



Visitor Guide

Summer 2015 – Winter 2016

Theodore Roosevelt National Park
Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site
Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site

2016
National Park Service
CENTENNIAL

NPS photo by Richard Spener, 2013 Annual Photo Contest finalist

Celebrating 100 Years of ‘America’s Best Idea’

Centennial celebrations are sweeping the nation’s parks this year, as the National Park Service celebrates 100 years of preserving the country’s natural and cultural treasures. The NPS wants visitors everywhere to embrace opportunities to explore, learn, be inspired, or simply enjoy their 410 national parks in this Centennial year.

The NPS Centennial is not just about looking back at the foundations of our nation’s conservation movement. It’s about looking forward to the next century of stewardship.

Special events, such as Theodore Roosevelt’s Dakota Nights Astronomy Festival, Fort Union’s Rendezvous, and Knife River’s Archeo Blitz, will help park visitors connect with community-based recreation and preservation programs that positively impact their own communities.

We welcome those who already know and love the parks, as well as the next generation of visitors and supporters to Find Your Park! We are excited for you to be a part of our second century of stewardship.

As we look forward to the future, it is also worthwhile to revisit the past. Our journey started with a simple but radical idea that has grown into the National Park System we know today.

In the early history of the U.S., there were no truly “public” lands. The idea of preserving lands for the general public began to take shape gradually, over the course of several decades. In 1864 President Lincoln signed the Yosemite Grant Act into law.

Eight years later, in 1872, Yellowstone National Park became the world’s first national park. It was set aside as a “public park and pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.”

Its primary purpose was to preserve the area’s natural wonders from commercial exploitation. Sequoia, General Grant (now Kings Canyon), and Yosemite National Parks followed in 1890. From then on, the number of federally protected parks would grow steadily for generations to come.

www.nps.gov/subjects/centennial/index.htm

2016
National Park Service
CENTENNIAL



Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site, page 6



Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site, page 6

Theodore Roosevelt National Park

Plan Your Visit



Welcome to Theodore Roosevelt National Park! This park features three separate units—the South Unit, the North Unit, and the Elkhorn Ranch Unit. It includes unique geological sites, such as Petrified Forest and Painted Canyon, as well as abundant opportunities to observe wildlife and learn about the 26th president’s ranching experiences in the North Dakota badlands.

The South and North units each have scenic drives and park visitor centers, where you can obtain information and maps. See page 7 of this guide for maps and details.

Each area offers exceptional ways to experience the badlands of North Dakota. Here are a few suggestions, depending on your length of stay and interests:

2 HOURS

- Take the scenic drive.
- Hike a short trail to an overlook.
- Do some wildlife spotting.
- Attend a short ranger program.
- Tour Maltese Cross Cabin in South Unit.

HALF DAY

- Pack a lunch and have a picnic.
- Visit Petrified Forest or Painted Canyon.
- Hike a moderate trail or many short ones.
- Attend more than one ranger program.

FULL DAY

- Bike some of the scenic drive.
- Hike a strenuous trail.
- Visit the North Unit or Elkhorn Ranch.
- Explore the backcountry.
- Find a scenic spot to watch the sunset.
- Camp in a campground or backcountry.

[nps.gov/thro/planyourvisit/things2do.htm](https://www.nps.gov/thro/planyourvisit/things2do.htm)



RESTROOMS

Restrooms are located in visitor centers, picnic areas, and campgrounds. In case of an emergency, practice Leave No Trace; leaving toilet paper behind is littering. **There are no restrooms on the scenic drives.**



PICNIC AREA

Shaded or covered picnic areas are available adjacent to the campgrounds in both the South and North Units. These facilities have restrooms, picnic tables, fire grates, and trash containers.



CAMPGROUNDS

Campgrounds have restrooms, drinking water, picnic tables, and fire grates. Fires are only allowed in fire grates at campgrounds and picnic areas. For more information on camping, see page 4.



HEAT & DEHYDRATION

Dehydration and heat exhaustion are common hazards that can be avoided with preparation. Carry and drink lots of water: at least one gallon per person per day. Always wear a hat and use sunscreen.



