



# VISITOR GUIDE

PROWERS COUNTY, CO  
[THEGREATHIGHPRAIRIE.COM](http://THEGREATHIGHPRAIRIE.COM)



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**PROWERS COUNTY, CO**

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# WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE.

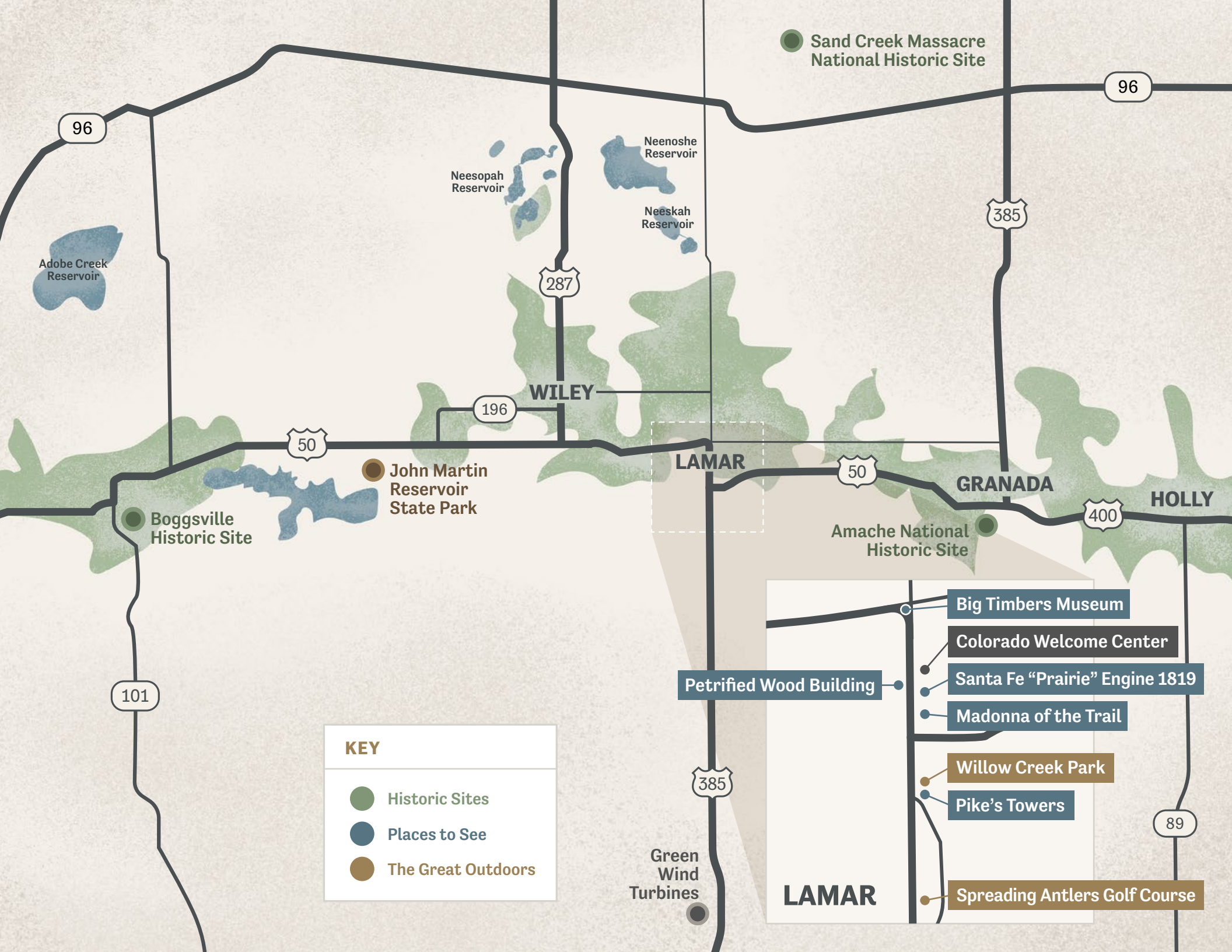
Set upon shimmering grasslands and alongside majestic canyons, the Great High Prairie in southeastern Colorado epitomizes the American frontier spirit.

Meet people who are connected to the land, honor the unique characters who shaped the region, and carry an optimism for a future that utilizes sustainable farming and energy practices.

