

“Great Bend — It’s In Our Nature To Inspire!”

If your inspiration comes from paddling, hiking, biking, outdoor photography, or birding. . .then **Great Bend, KS** is your natural wonderland.

Fashioned from whole Kansas cloth and deeply held-Midwestern values and motivated by perseverance and resolve, Great Bend is a blend of 19th century pioneer spirit and 21st century vision. It is a city that has made peace with, and thrives by the environment in which they live, while embracing their role as the guardian of one of nature’s most inspiring habitats.

You will find rural charm, amazing natural resources, and true Midwestern hospitality combined with all the amenities travelers need and expect for an “inspiring” visitor experience.



Great Bend Services

Population: 15,652

Lodging

- America’s Best Value Inn
3500 10th Street - (620) 793-8486
- Baltzell Motel
705 10th Street - (620) 792-4395
- Best Western Angus Inn
2920 10th Street - (620) 792-3541
- Comfort Inn
911 Grant Street - (620) 793-9000
- Days Inn
4701 10th Street - (620) 792-8235
- Highland Hotel and Convention Center
3017 10th Street - (620) 792-2431
- Travelers Budget Inn
4200 10th Street - (620) 793-5448
- Travelodge
3200 10th Street - (620) 792-7219

Wireless Internet Access

- Great Bend Convention & Visitors Bureau office
- Great Bend Raptor Center at the Brit Spaugh Zoo

Library

Great Bend Public Library
1409 Williams Street - (620) 792-2409

Emergency 911 **Road Conditions** 511

Hospitals

- St. Rose Ambulatory and Surgery Center
3515 Broadway - (620) 792-2511
- Great Bend Regional Hospital
514 Cleveland Street - (620) 792-8833

