

Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge

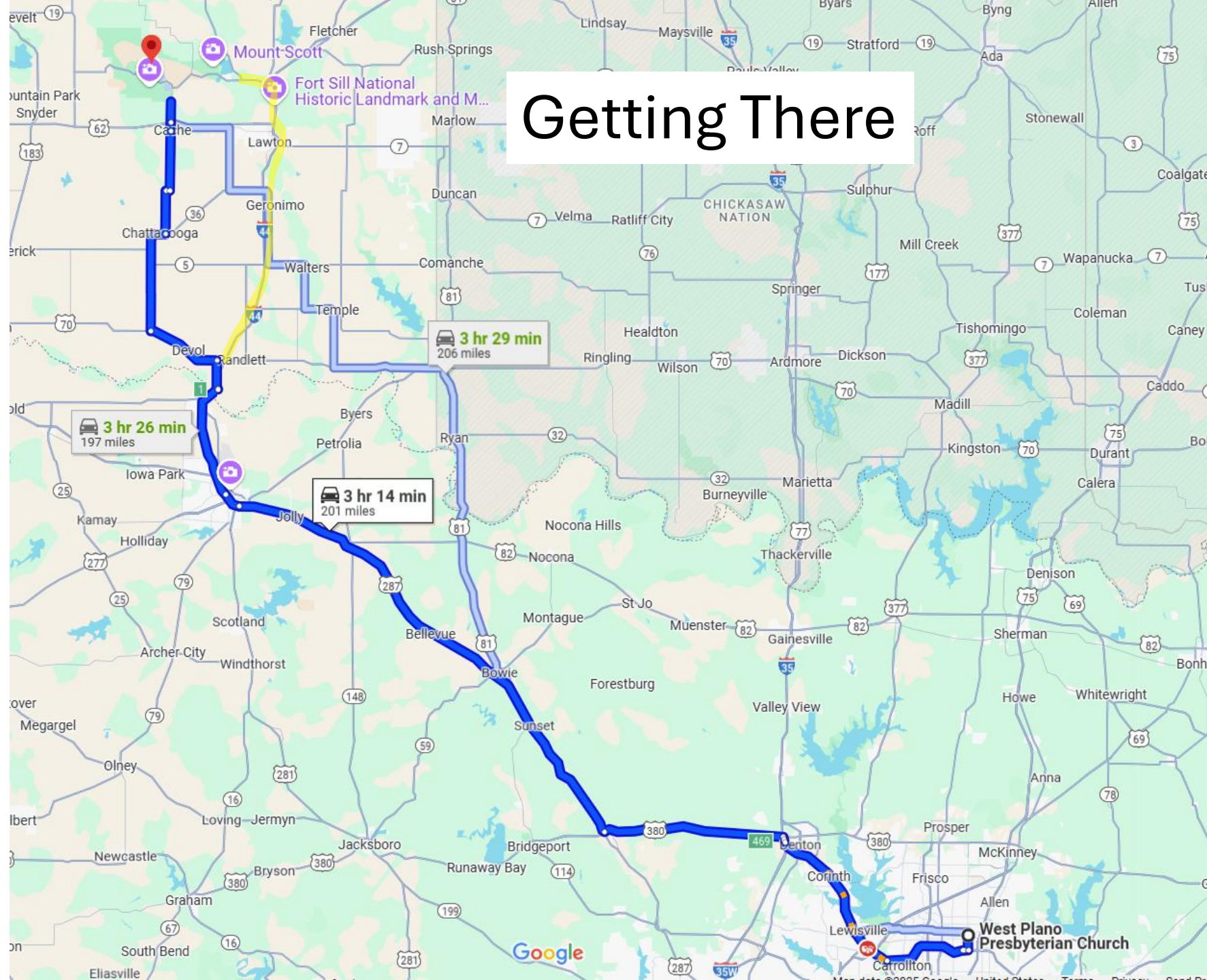
A Plano Photography Club Adventure

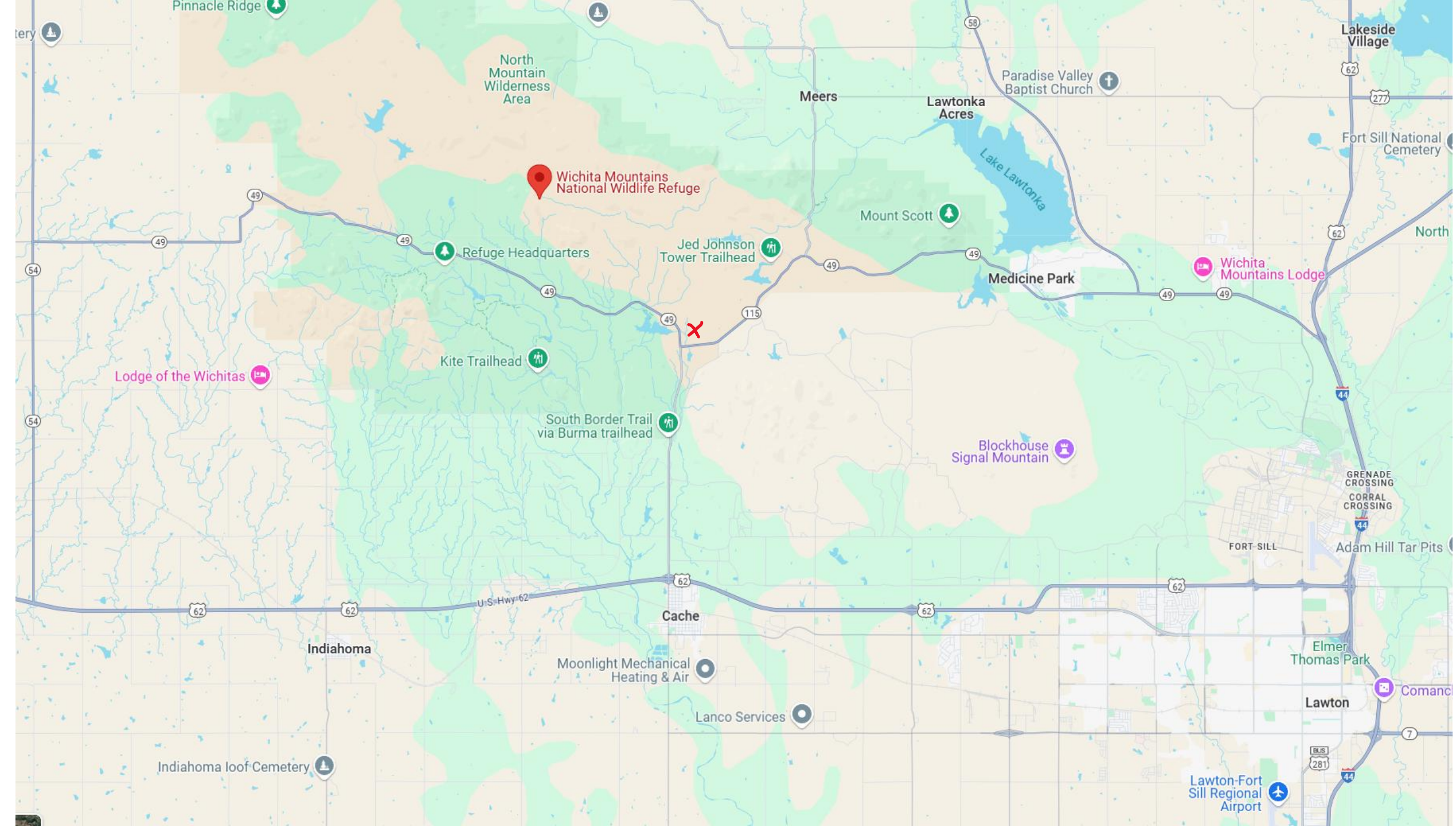
April 14 – 16, 2025

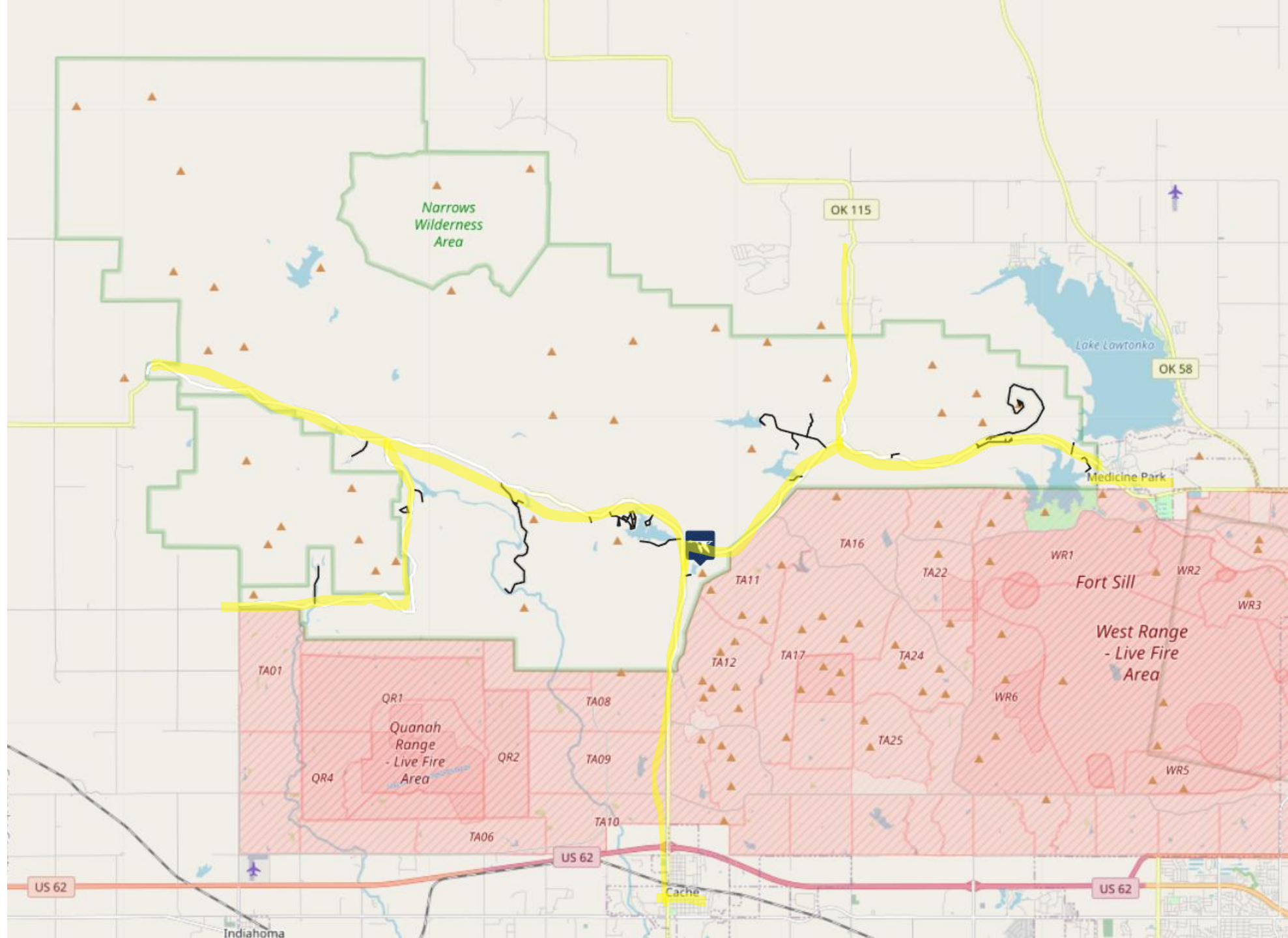
Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge

- National wildlife refuges offer us all a chance to unplug from the stresses of daily life and reconnect with our natural surroundings.
- Best known for its roaming herds of bison, longhorn, and Rocky Mountain elk, Wichita Mountains also offers quality opportunities for wildlife dependent recreation including fishing, bird watching, wildlife photography, hiking, camping, and kayaking. Take time to explore the roughly 29,000 acres of mixed grass prairie, ancient granite mountains, and freshwater lakes and streams.
- Also, fishing, turkeys, prairie dogs, deer, birds, etc

