

Rules of the Road

Your safety while using the trail is our utmost goal. Whenever you hike or bike on the Tallgrass Heritage Trail we ask that you follow these important safety rules:

- ❁ Be courteous to other trail users.
- ❁ Keep to the right on the trail as you approach oncoming trail users.
- ❁ Proceed single file around blind curves.
- ❁ Pets must be on a leash at all times.
- ❁ Please pack out any litter
- ❁ Watch for objects on the trail that may trip you or puncture a bicycle tire.
- ❁ Safety helmets for bicyclists are not required, but strongly encouraged.
- ❁ Cyclists always yield to pedestrians. Before passing another bicyclist or hiker make sure they are aware you are passing. Pass on the left side.

Trail Safety

Remember, you are not just sharing the trail with other trail users. You may also encounter a variety of wildlife during your trek. Be aware that snakes are common around Melvern Lake. Rattlesnakes and copperheads are the two main poisonous snakes in the lake area. If you encounter snakes or other wildlife, leave it alone.



Another safety hazard to be watchful of is poison ivy. Perhaps the most abundant type of poisonous plant at Melvern Lake, poison ivy can cause many hours of uncomfortable itching. Remember the old saying, "Leaves of three, leave it be". This should help remind you to avoid all three-leaved plants that you are not familiar with.

Location Map



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is proud to oversee 12 million acres of land and water across the Nation. These water resource project provide 4,300 recreation areas at 456 lakes in 43 states. This site is your gateway to recreation opportunities at the Corps Lakes!

For additional information about the facilities or the operation of Melvern Lake Project, write to: Melvern Lake Project Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 31051 Melvern Lake Parkway, Melvern, Kansas 66510. Telephone: 785-549-3318.



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Kansas City District

Welcome

to the Tallgrass Heritage Trail. Lying in the heart of the Osage Questas region of Kansas, we invite you to journey through a Kansas prairie ecosystem where you will enjoy woodland areas and fields of native tallgrass abundant with prairie plant and animal life.

Construction of the trail began in the winter of 2005. Nearly two miles were cleared from the Arrow Rock Campground to near the park entrance with a machine called the hydro-axe. In 2006, the Melvern Lake maintenance staff cleared trees and brush and put down a rock-Chat

material surface for easy walking and bike riding.

Phase II of the trail will be constructed in 2008. This leg of the trail will be extended from Arrow Rock Park to Coeur d'Alene Park, a distance of nearly two miles. We also plan to develop loop trails off this main leg that will extend to the lake shoreline. In the meantime, this length of trail, which is entirely grassland will be mowed to provide a high-quality grass path for hikers and bike riders.

Eventually, we hope to connect the Tallgrass Heritage Trail to the trail system in the Outlet Park. This

will give us a trail approximately 10 miles in length and will provide tremendous hiking and mountain bike opportunities.

Wildlife Viewing

During your hike you will see numerous plant and animal species that combine to make up the woodland and tallgrass ecosystems of east central Kansas. We invite you to return often to enjoy the seasonal changes and to view wildlife. Keep in mind that most wildlife are more active during the spring and fall.

Common animal species that can be seen are deer, turkey, raccoon, red-tailed hawks and opossum to name a few. Melvern Lake also serves as a stopping point for many waterfowl and shorebird species during the spring and fall. Common plant species include a variety of grasses, forbs and trees. We invite you to bring along a field guide to help identify the many species you will encounter. Fire continues to play a vital role in the management of the grassland ecosystem. Periodic controlled burns help control the invasion of woody plant species that if left unchecked, would eventually overtake and choke out the desired grass species. Fire also spurs the growth of many species of forbs which give the grassland ecosystem brilliant color throughout the growing season.

Take the time to stop and enjoy nature. Remember, if you do encounter wildlife along the trail give them respect and allow them to leave without disturbing them.

Trail Partner

The Tallgrass Heritage Trail would not be possible without the valuable partnering effort between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Kansas Trails Council. The KTC assisted in the initial trail design and clearing, utilizing a walk-behind brush cutting machine through extremely dense brush and wooded habitat. The KTC also provided assistance in obtaining grant money which funded the majority of the trail work.

