

# Western Nebraska offers escape

By Douglas Engh  
Staff Reporter

If roaming Gateway Shopping Center is your idea of getting back to nature, perhaps camping in western Nebraska can provide you with more of a challenge.

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission recommends many summer adventures. Fort Robinson State Park, near Crawford, offers hunting and fishing, hiking trails, horse riding, and camping. Nine hours from Lincoln, the 21,000-acre park lies in the shadow of the Pine Ridge. Tours of the fort are conducted throughout the summer, and a repertory theater company plays at the Post Playhouse.

Chadron State Park, east of Fort Robinson, is also in the Pine Ridge. Once a fur trading and military post, it has camp sites, cabins, a fur trade museum, and conveniences for family camping. It also sponsors an annual fur traders rendezvous, parade, and 10K run.

Modern day prairie pioneers can travel to Bayard, near Scottsbluff and ride in a wagon train. The Oregon Trail Wagon Train company operates throughout the summer with three- and four-day trips. Participants cook out, drive horse teams, square dance and experience a simulated Indian attack.

Other sites in the area include

Chimney Rock National Historic Site, and Scotts Bluff National Monument, both with hiking trails. The National Park Service has no facilities at Chimney Rock other than the trails and a picnic area. Scotts Bluff has a visitors center.

Maps and additional information can be obtained from the Game and Parks Commission.

If the student camper lacks equipment, they can turn to the Campus Recreation office for help. Campus Rec maintains the largest equipment rental program in the city, serving current UNL students, staff, and faculty. They also sell hunting, fishing, and park permits, and have maps and travel brochures of western Nebraska campsites, rest areas, and recreation areas.

Brent Toalson, Campus Rec Outdoor Adventures staff member said, "You can rent tents, sleeping bags, cookstoves, and canoeing equipment." Items can be rented at daily, weekend, and weekly rates. "This service provides for those who don't have their own camping equipment to experience the outdoors," he said.

In addition to their rental program the Outdoor Adventures Department, a part of Campus Rec, sponsors organized

camping trips, both throughout Nebraska and out of state. Western trips this summer include two canoeing trips down the upper Niobrara River, and one down the Dismal River.

All canoe trips include food, transportation, and camping equipment, average \$50 in cost, and are scheduled for extended weekends. Sign-up deadlines are mid-June, and the trips go out late June and July.

For the more experienced canoeist, Outdoor Adventures is offering a white-water trip down the Middle Fork of the Salmon River near Challis, Idaho. The trip runs July 15-25, and costs \$345. Sign-up deadline is June 30.

In addition, two broadsailing trips have been added this summer, one to Lake McConaughy and one to Milford Lake, Kan. Brent Toalson, leader of the McConaughy trip, said that both include certified instruction and sailboards. Student cost of the "Big Mac" trip is \$165 and runs July 10-12, with a sign-up deadline of June 25. This trip is in cooperation with Big Mac Scuba and Sail shop at the lake. Its owner, Jeff Dyer, will be providing instruction.

Additional information about these trips can be obtained by calling the Campus Recreation office at 472-3467.



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