

Black Mesa State Park

Frequently Asked Questions



What is the address to the park and how do I get there?

11546 North Lake Road, Kenton, OK 73946

Some GPS units cannot navigate to this address. Lake Etling is inside the park, you can navigate to Lake Carl Etling to find Black Mesa State Park on a GPS.

From Boise City go west on Hwy 325 for 20 miles to South Lake Road turn left, travel 4.5 miles to N0080 Road and take a right, 1.2 miles to E0120 road and take a left, continue into the park.

From Clayton, New Mexico head northeast on US-412 3.3 miles, turn left onto NM-406 for 35 miles, turn right onto NM-456 for 7.7 miles (turns into OK-325), turn right on North Lake Road for 4.5 miles into the park.

Black Mesa Nature Preserve is located 15 miles northwest of the park, there is no camping at the Nature Preserve and the preserve is closed after dark.

Where can I get gas?

The closest gas stations are in Boise City, OK (30 miles) or Clayton, NM(50 miles). Fill up before you visit the park, many activities in the park and area require driving and having a full tank helps you better enjoy the park.

How do I make reservations and what is required?

You can make advanced reservations two ways:

Online: Check availability, make and cancel reservations for tent and RV site, at rv.okparks.com. You must use a credit card to confirm reservations.

Telephone: Check availability, make and cancel reservations for tent and RV sites. Call 1-877-657-2757. Use a credit card to confirm your reservation.

Same day reservations made with the park office are allowed but you must arrive while the office is open, a credit card is required to make a reservation. If arriving after the office is closed you must make a reservation online or by phone before setting up on a campsite.

Be sure to have the following information handy when you make a reservation:

- Telephone number

- Email Address

- Trailer or motor home lengths (if applicable)

- Credit card information

How do I check in?

Check-in time is 5:00 pm. Checking-in at the office is not required. When arriving after 5:00pm you may go directly to your reserved campsite. Wi-Fi and cell service is limited in the park please have your site number available to you offline. You must make a new reservation if you decide to move to a different site. Do not occupy any campsite or campsite parking area if you do not have a reservation for that site.

Is there a gate to the park?

No, Black Mesa State Park is located on a county road there is not a gate to enter the park or campground.

Can I check in to my site before 5:00pm?

Early check-ins are based on availability, you must get approval with the park office or camp host before setting up early on a campsite.

Can I check in to my site after 5:00pm?

Yes, many guests arrive later in the evening. Campsites will not be given away if you are not in your site at 5:00pm. If arriving after dark please be aware that Black Mesa State Park is a dark sky park and due to this the park will be very dark when you arrive. Please be aware of other guests and limit bright light usage while setting up your campsite.

What cell phone carriers work at the park?

AT&T is the only cell network that works in the park.

Is there Wi-Fi in the park?

Yes, Wi-Fi is available near the park office but is not strong enough for streaming or video calls.

May I build a campfire in a state park?

You can have a campfire in most sites, unless a county or park burn ban is in place. However, you must follow these fire safety guidelines:

Fires may be built only in park provided grills or metal fire rings. Most developed campsites have fire rings and grills.

Some sites allow only containerized fuel fires (i.e. camp stoves). Please check the regulations for each site.

You can only gather firewood if it is dead fall and will fit in the fire rings, no cutting standing living or dead trees.

Do not leave your fire unattended!

Can I buy firewood at the park?

Camp Works sells firewood, the store is open March through November.

Is there drinking water available in the park?

All water spigots in the park have potable water and water in the park is on year round. Water is available for all guests near the park office, near the restrooms, and in the West Canyon area. If camping in the Lakeview or Stargazing Road areas bring water jugs and bottles to fill in the main campground before going to your site, no water is available in these areas. There is no water at Black Mesa Nature Preserve.

Where are the restrooms/showers located in the park?

Restrooms and showers are available in the main campground near the playground. There are no restrooms in Lakeview or Stargazing road campgrounds.

A pit toilet is located at the High Point Trail parking area.

