

2012 Greater Prairie Chicken Tours

The Greater Prairie Chicken Tours were started in 1994 by a former officer of the Colorado Division of Wildlife. These tours were started to educate the public on these, at the time, endangered birds. The East Yuma County Historical Society was asked in the late 1990's to take on arranging these tours to help raise funds for the Wray Museum. Then in the early 2000's, the Wray Chamber of Commerce was asked to take over arranging the tours. Today, the Wray Chamber of Commerce and the East Yuma County Historical Society partner together to make these tours possible with the gracious help and knowledge of the Colorado Division of Wildlife and the Kitzmiller Grazing Association. The Greater Prairie Chicken is no longer endangered, but these organizations would like to keep it that way...so we continue the tours to help keep the public educated on these amazing birds.

We thank you for deciding to attend one of our tours to learn more about these birds which were once facing certain extinction. Whether you are a birder at heart, or becoming one, we know you will enjoy the tour and will leave with a greater appreciation of the Greater Prairie Chicken.

Respectfully,

The Board Members, Directors & Staff of the Wray Chamber of Commerce, the East Yuma County Historical Society, the Colorado Division of Wildlife and the Kitzmiller Grazing Association.

For more specific information about the Greater Prairie Chicken, [click here!](#)

2012 Dates

	<i>Orientation</i>	<i>Tour</i>
<i>Tour #1</i>	Friday, March 23	Saturday, March 24
<i>Tour #2</i>	Saturday, March 24	Sunday, March 25
<i>Tour #3</i>	Friday, March 30	Saturday March 31
<i>Tour #4</i>	Saturday, March 31	Sunday, April 1
<i>Tour #5*</i>	Tuesday, April 3	Wednesday, April 4
<i>Tour #6</i>	Friday, April 6	Saturday, April 7
<i>Tour #7</i>	Friday, April 13	Saturday, April 14
<i>Tour #8</i>	Saturday, April 14	Sunday, April 15

Schedule:

Friday & Saturday Night:

6:00 P.M. - Tour Orientation. (*Attendance is Required*)

This orientation will last approximately 1 hour. A representative from the Colorado Division of Wildlife will give a presentation on the Greater Prairie Chicken and how the following morning's tour will take place. There will also be a video presentation and a question and answer session.

Following Your Orientation. – Wray Museum Tour (*Optional*)

Following the orientation, you will have the option to take a guided tour of the Wray Museum. Trained staff members will be on hand to take you on a guided tour of our local museum which houses lots of artifacts and information regarding Wray and Eastern Yuma County. (*The Wray Museum is the only community museum outside of Washington, D.C. to have a Smithsonian sanctioned exhibit!*)

Saturday & Sunday Morning:

Time TBD – Check-In at Wray Museum

At the orientation the night before, you will be given all the proper information regarding your attire and procedures for the tour. You can also find some more information on the Frequently Asked Questions page...the link to this page is below. This will include the time you need to be at the Wray Museum the morning of your tour. This time all depends on the weather forecast and the sunrise, so we are not able to provide you with this information ahead of time. If you are not on the bus at the time that was given the night before, or unless you have made prior arrangements with the Wray Chamber Director or the Colorado Division of Wildlife officer ahead of time, the bus will leave without you. If this happens, you will forfeit your registration fee.

Time TBD – Arrival at Lek on Kitzmiller Grazing grounds.

Once you arrive at the lek, you will be escorted off the bus and in to the viewing trailer. You will be given ample time to situate yourself and get comfortable. You will be in this viewing trailer for 1 ½ to 2 hours and will not be allowed to leave. Also, there are no restrooms available during this time frame. Once the viewing is finished, you will be taken to the Kitzmiller Grazing Association's main property for breakfast. This breakfast will consist of farm fresh scrambled eggs, farm raised bacon, pancakes, juice and coffee. You will spend about 1 to 1 ½ hours there and then be taken back to the Wray Museum. Typical estimated return time is between 9 – 10am.

Optional Excursions:

Over the last couple of years, we have had many people ask for other opportunities for bird watching in Yuma County. This year we have two optional excursions for you to take, following your Saturday or Sunday morning tour.

When you register, please let us know if you are interested in either or both of the optional excursions. Excursion #1 is a guided tour and requires a minimum of 10 people. If we do not meet that minimum number, this excursion will be cancelled and we will attempt to notify you as far enough in advance as possible. Excursion #2 is a self-guided tour and does not require a minimum. You will be able to do both excursions if you'd like, but you will have to do #1 first as that will be a scheduled guided tour and #2 is not.

