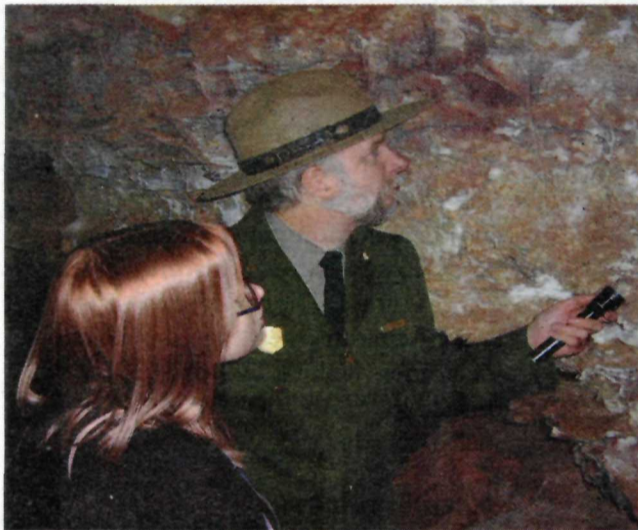


# Wind Cave

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
2021 Visitor Guide



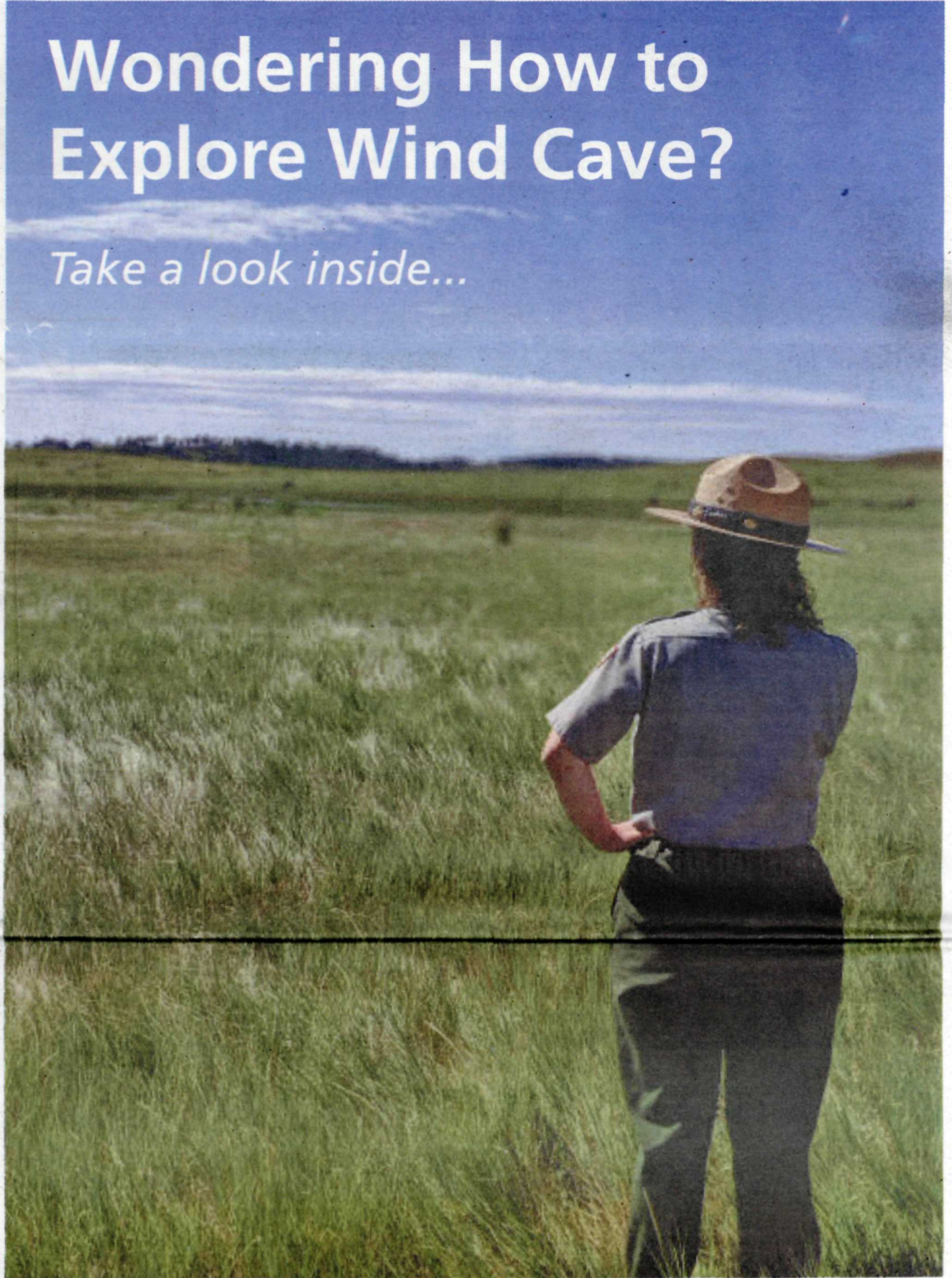
**PLANNING YOUR VISIT - pages 2-3**



**CAVE TOUR INFORMATION - page 4**



**WIND CAVE WILDLIFE - page 6**



## Wondering How to Explore Wind Cave?

*Take a look inside...*

**RANGER GUIDED PROGRAMS - page 5**



**HIKING INFORMATION - page 8**

**Park Hours**  
24 hours/day, every day

**Emergencies**  
Dial 911

**Park Info**  
605.745.4600  
[www.nps.gov/wica](http://www.nps.gov/wica)

# Planning Your Visit



## Welcome to Wind Cave National Park!

Wind Cave has always been a special place for me. As a native of northwest Nebraska, I grew up visiting Wind Cave and the Black Hills with my family. Whether it was watching the majestic bison and the busy antics of the prairie dogs on the surface or exploring the wonders of the cave below, I've carried the experiences and memories I formed here as a personal connection to the place I call home. Wind Cave National Park is a living, breathing system that connects a unique mixed-grass prairie ecosystem to a deep underground network of passages that are still being explored to understand their formation and to find their full extent. The park is proud to be affiliated with 20 Native American Tribes for whom the natural environments of the cave and the land have rich cultural and spiritual meaning.

I hope your experiences here, and the memories you take away, enrich your sense of the land and the people of the Black Hills and its communities. Whether this is your first visit or your 100th, there is always something new to see and do. Enjoy your visit!