When are quiet hours in the park?

Quiet hours 11pm to 7am, you may go around the park after dark to view the stars. Please be aware of other guests and try to limit light use. The park is extremely dark at night carry red lights for safety.

What are the dark sky policies in the park?

Red lights are highly encouraged after dark as they help preserve your night vision. Turn out lights when you go inside. No decorative lights. Fires are allowed at campsites please extinguish fires when not actively attending them. You may go around the park after dark to view the stars away from the campsites, if driving headlights are required. Do not block roadways or set up telescopes on the roads, many roads have steep hills and sharp curves parking on or standing in the roads can be extremely dangerous especially at night.

Is astrophotography allowed in the park?

Yes, many guests visit the park to get photos of the night sky. You must have a reservation in the park if you plan on staying after 11:00 pm. You may go on trails in the state park (not the Nature Preserve) after dark, the Rock Garden Trail has many opportunities for rock formations in the foreground of astrophotography photos. Please do not trespass on private property outside the park for any reason. Multiple rock formations are available in the park for photographs.

Can I bring my pet to a state park?

Yes, you can bring your pets camping and on the trails. However, we do have some rules:

Pets must be on physical leash, in a car, or in a crate at all times.

You must be with your pet at all times. You may not leave your pet unattended in the park, in a vehicle, or at your campsite.

You must pick up your pet's waste and put it in a dumpster.

Is there a camp store/gift shop in the park?

Yes, Camp Works is located near the restrooms in the park and carries firewood, ice, camping supplies, snacks, drinks, fishing supplies and souvenirs. Open March through November. Please call 806-333-3517 for questions or hours of operations of Camp Works. The park office also sells souvenirs, park office hours are staff dependent.

Can you swim in the lake?

A swimming area is located in the creek near the main campground, Lake Carl Etling is a no swimming lake.

What fish are in the lake?

The lake is currently stocked with walleye, bass and catfish. Lake levels vary greatly throughout the year please call the park for information about lake levels and boat ramp access.

Can I use a hammock in a state park?

Yes, hammocks may be used under the following conditions:

No permanent anchors such as screws or eyebolts may be used.

Trees must be at least 8" in diameter at the point of strap contact to ensure they are strong enough to support the hammock.

Straps must be at least two inches wide, preferably made of nylon or polypropylene.

We recommend using padding underneath straps to protect tree bark.

No more than two straps may be attached to a single tree.

You may not prune or cut plants to make room for a hammock.

Hammocks used for overnight camping must be hung within the bounds of the assigned campsite.

Hammocks may not be attached to park structures such as shade shelters, lantern posts or buildings unless specifically authorized.

Where is the High Point Trail located?

Black Mesa State Park is split into two locations. Camping is at Black Mesa State Park, the High Point Trail is 15 miles northwest of the main park at Black Mesa Nature Preserve. There is no camping at the Nature Preserve.

When is the High Point Trail open?

The High Point Trail is open dawn to dusk year round. The trail may be closed during adverse weather conditions. Do not hike when temperatures are over 90 degrees. Please call the office to check on trail conditions.

How long is the High Point Trail and what do I need to know before I hike?

The High Point Trail is 8.4 miles, 4.2 in and 4.2 out. Bring plenty of water for each person and pet hiking the trail. While an emergency cache of water is on the trail in the summer, never rely on it as your source of water, during days when there is high trail usage the cache will sometimes run low on water. The trail is open year round but may close during extreme weather or trail work. In the summer hikers need to be off the trail by 10:00 am when the temperatures are predicted to be over 90 degrees and the trail is closed when temperatures are over 100 degrees. Do not hike during thunderstorms. Deep snow or excessive rain may also cause trail closures, call the park office to check trail conditions.

Are there any shorter trails?

Shorter trails between .5 and 1.5 miles in length are located at Black Mesa State Park. The Rock Garden Trail, the Vista Trail, the Carrizo Creek Trail, and The Bird Haven Trail are all shorter options than the High Point Trail.