Getting There







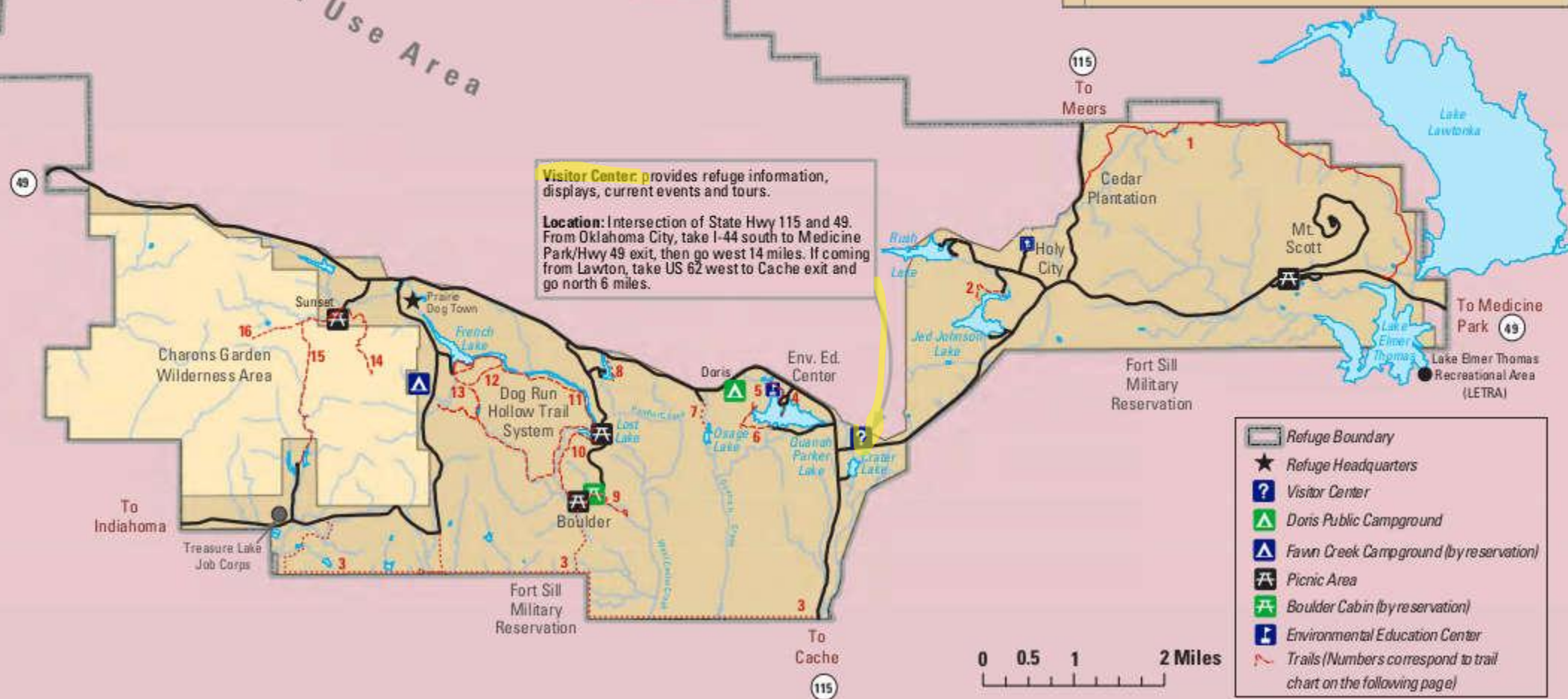
WICHITA MOUNTAINS WILDLIFE REFUGE INDIAHOMA, OKLAHOMA

Special Use Area



Visitor Center: provides refuge information, displays, current events and tours.

Location: Intersection of State Hwy 115 and 49. From Oklahoma City, take I-44 south to Medicine Park/Hwy 49 exit, then go west 14 miles. If coming from Lawton, take US 62 west to Cache exit and go north 6 miles.



