

Welcome . . .

To Black Kettle and McClellan Creek National Grasslands

Black Kettle National Grassland is comprised of 31,286 acres with 30,710 acres located in Roger Mills County, Oklahoma, and 576 acres located near Canadian in Hemphill County, Texas. The Oklahoma portion of the Black Kettle is composed of 114 different parcels located near Cheyenne, Oklahoma. McClellan Creek National Grassland contains 1,449 acres located near McLean in Gray County, Texas. Black Kettle Grassland is named for Black Kettle, the famous peace chief of the Cheyenne tribe. McClellan Creek Grassland derives its name from McClellan Creek, named for explorer and army officer G.B. McClellan, by his commander R.B. Marcy. Both grasslands are managed by Cibola National Forest, United States Department of Agriculture, and administered by the Black Kettle Ranger District, headquartered in Cheyenne, Oklahoma.

History

Black Kettle and McClellan Creek National Grasslands are located on lands that were once home to native tribes such as the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Sioux, Apache, Comanche, Pawnee, and many others. After much conflict and the eventual relocation of the tribes, settlers were drawn to the area because of the promise of “free land” during the land run era of western expansion. The settlers swept across the plains establishing farmsteads which led to rapid changes in the landscape. In the 1930s, the region experienced extreme drought and strong winds that swept away as much as 4 inches of soil. Farms were severely devastated and sometimes abandoned during this time which became known as the “Dust Bowl.” At the same time, America was struggling through the “Great Depression.” As part of an economic recovery plan, Congress enacted the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 and the Emergency Relief Appropriations Act of 1935. Through these programs, the Federal Government was able to relocate many of the destitute farmers and purchase the drought-stricken lands, using the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act of 1937. This legislation required the Department of Agriculture to develop a program of land conservation and utilization that did not involve row cropping. Thus began an era of “grassland agriculture.” After these lands were partially stabilized, they were transferred from the Soil Conservation Service to the U.S. Forest Service in 1954, and were established as national grasslands in 1960. Because lands comprising the grasslands were purchased from willing sellers, it has a “checkerboard” look and feel.

Multiple use of the Grasslands

Recreation

Black Kettle and McClellan Creek National Grasslands are open year-round. Tucked into the plains are five lakes with developed recreation sites, picnic and camping areas, trails, and spectacular scenery. Visitors enjoy fishing almost all year, with some seasonal changes in water levels. There are several wildlife trails that provide opportunities for viewing



Cactus Flowers



Windmill and abandoned structure



Croton Creek

wildlife or spectacular wildflower vistas. Hunting is permitted on most of the Oklahoma portion of Black Kettle National Grassland and is one of the most enjoyed hunting areas in the state. Hunting is prohibited on the Lake Marvin Unit at McClellan Creek National Grassland, both located in Texas. Off-road enthusiasts will find designated ATV and motorcycle trails at McClellan Creek, a popular spot of the Texas Panhandle.

Background photo: Lake Marvin, USFS circa–1964.



White-tailed Deer

Grazing

The grasslands support local ranching operations by issuing permits for livestock grazing. Both the ranchers and the grasslands benefit from this arrangement, as this use of the grasslands contributes to the social and economic well-being of this area, while proper grazing helps manage native ecosystems.



Grazing Cattle

Energy

The grasslands provide for oil and natural gas extraction that contributes to meeting the Nation’s energy needs and supporting the local economy in the form of production and service industry jobs. Royalties from oil and gas wells have also contributed millions of dollars to area schools and county roads as well as revenue to the Federal Government.

Ecosystem Management

Ecosystems within the grasslands produce thousands of pollinators including: butterflies, bees, wasps, birds, and moths. Nationally, wild pollinators account for one-third of the food produced for human consumption. Established vegetation protects soils against excessive erosion caused by heavy rain and/or wind and helps retain the natural water filtration of the watershed for usage further downstream and aquifer recharge. Our national grasslands are a continuing success story for the Forest Service’s commitment to provide sustainable multiple use for future generations.

Interpretation

The Black Kettle Interpretive Trail at the district office provides a glimpse of what life was like on the grasslands. Visitors will see a working windmill, examples of local plants and trees, and a replica dugout home, as well as prescribed fire study plots.

How to Find Us:

The Black Kettle and McClellan Creek National Grasslands office is located in Cheyenne, Oklahoma, and shares space with the National Park Service’s Washita Battlefield National Historic Site. Congress established Washita Battlefield National Historic Site on November 13, 1996, as part of the National Park System. In 2007, a visitor center was completed which serves as headquarters for both the historic site and the Black Kettle Ranger District. We are located approximately 1 mile north of Cheyenne at:

18555 Hwy. 47A
Cheyenne, OK. 73628
Phone: (580) 497-2143 or
go to: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/cibola>

Wildlife

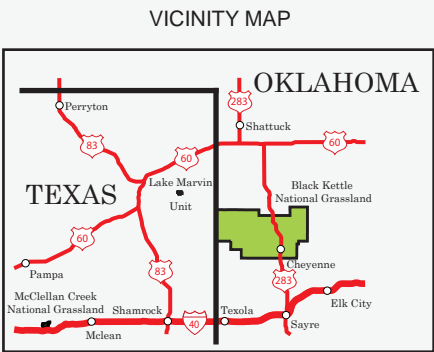
There are abundant and diverse wildlife habitats in the grasslands. Commonly seen animals include: white-tailed deer, Rio Grande turkeys, coyotes, beavers, bobcats, rabbits, and squirrels. The grasslands serve as a winter haven for a wide variety of ducks and geese. Hawks and owls can be found, as well as quail, songbirds, dove, and the seasonal Mississippi kite.