Discover the beauty of a prairie sunset, the joy of large bird populations, and the peace that lies at the base of a canyon or alongside a tranquil lake.



WELCOME TO THE  
GREAT HIGH PRAIRIE,  
WHERE COLORADO BEGINS.



 Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site

96

96

Adobe Creek Reservoir

Neesopah Reservoir

Neenoshe Reservoir

Neeskah Reservoir

287

WILEY

196

50

 John Martin Reservoir State Park

 Boggsville Historic Site

LAMAR

50

GRANADA




 Amache National Historic Site

400

HOLLY

101

**KEY**

-  Historic Sites
-  Places to See
-  The Great Outdoors

 Big Timbers Museum

 Colorado Welcome Center

 Santa Fe "Prairie" Engine 1819

 Madonna of the Trail

 Willow Creek Park

 Pike's Towers

 Spreading Antlers Golf Course

 Petrified Wood Building

385

Green Wind Turbines

LAMAR

89

# LEAVE NO TRACE

## 7 LEAVE NO TRACE PRINCIPLES

We kindly ask that you minimize your impact when visiting  
The Great High Prairie.

1

PLAN AHEAD & PREPARE

2

TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

3

DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

4

LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

5

MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

6

RESPECT WILDLIFE

7

BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS



LEAVE ONLY FOOTPRINTS.  
TAKE ONLY MEMORIES.







# COMMUNITIES

LAMAR, HOLLY,  
GRANADA, & WILEY MAKE UP  
PROWERS COUNTY AND  
THE GREAT HIGH PRAIRIE.



## LAMAR

Lamar was selected as the townsite when a railroad station was moved from the Blackwell Ranch three miles east. When the railroad extended, Lamar became the railhead, and the town was founded in 1886.

Lamar was named after Lucius Quintus Lamar, the secretary of the interior at the time.

Lamar, the county seat of Prowers County, is a rural, agricultural-based community where numerous events and activities are scheduled throughout the year. A visit to Lamar may include outdoor recreation, concerts, historical deep dives, community events, or a relaxed shopping experience.

## HOLLY

Holly was settled as a ranching community, and the town was incorporated in 1903. The town was named for Hiram S. Holly, a local cattleman. Hiram S. Holly moved to the town in 1871 and brought 1,300 cattle with him. Holly's ranch, the SS Ranch or Double S Ranch, was the first settlement in the area. The Holly SS Ranch Barn, a stone barn built in 1879, survives and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Holly grew into a community that gained fame from its abundant sugar beet crops. Today, Holly is a quiet town that has wonderful bird habitats and a Rockwellian atmosphere for visitors and locals alike.

## GRANADA

Among the farms that dominate Granada's landscape is the Camp Amache National Historic Site. Granada residents have honored the Japanese people affected by WWII's travesties by preserving Camp Amache's land, artifacts, and memories.

## WILEY

Wiley epitomizes the best of rural life and small-town friendliness. Walk through town and discover beautiful sandstone curbs and gutters and the Old Rock Schoolhouse, a WPA project that is now designated on the National Historic Register.



THE HOLLY SS RANCH BARN  
SURVIVES AND IS LISTED ON  
THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF  
HISTORIC PLACES.





# THE HISTORY OF AGRICULTURE ON THE GREAT HIGH PRAIRIE

Railroads arrived in the 1880s, leading to the development of agriculture and towns on the Great High Prairie. By the twentieth century, the region had become an essential part of the cattle, alfalfa, and sugar beet industry.

Devastating flooding in 1921, followed by the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl, hit the region's agricultural landscape hard. However, demand for agricultural products during World War II brought the county's economy back to life.

In the decades following World War II, combines, fertilizers, pesticides, and other new farm implements allowed for larger farms and encouraged farmland consolidation.



Today, agriculture is big business, and farmers and ranchers are constantly exploring new technology and research in pursuit of higher yields, making The Great High Prairie one of the most agriculturally productive regions in the state.

## THE COLORADO WELCOME CENTER

The Colorado Welcome Center in Lamar is housed in the 1907 train depot, which is on the National Historic Register and still serves as a scheduled stop for Amtrak. As one of the 10 official Colorado Welcome Centers, the Lamar Welcome Center sees visitors coming into Colorado from surrounding states like Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, and New Mexico.