Excursion #1 – Beecher Island Tour: 21 miles south of Wray is a little town called Beecher Island. The Battle of Beecher Island was a war fought between the United States Army and the Plains Native American tribes in September 1868. Beecher Island is situated on the Arikaree River, then known as part of the North Fork of the Republican River. Beecher Island was named after Lieutenant Fredrick H. Beecher, an army officer killed during the battle. Because of the area in which this battleground sits, it is a great place for bird watching. Following your morning tour, a representative from the Beecher Island Battleground Association or the Wray Museum will meet you and give you a guided tour of the grounds. This tour will take 1 to 1 ½ hours and then you will be free to roam around the grounds.

Excursion #2 – Smith Land Self-Guided Tour: Approximately 10 miles west of Wray is a piece of private land that sits on the Republican River. This is another great place to see many different species of birds. The landowner has agreed to allow any GPCT attendees to come take a self-guided tour on their property. At orientation, you will be given a map to the property and all pertinent information regarding this self-guided tour.

PLEASE NOTE:

Although we are not charging you for these tours, we are asking that you consider giving a donation to the parties responsible for organizing these excursions for you.

Price:

\$100 per person

For more details, such as lodging options and clothing suggestions along with others, and answers to some frequently asked questions, [click here!](#)

Payment Options:

We offer two ways to register and pay for your registration:

Register & Pay By Mail:

1. If you choose this option, you **MUST** call the Wray Chamber office before mailing your form & payment to notify them. Because the online registrations process immediately, we need to hold a spot for you until we receive your registration form & payment.
2. We will place a temporary hold on the quantity of spaces you need for five (5) business days. If we have not received your form by the end of the fifth day, we will reopen your spaces to the general public. If we, then, receive your form after that, it will be dependent on whether there are spots still available.
3. In this option, you can pay by check or credit card using Visa, MasterCard or Discover.

If you wish to register and pay by mail, **[click here](#)** to download and print the form.

Register & Pay Online:

1. The first page you will be directed to is the registration form. Most of the information is required and is needed for our records. But please be assured, we **do not** release or sell any personal information to third parties.
2. Once you have finished the registration form, you will be directed to the payment page on the PayPal website. Again, this site is 100% secure!
3. You do NOT need to have a PayPal account to use this system. On the payment page, you will have an option to pay just using your credit card.
4. PayPal accepts Visa, MasterCard, American Express & Discover.

If you wish to register and pay online using our 100% secure system, **[click here](#)**.

**** For security reasons we cannot accept registrations and payments by phone. ****

If you have any questions or issues, don't hesitate to contact:

Kyle Hansen, Wray Chamber of Commerce Executive Director at
970-332-3484 or e-mail him at director@wraychamber.net.

**THANKS AGAIN &
WE'LL SEE YOU IN MARCH OR APRIL!**

General Information & Frequently Asked Questions:

1) Lodging Options:

The following are Wray Chamber member lodging establishments.
Call for more details!

<u>Business</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Price Range:</u> <i>(Tax is not included)</i>
B&L Properties	970-630-0660	\$90 - \$110
There are 2 executive rental units available & this duplex sits on the eastern edge of Wray. Each unit includes: 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, a full kitchen w/ utensils and appliances, Cable TV, Free Wireless Internet & a 1 car garage.		
Doc's Bed & Breakfast	970-332-4984 or 970-630-5459	\$75 for 1 Queen Bed Units \$90 for 2 Queen Bed Units
There are 8 units available in this establishment which sits in the heart of Wray. There are 6 – 1 bed units and 2 – 2 bed units and each have their own en suite bathroom. Because our tour includes breakfast, Doc's is offering a special rate (<i>shown above</i>) to GPCT attendees only which does not include breakfast, but includes: 1 or 2 beds, Dish Network TV & Free Wireless Internet. Ample parking is free & close! You can look up reviews at www.tripadvisor.com .		
The Hideaway Inn	970-332-4634 After 4pm MST or Weekends	\$79.95 for 1 bedroom units \$99.95 for 2 bedroom units (6 Person Limit)
There are 2 executive rental units available and this duplex unit sits in the western part of Wray. Each unit includes: Fully furnished kitchen; laundry facilities; patio w/gas grill, Satellite TV, DVD player (Red Box rental available@ 7-11), free wireless internet & easy parking.		
The Lark Bunting Bed & Breakfast	970-371-8782	\$79.95 & up for queen suite (w/shower only) \$84.95 & up for queen suite (w/shower & tub) \$89.95 & up for king quite (w/shower & tub)
There are 4 units available in this establishment which sits in the heart of Wray. The Lark Bunting caters to professional people and has a no children and no pet policy. It is a non-smoking facility; however there is an outside area for smokers. Each room has its own en suite bathroom, free wireless internet, cable TV and DVD rentals available. There is ample parking and all GPCT attendees will have some coffee and pastries available the morning before you leave for your tour.		
Sandhiller Restaurant & Motel	970-332-4134	\$55 for Hotel Rooms \$80 for Executive Suites
The Sandhiller Motel sits nestled in one of Wray's sand hill bluffs on the northwest edge of town. The hotel rooms are 1 or 2 bed units and there are 2 executive suites (1 is a 1 bedroom unit and the other is a 2 bedroom unit). All include free cable TV and ample free parking. Wireless internet is free in the executive suites and costs \$2.50 p/night in the hotel. There is also a full service restaurant attached. This establishment has recently undergone some renovations too!		