Travel safe,

Leigh Welling  
Superintendent

## Visitor Center

The visitor center is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily, with extended hours during the summer. The visitor center is closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

All cave tours begin at the visitor center and are offered daily. Exhibits, maps, book sales, backcountry permits, horse permits, information about cave tours and ranger programs, lost-and-found services, and Federal Recreational Lands Passes are all available here.

## Covid Conscious

Wearing masks in all federal facilities is required. This includes all cave tours. These safety measures are in place to protect staff and visitors.



## Campground

Located one mile north of the visitor center, the Elk Mountain Campground is open year-round and offers 62 campsites on a first-come, first-served basis. Two accessible sites are available. *The campground generally does not fill.*

Campsites are \$18 per night regularly, \$9 per night in the off season when facilities are limited. Senior or Access passholders pay half price. For information on group camping, call 605.745.4600. Drinking water and flush toilets are available in summer, but no showers, electrical hookups, or dump station. Firewood is made available for campers as the collection of firewood is prohibited.



## Backcountry Camping

Backcountry camping is permitted in the northwestern part of the park. Permits are required and available for free at the visitor center. Ask a ranger for suggestions on routes and destinations.

For your safety, and for the protection of park resources, follow all regulations during your stay. Leave no trace of your visit.

## Hiking

When hiking park trails make sure to carry plenty of water; temperatures in the summer can exceed 100°F (38°C). Water is not readily available along the trails and any water found in the backcountry should be treated or boiled before drinking. Flies, mosquitoes, and wood ticks can be found in the wetter areas of the park. Be watchful for rattlesnakes throughout the prairie.

## Bicycling

Bicycling is limited to roads which are open to public motor vehicle access. *Bicycling off road, on trails, or in the backcountry is prohibited.* When bicycling, be aware that animals roam freely through the park. Keep a safe distance from bison and all wild animals.

## Horseback Riding

Horseback riding is a wonderful way to experience the park's backcountry. *All horse and pack animal use requires a free permit* available at the visitor center and weed free feed. Almost all of the park is open to riding, except: on roadways and trails, and in the campground, picnic areas, and around the visitor center.

## Picnicking

A picnic area is located ¼ mile north of the visitor center and is open year-round. The picnic area contains tables, fire grates, and pit toilets. Drinking water is available in the summer.

## Restrooms

Restrooms are available year-round at the visitor center and in the summer months at the Elk Mountain Campground. Pit toilets are available at both the picnic area and the campground year round.

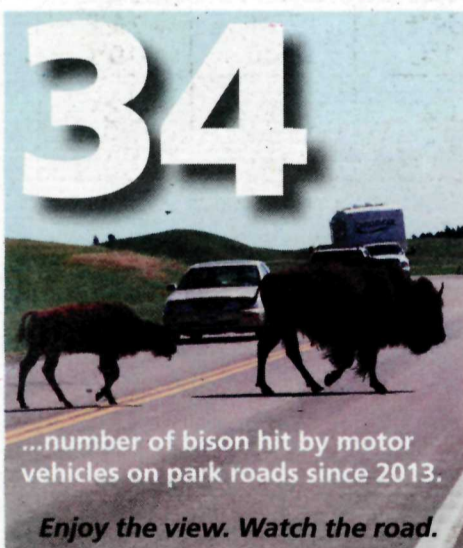
## Trash and Recycling

Trash receptacles are available at the visitor center, the picnic area, and the Elk Mountain Campground. Recycling facilities are also available at these areas. The park recycles glass, aluminum cans, steel cans, and plastic containers with PETE 1 or HDPE 2 markings. Please rinse recyclables before placing them in containers.

## Area Services

There are no lodging, gasoline, grocery, or restaurant services in the park. Snacks are available at the visitor center vending machines. Full services are available in the nearby towns of Hot Springs (20 minutes south) and Custer (30 minutes north), with partial services in Custer State Park (bordering Wind Cave National Park). For information on Hot Springs, call 800.325.6991; for Custer, call 800.992.9818; for Custer State Park, call 605.255.4515.

# Safety and Protecting Park Resources



## Wildlife

*Animals in the park are wild and unpredictable. Do not approach or attempt to feed them.* Feeding animals causes them to become dependent on handouts and attracts them to highways. Bison roam freely within the park and can be dangerous. Stay a safe distance from all wildlife – regulations require at least 25 yards from bison and elk.

## Unmanned Aircraft

Federal law prohibits the use of unmanned aircraft in all national parks.



## Traveling in the Park

All vehicles and bicycles must remain on roadways. Off-road driving or bicycle riding is prohibited. Obey all speed limits as they are in place to protect you and the wildlife. For your own safety, federal and state seatbelt laws are enforced.

## Pets

Pets are prohibited in the backcountry and on most hiking trails. Pets are permitted on the Elk Mountain Nature Trail and on the Prairie Vista Nature Trail. Please clean up after your pet. Pets may not be left unattended and must be on a leash at all times. Do not leave pets in your vehicle for any length of time. Kennel space is available in Hot Springs or Custer.

## Weather

Hazardous weather can strike at any time of year. Severe thunderstorms, common in the summer, bring lightning and the potential for damaging hail and possibly a tornado. Check the forecast before heading out and avoid the open prairie when severe weather is expected.

## Protecting the Park

Park resources are for everyone to enjoy. *Do not disturb or remove plants, wildlife, antlers, bones, rocks, or any other natural or cultural feature; they are protected by federal law.* These resources are all part of the park's ecosystem and are important to the park's history and to the survival of animals and plants. Please leave all objects undisturbed so the next visitor can enjoy them.

## Weapons

Federal law allows people who can legally possess firearms under federal, South Dakota, and local laws to possess firearms while visiting Wind Cave National Park. *Hunting and the use of firearms is prohibited.* It is the visitor's responsibility to understand and comply with all applicable state, local, and federal firearms laws. *Federal law prohibits firearms in public buildings within this park.* These locations are posted with signs.



