



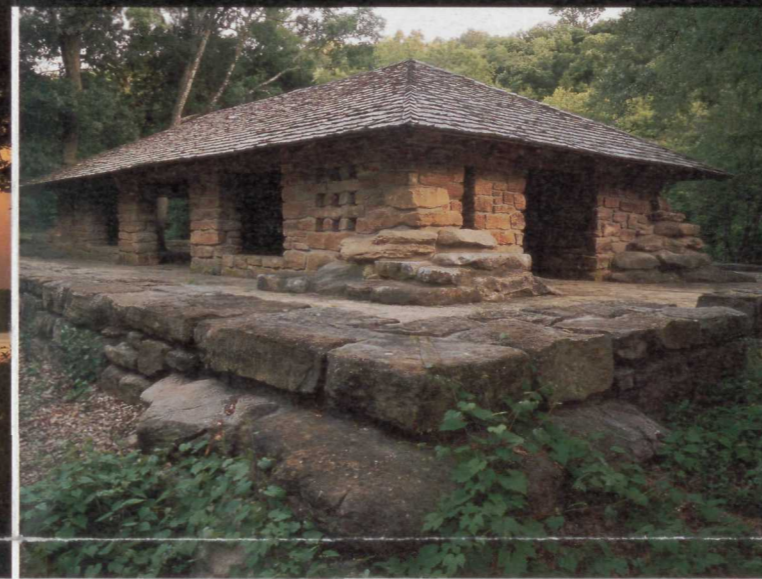
Buffalo Springs

© LAURENCE PARENT



Sunset over Lake of the Arbuckles

© LAURENCE PARENT



Bromide Pavilion

© LAURENCE PARENT



Travertine Creek

© LAURENCE PARENT

Springs, streams, lakes—whatever its form, water is the attraction at Chickasaw National Recreation Area. Little Niagara and Rock Creek beckon waders and swimmers. Relax in the coolness of a shaded stream or take a dip in a swimming hole. Veterans Lake calls anglers to test their skills. Lake of the Arbuckles provides excellent motorboating, skiing, sailing, fishing, and swimming. Fresh-water springs welcome a variety of wildlife. The mineral springs were once sought for medicinal qualities. The springs are formed when water passes through underground rock formations. Rock layers form a canoe-shaped structure called a syncline. Water enters the high point of this formation and travels downhill.

Pressure then forces the water up through fissures in the rock layers. Some rock layers contain sulphur and bromine; water coming through these layers collects the minerals, becoming mineral water. Water passing through rock layers without these minerals is considered fresh water.

Archeologists believe that people have lived here for thousands of years. Folklore says that ancient people called this place “the Peaceful Valley of Rippling Waters.” They believed in the healing power of the strong-smelling mineral water, and tribes like the Wichita, Caddo, and others came here. In the early 1800s the

federal government began moving tribes from east of the Mississippi River—Choctaw, Chickasaw, and others—to this area. In 1855 land that is now part of the national recreation area came under the control of the Chickasaw Nation.

By the late 1890s settlers had built the town of Sulphur Springs around the fresh and mineral springs, with hotels and bath houses that promoted the waters’ medicinal qualities. Residents of the town and the Chickasaw and Choctaw nations, fearing the waters would suffer from uncontrolled use, worked with government officials to find ways to save the springs. In 1902, when the Chick-

asaw and Choctaw nations sold all the springs and 640 acres to the Department of the Interior to protect these resources, the area became Sulphur Springs Reservation. In 1906 it was expanded and renamed Platt National Park for Sen. Orville Hitchcock Platt, sponsor of the park legislation. In the 1930s the Civilian Conservation Corps built pavilions, roads, trails, and waterfalls and planted over 500,000 trees and shrubs. In 1976 Platt National Park, Arbuckle Recreation Area, and additional lands were combined to create this nearly 10,000-acre recreation area. The foresight of the Chickasaw Nation in 1902 played a critical role in preserving the springs and creeks. The park is named in their honor.

About Your Visit

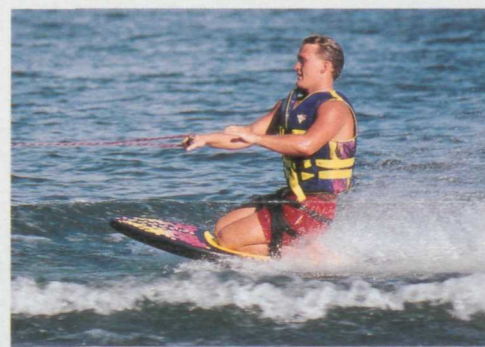
Chickasaw National Recreation Area has activities all year. Stop at the **Travertine Nature Center** for exhibits, nature films, books, and information about the area’s history, wildlife, and geology. Activities include nature walks, history talks, and seasonal programs. Open daily except Thanksgiving Day, December 25, and January 1.