2) Dining Options:

The following are Wray Chamber member dining establishments.
Call for hours & for menu related questions.

<u>Business</u>	<u>Menu Type</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
4th & Main Downtown Grille	American/Varied	970-332-3358
Hillbilly Heaven	American/Diner	970-332-4484
Subway	Sandwich Shop	970-332-4444
The Meat Shoppe	Sandwich Shop	970-332-9830
The Sandhiller Restaurant	American/Varied	970-332-4134

3) **Clothing:**

1. Wear dark clothing. The birds behave better when they don't notice you!
2. Bring warm clothing. We will take the trip no matter the weather, unless traveling is too dangerous. You will be sitting still for quite some time so as not to disturb the birds. Please understand that the cold can be extreme. We recommend ski-type clothing or coveralls. Gloves & hats are also recommended.

4) **Electronics:**

1. Please do not bring cell phones, watches, or anything that will make noise as it will disturb the birds.
2. Cameras are allowed...we just ask that you make sure they do not make any loud noises. A shutter noise is ok...but some cameras play music when you turn them off and on. Make sure to turn noises like that off prior to going on the tour.
3. You are allowed to bring a stand for your camera...but if you have a tri-pod you will be asked to not fully extend it. Room is VERY limited in the viewing trailer!

5) **Viewing Trailer:**

1. Once you are in the viewing trailer, you will be there for approximately 1 ½ to 2 hours. We will then head to breakfast!
2. Unfortunately, at this time, we do not have handicap accessibility.
3. The trailer is set up with three rows of benches. There will be seat cushions and blankets provided. You are welcome to bring extra blankets and extra cushions or a bench seat for added comfort.
4. Be advised that there are no bathrooms in the viewing trailer or anywhere close to the lek! We will recommend that you limit your liquid intake prior to the viewing tour. There are bathrooms at the breakfast site immediately following the viewing.

FAQ's:

Do we have to be at the orientation on Friday or Saturday night?

YES! The orientation is mandatory. As previously mentioned, you will be briefed on the do's and don'ts of the tour the following morning. You will also learn more about the Greater Prairie Chicken and get a chance to talk to a representative from the Colorado Division of Wildlife. The other key factor to being there is that we will let you all know what time to be at the bus the next morning. This information cannot be given out ahead of time due to weather and the sunrise. Therefore if you do not show up, you will not be allowed on the bus the next morning. The only exception that can be made is if you contact the Wray Chamber ahead of time with a logical reason as to why you can't be there.

Why isn't the hotel room or dinner included in the tour packages anymore?

It was decided to take out the hotel room so that we can give each Chamber member lodging establishment an equal chance to host our guests. Forcing people to one hotel was not being fair to the others. We also have an executive rental duplex and a bed and breakfast that can't accommodate a full tour group...therefore not giving them a chance to host at all. We also decided to take the dinner out of the package because of the same reasons. This way it gives each restaurant a fair chance to serve our guests and also gives you the option to eat what you want.

What happens if the weather turns bad?

We will go on the tour no matter the weather...unless it becomes too hazardous to drive out to the lek. In the tour history, we have only had to cancel 1 tour. So, the likelihood that a cancellation would happen is small...but if it does, we will let you know as far in advance as possible and you will receive a full refund.

If I cancel my reservation, will I receive a refund?

Unfortunately, we do not offer refunds for these tours. If there is an extraordinary circumstance that prevents you from coming, you will need to contact the Wray Chamber and be able to offer proof of your reason. Otherwise we will be unable to offer a refund.

If you have any questions that are not answered here, don't hesitate to call the Wray Chamber of Commerce at 970-332-3484 or e-mail the director at director@wraychamber.net.