**One hour: (Pick one)**

- Hike the Prairie Vista or Elk Mountain Trails
- Look for bison and watch prairie dogs
- Watch the park film / explore exhibits
- Complete the junior ranger program

**Two Hours: (pick one)**

- Hike Wind Cave Canyon or Cold Brook Canyon Trails
- Drive NPS 5 or 6
- Visit Buffalo Gap National Grasslands Visitor Center (Hot Springs)
- Drive HWY 87 and hike Rankin Ridge Trail

**TRAVEL TIME TO SURROUNDING SITES  
FROM WIND CAVE VISITOR CENTER:**

- Hot Springs: 20 minutes	- Jewel Cave NM: 45 minutes
- Custer City: 30 minutes	- Mount Rushmore NM: 1 hour
- Hill City: 45 minutes	- Iron Mountain Rd: 1 hour
- Rapid City: 1 hour	- Badlands National Park: 2 hours
- Denver, CO: 6 hours	- Devils Tower NM: 2.5 hours
- Sioux Falls, SD: 6 hours	- Agate Fossil Beds NM: 2.5 hours
- Cody, WY: 6.5 hours	- Scotts Bluff NM: 3 hours

**Four Hours: (pick one)**

- Visit Jewel Cave National Monument
- Drive the Wildlife Loop in Custer State Park
- Hike the Lookout / Centennial Loop Trails
- Visit Mount Rushmore National Memorial

**Full Day: (pick two)**

- Hike a longer trail; Highland Creek or Boland Ridge Trails.
- Drive Iron Mountain Road or Needles Highway
- Watch a sunset along HWY 385
- Visit Black Hills National Forest: Spearfish Canyon

# Weather

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Average High Temp.	38°F 3°C	42°F 6°C	50°F 10°C	61°F 17°C	71°F 22°C	81°F 27°C	89°F 32°C	88°F 32°C	78°F 26°C	66°F 19°C	50°F 10°C	40°F 6°C
Average Low Temp.	11°F -12°C	15°F -9°C	21°F -6°C	32°F 0°C	42°F 6°C	51°F 11°C	57°F 15°C	55°F 13°C	45°F 7°C	34°F 1°C	23°F -5°C	14°F -10°C
Average Precipitation (snowfall)	0.4" (6.6")	0.6" (5.9")	1.0" (7.4")	1.9" (7")	3.4" (2")	3.1" (0)	2.5" (0)	1.8" (0)	1.4" (0.5")	1.2" (1.5")	0.6" (5.1")	0.5" (6")

# Your Fee Dollars at Work

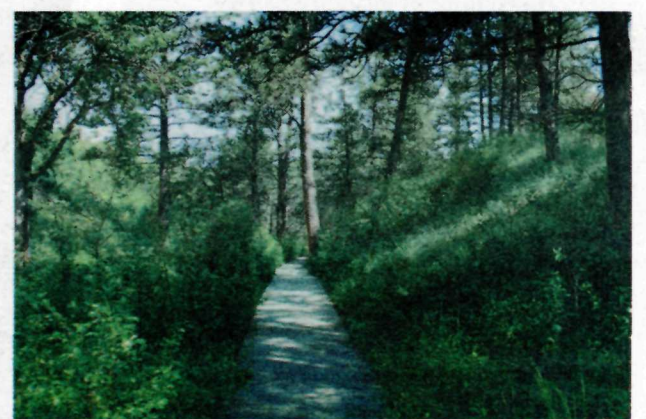
Thanks to your support here are projects that have been completed around the park.



Buffalo proof trail posts for better wayfinding



Airlock for the Natural Entrance Tour



Accessible walkway to the Natural Entrance

# Cave Tour Information

All cave tours are ranger-guided and leave from the visitor center. The cave temperature is 54°F(12°C) year-round. Closed toe shoes and a jacket are recommended.

Covid restrictions may be in place. Please call or visit the website for specific information.

Tickets are sold on a first-come, first-served basis at the visitor center.

Tickets typically sell out two hours ahead of a tour during the summer months and need to be purchased at least five minutes before in the winter months.

**Strollers, backpacks, helmets, trekking poles, and other large items** are not allowed in the cave. These items cannot be left at the Information Desk or anywhere in the Visitor Center. Please secure all large items with your vehicle before your tour.

## EASY

### Garden of Eden Tour 1 hour; 1/3 mile; 150 stairs

This tour is the least strenuous, with only 150 stairs. Boxwork, popcorn, and flowstone formations are seen along the trail. The tour is ideal for people with limited time or abilities. This tour enters and exits the cave by elevator.

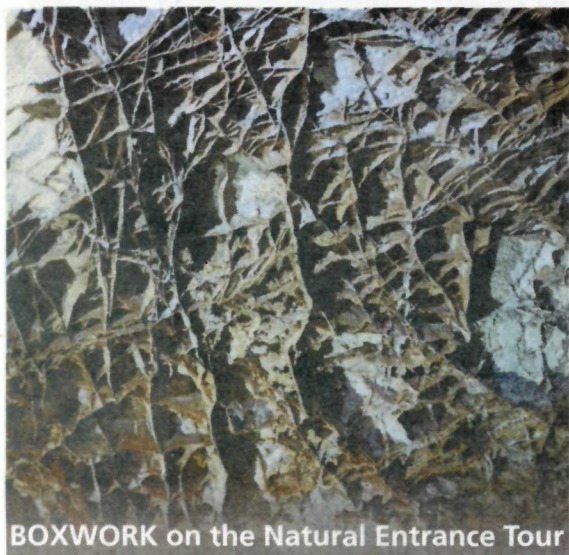


FLOWSTONE on the Garden of Eden Tour

## MODERATE

### Natural Entrance Tour 1 1/4 hours; 2/3 mile; 300 stairs

This moderately strenuous tour is the most popular at Wind Cave. It includes a visit to the cave's largest natural opening, a site considered sacred by many American Indians. Participants enter the cave through a man-made entrance and journey through the middle level of the cave, exiting via elevator. Wind Cave's famous boxwork is abundant along this route. Popcorn and frostwork can also be seen along the trail.



