



LOESS Hills

Underwood



Pottawattamie County
I-80 eastbound at milepost 19
Emphasis: Loess Hills
Artist: David Dahlquist
Completed: November 2007

The Loess Hills are the inspiration for this rest area. The hills are considered a world-class geologic formation created by deposition of great clouds of silt blown across the Missouri River floodplain. They are a unique landform with the only other similar formation (depths of up to 200 feet) in Shaanxi, China.

Loess soil allows for rapid movement of water, resulting in dry conditions suitable for arid plants. The Loess Hills region supports a wide and abundant variety of plants and animals uniquely suited to these arid conditions.

Pottawattamie County has played a significant role in many interesting historical events, including:

- Home to an early and extensive Native American culture.
- On the route of the Corps of Discovery's Lewis and Clark Expedition.
- Part of the Mormon Trail.
- One of the oldest archeological human burial sites where the remains of four humans, now called the "Turin Man," were buried 5,500 year ago.

The Native Americans that once lived throughout the Loess Hills considered the hills to be a "sacred" place, so special that no tribe or group could control it.

