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EISENHOWER STATE PARK HONORS WORLD WAR II HERO DWIGHT DAVID EISENHOWER. PROUD OF THE TEXAS-BORN GENERAL, THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE VOTED IN 1947 TO CREATE A NEW PARK BEARING HIS NAME ON THE SOUTH SHORE OF LAKE TEXOMA NEAR HIS BIRTHPLACE IN DENISON. THE PARK OPENED WITH GREAT FANFARE ON MAY 18, 1958 WITH BANDS PLAYING PATRIOTIC SONGS AND A WATER CARNIVAL FEATURING BOAT ARMADAS, NAVY FROGMEN AND WATER-SKIING EXHIBITIONS.



INTERPRETIVE GUIDE

# EISENHOWER STATE PARK



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### Eisenhower State Park

50 Park Road 20, Denison, TX 75020

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TXDOT

## TEXOMA CROSSROADS

Lake Texoma provides an abundance of recreational opportunities, from camping and hiking to boating and fishing. Visitors enjoy the wooded campsites, the rugged bluffs, scenic coves and the rocky lakeshore. This intriguing landscape results from a blending of prairie openings within the woodlands of the Oak Woods and Prairies region.

Remnants of tallgrass prairie with stands of little blue-stem and Indiangrass can be found in open areas of the park, while the more wooded areas offer shade and shelter underneath oaks, elms, and the bois d'arc tree. The Red River adds a riparian element to the mix.

The final dramatic feature creating this landscape is an upside-down bowl-shaped buckle in the earth known as the Preston Anticline that thrusts several layers of clays, shales and limestones to the surface, revealing the layers left by an ancient Cretaceous ocean dating to the days of the dinosaurs. Spiral shaped ammonites and other fossils embedded in these layers provide clues to the ocean life of the past.

This spiral-shaped fossil comes from an ammonite, a predatory mollusk that resembled a squid.



Opportunities for excellent fishing can be found along the scenic coves where largemouth and smallmouth bass, striped bass and channel catfish thrive. Texoma is the only lake in Texas where striped bass spawn. A lucky angler caught the 121.5-pound Texas state record blue catfish in Lake Texoma.

The shoreline attracts over 170 species of birds, including the great blue heron and osprey. Bald eagles winter in the park from October through March.



Bald eagle

## THE RED RIVER

The Red River marks the northern entrance to Texas. It is more than a mere river, serving as a border, a boundary, a transportation corridor, and a source of sustenance for people and wildlife. The Red River flows from the Texas Panhandle to the Mississippi River, carrying the rich red colors of the Permian sandstones of Palo Duro Canyon toward the sea. Early Spanish explorers called the river "Rio Rojo." On an 1853 U.S. Army expedition, W. B. Parker observed that "the river takes its name from the color of the water, which is a dark maroon, full of sediment and very unpalatable."

Here the river marked the international boundary between Spain and France and later between the United States and Spain, Mexico, and the Republic of Texas. Later the river separated the new state of Texas from Choctaw and Chickasaw lands in Indian Territory which eventually became the new state of Oklahoma. Many early settlers entered Texas by crossing the Red River at Colbert's Ferry to the east or Preston to the west. Trail drivers on the Shawnee Trail herded cattle north across the Red River at Preston Bend, now hidden under the waters of Lake Texoma. In 1944, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed Denison Dam, creating the 89,000-acre Lake Texoma. The dam captures the waters of the Red River and its Oklahoma tributary, the Washita, creating the 12th-largest reservoir in the United States.