Visitor Information Station This facility in the Sulphur Chamber of Commerce building has information about services, activities, and programs. Hours vary by season.

Park Headquarters The National Park Service manages the area, provides for recreational uses, and cares for the park’s natural and cultural features. Open weekdays except federal holidays. National Park Service ranger stations are in the Platt Historic District and on Lake of the Arbuckles at The Point and Buckhorn.

Chickasaw National Recreation Area is one of over 390 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about national parks and National Park Service programs visit www.nps.gov.

Recreation Aounds



© LAURENCE PARENT



© LAURENCE PARENT

Ecotone: The transition area between two adjacent ecological communities. This is a characteristic of Chickasaw, where eastern woodlands meet the mixed-grass prairie.



Scorpion, Tarantula, Western diamondback, Bobwhite quail, Cottontail rabbit, Wild turkey, Bobcat, White-tailed deer, Chinkapin oak, Red cedar, Coyote, Coreopsis, Juniper, Roadrunner, Scissor-tailed flycatcher, Yucca, Barred owl, Sycamore, Red-tailed hawk, Beaver, Nine-banded armadillo, Prickly pear cactus.

The Prairie All prairies have common traits. They exist on flat or rolling terrain. Rainfall averages between 10 and 40 inches per year and is concentrated, so every year has both wet and dry periods. Constant winds evaporate moisture and contribute to the dryness—and winds spread fire. Fire, a natural force, weakens or kills trees, but most grasses survive and as a result may

grow better. Although called “The Great American Desert,” this mixed-grass prairie once fed the large buffalo herds of the West. Stretching from the Dakotas to north-central Texas, these grasslands have historically supported a variety of wildlife. Today many plant and animal species still live here, including buffalo grass, Indian grass, roadrunners, and coyotes.

Activities Afloat

Swimming Streams are cold and clear all year. Rock Creek has a small beach. Do not use soap or shampoo in streams. At lakes, swim in boat exclusion areas. Never swim alone, near fishing docks, after dark, or from an unanchored boat.

Watersports Conditions for towed water sports and personal watercraft (PWC) are ideal on Lake of the Arbuckles. PWC permitted from sunup to sundown. Waterskiers must be accompanied by two people: the boat operator and a spotter. Wear an approved life preserver (PFD) at all times. PWC are prohibited on Veterans Lake.

Fishing Lake of the Arbuckles and Veterans Lake have wheelchair-accessible docks. Rods and reels only on Veterans Lake. A state license is required.

Boating Boats and canoes all share the waves. Use designated ramps. Federal and state laws apply. Do not overload boats. Keep safety equipment in good working order. Do not refuel craft when on the water. Be safe—alcohol, drugs, and boating do not mix. Wear an approved PFD. Permits required for Lake of the Arbuckles, available at boat ramps (fee).

Largemouth Bass This popular catch is often confused with smallmouth and spotted bass. The largemouth’s upper jaw extends past its eye socket.



NPS / DAN FEASER

White Crappie A favorite catch in winter, the crappie is a stream fish also well-adapted to large lakes.



FWS / DUANE RAVER

Boating Safety Guide

Danger Shallow water, rocks, other hazards.



Restricted Area Boats prohibited.



Controlled Area Speed limits, no skiing, no wake.



Regulations www.nps.gov/chic/parkmgmt/watercraft-regulations.htm

Ranger-Led Programs



NPS / DAKOTA RADFORD

For ranger-led program schedules ask a ranger or check bulletin boards.

Organized groups need advance reservations year-round.

Activities Ashore

Picnicking Picnic areas have tables and grills. You can reserve Buckhorn and Veterans Lake picnic pavilions at www.recreation.gov.

Camping Most campsites are first-come, first-served (fee). Register and pay at the

campground. Buckhorn and The Point have wheelchair-accessible sites.

Hiking The park maintains over 20 miles of trails, from short, level strolls to steep, uneven climbs.