EMERGENCY HELP

If you experience an emergency in the park, dial 911 immediately. If you need non-emergency assistance, dial 701-623-4466 in the South Unit and 701-842-2333 in the North Unit during business hours.



BICYCLING

Bicycles are permitted only on roads. They are not allowed on trails, including sections of the Maah Daah Hey Trail that lie within park boundaries. The rules of the road apply to bicycles. Be sure to wear your helmet.



BACKCOUNTRY CAMPING

The park is open to backcountry camping. Permits are required and are available for free at the South Unit Visitor Center and North Unit Contact Station. Special regulations and limitations on group size apply.



HORSEBACK RIDING

Backcountry trails throughout the park are open to horseback riders. Stock are prohibited on nature trails and in all campgrounds except Roundup Horse Camp. Guided trail rides are no longer offered.



Accessibility

The park’s developed areas are accessible. The South Unit Visitor Center park film offers captioning, audio description, and assistive-listening devices.

Service animals are permitted on leashes in all developed areas. The trails and scenic points listed below are also open to service animals.

All other trails and undeveloped areas are closed to service animals for safety reasons. Ranger-led programs are accessible with the exception of some guided hikes.

Trails and Scenic Points

South Unit

Skyline Vista

0.1 mi (one-way) paved trail

Boicourt Trail

0.17 mi (one-way) gravel trail

Painted Canyon Overlook

Sidewalk along badlands rim

North Unit

Little Mo Trail

0.7 mi (loop) paved trail

River Bend Overlook

Gravel path to viewing deck

Oxbow Overlook

Paved path along badlands rim

www.nps.gov/thro/planyourvisit/accessibility.htm

Important Regulations

NO COLLECTING OR DEFACING

All natural features of the park are protected. This includes, but is not limited to, wildlife, plantlife, cultural artifacts, rocks, soil, plants, shed antlers, and animal bones.

Collecting and/or possessing these items is illegal, as is graffiti (including carving initials in rocks or wood). Help us keep the park clean, safe, and beautiful so that we, and those who come after us, can enjoy it.

FIREARMS

Federal law prohibits firearms in National Park buildings and certain facilities. Federal law also prohibits discharging a firearm inside a National Park area.

If you can legally possess firearms under North Dakota, local, and federal laws, you may possess firearms in a National Park area. It is your responsibility to understand and comply with all applicable firearms laws.



PETS

Pets are not allowed on trails, in buildings, or in the backcountry. Pets must be leashed and attended at all times, and may walk on roads, sidewalks, in picnic areas, parking areas, and campgrounds. Please clean up after your pet.

KNOW THE LAW

National Parks have special rules to help protect park resources. If you have a question, ask! Or find information about park regulations at www.nps.gov/thro.

It is your responsibility to know the law.

Keeping the *Wild* in wildlife



This park is filled with abundant, watchable wildlife. What you see depends on the season, your patience, and your luck. Binoculars and spotting scopes can give you an added advantage.

While they may appear tranquil, the wildlife here is not tame. Feeding the animals can harm them and disrupt the natural balance of the ecosystem the park strives to maintain.



While wildlife spotting is fun, it can also be risky. Getting too close to animals can cause injury or death, so be sure to keep your distance. If your presence changes an animal's behavior, you are too close! Please respect all wildlife, and the habitats in which they live.

Wildlife Viewing Tips

- Dawn and dusk are best.
- Go slow! It's hard to spot wildlife from a speeding car.
- Find a high point, and use binoculars to scout a large area.
- Spend time in a prairie dog town. Dog towns attract many other animals, especially predators.
- View wildlife from a distance.
- Remember that the park is their home, and we are the visitors.



www.nps.gov/thro/planyourvisit/wildlife-viewing.htm

Be a Junior Ranger!

Junior Rangers are National Park enthusiasts who dedicate their time to learning about and preserving the nation's treasures. They study the natural and cultural history of parks to learn valuable lessons about conservation and to gain a deeper understanding of the special places they visit.