Where to Stay

- Medicine Park – funky town along the river
 - Old Plantation Inn
 - Cabin Rentals
- Cache
 - The Lazy Buffalo
- Lawton/Fort Sills
 - All the regular hotels/motels

Where to Eat

- Medicine Park
 - Old Plantation Restaurant
 - Riverside Cafe
 - Joe Mountain Breakfast Bar – The Mayor Johnson, small, open early
- Cache – Various Choices
 - Wahlburgers at the Comanche Casino as of February 21
- Lawton/Fort Sills – Many Options
- Meers Store and Restaurant – famous for burgers, cash only, one check per table

What to Do

- Go to the visitor center, talk to a ranger, and get a map. Very good displays.
- Hiking [Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge | Visit Us - Trails | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service](#)
- Drive-by shooting – wildlife is readily accessible from the car
 - Bison aka Buffalo
 - Longhorns
 - Prairie dogs
 - Elk
 - Deer

What to Do (continued)

- Visit the Holy City of the Wichita's
- Go up Mount Scott for great views
- Visit the Cedar Plantation (aka, the Parallel Forest)
- Visit the lakes. Fish if you desire but check regulations.
- Lichen
- In Lawton, the Elmer Thomas Park is Prairie Dog headquarters

Buffalo – Found Everywhere



Longhorns - Found Everywhere



Prairie Dogs



The place labeled Prairie Dog Town is no longer active.
Rebuilding near the Holy City.



Elk



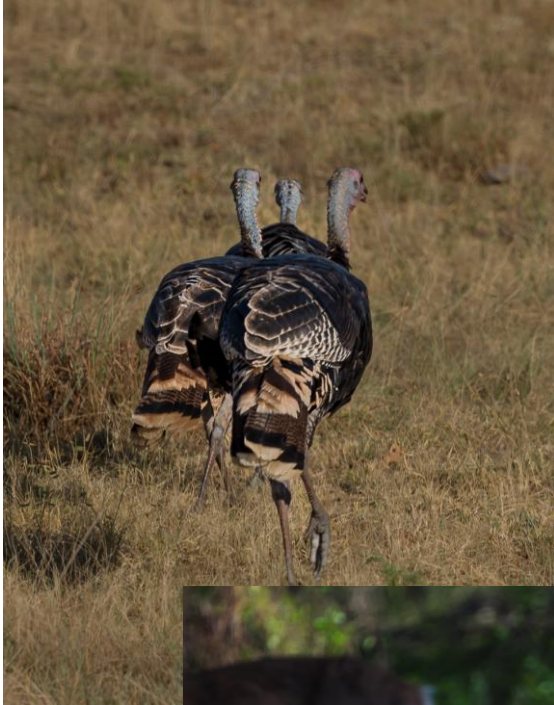
Elk need

- Water
- Grazing area
- Wooded area for rest

Most often seen late afternoon and early morning.



Deer, Turkey, Birds, etc



Deer and turkey can
Be seen just
about anywhere.



Collared Lizard or Mountain Boomer
Sunning on rocks near the lakes and reported at Holy
City

Holy City



Depicts Bible stories
Annual Easter Padget (April 20)