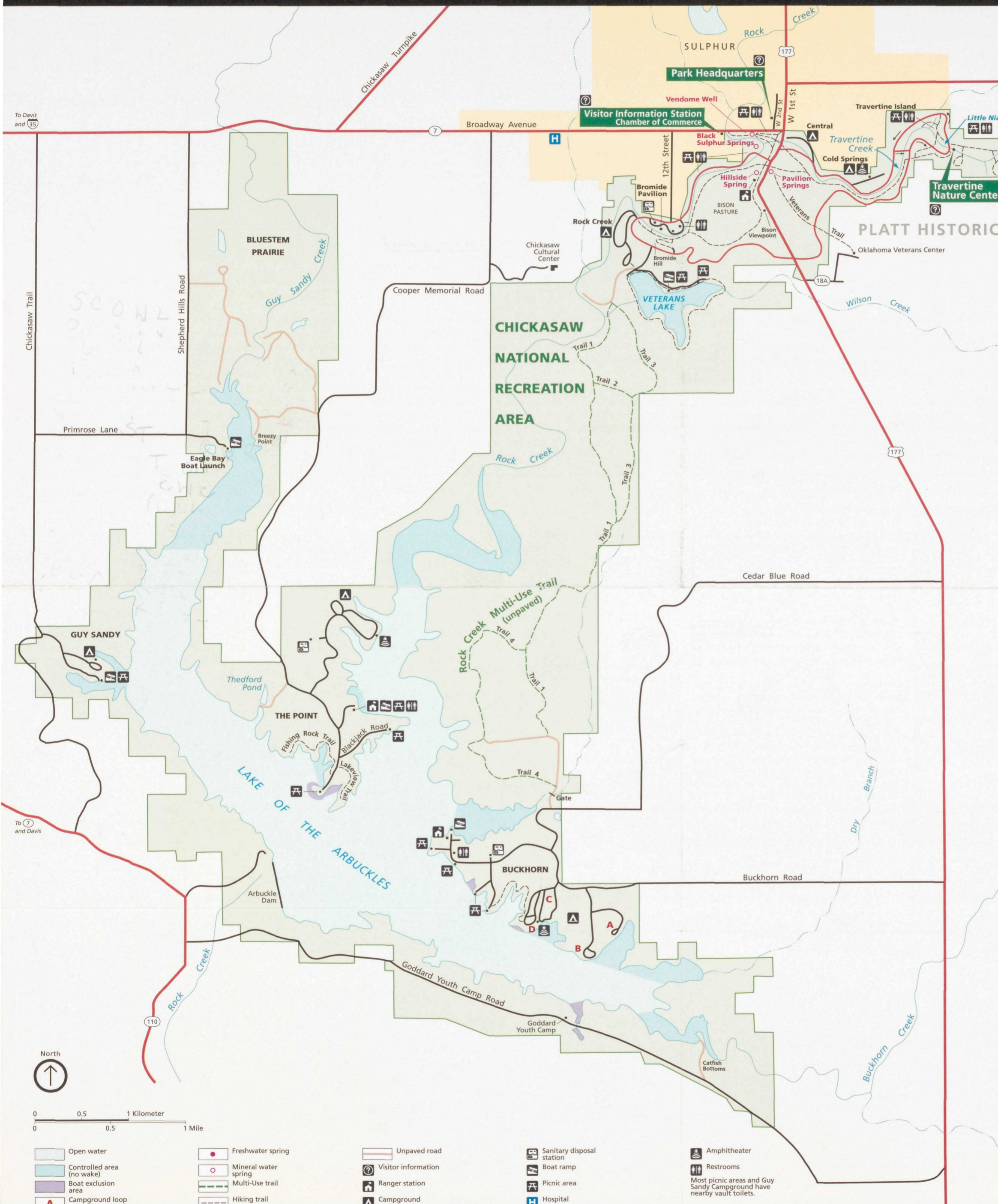
The Edge As you travel through Chickasaw watch how habitats change from eastern woodland to prairie and back to woodland again. Where these habitats meet (see Ecotone above left) there are more plant and animal species than in either woodland or prairie habitat alone. Known as the “edge effect,” this increase in species results from the increased food and

shelter choices where habitats overlap. At the edges woodland sumac and wild turkeys live amidst prairie yucca and bobwhite quail. The cardinal’s eastern range overlaps the scissor-tailed flycatcher’s mid-continent range. These woodland and prairie edges are the best places to see wildlife.

The Woodland In Chickasaw’s forests you will find many trees—sycamore, oak, hickory, walnut, pecan, and more. But a forest is more than trees. By looking carefully you can discover other residents of the forest habitat. Dead trees and the forest floor provide homes to a variety of species. You can see fungi on decaying leaves and tree trunks. Trails through the park’s forested

area give hikers a chance to see wildlife and their traces. Watch for tracks left by nocturnal animals, owl pellets, and other signs of nighttime activity. Armadillos appear in the early evening, shuffling alongside trails. Alert forest visitors may be rewarded with glimpses of beaver, gray fox, skunks, hawks, or raccoons.