Rio Grande Turkey



Washita Battlefield National Historic Site Visitors Center and Ranger District Office



For maps and other information, contact:

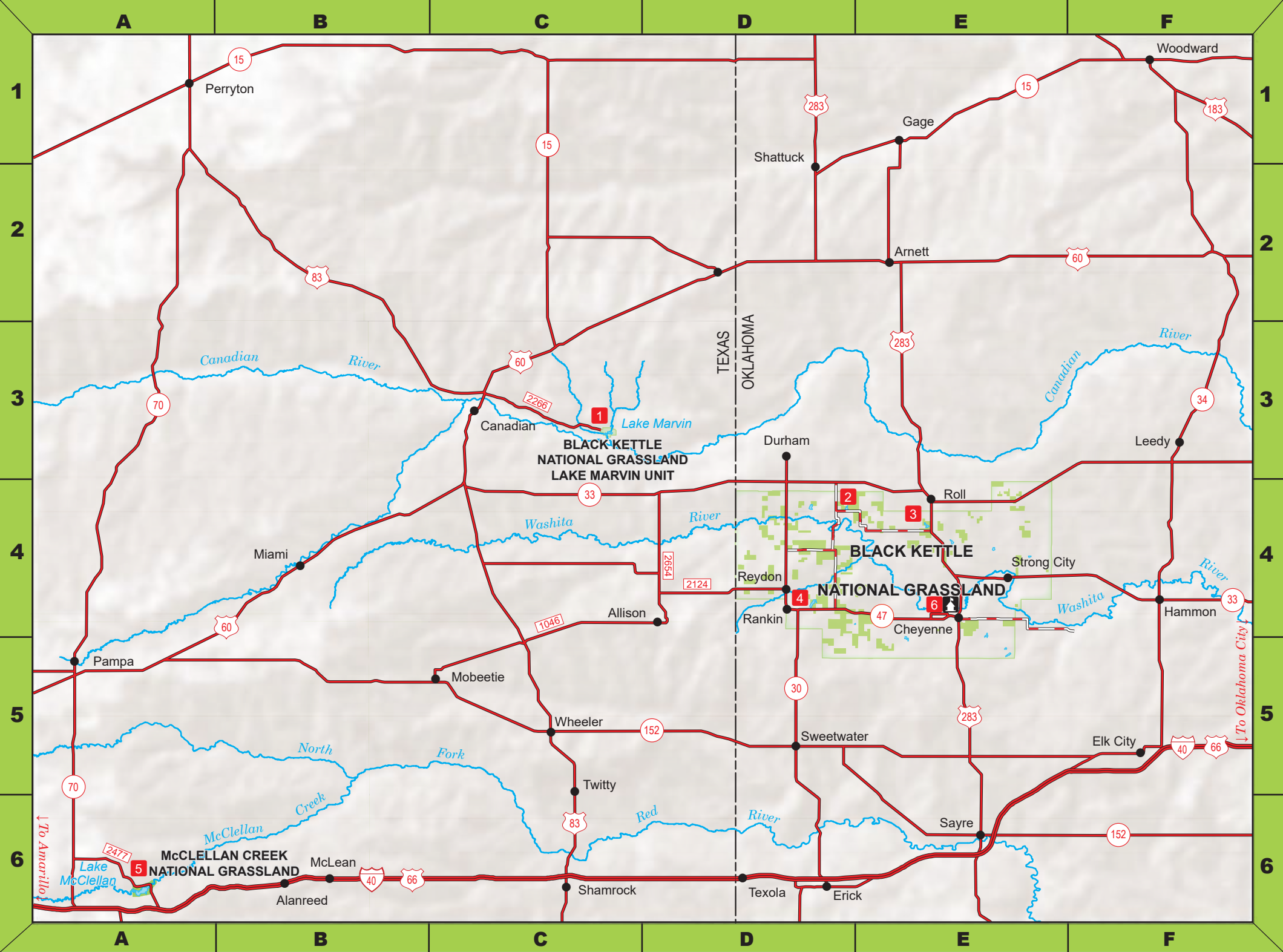
Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands
2113 Osuna Road, NE
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Phone: (505) 346-3900

Black Kettle National Grassland
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Black Kettle and McClellan Creek National Grasslands
Cibola National Forest Pocket Guide

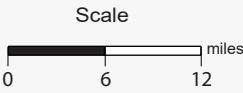


America's Great Outdoors



BLACK KETTLE
AND
McCLELLAN CREEK
NATIONAL GRASSLANDS

(Administered By)
Cibola National Forest
2013



Recreation Sites

	Site Names	Map Location	Season of Use	Elevation (feet)	Number of Units	Facilities
1	Lake Marvin	C3	All Year	2,000	22	
2	Spring Creek Lake	D4	All Year	2,300	9	
3	Black Kettle Recreation Area	E4	All Year	2,100	16	
4	Skipout Lake	D4	All Year	2,100	10	
5	Lake McClellan	A6	All Year	3,000	47	
6	Ranger District Office	E4	All Year	2,000	NA	

Legend

- National Grassland Boundary (Administrative)
- State Boundary
- Interstate Highway
- Primary Highway
- Improved Road
- National Forest System Lands
- Recreation Site, National Grasslands
- Interstate Route
- U.S. Route
- State Route
- Farm or Ranch Road
- Ranger District Office

Facilities Legend

- Campground
- Drinking Water
- Telephone
- Information
- OHV
- Trailer Camping
- Picnic Area
- Restrooms
- Fee Area
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Launching Ramp
- Blue symbols indicate barrier-free facilities

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