The Welcome Center provides Wi-Fi, a book exchange, and restrooms. Visitors will also find many brochures and guides covering locations throughout Colorado. Volunteers are happy to help with travel plans and advise on road and weather conditions.

The Colorado Welcome Center in Lamar is open daily from 8 am to 5 pm.





# EXPLORE THE PAST

## AMACHE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

In 1942, after the war with Japan had started, the United States appointed land southwest of Granada as a Japanese Incarceration Camp, later known as Camp Amache.

Amache was designated a National Historic Site in 2022. This designation permanently protects the site for future generations and helps tell the history of Japanese-American incarceration during WWII.

Today, visitors may drive through the National Historic Site on dirt roads and read covered kiosks detailing life at the camp. A museum in Granada is open daily during the summer and by appointment in the winter. The museum holds a collection of artifacts collected from Amache internees and families.



AMACHE'S DESIGNATION ALLOWS IT  
TO SERVE AS A REMINDER OF OUR  
PAST FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

### SAND CREEK MASSACRE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Due to mounting tensions between the Plains Indians and the white settlers moving west, US Army Colonel John Chivington ordered several hundred members of the Colorado Territory militia to attack Cheyenne and Arapaho Indian villages in an area known as Sand Creek on November 29, 1864. Despite the Cheyenne and Arapahoe hanging a US flag and a white Flag of Truce, 230 Indians were killed and mutilated.

The Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site offers visitors the opportunity to stand on the ground of this historic travesty and learn more from interpretive signage.

### BOGGSVILLE HISTORIC SITE

Boggsville became the first permanent settlement in southeastern Colorado. The town flourished for a few years but declined in the 1870s when the railroad arrived a few miles away in Las Animas.

After a restoration effort in the 1990s, Boggsville became an interpretive museum and was named a National Treasure by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

### BIG TIMBERS MUSEUM

Big Timbers Museum features artifacts and exhibits that tell the history and legacy of the High Plains of Eastern Colorado. Exhibits range from the pioneers, the Dust Bowl, and homesteaders to an exciting display of original WWI posters.

The adjacent building is home to Big Timbers Transportation Museum, which opened in 2011 and features antique wagons and more.



BOGGSVILLE BECAME  
THE FIRST PERMANENT  
SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH-  
EASTERN COLORADO.







# THE FLEAGLE GANG FINGERPRINT

In 1928, a Lamar bank robbery, a getaway, four murders, and an abandoned car led the FBI to use a fingerprint to identify and convict a criminal for the first time in U.S. history.

After robbing Lamar's First National Bank and killing the bank's president and his son, Jack Fleagle and his gang drove off, only to pick up a local doctor to assist with a wound incurred during the robbery.

After killing the doctor and dumping the doctor's car in a ravine, local investigators discovered a fingerprint on the side of the vehicle and sent copies to the FBI.

An agent at the FBI studied the fingerprint in detail and matched it with a man who had recently been arrested and released in California. It was a perfect match!

The discovery led to the eventual arrest and execution of Jack Fleagle and his gang accused of murder during the time of the First National Bank robbery.

## WIND POWER

What better place to harvest the wind than the windy prairies of southeastern Colorado? Dotted over the years by a variety of historic water-pumping windmills, the area now blends its historic past with a progressive future.

On the Great High Prairie, two of Colorado's wind farms were developed to help meet Colorado's demand for clean, renewable energy. Find them south of Lamar on US Hwy 287/385.



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN U.S.  
HISTORY, THE FBI USED A  
FINGERPRINT TO CONVICT.

# THINGS TO SEE



THE MONUMENT REMAINS A SYMBOL OF THE COURAGE AND FAITH OF THE WOMEN WHOSE STRENGTH AND LOVE AIDED SO GREATLY IN CONQUERING THE WILDERNESS.

## MADONNA OF THE TRAIL MONUMENT

Commissioned and installed by the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), the Madonna of the Trail Monument in Lamar celebrates the pioneer mothers of the covered wagon days on the Santa Fe Trail. Harry S. Truman was asked by the DAR to select a site, and after considering Trinidad and La Junta, he chose Lamar.