Check in at your nearest visitor center to pick up a free Junior Ranger activity book.

Finish the activities for your age group, share your answers with a park ranger, and you will earn an official Theodore Roosevelt Junior Ranger badge to "Explore, Learn, and Protect!"



Collect them all in North Dakota

Theodore Roosevelt National Park
Junior Ranger
Junior Paleontologist

Knife River Indian Villages NHS
Junior Ranger

Fort Union Trading Post NHS
Junior Trader

www.nps.gov/thro/learn/kidsyouth/beajuniorranger.htm

Live and Learn

What better way to learn about the world around you than to Find Your Park? Theodore Roosevelt welcomes students and teachers to its outdoor classroom—which makes learning about history, ecology, and geology come to life!

To find out more about educational opportunities and plan your field trip, log on to the park's website.

Field Trip Resources

- Fee waiver application
- Curriculum materials
- Teacher's guide for planning
- Resource materials for loan
- Maltese Cross Cabin film

www.nps.gov/thro/learn/education/index.htm



Do you know a curious 4th grader? She or he may be eligible for a *free* Every Kid in a Park pass good for entry to all national parks.

Just have that 4th grader visit www.everykidinapark.gov, print off the voucher, and bring it to a national park. The pass is valid until Aug. 31, 2016.

Putting Your Fee Money to Work in Parks



Wondering where your park fee money goes? Federal law ensures that parks use recreation fees in ways that directly benefit you, the visitor. Your fee dollars help pay for printing free publications, such as this guide, brochures, and Junior Ranger books.



Fee-funded projects that benefit visitors include campground improvements, such as recycling containers, site posts, and a new group site shelter. Non-fee collecting parks like Fort Union and Knife River also benefit from funds collected at fee sites.



A trail crew funded by visitor fee dollars worked hard to rehabilitate park trails last year. Future projects include more trail rehabilitation, museum exhibit updates, public restrooms, vault toilets, and visitor facility improvements.

Things to Do

Ranger Programs

For times and locations, see weekly program schedules posted in visitor centers and campgrounds.



The following programs are offered June through August, as staffing permits. All programs are free to attend; regular park entrance fees apply.

North Unit Programs

Evening Program
Programs in the rustic Juniper Campground amphitheater focus on a wide array of topics, including geology, wildlife, and history.
Weekends in July and August, 45 - 60 minutes

Guided Hikes and Special Programs

Throughout the summer season, guided hikes and other special programs may be offered as staffing permits. These events will be advertised in weekly program schedules posted in various locations in the North Unit.
Occasional programming; see weekly schedules.

Short Trail Highlights

South Unit

Wind Canyon Trail
0.3 mi loop, stairs, nearby cliffs
The South Unit's most famous view of the Little Missouri River.

Coal Vein Trail
0.8 mi loop, steep stairs
See how the land has healed following an underground fire.

Ridgeline Trail
0.6 mi loop, steep terrain, stairs
Walk a grassy ridge with stunning badlands views all around.

Painted Canyon Nature Trail
0.9 mi loop, stairs
Explore the badlands from top to bottom (and back again!)

South Unit Programs

Park Film
Our film, *Refuge of the American Spirit*, shows **every half hour** in the South Unit visitor center theater. (17 minutes, year-round)

Cabin Tour
A tour of Roosevelt's original Maltese Cross Cabin explores how his experiences in Dakota Territory influenced his life and ours.
Several tours daily, 15 - 20 minutes (self-guided in the off-season)

Geology Talk
Experience, hands-on, the fascinating geology of the park from the stunning vantage point of the Painted Canyon Overlook.
Daily, 15 - 30 minutes

Evening Program
Nightly programs in the Cottonwood Campground Amphitheater focus on a wide array of topics, including wildlife, geology, history, and astronomy.
Most evenings, 45 - 60 minutes

Guided Hikes

Guided hikes are offered on weekends in the summer months. Routes vary in difficulty; destinations include the Petrified Forest and Ridgeline Trail. Check our website or posted schedules for dates, times, and locations.

