Eisenhower family.

"And I hope that on this occasion all present will feel as I do – that the true purpose of this ceremony is to honor the strength of our country and the character of those who have gone before us rather than to pay any unusual tribute to an individual or a family.

I think that these exercises will help inspire all of us of the present generations and those that follow ever to guard that strength and to emulate those great qualities of character, so that America may remain the symbol of freedom and opportunity to all the world."

EISENHOWER STATE PARK HONORS WORLD WAR II HERO DWIGHT DAVID EISENHOWER. PROUD OF THE TEXAS-BORN GENERAL, THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE VOTED IN 1947 TO CREATE A NEW PARK BEARING HIS NAME ON THE SOUTH SHORE OF LAKE TEXOMA NEAR HIS BIRTHPLACE IN DENISON. THE PARK OPENED IN 1958 DURING EISENHOWER'S SECOND TERM AS THE 34TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.



TEXOMA CROSSROADS

Lake Texoma provides an abundance of recreational opportunities, from camping and hiking to boating and fishing. Visitors enjoy the wooded campsites, the rugged bluffs, scenic coves and the rocky lakeshore. This intriguing landscape results from a blending of the grasslands of the Blackland Prairie with the woodlands of the Eastern Cross Timbers. The Red River adds a riparian element to the mix. The final dramatic feature creating this landscape is a buckle in the earth known as the Preston Anticline that thrusts several layers of clays, shales and limestones to the surface, revealing the layers left by an ancient Cretaceous ocean dating to the days of the dinosaurs. Spiral-shaped ammonites and other fossils embedded in these layers provide clues to the ocean life of the past.



Opportunities for excellent fishing can be found along the scenic coves where largemouth and smallmouth bass, striped bass and channel catfish thrive. Texoma is the only lake in Texas where striped bass spawn. A lucky angler caught the 121.5-pound Texas state record blue catfish in Lake Texoma. The shoreline attracts over 170 species of birds, including the great blue heron and osprey. Bald eagles winter in the park from October through March.

THE RED RIVER

The Red River marks the northern entrance to Texas. It is more than a mere river, serving as a border, a boundary, a transportation corridor and a source of sustenance for people and wildlife. The Red River flows from the Texas Panhandle to the Mississippi River, carrying the rich red colors of the Permian sandstones of Palo Duro Canyon toward the sea. Early Spanish explorers called the river "Rio Rojo." On an 1853 U.S. Army expedition, W. B. Parker observed that "the river takes its name from the color of the water, which is a dark maroon, full of sediment and very unpalatable."

Here the river marked the international boundary between Spain and France and later between the United States and Spain, Mexico and the Republic of Texas. Later the river separated the new state of Texas from Choctaw and Chickasaw lands in Indian Territory which eventually became the new state of Oklahoma.

Early Settlers

Many early settlers entered Texas by crossing the Red River at Colbert's Ferry to the east or Preston to the west. Trail drivers on the Shawnee Trail herded cattle north across the Red River at Preston Bend, now hidden under the waters of Lake Texoma. Chickasaw entrepreneur Benjamin

Franklin Colbert operated a toll ferry crossing the unpredictable river. From 1858–1861, Colbert's Ferry served as a water stop on the Butterfield Overland Mail stagecoach route carrying mail and passengers between Missouri and California. The 1936 Texas Centennial Commission recognized Colbert's Ferry as one of eight ferries significant to the development of the state of Texas.

In 1944, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed Denison Dam, creating the 89,000-acre Lake Texoma. The dam captures the waters of the Red River and its Oklahoma tributary, the Washita, creating the 12th-largest reservoir in the United States.

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY



The park is a biological mosaic of

different habitats. Remnants of tallgrass prairie with stands of little bluestem and Indiangrass can be found in open areas of the park. These grasses provide food and habitat for white-tailed deer and small mammals such as raccoons, armadillos and foxes.

A riparian woodland in the Bois D'Arc campground offers shade and shelter in a hardwood forest that includes oaks, elms and the Osage orange or bois d'arc tree. Used by native Americans to make bows and an orange dye, the Osage orange with its bumpy green fruit is native to the Red River area of Texas. The showy bluish-purple flowers of blue wild indigo plants bloom each spring in this area along the Red River.