The monument was dedicated in 1928 and remains a symbol of the courage and faith of the women whose strength and love aided so greatly in conquering the wilderness and establishing permanent homes.





### SANTA FE “PRAIRIE” ENGINE 1819

The 1819 “Prairie” Engine that sits in front of the Colorado Welcome Center was forged by Philadelphia-based Baldwin Locomotive Works for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway.

Engine 1819 retired in October 1953 after 47 years of service. It traveled a total of 916,626 miles during its tenure and handled freight, passengers, and switch duties in the “Middle Division” of Missouri, Kansas, and Colorado.

### PETRIFIED WOOD BUILDING

Constructed of petrified wood found three miles northwest of Two Buttes Mountain, the 1932 Petrified Wood Building was once touted as “the oldest working gas station in the world, at over 175,000,000 years old.”

Three months after the gas station opened, Ripley’s Believe It or Not mentioned it in a column which read, “The Petrified Wood House, Built Entirely of Wood Turned to Stone.”



### THE HISTORIC SANTA FE TRAIL

For 59 years, the Santa Fe Trail was one thread in a web of international trade routes, influencing economies as far away as New York, London, and Mexico.

Spanning 900 miles on the Great Plains between Missouri and Santa Fe, New Mexico, it brought together a cultural mosaic of people, including traders, emigrants, adventurers, hunters, American Indians, and more.

Stand on the Santa Fe Trail on The Great High Prairie, where you’ll find several Santa Fe Trail markers.

### PIKE’S TOWER

Zebulon Pike and his men camped along Willow Creek near the location of present-day Lamar on November 13, 1806. The spot is marked by forty-foot Pike’s Tower, located in Willow Creek Park and developed in 1933 as Lamar’s first Works Progress Administration (WPA) depression-era project.



# HISTORICAL BUILDINGS OF DOWNTOWN LAMAR

## 119 SOUTH MAIN

This building was a post office from 1900 to 1907 when it became a drug store. It remained a drug store until 2008 when it became a fitness franchise and then Brew Unto Others, a coffee shop and internet cafe.

## 117 SOUTH MAIN

Built in 1889, this building housed an opera house, barbershop, theater, dry goods store, and more before becoming home to the Shore Arts Center. Today, the building houses the Arkansas Valley Wind and Percussion Ensemble and the Valley Jazz Orchestra—groups made up of local musicians. Performances are held here throughout the year.



LAMAR HAS MANY  
HISTORICAL BUILDINGS IN  
ITS DOWNTOWN, INCLUDING  
AN OPERA HOUSE AND A  
GRANITE COURT HOUSE.







### 122 NORTH MAIN

The Davies Hotel served travelers, local workingmen, sugar beet factory workers, and some prominent characters, including the bank-robbing Fleagle gang and actor Tom Mix.

### 100 NORTH MAIN

This ornamental concrete building was built around 1906 as a one-story saloon. It was a drug store from 1911 to 1940 and has since been a liquor store.

### 114 SOUTH MAIN

This stone building was constructed in 1894 and is remembered locally as the Main Café that operated from 1940 to 1990.

### 122 SOUTH MAIN

This building is the location of the First National Bank, which purchased the property in 1888. The First National Bank was famously robbed by the Fleagle Gang in 1928. Bullet holes from the robbery can still be seen inside.

### 322 SOUTH MAIN

The Alamo Hotel was built in 1936 and operated as a hotel until 1970. The Lamar Housing Authority purchased the property in 1985, remodeled it for senior housing, and renamed it Alamo Apartments. It is now privately owned and rented as apartments.

### 301 SOUTH MAIN

The Prowers County Courthouse was constructed in 1929 of granite from the same quarry as the Empire State Building. It is considered one of the most unique and distinguished county courthouses in the state.

