

Gloss Mountain Conservancy

The State of Oklahoma obtained the land for Gloss Mountain State Park in 1977, and shortly after, unfortunate funding cuts left the planned park undeveloped. The conservancy came about in 1997, when Oklahoma Tourism approached area citizens about developing the park locally.

The Conservancy is a not-for-profit, 501c3, volunteer organization created to promote and enhance recreational and educational opportunities while preserving the natural environment of the Gloss Mountains. The Conservancy partners with Oklahoma Tourism and Recreational Department, the City of Fairview, Major County Economic Development, and other volunteer organizations to expand and maintain the park.

If you enjoy the natural beauty of Gloss Mountain State Park and wish to see it remain for generations to come, Gloss Mountain Conservancy welcomes your tax-deductible donations. All funds will be used for Gloss Mountain State Park and may be sent to:

Gloss Mountain Conservancy
P.O. Box 503
Fairview, OK 73737
580.227.2512

Oklahoma's State Wildflower, the Indian Blanket - pictured to the right, is prevalent early summer at the Gloss Mountains.



Selenite (Isinglass)

Whether hiking or driving by on highway 412, you may notice a glimmering of light on the hillsides. This shimmering is selenite, better known as isinglass, serving as a reflecting object. Selenite is more visible at times of rains, clouds, and sun. The rain tends to wash the red dirt from the isinglass while the clouds, in combination with the sun create a spotlight effect. "Souvenir" selenite is available in two baskets alongside the trails in the Gloss Mountain State Park. We ask that you leave anything else untouched for the enjoyment for future visitors.



Geology

There are two time periods of formation represented at the Gloss Mountain Site. The first is the Quaternary period - the last one million years of history. This period marks the formation of Pleistocene terraces along major streams with Holocene or recent alluvium along the valleys, having sand, gravel, silt, clay and volcanic ash up to 100 feet thick or more. Thin veneers of flood plain deposits are on the southwest sides of the river. The second period is the Permian which was 270-230 million years ago. This period is indicated by red sandstone and shale 1,000-4,500 feet thick with gypsum on the outcroppings. Permian red beds are irregularly slumped due to the solution of the underlying salt and gypsum beds. The Permian red beds are subdivided into the Cimarronian Series (2,850 feet) at the base,

overlaid by the Custerian Series (400 feet, top eroded). Flowerpot shale (180-430 feet) is found at this area. It mainly consists of red-brown illitic-chloritic shale, which is gradational southward into the upper Duncan Sandstone and lower Chickasha Formation. Thick salt units are also found widespread in the subsurface.

Major streams were initiated as southeast flowing tributaries of the Mississippi River were fed by glaciers melting in the Rockies. Present day area streams form extensive flood plains rather than cut deeper channels. Minerals found at the site are salt, copper, gypsum, sand, gravel and spar.

White Rings - Gypsum

Many people observe white rings on the side of exposed mountains and on the red beds in front of many mountains. What are they and what causes them? Gypsum is leaching out of the ground and is actually what causes the white ring. Gypsum: a common sulfate mineral of great commercial importance, hydrated calcium sulfate (CaSO4 2H2O). It is named from the Greek word gypsos (meaning chalk). In well-developed crystals the mineral commonly has been called selenite. Gypsum in Blaine and Major Counties is very high in purity. Therefore, you will find it in pharmaceuticals and food products (i.e. baking soda, bread, candy, beer). The gypsum is mined from open pit quarries south of Fairview and at Southard. U.S. Gypsum Company has quarries of approximately 7,000 acres at Southard while Allied Custom Gypsum has 1,500 acres near Bouse Junction in western Major County.

Fairview, OK



"Gateway to the Gloss Mountains"

Fairview's distinctive history dates back to the Land Run on Monday, September 17, 1893, when 5 men staked claims but quickly became discouraged and left the area. However, one resilient man, Henry Bower, had the fortitude and foresight to see a future for the area and along with A.J. Bower built a sod house. On a cold morning, A.J. walked from his sod house, looked in all directions, then turned to view a beautiful Oklahoma sunrise. He named the area "Fairview", derived from an Indian word meaning "Fair Valley".

Just as Mr. Bower had an eye for the community, the citizens and leaders of Fairview continue striving to move Fairview forward with a "can-do" attitude. Fairview, Oklahoma, is home to approximately 230 businesses with the following specialties:

- A striking Main Street with locally owned shops
- 3 Motels: Best Western, Fairview Inn, & Heritage Inn
- Fairview Regional Medical Center & Family Clinic
- Fairview Fellowship Home & Retirement Village
- Fairview Conference & Event Center
- Fairview Aquatic Center and Specht Park
- Sand Creek Heritage Center and Museum
- Fairview Public Schools
- Northwest Technology Center
- Fairview Regional Airport
- Fairview Industrial Park & MCEDC Business Incubator

Fairview: A City Alive With Opportunity!



Gloss Mountain State Park

*A Recreational & Educational Park
maintained in natural habitat.*

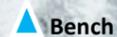
6 Miles North of Fairview, Oklahoma,
then 5.5 Miles West of Orienta on U.S. 412.