BOXWORK on the Natural Entrance Tour

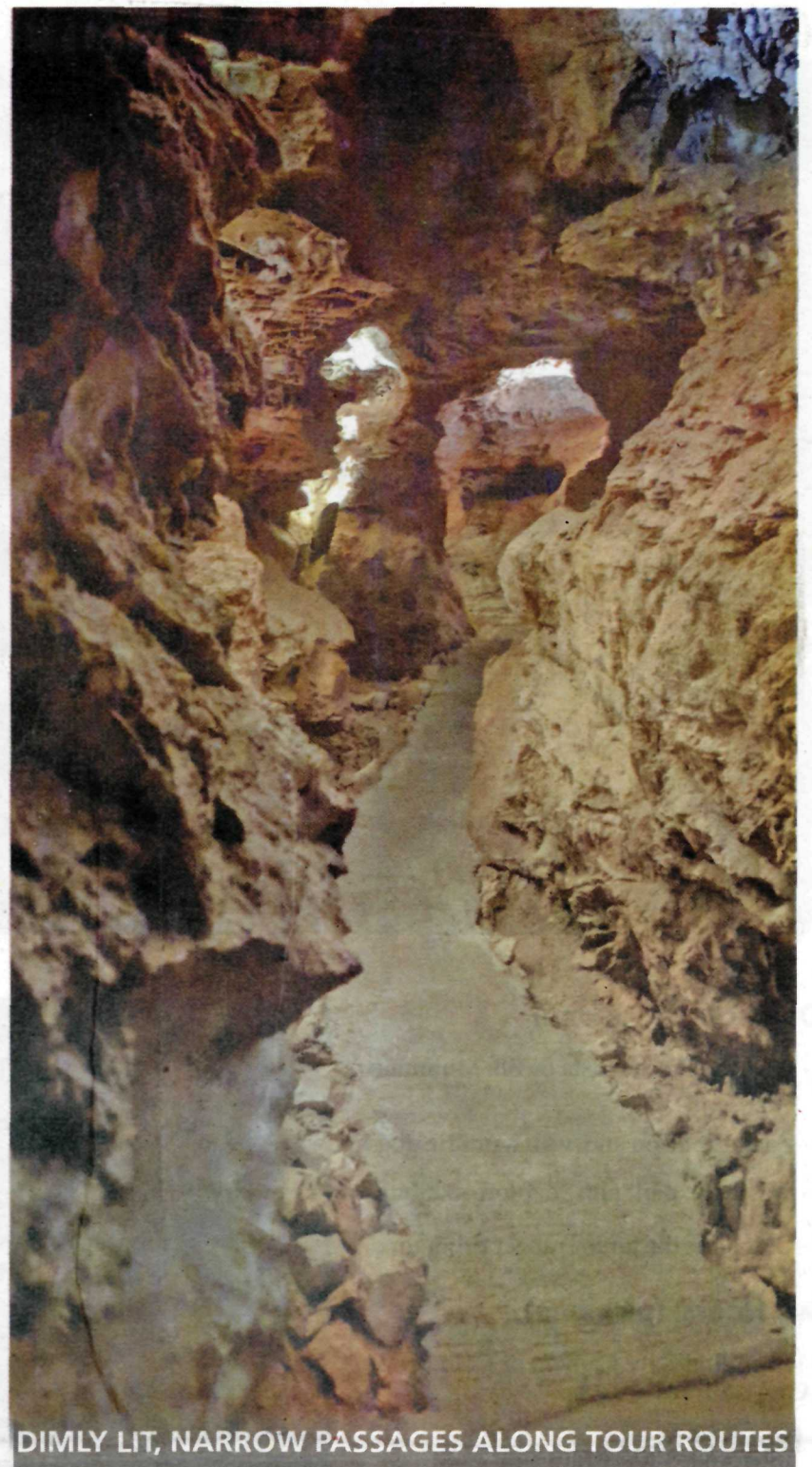
## STRENUOUS

### Fairgrounds Tour 1 1/2 hours; 2/3 mile; 450 stairs

This tour explores both the upper and middle levels of Wind Cave. Boxwork is abundant along the trail in the middle level of the cave. In the upper level, the trail winds through large rooms and into areas where popcorn and frostwork can be seen. This is the most strenuous walking tour with 450 stairs, including one flight of 89 steps up. The tour enters and exits the cave by elevator.



FROSTWORK on the Fairgrounds Tour



DIMLY LIT, NARROW PASSAGES ALONG TOUR ROUTES

### Cave Tour Fees

Tickets must be purchased at least five (5) minutes before scheduled tour time but typically sell out earlier.

	Garden of Eden Tour	Natural Entrance Tour	Fairgrounds Tour
Adults (17+)	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
Children (6-16)	\$5.00	\$6.00	\$6.00
5 and Under	Free	Free	Free
Senior/Access Pass*	\$5.00	\$6.00	\$6.00

\* Price applies *only* to *cardholders*.

### Accessibility Tour



The cave is partially accessible to people with limited mobility. Please call ahead to ask for the scheduled times for an accessible tour. Tours are \$5.00 for adults and half price for Senior or Access pass holders. Sign language tours are available with prior notice.

Interagency Passes Issued Here



## Tour Schedule

For information on specific times please go to:

[go.nps.gov/windcavetours](http://go.nps.gov/windcavetours)



When exiting the cave, please walk over the bat mat. This will help slow the spread of White-nose Syndrome.

Walk slowly! You must step over a lip and your shoes get wet. Use the handrails provided.

# Connect with Wind Cave



**Friends of Wind Cave National Park**  
(FOWC) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to support and promote Wind Cave National Park as a natural and cultural treasure. FOWC works to expand the awareness of the unique value of the park to the Black Hills community and the nation.

Friends groups provide community based fundraising for various projects to enhance the local park's interpretive programs or to maintain or install new infrastructure. Friends groups can receive and administer your ear-marked donation for specific projects. For more information visit: [www.friendsofwindcavenp.org](http://www.friendsofwindcavenp.org)

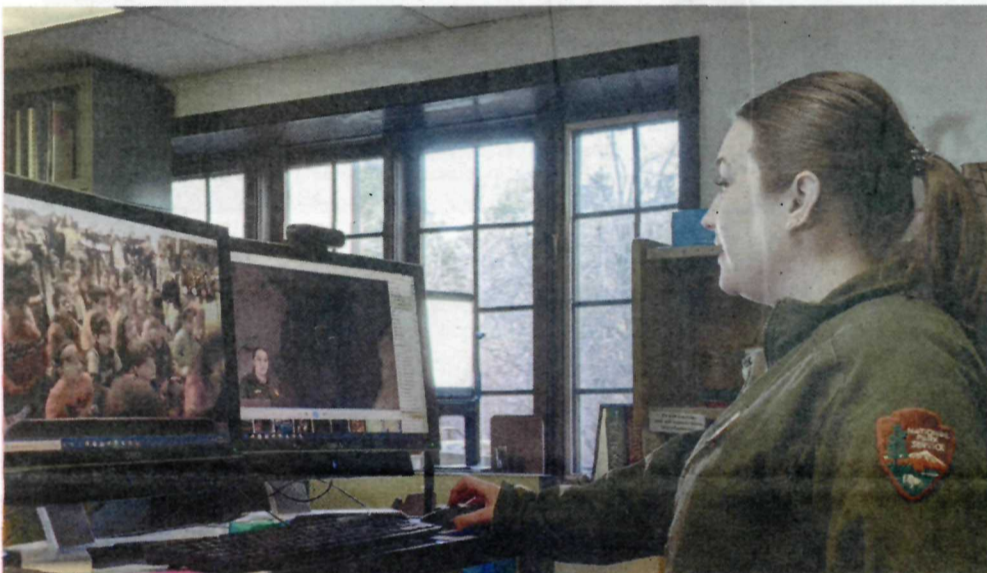
## Bring Your Class to the Park

Students can participate in regular cave tours or the park's Environmental Education program. These free programs are offered from mid-April through mid-May. Reservations are required. Contact the park at 605.745.4600 or [wica\\_education@nps.gov](mailto:wica_education@nps.gov) for details.

