

# KANSAS

## SMOKY VALLEY

*Scenic Byway*

Whether your preference is enjoying the natural beauty of wildflowers, the picturesque vista of windmills, the beauty of limestone bluffs or the wonders of the past, we welcome you and hope you will visit us again.



Zion Lutheran Church

Blaine Fisher ©2004



Old stone marker for the Butterfield Overland Despatch



Wilcox School

For more information about the Smoky Valley Scenic Byway contact:

1906 Cottage Garden Guest House • 1-785-743-2644

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Kansas Scenic Byways Website: [ksbyways.org](http://ksbyways.org)

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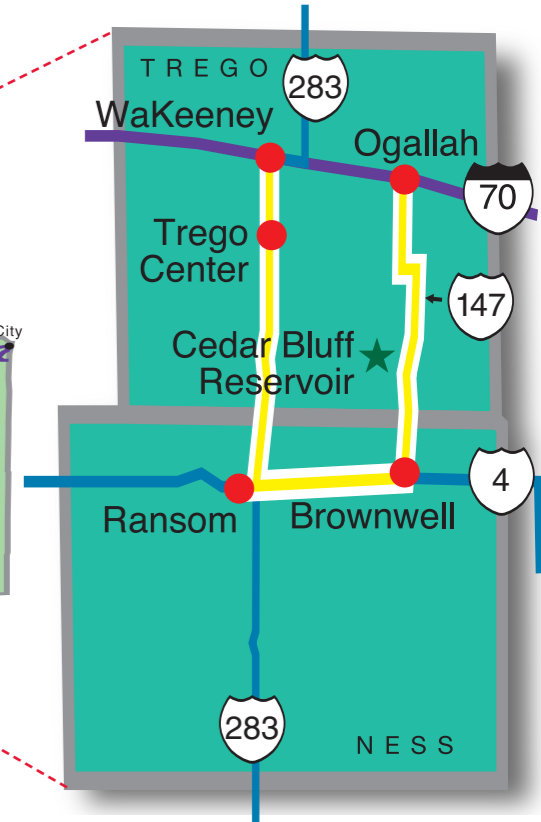
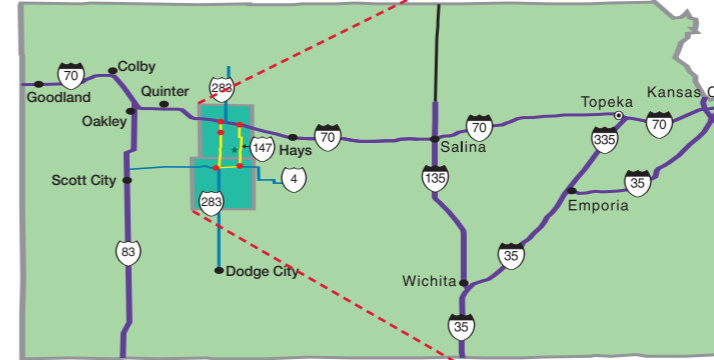
## SMOKY VALLEY

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### SMOKY VALLEY AREA MAP



### Points of Interest Near the Byway

#### Historical Sites and Museums

- Boot Hill Museum, Dodge City
- Ellis Railroad Museum and Doll Display, Ellis
- Emanuel Lutheran Church, Ogallah
- Fick Fossil and History Museum, Oakley
- Fort Hays State Historical Site, Hays
- Iwo Jima Monument, WaKeeney
- Keystone Gallery, Oakley
- Nicodemus National Historic Site, Nicodemus
- Prairie Mercantile Museum, Ness City
- Prairie Museum of Art and History, Colby
- Smoky Hill Trail/Butterfield Overland Despatch Trail
- Sternberg Museum of Natural History, Hays
- Thomas County Courthouse, Colby
- Trego County Historical Museum, WaKeeney
- WaKeeney Municipal Building, WaKeeney
- Walter P. Chrysler Boyhood Home and Museum, Ellis
- Wilcox School, WaKeeney

#### Recreational Opportunities

- Cedar Bluff State Park
- Claycamp Memorial Park, WaKeeney
- Eisenhower Park, WaKeeney
- North Pole Park, WaKeeney
- Scott State Park, Scott City
- Scout Park, WaKeeney
- Warren-Keeney Park, WaKeeney

#### Scenic Places

- 1900 Timber Claim, WaKeeney
- Bas Relief facing on the Citizen's State Bank, Morland
- Castle Rock, Quinter
- Cottonwood Ranch, Studley
- El Quartejejo Pueblo Ruins and Museum, Scott City
- Finney Game Refuge, Garden City
- Monument Rocks, Oakley
- Wildcat Canyon, Quinter



*A view of the bluffs from Cedar Bluffs Reservoir*

*Stunning sunset over the vast open skyline of Smoky Valley*

Troy Brown ©2004



Ariel S. Hausler ©2004

1800's carved their names in the limestone bluffs, some of which are still visible today. This area is located in a wildlife refuge and is open to the public from March 11 through August 31.

