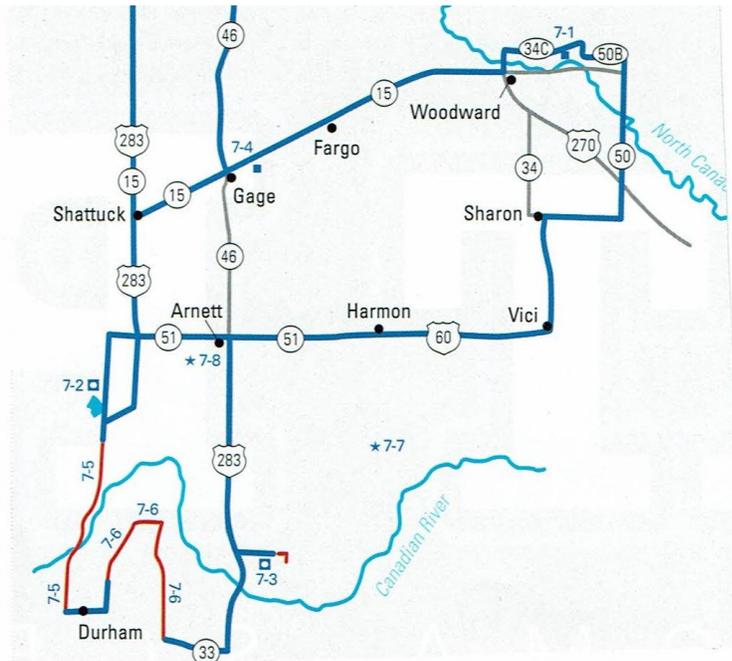


## Loop7 – Sand Hills Loop



**Boiling Springs State Park (7-1): 580.256.7664 or 800.654.8240**  
[www.travelok.com/listings/view.profile/id.672](http://www.travelok.com/listings/view.profile/id.672). *Directions: Located 1 mile north of the city of Woodward on Hwy 34, then 5 miles east on Hwy 34C.*

**What to Expect:** The most striking aspect of the landscape in this Loop is that it is so diverse: there are shinnery oak mottes, tablelands, the extensive wooded area and springs within Boiling Springs State Park, two sandy-bottomed, wide rivers, and the extensive sand hills covered with mixed-grass prairie and sand sagebrush. Unique in these sand hills are the shinnery oak mottes, which to the human eye, resemble round gazebos scattered throughout the prairie. Center trees in the mottes reach heights of 10 to 15 feet and their offspring radiate from the center becoming progressively shorter and more closely spaced which effectively eliminates all other plants in the mottes. Although small, these oaks produce heavy crops of acorns and the density of the mottes provide much needed shelter just as gazebos provide shelter for people. **American Pronghorn, mule and white-tailed deer, Northern Bobwhite, scissor-tailed flycatchers and Cassin's sparrows** occur in this diverse landscape. The endangered **least tern** nests along the Canadian River and the imperiled **lesser prairie chicken** can still be heard booming in early spring.

**Lodging: Woodward:** <http://gowoodward.com/lodging>, motels, hotels, B&B, RV parks; Cabins/camping: **Boiling Springs State Park** (info above); **Shattuck:** motels, RV Parks, [www.shattuckchamber.org](http://www.shattuckchamber.org); **Arnett:** Circle C Motel 580.885.7551.

**One-Day Outings:** Fill up your gas tank and pack a picnic lunch (grocery stores in Woodward and Shattuck) or eat lunch at local cafes in Gage, Shattuck, and Arnett.

**Ellis County Wildlife Management Area (7-2)** is a great place to start your day in the sand hills surrounding Lake Vincent. Enjoy the drive around the Lake or enjoy walking the many little paths that surround the Lake. Exit the south entrance and follow signs to Hwy 283. Turn south (right) and travel approx. 10 miles to enter **Packsaddle Wildlife Management Area (7-3)** to experience the shinnery oak motte landscape. There are many areas to walk-in.

**Boiling Springs State Park (7-1)** is an unexpected landscape for the Great Plains...deciduous woodland abounds primarily because it is in the floodplain of the North Canadian River but also because of its many freshwater springs that seep and “boil” up from the ground. After lunch, stop by the Plains Indians and Pioneer Museum in Woodward to learn about the importance of wildlife culturally and historically.

**Birding Route:** Have breakfast in Shattuck and start at the **Ellis County WMA (7-2)**. (One Day Outing as described above.) Travel to the east side of Gage to **Gage Lake (7-4)** off of Hwy 15 which will provide wetland birding opportunities and a good place to picnic or try the local cafes in Arnett, Shattuck and Gage. Take a restroom break at Brauch-Hohweiler Park in Fargo. **Boiling Springs State Park (7-1)** has 5 easy walking trails in this densely wooded area. If limited on time consider walking either the River Trail or Scout Trail. `

**Off the Beaten Trail: Both of these scenic routes should only be driven during good weather. Wet conditions make these roads very slippery. A high-clearance vehicle is strongly recommended.**

**Canadian River Scenic Route (7-5):** From the **Ellis County WMA (7-2)** travel south on NS173 (gravel road) approx. 15 miles across the Canadian River bridge. Follow the winding road along the back edge on the Antelope Hills. At the town of Durham, continue east of E0810 Rd until the intersection of N1740 Rd. Turn north to drive the **Antelope Hills Scenic Route (7-6)** directly through the tablelands and leisurely look for roadrunners, prairie dog towns, and the American pronghorn. This route will continue north until the route turns east on E0720 Rd and then eventually south on N1780 Rd which will intersect with Hwy 33. **Four Canyon Preserve (7-7)** is operated by the Oklahoma Chapter of The Nature Conservancy and lies along the Canadian River. Visitation is by appointment only. 580.939.2220, cmhise@tnc.org, [www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org) (click on “places we protect”).

**Guest Ranches: Knowles Ranch (7-8)** Sagebrush, shinnery oak mottes, sand hills, beaver ponds, mixed-grass prairie can all be explored on this ranch where the Lesser Prairie Chicken males can be observed on their booming grounds. 580.885.7952, [cknowles@pldi.net](mailto:cknowles@pldi.net).