Follow Wind Cave!  
@WindCaveNPS



# Interactive Virtual Field-Trips



Explore Wind Cave National Park virtually from the comfort of your own classroom! Rangers offer a variety of programs about both the surface and subsurface. Explore the world's most complex maze-cave or one of the last intact mixed-grass prairie ecosystems. These programs can be applied to all ages or used as a unique virtual experience.

Programs are offered from mid-September - mid-April.

Wind Cave connects with educators from all over world! Reach out if you'd like more information on Wind Cave hosting your group virtually.

To discover the programs we offer visit, [www.cilc.org](http://www.cilc.org).

For more information please call, 605-745-4600 or email [wica\\_education@nps.gov](mailto:wica_education@nps.gov).

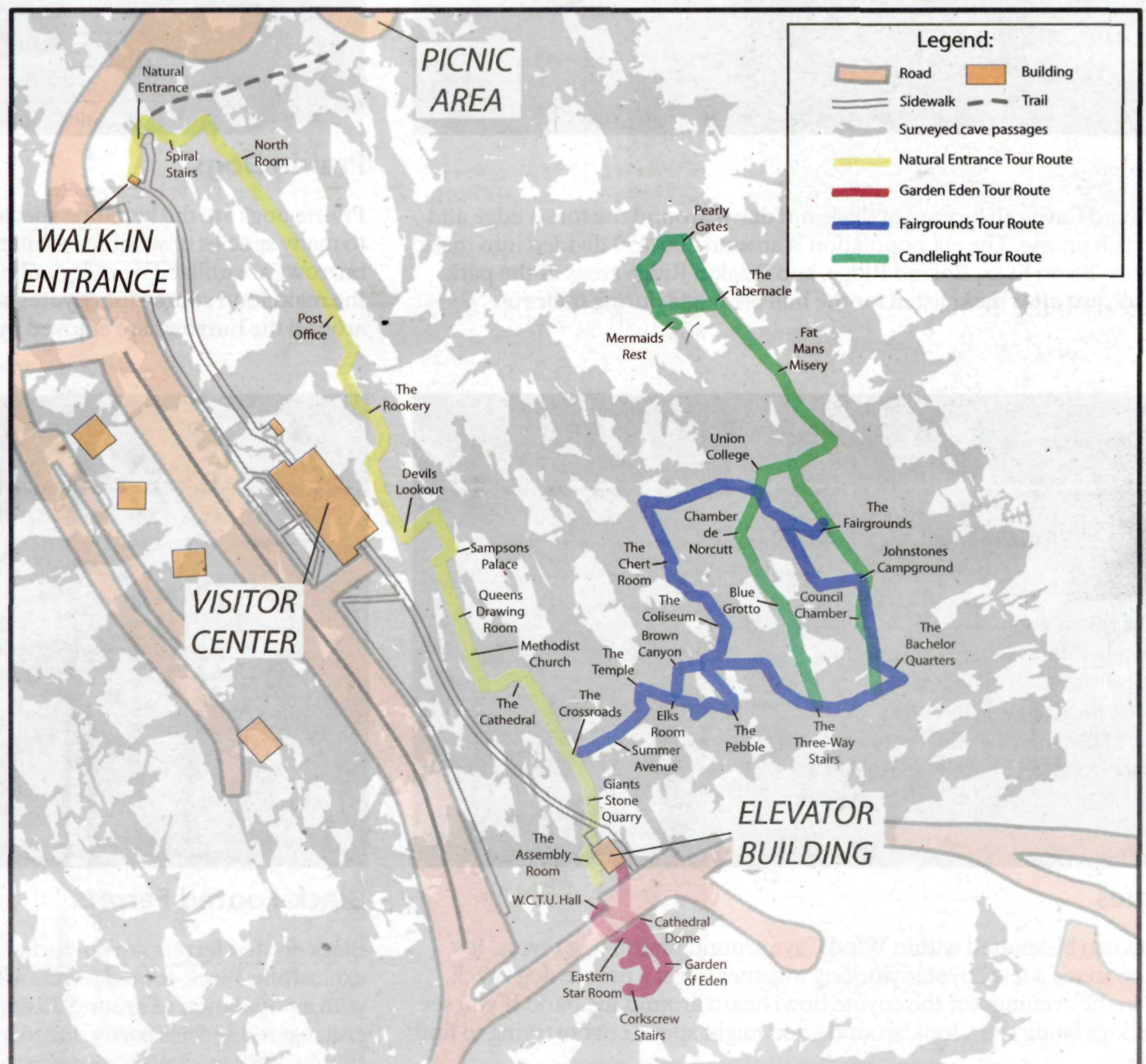
## White-nose Syndrome



A disease called White-nose Syndrome (WNS) is spreading through the United States, killing more than 6 million bats since 2006. WNS is linked to a fungus that forms a white growth on bats' muzzles and other body parts when they are most vulnerable--during hibernation. Affected bats wake and use up energy reserves before spring comes, resulting in death by starvation or freezing.

First identified in a cave in New York State, the disease has spread throughout the United States and Canada and is now found among caves in the Black Hills. Although this disease might not affect humans, people may contribute to its spread by unknowingly transporting spores from an affected cave to others on clothing or objects used in affected caves.