**Natural Wonders That Inspire...**

**D**iscover Castle Rock with its tall, steep-sided chalk formations, originally formed 80 million years ago. Smoky Hill chalk is known the world over for the fossils of reptiles and other sea life that have been discovered in these formations.

Cedar Bluff Dam & Reservoir was named for the 100-foot tall, cedar-covered limestone bluffs rising along the south side of the lake. A trip to the top of the bluff provides a stunning view of the area and is an ideal spot to view wildlife. Offering hunting, fishing, water sports and special events throughout the year, it is an ideal setting for all types of recreation.

# Explore the Smoky Valley Scenic Byway

**A**s you travel through west central Kansas, the gentle rolling hills open up to the Smoky Valley Scenic Byway, which passes through Trego and Ness counties. Named for their "hazy, blue-gray" appearance at sunrise and sunset, the Smoky Hills offer visitors an opportunity to experience the transition between the mixed-grass prairie and the short-grass prairie of the plains. Many varieties of native wildflowers – including colorful Indian blanket, coneflowers, yucca and swaying sky-blue pitcher sage – dot the Scenic Byway throughout the growing season.

Travelers on the Scenic Byway are greeted by a multitude of picturesque creaking windmills or "skyscrapers of the prairie" – a disappearing feature of the western Kansas prairie. These landmarks "that tamed the wind" were vital in providing life-giving water to the early home-

steads who traveled and settled in this valley and to their livestock on the abundant grazing lands.

During the winter season, WaKeeney, known as "The Christmas City of the High Plains", has a unique Christmas display featuring a 40 feet high handmade Christmas tree and over 6,000 lights. An annual tradition for over fifty years, it is considered the largest Christmas tree and lighting display between Kansas City and Denver.

*WaKeeney, The Christmas City of the High Plains*

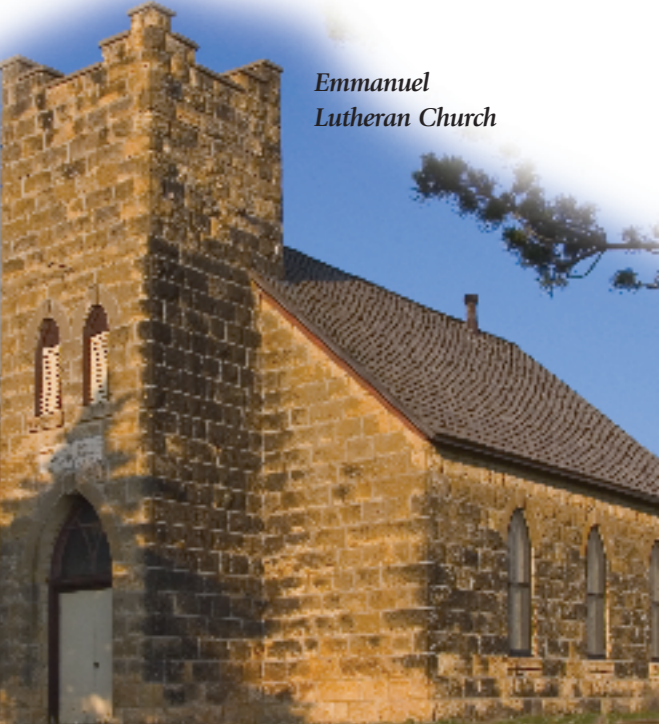


Sherry Spitsnaugle ©2004

**A River Valley Still Traveled...**

**T**he Scenic Byway is steeped in the rich history of the westward movement of the pioneers along the Smoky Hills Trail. The Butterfield Overland Despatch was established in 1865 along this trail by Col. David A. Butterfield to carry freight and later passengers. Following the Smoky Hill River from Fort Leavenworth to Denver, it was the shortest, but most dangerous route. Today limestone markers denote the location of the BOD, which crosses the Scenic Byway in two locations.

Threshing Machine Canyon, on the Smoky Hill Trail near Cedar Bluff State Park and Reservoir is the site of an 1867 Native American attack on a wagon train transporting a threshing machine to Brigham Young in Salt Lake City. Ambushed in the bottom of the canyon known as Bluffton Station, the remains of the old burned threshing machines could be seen for years. Travelers from the mid



*Emmanuel Lutheran Church*

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