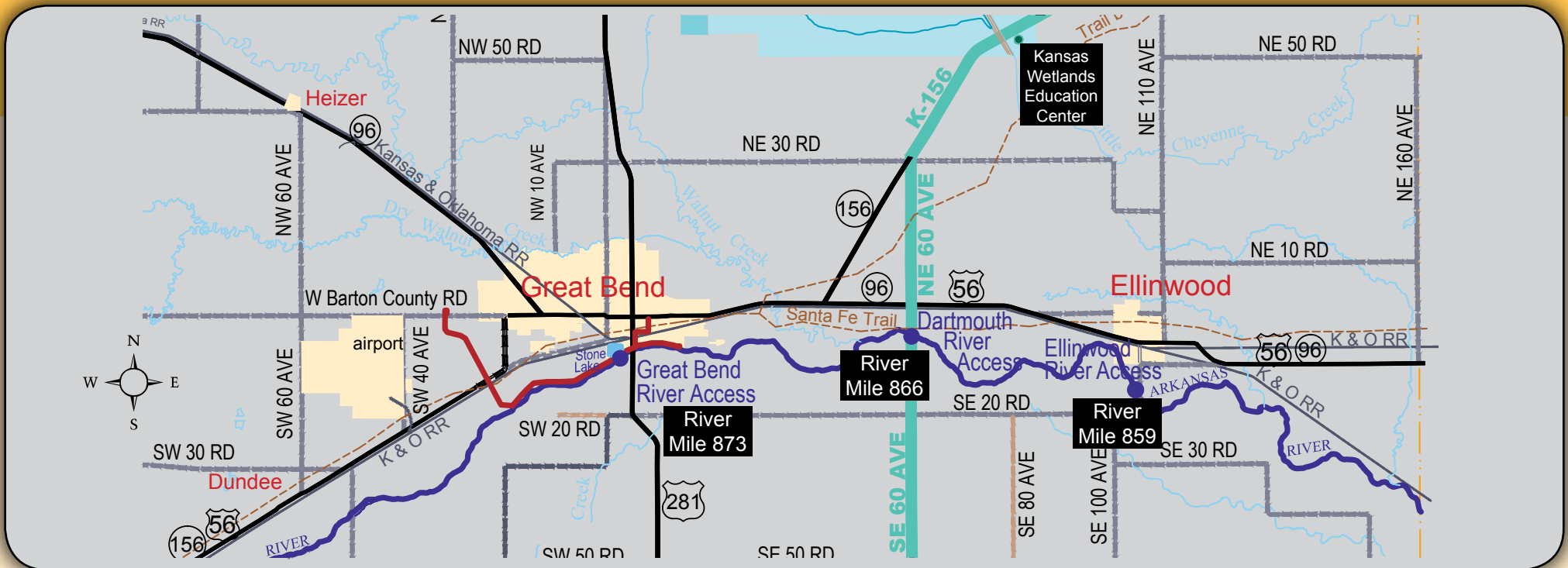


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Paddle Great Bend, KS



www.visitgreatbend.com



Arkansas River Paddling

Great Bend is located almost in the center of Kansas at the apex of a giant northward bend of the Arkansas River. The waters flow north then turn south and east toward Wichita. The Santa Fe Trail ran through the point where Great Bend is now located, bringing early Americans, Mexicans, Native Americans and settlers together for trade.

Consider entering the Arkansas at Stone Lake and take out at either Dartmouth (app. 7 miles) or the Ellinwood access (app. 10 miles).

Stone Lake Access

River mile 873
GPS: N38.3522 W-98.7679
Directions: From Railroad Avenue and Washington Street, drive south to the parking lot north of the dike. Follow the trail to the Hike/Bike Path over the dike and down to the river.

Dartmouth Access

River mile 866
GPS: N38.3553 W-98.6641
Directions: From US Hwy 56 and 60th Avenue (the

Scenic Byway) drive south one-half mile. Cross the bridge and park on the east side of the road.

Ellinwood Access

River mile 859
GPS: N38.3403 W-98.5822
Directions: From US Hwy 56 and Main Street in Ellinwood drive one mile south. Park on the west side of the road before you cross the bridge. Follow the trail next to the bridge.



Kansas Property Rights

Kansas property owners own the riverbeds, not the water itself! There are three “public” rivers in the state: the Kansas, the **Arkansas**, and the Missouri. Only those three rivers, are considered open for your use without the permission of the landowners.

According to the high court’s decision, on those three “public” rivers, the riverbed and banks, up to the usual high-water mark, are public property. The “usual high-water mark” includes the land up to the line along the top of the riverbank above where the largest trees (if any) regularly grow, the upper line below which the signs of the river’s erosion are visible, and the line below which river debris has been deposited (“trash line”) along the banks and in the trees and brush within the river channel.

“There is no greater gift we can give our children than an appreciation of the natural world, the tools to maintain it, and the passion to preserve and enjoy.” — Mark Hughes, Arkansas River Coalition

Cheyenne Bottoms Paddling

The 19,857-acre basin containing Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Refuge is northeast of Great Bend. As the largest interior marsh in the U.S., the Refuge is vital to shorebird migration. In order to protect the birds and other wildlife, boating activities are limited. During the waterfowl season, in-water propeller-driven boats and hand powered boats can be utilized in Pools 2, 3 and 4. Airboats are not allowed at any time. Outside the waterfowl season, only hand-powered boats are allowed. From April 15 to August 15, hand powered watercraft are not permitted between 10 A.M. and 5 P.M. Life jacket laws will be enforced.

Stone Lake and Veteran’s Lake Paddling

Two jewels of Great Bend and Barton County; featuring shade, walking trails, grilling pits and picnic areas. In addition to paddling, you’ll enjoy fishing, biking, hiking, relaxing near the water’s edge, and much more. These small lakes are perfect for intimate family gatherings, yet close to all city amenities.