*You can help protect the bats in Wind Cave by not wearing any shoes, clothing or other items that have been in another cave or mine.*



# Wind Cave Wildlife



## SAFETY AROUND BISON

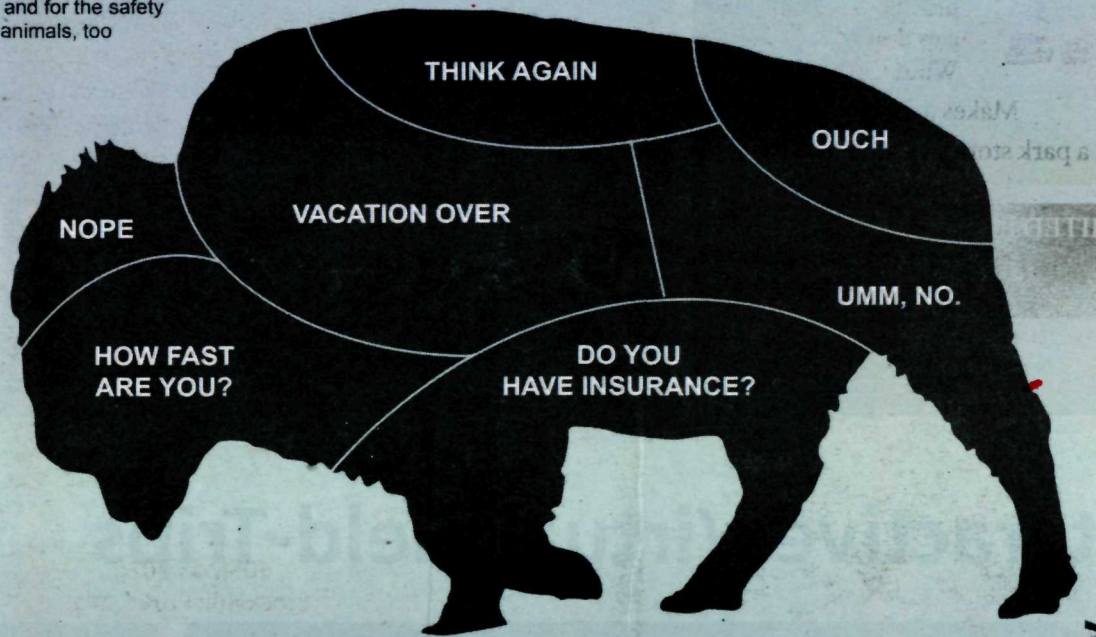
- Keep at least 25 yards away
- If you see the bison's tail up and they are grunting with their head swinging, **YOU ARE TOO CLOSE.**
- Bison can **JUMP** 6 feet
- Bison can **CHARGE** at 35 mph



## WILDLIFE PETTING CHART

National parks offer a unique experience for watching wildlife. Animals in parks are wild—visitors have the amazing opportunity to view animals as they live and interact with each other in their natural homes.

But with that privilege comes responsibility. Visitors are responsible for their own safety and for the safety of the animals, too



#KEEPWILDLIFEWILD

Remember to keep your distance, and enjoy your experience watching wildlife. No touching, no feeding, no harassing.

NPS.GOV



### Elk

Elk at Wind Cave can be seen at dusk and dawn around the forest edge and in the open prairie. The elk population is around 200-250 divided into three sub-herds, Bison Flats, Boland Ridge, and Rankin Ridge areas of the park. In the fall, just after dark, listen for the bull elk bugle during their rut.



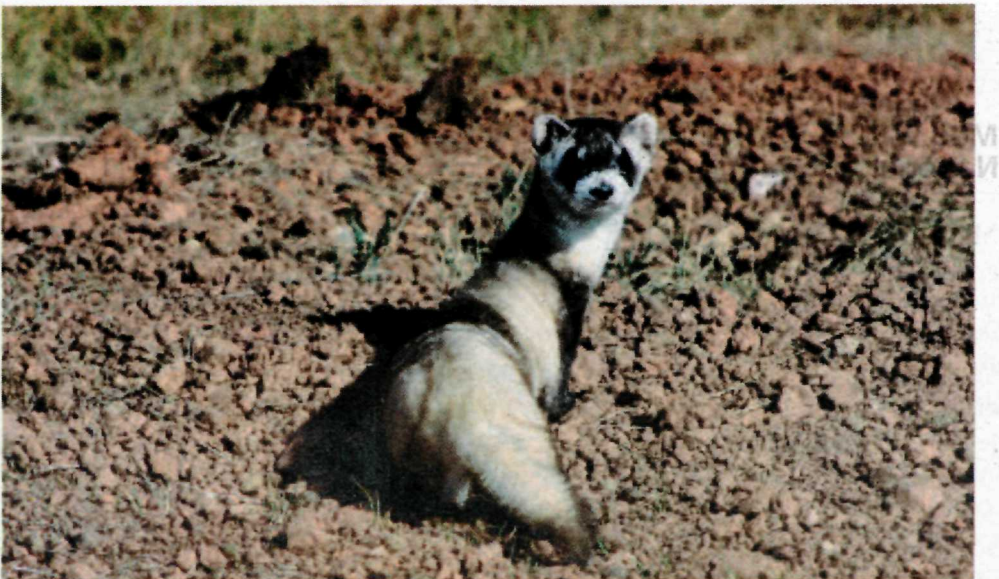
### Prairie Dogs

Prairie dogs are the keystone species at Wind Cave due to their vital role to many species of wildlife within the park. Spread over 2,000 acres, their burrows are utilized by many animals. In addition, prairie dogs serve as the main food source for coyotes and black-footed ferrets, and the grasses around the burrows are enjoyed by bison, elk, and pronghorn.



### Coyotes

Coyotes can be spotted within Wind Cave around prairie dog towns. It's common to see a few coyotes working together to get a prairie dog snack. Listen in the evenings for the coyote howl heard around the park. If you see prairie dogs being alert, look around - you might spot a coyote trying to find lunch!



### Black-Footed Ferrets

Black-footed ferrets are nocturnal animals that eat prairie dogs almost exclusively. Black-footed ferrets are not commonly seen in the park even with a population of around 30 animals. Black-footed ferrets are an endangered species partly due to lost habitat, making their protection at Wind Cave especially important to the species' survival.

# Black Hills Parks & Forests Association

## Adopt - a -Bison Program

Would you like to support Wind Cave's special herd of bison?



This a popular Wind Cave program to help with herd management, research, and special activities with \$20 of the \$35 fee going towards the park. Choose either a plush bison calf or a baseball cap that says, "I adopted a Wind Cave bison".

Makes a special gift!

Ask a park store staff member for details.

The Black Hills Parks & Forests Association is a proud non-profit partner of the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service, selling a curated selection of books, toys, and games in the park store that help people of all ages engage with and interpret the natural world.

Proceeds from store sales to go toward funding projects such as printing educational literature, funding intern positions, research, educational supplies or equipment, and interpretive displays for our partner agencies.

Thanks to the support of our members and customers, a portion of those sales is provided to our partners allowing them to further their critical missions of sustaining and preserving our natural legacies. Since 1946, BHPFA has provided over \$830,000 to our partners.



These products are available through the Black Hills Parks & Forests Association

LIMITED EDITION Charley Harper print

"American Bison"

\$150



Print proceeds go directly toward the Wind Cave Bison herd.