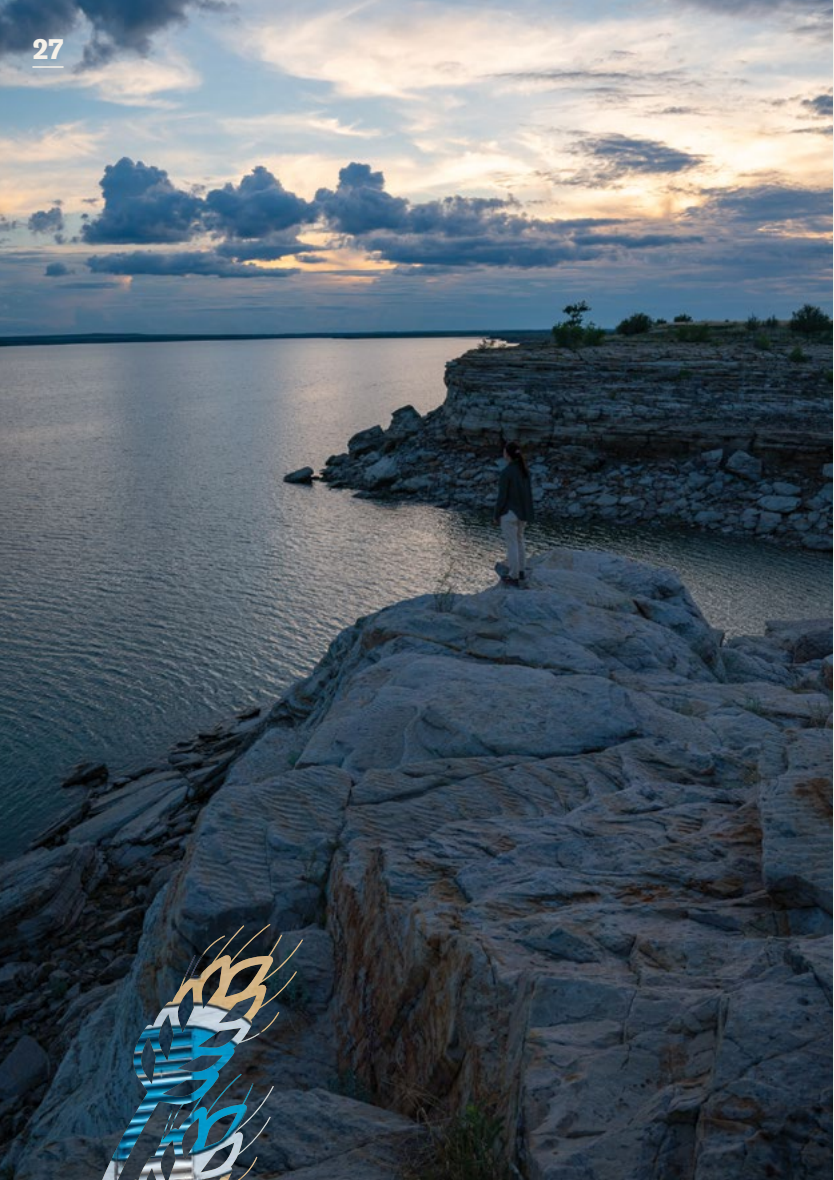
### 219 SOUTH MAIN

Built in 1911, this property has been a hardware and furniture business and then a jewelry and drug store. In 1946, it was renovated into the Lamar Theatre and has since been nationally recognized for its unique Art Deco architectural design.

### 201 SOUTH MAIN

The Maxwell House, considered one of the finest hotels in Colorado, was built in 1929. In 2020, the hotel was renovated and rebranded as the Max.





DINOSAUR TRACKS CAN BE  
SEEN ALONG THE SHORE AT  
JOHN MARTIN RESERVOIR.

# THE GREAT OUTDOORS

## JOHN MARTIN RESERVOIR STATE PARK

John Martin Reservoir, the largest body of water in southeastern Colorado, sits like a sapphire on the plains.

Southeastern Colorado's mild weather and the reservoir's lack of crowds provide great opportunities for water sports throughout the year. Anglers catch a variety of fish, birders have a chance to see hundreds of species, and hikers enjoy the Red Shin Trail.

When the water at John Martin Reservoir is low, tracks made by various dinosaurs, crocodiles, and a few pterosaurs also become visible along the shore.



