

Activity & Adventure

Three Days/Two Nights on the Byway

"If you love nature, you know how good it feels to move..." - North Star Media
Bring your bicycle and your walking shoes for this adventure.

DAY ONE

Make your first byway stop at the **Kansas Wetlands Education Center** where you can orient yourself to both the wetlands and the pleasures of the nearby communities. Call ahead to schedule a guided van tour and bird watching excursion into the wetlands of **Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area**. The tours are a great way to scout out the best locations for bird and wildlife viewing. (Your van guide will also know if something "special" is on the wetlands like snowy owls, whooping cranes, pelicans, raptors). Next, explore nature by horseback at Camp Aldrich located just 4 miles from **Clafin**. They have a camp ranger for group rides. Call ahead for reservations (620-792-9340). And if you would rather hike, the camp's scenic trails are perfect for a nature walk.

Drive to **Great Bend** and treat yourself to a walking tour of the courthouse square and historic downtown. Stop for an espresso at Great Bend Coffee Company in the historic and quirky Masonic Lodge building, and then swing by the Brit Spaugh Zoo to tour the Raptor Center. Treat yourself to dinner at one of the local favorites (chicken enchiladas at Delgados). Or try The Page (healthy entrees, great steaks and always a generous serving of vegetables). After dinner, drive to **Hoisington** for a treat at the Dairy Queen and check into the Rodeway Inn.

DAY TWO

A workout at the Hoisington Activity Center will get you moving this morning, and the hotel provides a hot breakfast to keep you going. Explore Main Street on foot to glimpse the history and passions of this extraordinary town through a series of 60 metal sculptures (created by a local artist) mounted on downtown lampposts. See the WPA-era high school and City Building and visit the 1937 Dorothea Tomlinson murals in the Post Office lobby. Learn how this town rebuilt itself after the devastating Prom Night Tornado of 2001. If you have your bicycles, a peddle through town will reveal new construction in the path of the tornado. Pick up snacks or lunch at the Town and Country Supermarket (rebuilt after the tornado) on your way out of town. Hoisington lies inside the Cheyenne Bottoms Basin and The **Nature Conservancy's Cheyenne Bottoms Preserve** is literally at the community's doorstep. Climb the observation platform for a view of prairie and marsh. Then head for the Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area and get your midday exercise with a brisk walk along the dikes. Birds abound!

Leave time for an afternoon visit to the beautiful community of **Ellinwood**. Here you can explore town by bicycle or on foot. Take a tour of the Underground Tunnels for a fascinating history of the German influence in Ellinwood (pick up the tour at the Wolf Hotel) and check out the nine antique shops on Main Street. Enjoy dinner in Ellinwood before you drive further south on the byway. Locals recommend the specials at the American Legion (located in the town's historic train station). Drive to **Stafford** for overnight lodging at Henderson House, a retreat center and inn with three buildings on the National Register of Historic Places.

DAY THREE

Breakfast at Henderson House, followed by an architectural tour of Stafford on foot or bicycle. Don't miss the Methodist Church that was designed by a Frank Lloyd Wright disciple, or the charming Larabee Library. Stop at the Stafford County Museum and view the historic collection of Glass Negatives by turn-of-the-century St. John photographer W.R. Gray. Bicycle or drive to **St. John**, just 11 miles from Stafford. Pack lunch (pick up your supplies at Paul's Grocery in Stafford or Dillons #11 on the square in St. John) and picnic in the shady, picture-perfect town square. Tour the quirky Science Museum on the square, and visit Martin Cemetery, resting place of some of the African American Exodusters who settled in St. John after the Civil War.



More to see and do on the Byway

Clafin. Miller's of Clafin is one of the largest family owned furniture stores in the nation. It fills almost all the buildings on Clafin's Main Street.

Ellinwood. Lunch at the Lone Wolf.

Great Bend. Access the Arkansas River from the hike and bike trail for kayaking and canoeing. Visit Heartland Farm to pet the alpacas, walk the labyrinth, and visit the organic garden.

Hoisington. Unique shopping at Calp's Fur and Root – skins, roots, and herbs.

Hudson. Visit Carol Long Pottery.

St. John. Town square boasts a miniature Statue of Liberty erected by the Boy Scouts of America.

Stafford. Great Finds at the Stafford Mercantile. Admire the neon sign and enjoy a treat at the old-fashioned soda fountain.