

Loop 9 – South Canadian Loop

What to Expect: The landscapes in this loop are the effect of three prairie rivers - the Cimarron, the North Canadian and the South Canadian. Flooded woodland, cattail wetlands and natural springs are nestled amongst rolling uplands carpeted with mixed-grass prairies and eastern redcedar (This not a misprint – this evergreen is not a true cedar but a juniper!). This diversity of wooded areas, wetlands and prairie provide habitat for both eastern and western bird species. Canton Lake, a 7900 acre reservoir, is the largest body of water on the Great Plains Trail and attracts **bald eagles, American white pelicans, gulls, and waterfowl** during winter. Adjacent to this lake is a **prairie dog town** that is active unless extremely cold. **Eastern meadowlarks, dickcissels, and roadrunners** are common in summer. **Rio Grande turkey** and **wood duck** are year-round residents. Count the number of **scissor-tailed flycatchers** perched on barbed wire fences and utility lines as you travel this loop during spring, summer and early fall- you'll be astounded at the total!

Lodging: [Lodging in Watonga](#); Lodge, cabins, camping at [Roman Nose State Park](#) (contact info above). Camping at [Canton Lake](#)

Taloga: [Little Robe Creek Lodge Retreat](#); The [Lodge at Rawhide Creek Ranch](#); **Seiling:** [Lodging in Seiling](#); **Longdale:** Walleye Motel, 580.274.3516.

One-Day Outings: Fill up your gas tank and pack a picnic lunch or enjoy lunch at any of the local cafes and restaurants in Watonga, Seiling, Vici, and Canton.

[Roman Nose State Park \(9-1\)](#): Once a winter campground of the Cheyenne tribe, this area now is a scenic retreat set on a canyon bluff that over-looks ancient mesas. With hiking trails, two lakes, natural springs, trout fishing in season, canoeing, horse stables and hayrides this Park offers a full day of wildlife-viewing fun. Check out their website (see above) for more information on lodging, scheduled programs and other amenities.

[Canton Lake \(9-2A\)](#) and [Wildlife Management Area \(9-2B\)](#) This beautiful man-made lake offers various outdoor recreational activities for the entire family. The Corps of Engineers operates five multi-use recreation areas that offer overnight camping and day-use to the public. Sightseers may view the lake from the 2.5 mile stretch of State Highway 58A that crosses over Canton Dam. Three parking areas with fishing jetties are located on the dam. Other features include a nature trail, overlook visitor center, outdoor amphitheater with scheduled weekend programs, a scenic drive and an active prairie dog town. (Contact information above.) Canton Wildlife Management Area (WMA) can be accessed by crossing Canton Dam east on State Highway 58 and immediately, after crossing the dam, turn left as the highway continues to curve right. This road will take you through the east side of the WMA.

Two Rivers Scenic Drive: Drive this winding route to get an overview of the landscape's beauty created by the North Canadian and South Canadian Rivers. From the town of Watonga, drive west on State Hwy 270 toward the town of Seiling. Turn west (left) 2 miles north of the very small town of Oakwood onto E0730 Road. Travel just over 5.5 miles and stop at the **Oakwood Low water Bridge (9-3)** over the South Canadian River. There are non-paved pull-offs located before and after the bridge where you can safely park. This stop provides the traveler with an opportunity to look for birds and wildlife at a cattail wetland adjacent to the river. Continue west on E0730 Rd for about 15.5 miles to the intersection of State Hwy 183 and turn north (right) to travel to the town of Taloga. North of Taloga, park in the parking area north of the bridge and take a short walk down to the South Canadian River to look for wildlife at the beginning of the **South Canadian River Nature Trail (9-4)**. **Beware of quicksand.** A little further north out of Taloga pull out on the right side of the Highway at **Raffington Hill (9-5)** to explore the base of the hill for lizards as well as the large trees for birds. Next, go back south just over ¼ mile and turn right onto Lenora Road (E0665 Rd.), just north of the bridge, and travel west approx. 3.8 miles on county blacktop road (E0665, to N2240, to E0670), 1½ miles south on N2230 (gravel road) to parking area (at intersection of N2230 Rd. and E0690 Rd.) of the **Dewey County WMA (9-6)**. Access to Dewey County WMA is foot access only from the parking area at the northwest corner of the WMA. Hip waders may be necessary to access the WMA during wet periods. From the parking area, take the ~26 mile **South Canadian River Valley Drive (9-7)** and enjoy the vistas. Start by traveling west 2 miles from the WMA parking area on the gravel road to the intersection of N2210 Rd. Turn left (south) onto N2210 and travel 6.5 miles to E0750 Rd. Turn right (west) and travel just over 4.5 miles to N2170 Rd. Turn right (north) and travel 2 ¼ miles to E0730 Rd. Travel 4.5 miles west to merge onto N2090 Rd. Continue on N2090 Rd. for 5 ¼ miles then turn left onto E0700 Rd. Continue 2 miles to town of Camargo and the junction of State Hwy 34. At Camargo, turn north (right) onto State Hwy 34 and travel to Vici for a break, ~ 10 miles. Take State Hwy 60 east to Seiling (20 miles) then turn south onto State Hwy 270. Travel 9 miles to junction of State Hwy 51. Take State Hwy 51 east (left) 14 miles to **Canton Lake (9-2)** that was created when the North Canadian River was dammed. Travel State Hwy 51 to State Hwy 51A, turn south and follow signs to **Roman Nose State Park (9-1)**, ~ 19 miles.

Birding Route: The **Two Rivers Scenic Drive** (see above) is an excellent birding route. Be at the **Oakwood Low Water Bridge (9-3)** at dawn.

Guest Ranches: **Rawhide Creek Ranch (9-8)** is found along the bluffs of the South South Canadian River where you will find everything from river bottoms filled with willows and cottonwoods to rolling hills that are covered with plum thickets. Ranch now has spacious lodge available. For a unique opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and experience a memorable hunt. See contact information above. **Little Robe Creek Lodge (9-9)** This lodge and retreat overlook Little Robe Creek which is spring fed, and flows into wetlands near the river. Walk the trails along the banks of the creek to find native cross timbers forest, which consists of black walnut, white oak, native elm, hackberry,

mulberry, redbuds, chittamwood, catalpa, and many other species of trees and native plants. In the summer, a great blue heron rookery can be observed. See contact information above.