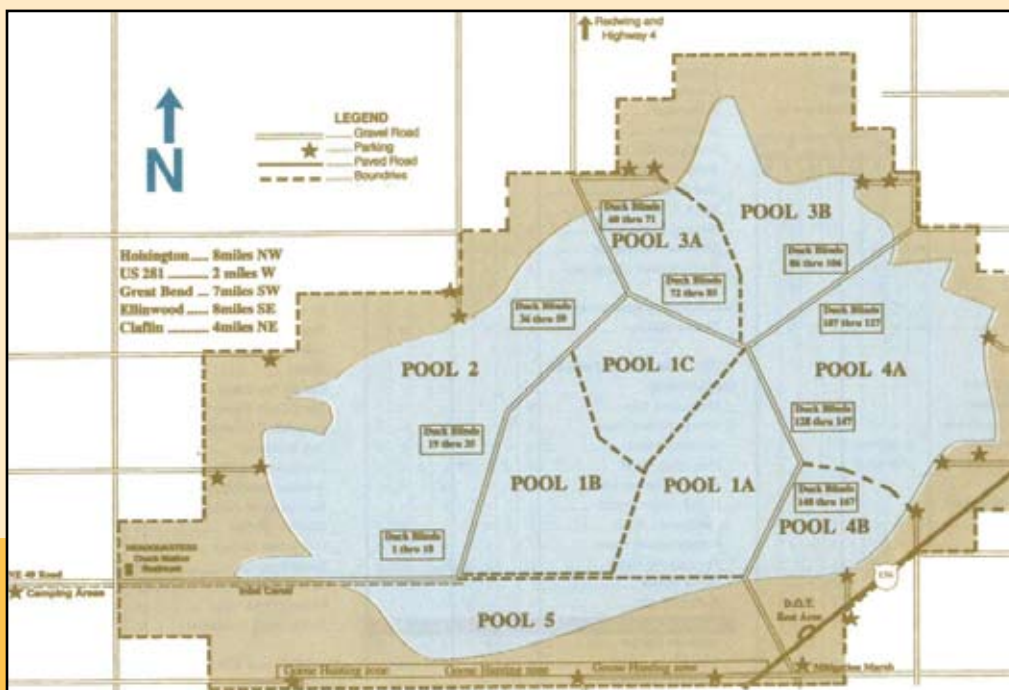
Both of these lakes are in the Great Bend city limits and are governed by city ordinances.

Permitted watercraft: rowboats, paddleboats, sailboats, canoes and life rafts. These watercraft may use an electric trolling motor.

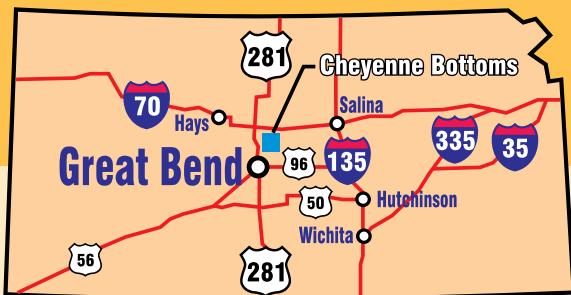
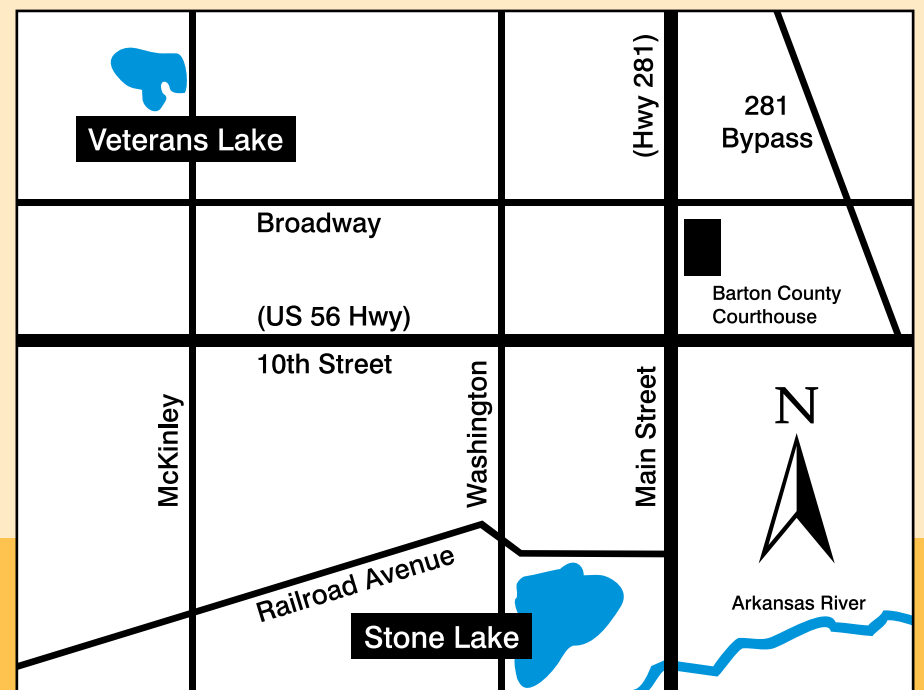
Launching shall be limited to designated launch areas. Boating shall not be permitted after eleven-thirty pm. and before daylight of the succeeding day. Life jacket laws will be enforced.