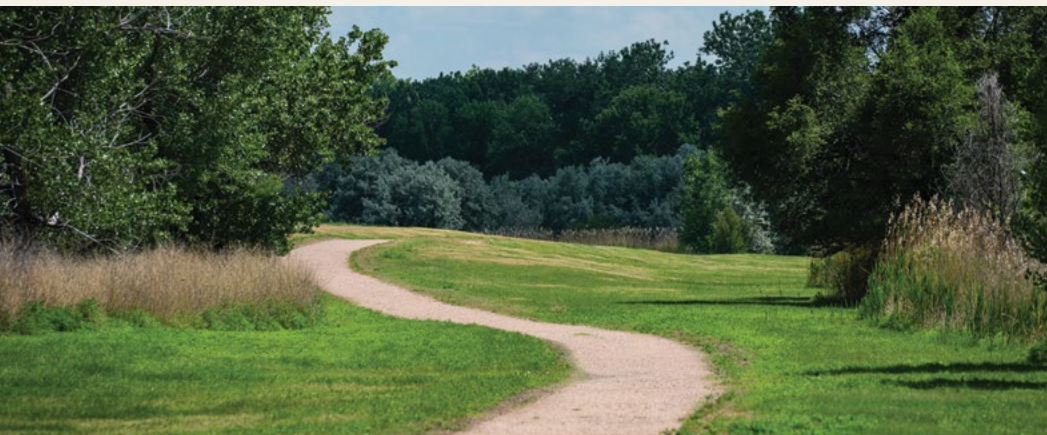


## BIRDING

The Great High Prairie is known as one of the best birding destinations in the state. In fact, Lamar had more than 400 species per the latest count. And with such high numbers, it comes as no surprise that new bird species are often identified on the Great High Prairie. For an easy birding trail, head to Willow Creek Trail behind Lamar Community College—an oasis for birds who have just flown miles and miles over the plains.

## TRAILS

Stick close to Lamar for a leisurely walk on the Willow Creek Trail or ride your bike on the popular 6-mile Lamar Loop, which encompasses the entire community. For a more adventurous outing, head to the canyons of southeastern Colorado and hike Cottonwood, Picture,



Picketwire, Carrizo, and Vogel Canyons. Other hiking options include Two Buttes Mountain, 20 miles south of Lamar, and Red Shin Trail at John Martin Reservoir State Park.

## SPREADING ANTLERS

### GOLF COURSE

Challenge yourself by playing the Spreading Antlers Golf Course, often referred to as the “most challenging nine-hole course in the country.”

This meticulously maintained nine-hole public golf course measures 2963/3103 yards with a slope rating of 114 and a USGA rating of 68.2. The course features 4 sets of tees for all skill levels.

## WILLOW CREEK PARK

Willow Creek Park was Colorado’s first Civil Works Administration project and the first planned park in Lamar, providing a location for active and passive recreation activities. Its buildings and stone features are good examples of the Rustic style as interpreted by New Deal agencies. The park was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2007. Today, Willow Creek Park has playgrounds, a skatepark, a disc golf course, and more.



# ANNUAL EVENTS

## FEBRUARY

HIGH PLAINS SNOW GOOSE FESTIVAL

## APRIL

LCC FRONTIER HISTORY ENCAMPMENT

## MAY

LAMAR DAYS ROD RUN

ANNUAL AMACHE PILGRIMAGE

WILD WEST BBQ COOK-OFF

## JUNE

ROLLING HILLS COWBOY CAMP

HOLLY BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL



## AUGUST

ANNUAL DOWNTOWN CUSTOM & CLASSIC CAR EXPO

SANTA FE DUTCH OVEN EXTRAVAGANZA

SAND & SAGE ROUND-UP COUNTY FAIR AND RODEO

## SEPTEMBER

HOLLY GATEWAY FAIR

TRI-STATE 9/11 TRIBUTE

MOUNTED THUNDER RIDERS, SHOOTING FROM THE SADDLE

PEDAL THE PLAINS

## DECEMBER

LIGHTED ENCHANTED FOREST

SANTA HOUSE

CHRISTMAS PARADE



# RODEOS

## APRIL

SE ALL-STAR & HIGH SCHOOL RODEO

## MAY

ROLLING HILLS COWBOY CAMP MEETING

## JULY

COLORADO JUNIOR RODEO ASSOCIATION RODEO

## AUGUST

SAND & SAGE ROUNDUP FAIR & RODEO

## SEPTEMBER

COLORADO MOUNTED THUNDER

## OCTOBER

LAMAR COMMUNITY COLLEGE ANTELOPE STAMPEDE