Mount Scott



Check the hours
Walkers in the morning.
Start down at sunset

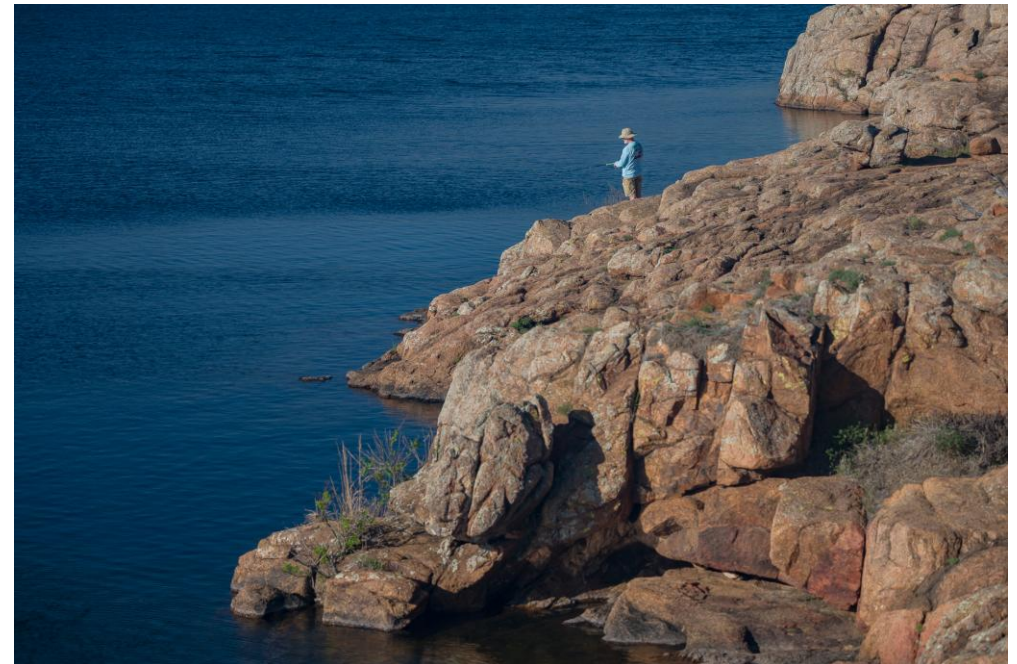
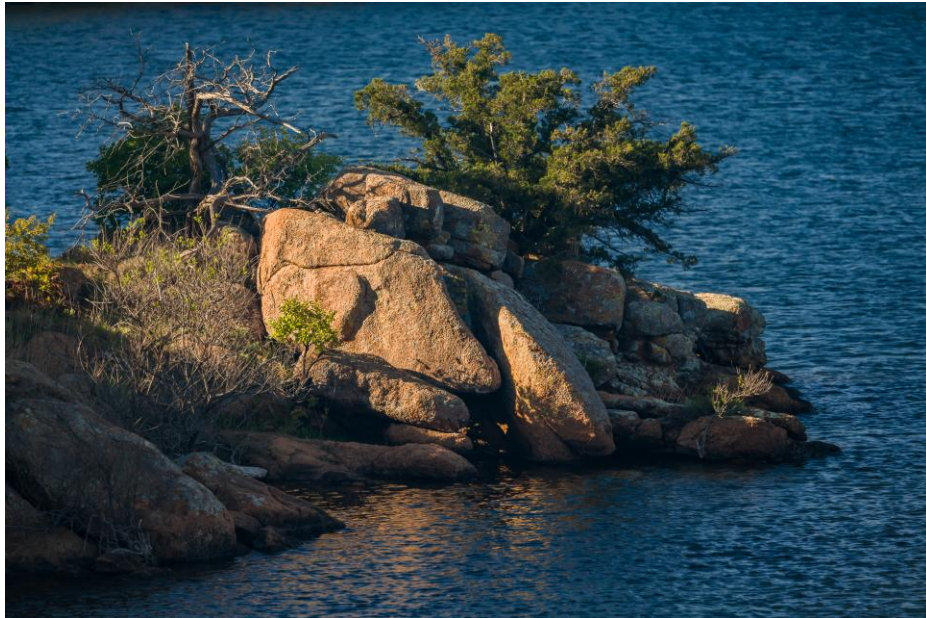