## BLACK HILLS PARKS & FORESTS ASSOCIATION

605|745|7020

BlackHillsParks.org

Help BHPFA Celebrate our 75th Anniversary!  
"OUR ROOTS RUN DEEP"

Birthday Celebrations | All year long

Join us for Live Virtual Birthday Parties with all of our partner locations on Facebook. Check our Facebook page for dates and times through the year.

BHPFA Membership | All year long

As you know, membership has its privileges! Supporting your favorite public lands, receiving first notification of programs and member only events. Become a member today and encourage others to join! Let your love of public lands shine!

Centennial Trail Challenge | May-Sept 2021

Sign up to virtually hike The Centennial Trail in 100 days (Memorial Day to Labor Day). Participants hike wherever they are in the world & log their miles. Just like any fun race, get great swag and help our public lands! Look for registration on our website.

Educational Programs | All year long

BHPFA will be co-hosting programs with many of our partners throughout the year. Learn how to identify birds and wildflowers; or build a bluebird or bat box.

Check out the events calendar on our website [BlackHillsParks.org](http://BlackHillsParks.org) for dates, times and locations.

Supporting **Wonder & Exploration** for Over 75 Years

## Join Us!

Become a member today!

Support Wonder & Exploration by becoming a BHPFA member!

Becoming a member of Black Hills Parks & Forests Association means you are part of a community that values our natural environment and cares deeply about preserving access to the unique and amazing parks, forests, and grasslands in our region.

Grass Roots Membership Starting at \$5/month

Annual Membership: \$30

Annual Business Membership: \$100

(auto-renewal now available for memberships!)

Members support these important projects at our partner locations:

- Jr. Ranger programs
- Interpretive staff and interpretive volunteers
- Outdoor education programs
- Exhibit preparation and installation
- Wayside displays and information kiosks
- Wildlife research projects

Annual Membership Benefits:

- Free BHPFA bag and gift
- 15% discount at all BHPFA retail store locations (card required)
- 15% discount on all online purchases - coupon code required at checkout
- Electronic Newsletter 4 times per year - Learn about the impacts of your membership!
- Receive discounts at cooperating association stores across the country
- Member only specials & discounts throughout the year



IN THE LAST 5 YEARS  
BHPFA HAS GIVEN OVER  
\$206,000

TO WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK  
IN SUPPORT OF EDUCATION.

BHPFA operates 16 retail locations throughout South Dakota, Nebraska, and Wyoming.

Visit our stores at:

- Jewel Cave National Monument
- Scotts Bluff National Monument
- Agate Fossil Beds National Monument
- Black Hills National Forest
- National Grasslands Visitor Center
- Nebraska National Forests and Grasslands

FOLLOW US ONLINE AND STAY UP TO DATE!



## National Park Neighbors



### Mount Rushmore National Memorial

Mount Rushmore is located approximately 50 miles from Wind Cave. Carved from 1927-1941 by Gutzon Borglum, the memorial depicts the portraits of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln. Today, Mount Rushmore is host to almost three million visitors from around the world. Over the decades, Mount Rushmore has grown in fame as a symbol of America - an image of freedom and hope.

605. 574.3165  
[www.nps.gov/moru](http://www.nps.gov/moru)



### Jewel Cave National Monument

Jewel Cave National Monument is located approximately 35 miles from Wind Cave. Immerse yourself within one of the longest caves in the world. With over 200 miles of mapped and surveyed passages, this underground wilderness appeals to human curiosity. Its splendor is revealed through fragile formations and glimpses of brilliant color. Its maze of passages lure explorers, and its scientific wealth remains a mystery.

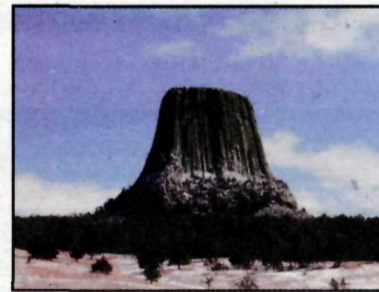
605. 673.8300  
[www.nps.gov/jeca](http://www.nps.gov/jeca)



### Badlands National Park

Badlands National Park is located approximately 145 miles from Wind Cave. The park consists of 244,000 acres of sharply eroded buttes, pinnacles, and spires. It protects the largest mixed-grass prairie in the United States. Its wilderness area covers 64,000 acres and is a site of the reintroduction of the black-footed ferret, the most endangered land mammal in North America.

605. 433.5361  
[www.nps.gov/badl](http://www.nps.gov/badl)



### Devils Tower National Monument

Devils Tower is located approximately 135 miles from Wind Cave, a geologic feature protruding out of the rolling prairie that surrounds the Black Hills. The site is considered sacred to the Lakota and other tribes that have a connection to the area. Hundreds of parallel cracks make it one of the finest traditional crack climbing areas in North America. Devils Tower entices us to explore and define our place in the natural and cultural world.

307. 467.5283 x 635  
[www.nps.gov/deto](http://www.nps.gov/deto)