- Hiking Trails
- Picnic Shelters
- Handicap Concrete Walk
- Historical Marker
- Flora, Fauna, Wildlife,
Geological & Astronomical

*Brochure courtesy of Gloss Mountain Conservancy with
the front cover featuring Lone Peak and Isinglass.*



LEGEND



Bench



Picnic Table



Shelter House with Picnic Table, Charcoal Grill and Water

- Gun Sight Pass:** The highway cut on U.S. 412 between the two mountains at the entrance to Gloss Mountain State Park. Named by hunters who traveled the highway who claim at a distance the "cut" resembles a view of looking down a gun sight.
- Tourism Information Kiosk**
- Bald Knob**
- Public Restrooms (Wheelchair Accessible) and Vending Machines/Brochure Area**
- Paved Parking Area (Tour Bus Accessible)**
- Road of Least Resistance:** Noted on the Historical Monument (#7), before Gun Site Pass was created by dynamite blasting on the existing U.S. 412, traffic (horse-drawn wagons and Model T's) followed a path through the main gate of the park down

- through what is now the parking lot, down the handicap walk to a large watering hole near the monument and then back to the roadway to Orienta. Hence, the path was known as the road of least resistance because equipment did not exist to make the cut in the mountain. By the way, the watering hole provided water for teams of horses and Model T radiators.
- 2-Sided Historical Monument/Flag**
- Cathedral Mountain Trail:** starting point to north rim and return is 1.2 miles (includes 150 stair steps).
- Cathedral Mountain**
- The Sphinx:** Looking to the southeast atop Cathedral Mountain, one finds mother nature formed the object similar to one in Egypt. Time, rain, heat, and freezing weather continue to alter the Sphinx.
- Oil and Gas Production**

- Rattlesnake Lake:** Named by conservationists who worked on the design and encountered numerous snakes during staking of the lake before dirt construction could begin.
- Turtle Pond**
- Tamarac Pond**
- Lone Peak:** Highest butte in the Gloss Mountain Range.
- Cimarron River**
- Shallow Water Pond**
- Cheyenne Creek**
- Red Washes:** Void of any vegetation.
- Lookout Mountain**

Gloss Mountain History



In The Beginning—An Inland Ocean

- The area was an inland ocean. The shoreline was near the Arbuckle Mountains near Ardmore and the Wichita Mountains near Lawton.
- The white gypsum crystals and rock layers were formed as calcium sulfate saturated the water which was trapped in the mud of the sea floor. Over time, both the shale and gypsum were buried beneath several thousand feet of more recent sediments.
- Development of the Rocky Mountains, about 65 million years ago, caused the broad uplift of the Western United States. This uplift raised all of Oklahoma and surrounding areas above sea level.
- Subsequent and on-going erosion of overlying sediments began exposing shale and gypsum layers.
- The gypsum and shale buttes are relics of millions of years of geological history. They are known as Major County's RED MESAS. Their base elevation is 1,418' above sea level, and they are known as Mesas of the Blaine Escarpment.

Plains Indian Tribes

- Until the 1800's, this area was the hunting domain of such Plains Indian Tribes as the Apache, Kiowa, and Comanche.
- Countless herds of buffalo once traveled here in their search for prairie grass.

Cherokee Nation

- In 1835, this region was part of over 6 million acres that were conveyed by the U.S. Government to the Cherokee Nation.

Explorers

- Daniel Boone's son, Nathan, passed through here in 1843 as did Thomas James in 1871. James, while searching for a trade route to Santa Fe, called the colorful formations the "Shining Mountains".
- "Glass Mountains" was first used in 1873 on a map issued by the U.S. General Land Office.
- The name was derived from the abundance of transparent gypsum crystals (the mineral selenite) that weather out of shale and are scattered on the slopes. At a distance, the selenite shimmers in the sunlight and appears to be glass.
- In 1875, a second map labeled this as the "Gloss Mountains", but apparently it was a drafting error. A third map, released shortly afterward, reverted to "Glass Mountains".
- Locals refer to them as the "Gloss Mountains".

Cherokee Outlet

- The Cherokee Outlet land was leased to the Cherokee Strip Livestock Assoc. from 1880-1883.

White Settlement

- By 1892, the Cherokee Nation reluctantly agreed

to cede the unoccupied lands of the Cherokee Outlet for settlement.

Cherokee Outlet Run

- In 1893, the Cherokee Outlet Run brought many pioneers. These hard-working homesteaders built farms, ranches and towns. Cedar trees, which once covered mesas, were used as fence posts and as rafters for sod houses and dugouts.
- Along with these industrious settlers, a few outlaws also roamed the land. Desperados like Dick Yeager took refuge in this rugged country.

Modern Day Exploration

- In 1900, landowners tried to find a use for the gypsum but determined it was only a haven for rattlesnakes!
- In 1900, the first Major County oil well was drilled in the Rusk community just east of Fairview. Early scientific measures showed no oil and gas existed in the Gloss Mountains. Today, we see wells in every direction. If the early miners had only known what was below them! Modern-day explorers have probed the depths of this region in search of gypsum, oil and natural gas. Major County has been one of the Mid-Continent Field's most active drilling areas.
- The Gloss Mountain Miners in 1900 felt they would find copper in the area. Tests showed the soil was lacking in hard rock minerals.

Gloss Mountain Wildlife & Wildflowers

Wildlife and wildflowers abound in Gloss Mountain State Park. Look for these region specific species.



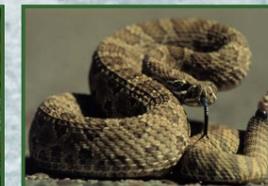
Turkey Vulture:
March 15-October 15



Horned Toad:
Spring/Summer/Fall



Mountain Boomer:
Spring/Summer/Fall



Rattlesnake:
Spring/Summer/Fall



Yucca (Soapweed):
Summer



Liatris:
Summer