Full Moon Hikes, Night Prowls, and Stargazing

Half the park is after dark! Immerse yourself in the sights and sounds of night in the badlands. Check our website or posted program schedules for dates, times, and locations. www.nps.gov/thro/planyourvisit/guidedtours.htm

For more hiking and trail information:

www.nps.gov/thro/planyourvisit/hiking-and-trail-information.htm

North Unit

Sperati Point
2.4 mi out and back, gentle terrain
A gentle rise in the prairie with great views on the Achenbach Trail.

Little Mo Nature Trail
0.7 mi paved loop, 1.4 mi with stairs
Explore the river bottom habitat along the Little Missouri River.

Buckhorn Prairie Dog Town
2.0 mi out and back, gentle terrain
Look for all kinds of wildlife on this easy stroll to a prairie dog town.

Caprock Coulee Trail
4.1 mi loop, stairs, nearby cliffs
The first 0.7 mi is a nature trail; the rest is strenuous and scenic.

Trail Safety

Visiting the backcountry is fun and exciting but should not be taken lightly. Be sure to plan carefully to ensure your adventure is both fun and safe.

Phone a friend. Leave your itinerary with a trusted friend in case you become overdue.

Drink water. Carry at least one gallon of water per person per day. Natural water sources must be treated or filtered before they are safe to drink.

Get all the facts. Talk with park staff about trail conditions, weather, and possible hazards.

Check your equipment. Wear sturdy shoes and clothing, a hat and sunscreen. Bring emergency supplies including food, a flashlight, first aid kit, and extra clothing.

Beware of wildlife. Never approach wildlife, especially bison. Bison will charge if threatened.

Know how to navigate. Trails are difficult to follow. A GPS is useful (if charged), but a map and compass are best. Topographic maps are sold in park visitor centers.



Myra Jensen, TRNHA photo contest submission

Camping

Cottonwood Campground South Unit - No hookups	\$14/night, \$7 with Senior or Access Pass	First come, first served and by reservation on recreation.gov 1 (877) 444-6777 64 RV/Tent, 12 Walk-in tent only
Juniper Campground North Unit - No hookups	\$14/night, \$7 with Senior or Access Pass	First come, first served 41 RV/Tent, 9 Walk-in tent only
Backcountry Camping Both Units - undeveloped	Free Permit Required	Permits available at park visitor centers. Backcountry regulations apply.

<https://www.nps.gov/thro/planyourvisit/camping.htm>

Supporting Our Park

Theodore Roosevelt Nature and History Association



Bookstores



Research



Publications



Education

Theodore Roosevelt Nature and History Association is a nonprofit cooperating association working in partnership with the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in North Dakota. TRNHA has donated more than \$963,000 in aid to national parks, historic sites, and wildlife refuges since its creation in 1951.

TRNHA operates five bookstores in Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Knife River Indian Villages NHS, and Upper Souris NWR. Proceeds from bookstore and online



sales, memberships, and donations are used to support many NPS and USFWS programs. TRNHA publishes free trail guides, brochures, and checklists, as well as many items sold in the bookstores that emphasize the natural and cultural history of the area.

TRNHA also sponsors special events and funds scientific and oral history research. Annual events such as Junior Ranger Day and the Dakota Nights Astronomy Festival couldn't happen without the support of TRNHA.

Shop online and learn more about TRNHA at www.trnha.org.

Reach for the Stars at Dakota Nights Fest



Have you ever seen the Milky Way pouring across an ink black night sky? Or cast a moon shadow on the face of a badlands butte? Does the sound of a Great Horned Owl calling in the distance, or the smell of nightfall on the prairie make you alert with anticipation?

Half the park really is after dark. Experience the night like you never have before. Join us as we explore and celebrate the dark side of Theodore Roosevelt National Park with our annual astronomy festival. Astronomers, rangers, and historians come together for Dakota Nights, a three-day festival celebrating North Dakota's dark skies and rich heritage, September 23-25, 2016.