Parallel Forest aka Cedar Plantation

Go early or late for shadows

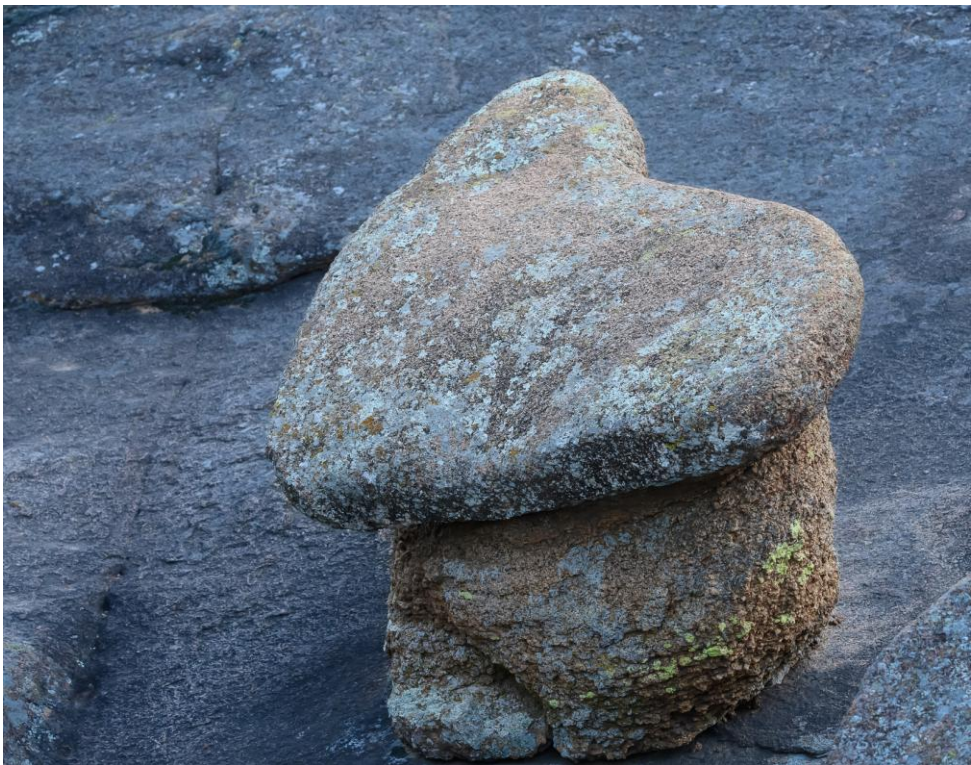


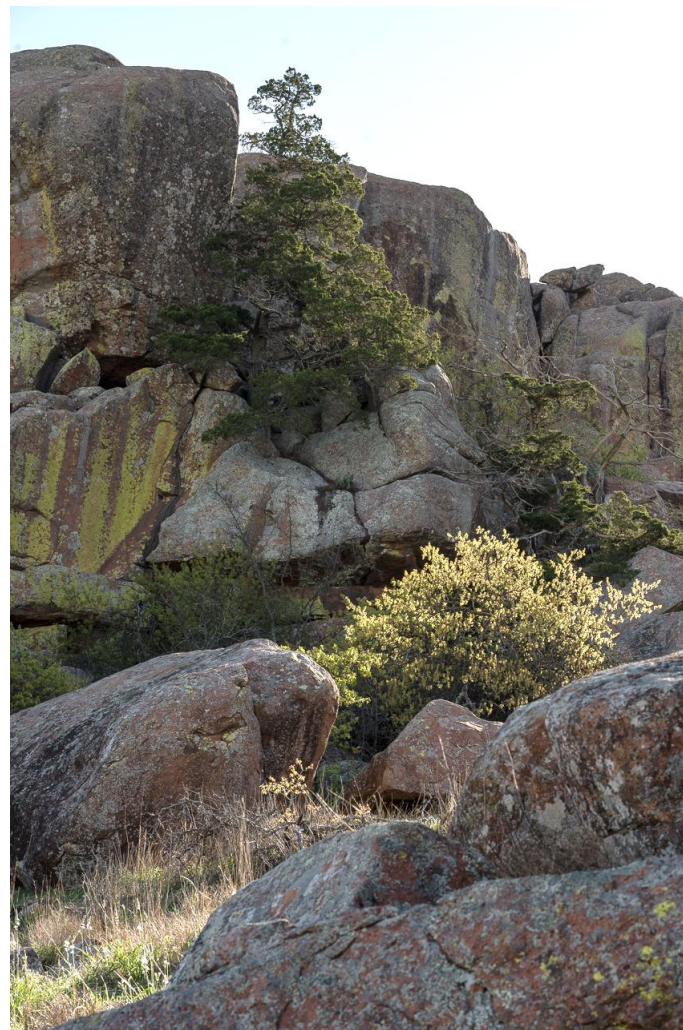
Visit the Lakes



Interesting Rocks with Caves and Buried Treasure







Lichen



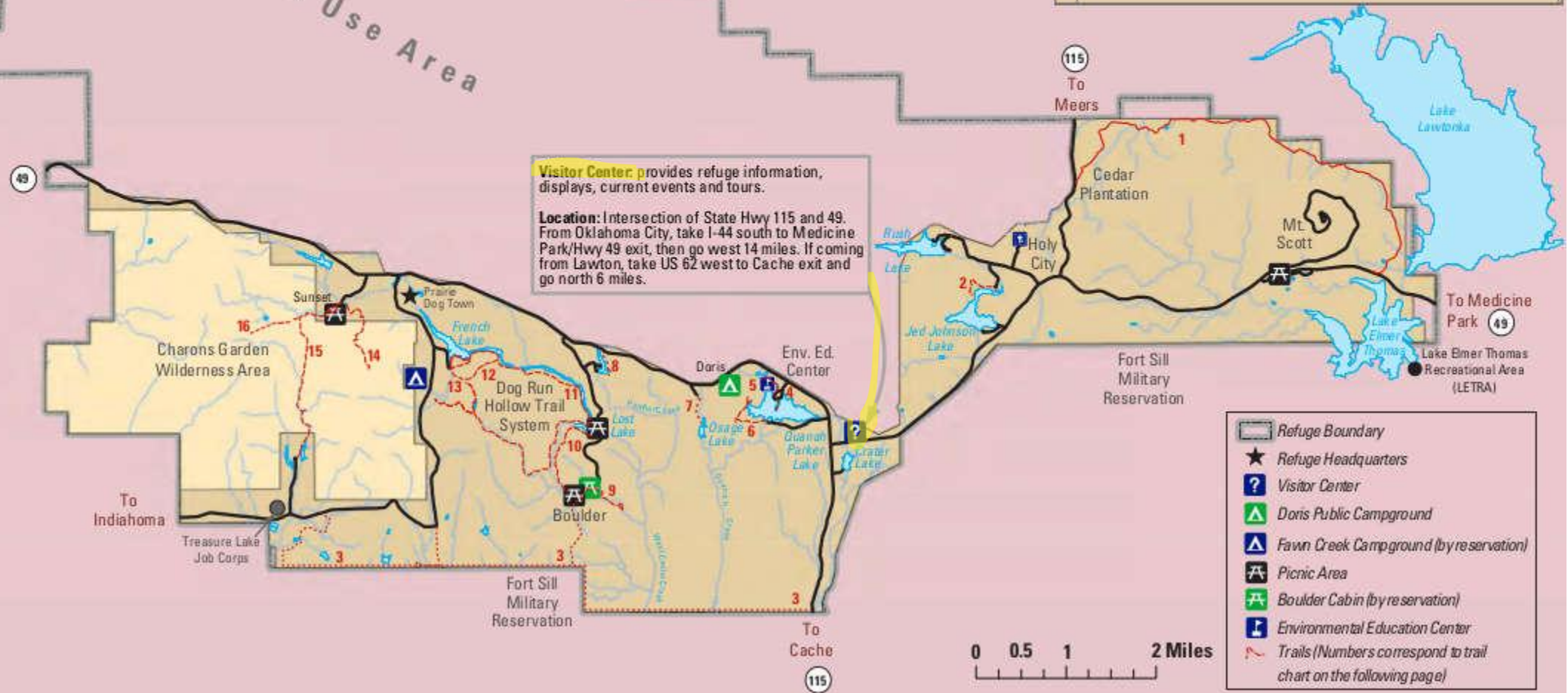
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- Refuge Boundary
- Refuge Headquarters
- Visitor Center
- Doris Public Campground
- Fawn Creek Campground (by reservation)
- Picnic Area
- Boulder Cabin (by reservation)
- Environmental Education Center
- Trails (Numbers correspond to trail chart on the following page)

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Gear

- Most of my images over two trips are from
 - 24-120mm f/4
 - 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6
- Tripod useful for sunrise/sunset
- A Larry trick – get a section of pool noodle to put over your car window

Final Words

- Before you go, research legends of the Wichita Mountains and other attractions around the refuge.
- Follow “Friends of the Wichita Mountains” on Facebook
- As soon as you arrive,
 - Go to the visitor center
 - Get a map
 - Talk to the ranger about what you want to see
- Drive every road until it exits the park to get the lay of the land and to see where the animals are
- It’s a small park so you will see other members – stop and asked them what they have seen
- Don’t get sucked into the supposed “scenic drive” you might see on some maps.