Map of Cheyenne Bottoms



Map of Great Bend showing Veterans and Stone Lakes



River Safety

- Know your limitations and do not exceed them
- Know the river; if it looks too high or too low, don’t chance it
- Beware of high winds, especially on wide rivers
- Don’t boat alone
- Tell a responsible person staying on land where you are boating and when to expect you back
- Be a competent swimmer
- Wear a well-fitting personal flotation device (PFD)
- Beware of cold-and hot-weather conditions
- Have the right clothing and gear for the weather and boating conditions
- Stay well hydrated
- If in doubt, portage
- Stay clear of fallen trees and obstructions
- Be sure everyone can identify the “take-out”
- Know how long your trip will take and be prepared for double that time
- Be prepared to deal with the worst that could happen

Pack for Safety

Minimum requirements—Boat, paddle(s)/oars, and a personal flotation device properly fitted and properly secured. Always take a spare paddle, throw rope, floatation bags, bailing bucket or sponge, appropriate dry clothes (in a waterproof container), map and compass, river shoes, and rain jacket and pants. Take a First-aid kit, knife, whistle, waterproof matches/lighter, and duct tape.

Miscellaneous—Sunglasses with strap, hat, sun-block and lip balm, insect repellent, fishing tackle and license, food, trash bags, camera, extra set(s) of keys for the shuttle vehicle(s), binoculars, and personal medications.

Cell phones are nice in an emergency, but rarely work on the river. If you take one, it is helpful to know where along your route you can get reception.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a decrease in body temperature that causes the body and brain to fail. Few paddlers die of hypothermia, but it is very often a contributing factor in drowning. Hypothermia does not always occur in cold weather. A sudden swim may soak an unprepared boater; wind can steal body heat rapidly. An injured person may experience hypothermia very quickly as shock sets in.

- Learn the symptoms and treatment for hypothermia
- Be smart: prevention is the best treatment
- Be skilled in self-rescue and know how to rescue others
- Eat and drink often to maintain your energy reserve

River Etiquette

- Be responsible for your own safety
- Help others when they need it, but only when you can do so without endangering yourself
- Abstain from alcohol and drugs
- Be quiet so you do not disturb the peace of the local landowners and your fellow paddlers. If you must have a radio, wear headphones so that others can hear the wilderness
- Leave things made of glass at home
- Respect private property
- If you build a fire, build it below the high-water mark so that the next rain will wash the ashes away. Keep it small and put it out
- Whether hiking, camping, or boating, leave nothing behind but footprints and take nothing but pictures and memories. Leave no trace of your passing, except to clean up where others have failed



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Pictures courtesy of the Great Bend Convention and Visitor’s Bureau and Dan Witt