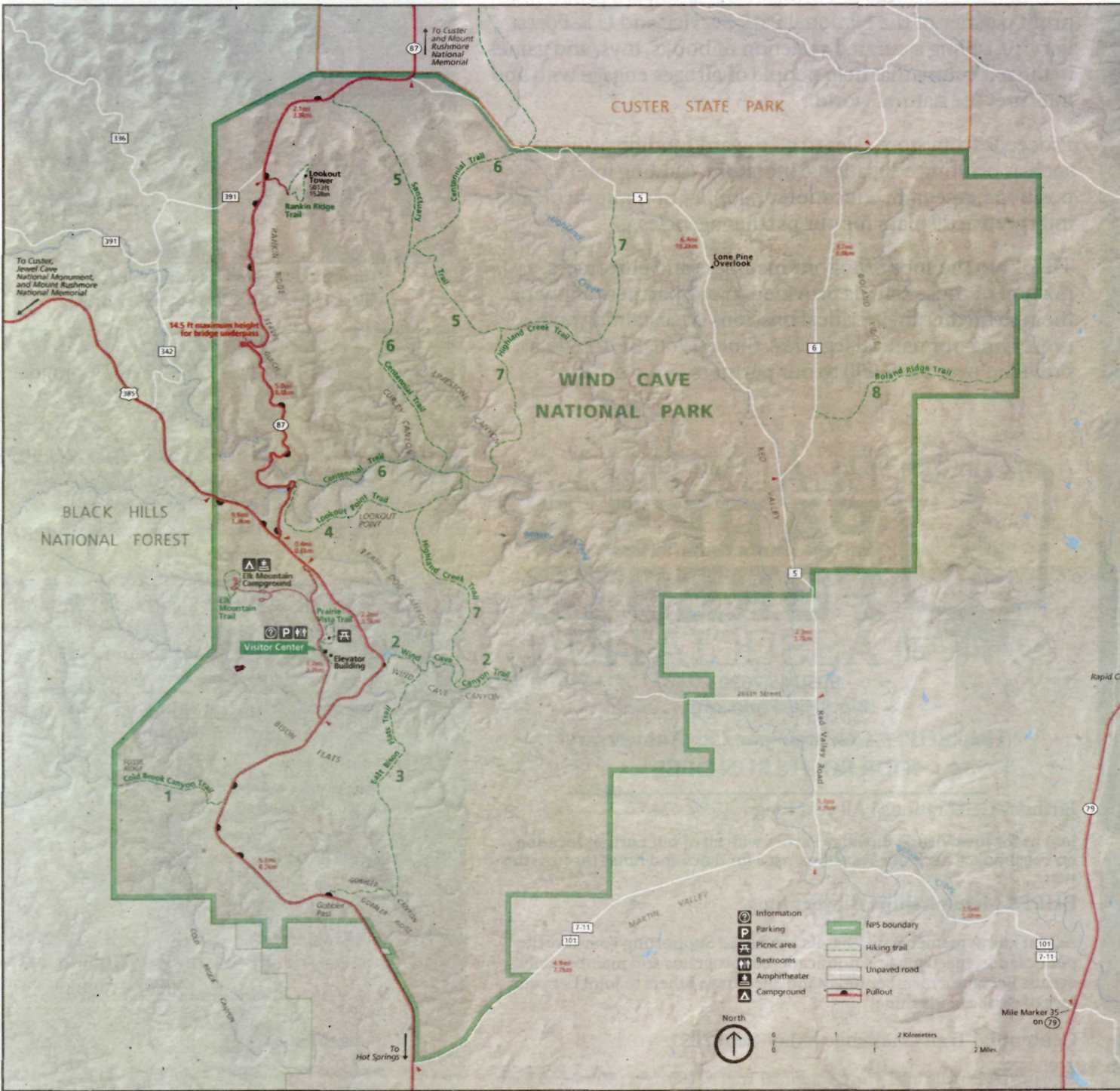


### Minuteman Missile National Historic Site

Minuteman Missile is located approximately 121 miles from Wind Cave. The Minuteman Missile was an iconic weapon in the American nuclear arsenal during the Cold War, the defining historical event of the last half of the 20th century. A visit to the park is an opportunity to explore sites rarely seen by civilians and explore the Minuteman II system's role as a nuclear deterrent that maintained peace and prevented war.

605. 433.5552  
[www.nps.gov/mimi](http://www.nps.gov/mimi)

# Hiking



## Hiking in the Park

Wind Cave National Park offers more than 30 miles of trails to explore prairie grasslands and ponderosa forests. Go prepared:

- Carry and drink plenty of water.
- Check the weather forecast before starting and bring extra layers.
- Off-trail hiking is allowed. Watch out for wildlife.
- A topographic map is recommended and can be purchased at the visitor center bookstore.

## Hiking With Pets



Leashed pets are allowed only on the Elk Mountain and Prairie Vista Nature Trails. Please clean up after your pet. **Do not leave your pets in your vehicle for any length of time.** Kennel space is available in Hot Springs or Custer.

## Short Walks

Not up for a day hike? Three short nature trails are a great way to explore for those with young children or little time. Each trail is about 1 mile in length. Informational signs or booklets are available for each trail.



**Rankin Ridge Nature Trail** - Gain spectacular views from the highest point in the park.



**Elk Mountain Nature Trail** - The grassland and forest meet on this trail around the campground. Leashed pets allowed.



**Prairie Vista Nature Trail** - Stroll the prairie grasslands from the visitor center. Leashed pets allowed.

## Hiking Trails

Trail	Difficulty	Trail #	One-way Distance	Description
Wind Cave Canyon	Easy	2	1.8 mi 2.9 km	This former road follows Wind Cave Canyon to the park boundary. Limestone cliffs provide nesting areas for cliff swallows, canyon wrens, and great horned owls. Look for Red-headed and Lewis's woodpeckers among the snag trees of forested hillsides.
Cold Brook Canyon	Moderate	1	1.4 mi 2.3 km	The trail winds through Cold Brook Canyon to the park boundary. Along the way a ponderosa forest gives way to the open prairie and crosses a prairie dog town, a good place to see prairie falcons and other raptors.
Lookout Point	Moderate	4	2.2 mi 3.5 km	Follow the rolling hills of the prairie across Lookout Point to Beaver Creek. A side trip up Lookout Point offers views of the American Elk Prescribed Fire from 2010. This trail can be combined with part of the Highland Creek and the Centennial trails to create a 4.5-mile loop.
Sanctuary	Moderately Strenuous	5	3.6 mi 5.8 km	The trailhead is about one mile north of the Rankin Ridge fire tower turnoff. This trail follows the rolling hills of the prairie, crosses a large prairie dog town, and ends where it meets the Highland Creek Trail.
East Bison Flats	Moderately Strenuous	3	3.7 mi 6 km	Hike one-half mile down the Wind Cave Canyon Trail to reach the East Bison Flats Trail where a brief, steep climb leads to the rolling hills of the prairie. Panoramic views of the prairie, Buffalo Gap, and the Black Hills await.
Centennial	Moderately Strenuous	6 (89)	6 mi 9.7 km	This 6-mile trail can be reached from SD Hwy 87 or NPS 5. This section is the southernmost part of a 111-mile trail through the Black Hills, ending at Bear Butte State Park. Here it crosses prairies, ponderosa forests, and winds along Beaver Creek.
Highland Creek	Moderately Strenuous	7	8.6 mi 13.8 km	The trail can be reached by a 1-mile hike down the Wind Cave Canyon trail or from the northern trailhead on NPS 5. This trail is the longest and the most diverse in the park, crossing mixed-grass prairies, ponderosa pine forests, and riparian habitats of Highland Creek, Beaver Creek, and Wind Cave Canyon.
Boland Ridge	Strenuous	8	2.6 mi 4.2 km	The trail begins at a small parking area on NPS 6, one mile north of the junction with NPS 5. A series of climbs offer panoramic views of the Black Hills, Red Valley, and the plains beyond. Elk are often seen from this trail.