Exploring Chickasaw



Chickasaw National Recreation Area is 90 miles south of Oklahoma City, Okla., and 140 miles north of Dallas/Fort Worth, Tex.

Planning Your Visit

Things To See and Do Outdoors or in, you will find activities here that are right for you. Streams and lakes attract boaters, swimmers, and anglers. Forests and prairies reward hikers, photographers, and campers. At the Travertine Nature Center you can see live animals and experience nature up close.

Food, Lodging, Services Food, lodging, gasoline, rentals, and services are available at Sulphur and Davis.

Climate Summers are hot and humid; winters mild. Thunderstorms are common April through July.

Springs *Fresh Water* Antelope and Buffalo springs, with a daily combined flow of about 5 million gallons, feed Travertine Creek. *Mineral Water* Hillside, Pavilion, Black Sulphur, and other springs produce mineral water. The National Park Service neither substantiates nor denies claims about the therapeutic values of the waters.

Swimming/Wading Know your limits! Do not swim if you are tired, chilled, or overheated. Glass containers are prohibited in swimming areas. Wear shoes when wading. Don't dive from waterfalls or stream banks. Swimming and wading are prohibited east of the Travertine Nature Center. Do not place rope swings in trees.

Park Trails Highlights Trails vary in difficulty, length, and scenery. *Note:* Bicycles and pets are prohibited east of Travertine Nature Center.

Antelope and Buffalo Springs *Easy: 1.2 miles, round-trip.* This trail along Travertine Creek is wheelchair-accessible.

Travertine Creek *Easy: 1.5 miles, one-way.* This trail follows the creek between Pavilion Springs and the Travertine Nature Center.

Bison Pasture *Moderate to strenuous: 1.9 miles, loop.* Watch for bison (buffalo) in the fields. Do not enter the fenced area.

Rock Creek Multi-Use *Four trails, easy to moderate: 2.1 to 4.4 miles, depending on the trail.* This network of hiking, bicycling, and horse trails passes through an area where eastern deciduous forest meets western mixed-grass prairie.

Fishing Rock and Lakeview *Easy: 0.8 and 0.5 mile, one-way (respectively).* Enjoy a hardwood forest, mixed-grass prairie, and beaches.

Campgrounds The park has six campgrounds with over 400 campsites. All campgrounds have tables, grills, restrooms, and water. Camp in designated sites only. Maximum stay is two weeks. A limited number of individual and group sites can be reserved: 877-444-6777; recreation.gov. *The park does not make reservations.*

Platt Historic District has three campgrounds: Cold Springs, Central, and Rock Creek. All three are suited for tent camping and small campers. No electric hookups. A sanitary disposal station is outside Rock Creek near Bromide Pavilion.

Lake of the Arbuckles has three campgrounds: Buckhorn, The Point, and Guy Sandy. Buckhorn and The Point have lakeside campsites. Buckhorn and The Point also have limited electric hookups, showers, and a sanitary disposal station.

Accessibility For information visit www.nps.gov/chic/planyourvisit/accessibility.htm. Service animals are welcome.

Hunting/Fishing Hunting in designated areas and fishing are allowed in season under federal and state regulations; state licenses required. Trapping is prohibited. For hunting, fishing, and firearms regulations see www.nps.gov/chic.

Safety and Regulations Please be alert and observe these regulations. *Remember, your safety is your responsibility.* • Observe posted speed limits. Stay on roads.

Don't stop, park, or wash vehicles in low-water crossings. Never drive through flooded creek crossings. • Pets must be leashed and attended. Pets are prohibited in buildings and swimming areas. • Build fires in designated areas only; extinguish fires completely. • Copperheads, cottonmouths, and rattlesnakes live here. Be careful where you put your hands and feet. • Do not feed or approach wildlife. Do not disturb, damage, or remove animals, plants, or artifacts; all are protected by federal law. • More information at www.nps.gov/chic/planyourvisit/yoursafety.htm. **Emergencies: call 911.**

More Information Chickasaw National Recreation Area 1008 W. Second Street Sulphur, OK 73086-4814 580-622-7234 www.nps.gov/chic

©GPO:2011-365-615/0665 Reprint 2011 Printed on recycled paper.

To Ardmore