

## Smoky Valley Ranch Trail User Guide

### Rough Pasture Hiking Trails

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Rough Pasture is about 1,100 acres, just one of many large pastures on the 17,000-acre ranch. In Rough Pasture, there are two trails: one short and one long. Each trail is a counter-clockwise loop and includes several interpretive stops along the way. Both share a common route upon leaving and returning to the trailhead. The trail surface is natural, meaning grass and dirt. Signage is still being developed with the use of temporary markers in some places. There is no restroom or water provided. There are cattle in Rough Pasture, which might be curious about you, but will

maintain their distance. There are no bison in this pasture. There are rattlesnakes in this area, but are usually not out in the open during the daytime. Regardless, wear boots and watch where you walk, especially in the early morning and late evening. Note the two trees to the west of the trailhead—a good trailhead landmark that can be seen from any high point along the trail. Your cell phone coverage on the trails might be weak and spotty. Bring your camera and binoculars—open landscape distances are vast.

#### Short Loop (1.0 mi)

The short loop traverses a counterclockwise loop to the south of the trailhead, the first 0.5 mile and last 0.25 mile of which is the same as the Long Loop. At about 0.5 mi, the long and short routes divide, with the short loop returning to the trailhead. Along the short route you will see spectacular close up views of Cretaceous deposits. The hike is relatively easy and takes about 20 minutes.

#### Long Loop (5.5 mi)

The long loop and short loop share the same counterclockwise route for approximately the first 0.5 mi, then diverge. The two routes merge again at about 0.25 mi from the end. Milestone markers are at one mile intervals. The long loop lies mostly to the east and south of the trailhead. It features the bison jump site, a shady cottonwood rest stop, spectacular Miocene (Ogallala) stream deposits, Cretaceous sea deposits, an abandoned windmill site, and awesome vistas of the Smoky Hill River Valley from almost anywhere on the trail. On most any day you can see a loooooong ways – so bring your binoculars. You'll walk through the prairie and at certain times of the year see spectacular wildflower displays, but vistas and rock formations are a year-around treat.

This is not a public park. It is a large working ranch, privately owned by *The Nature Conservancy*, most of which is leased for cattle grazing to local ranchers. *TNC* is a non-governmental organization. Please respect the access that has been granted by *TNC* for your personal use and their right to limit that use.

Furthermore, Kansas statute law provides that ... “*an owner of land who makes all or any part of the land available to the public for recreational purposes owes no duty of care to keep the premises, or that part of the premises so made available, safe for entry or use by others for recreational purposes*”... In other words, *TNC* is not in any way responsible for your safety while you are on their trail.

**IMPORTANT:** Thank you for abiding by the following trail user guidelines and proscriptions:

- Sign the trail register, both at the start and end of your hike.
- Trail hours: daylight only. Plan your hike to be off trail by sunset.
- Stay on the trail. Please do not leave the trail corridor or take shortcuts.
- No bicycles, horses, or motorized vehicles.
- No firearms.
- No camping or campfires.
- No smoking.
- No alcoholic beverages.
- No dogs on the trail and keep dogs on leash in the parking area.
- Take nothing but pictures. Collecting of anything from the ground is not allowed.
- Leave nothing but footprints. Please do not litter.
- Carry a photo ID.

Parking

Dec 11, 2008 4 pm



Trailhead & Kiosk

Short Loop (1 mi)



Cretaceous Formations

Wrecked Windmill and Ba

Long Loop (5 mi)



Cretaceous Formations

12-Mile Creek

Cretaceous Formations

Miocene Formations

Bison Jump

2706 ft

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