Picture Yourself with a Winning Park Photo



Theodore Roosevelt National Park and Theodore Roosevelt Nature & History Association announce the 5th annual Picture Yourself in Theodore Roosevelt National Park Photo Contest.

Each year, the winning photo is featured on the Theodore Roosevelt National Park Annual Pass. Twelve finalists are featured in a TRNHA calendar, for sale in park visitor centers.

Photos taken between September 1, 2015 and August 31, 2016 are eligible for the contest. For official rules, entry forms, and other information visit: www.trnha.org/pictureyourselfintrnp.html

Friends of Theodore Roosevelt National Park



The Friends of Theodore Roosevelt National Park has a goal to support the park at every level and deepen the human connection to the park.

Volunteering at special events, fund-raising, and providing project funds are all mission goals for the friends' group. Funding targets include research, educational activities, publications, and outreach.

The National Park Foundation awarded the The Board of Directors of the friends group a \$5,000 matching grant to be used for strategic planning, membership expansion, and marketing materials.

Last year the friends' group helped to support a picnic fundraiser in June and the rocket booth at Dakota Nights.



Rocket builders prepare for lift off at Dakota Nights.

Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fort Union Trading Post NHS

Mailing Address

Fort Union Trading Post NHS
15550 Highway 1804
Williston, North Dakota 58801

Park Information & Lost and Found

701-572-9083

Website

www.nps.gov/fous
Find us on Facebook and Twitter



WELCOME TO FORT UNION TRADING POST NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE. A trip to Fort Union takes you back to the mid-19th century, the heyday of Fort Union and the fur trade on the Upper Missouri River. From 1828 to 1867, Fort Union Trading Post was the most important fur trade fort on the Upper Missouri. Here, the Assiniboine, Crow, Cree, Ojibway, Blackfeet, Hidatsa, and other tribes traded bison skins and other furs for goods, such as cloth, guns, blankets, knives, cookware, and beads.



Visit where great tribal leaders from many nations met and exchanged goods and stories with traders and visitors. Special events at the fort throughout the year make history come alive. The entire reconstructed fort is open year-round for tours using a self-guided map. During the summer, various fur trade personnel are portrayed through living history demonstrations in the Trade House. A visitor center, museum, and bookstore are open year-round.



Living history interpreters engage young visitors in Fort Union Trading Post with storytelling.



EXPLORE THE POST

The partially reconstructed trading post serves as a stage for living history interpretation. During the summer months, interpreters in period attire re-enact trading sessions at the post. Meet a “trader” at the fort’s main gate and trade room.

TRADE HOUSE

Our living history interpreters in fur-trade attire transport you back to 1851 in historic Fort Union’s most important

building. When tribes, such as the Assiniboine, came to trade, they met here with the traders to exchange their furs for manufactured goods.

BODMER TRAIL

This two-mile trail climbs to the point where Karl Bodmer sketched images of Fort Union, Assiniboine Indians, and the confluence of the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers. The parking area and trailhead are north of Highway 1804. Ask for a Bodmer Trail Guide at the visitor center.



For special events at Fort Union, log on to <https://www.nps.gov/fous/planyourvisit/calendar.htm>

Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Knife River Indian Villages NHS

Mailing Address

Knife River Indian Villages NHS
P.O. Box 9
564 County Road 37
Stanton, North Dakota 58571

Park Information & Lost and Found

701-745-3300

Website

www.nps.gov/knri
Find us on Facebook



FUN FOR ALL!

Discovery Packs with bird guides, binoculars, magnifying glasses, and wildflower cards are available for checkout at the visitor center. Free! Junior Ranger books are available for kids 6-12; Junior Explorer books are available for ages 3-5.



FISHING

Catch walleye, catfish, or pike from the shore of the Knife River. The parking lot of the Sakakawea Site is a great location. North Dakota fishing regulations apply. Visitors under the age of 16 may fish without a license.



RANGER PROGRAMS

Ranger Programs are available Memorial Day through Labor Day. Programs are free. Visitors of all ages are welcome to attend.



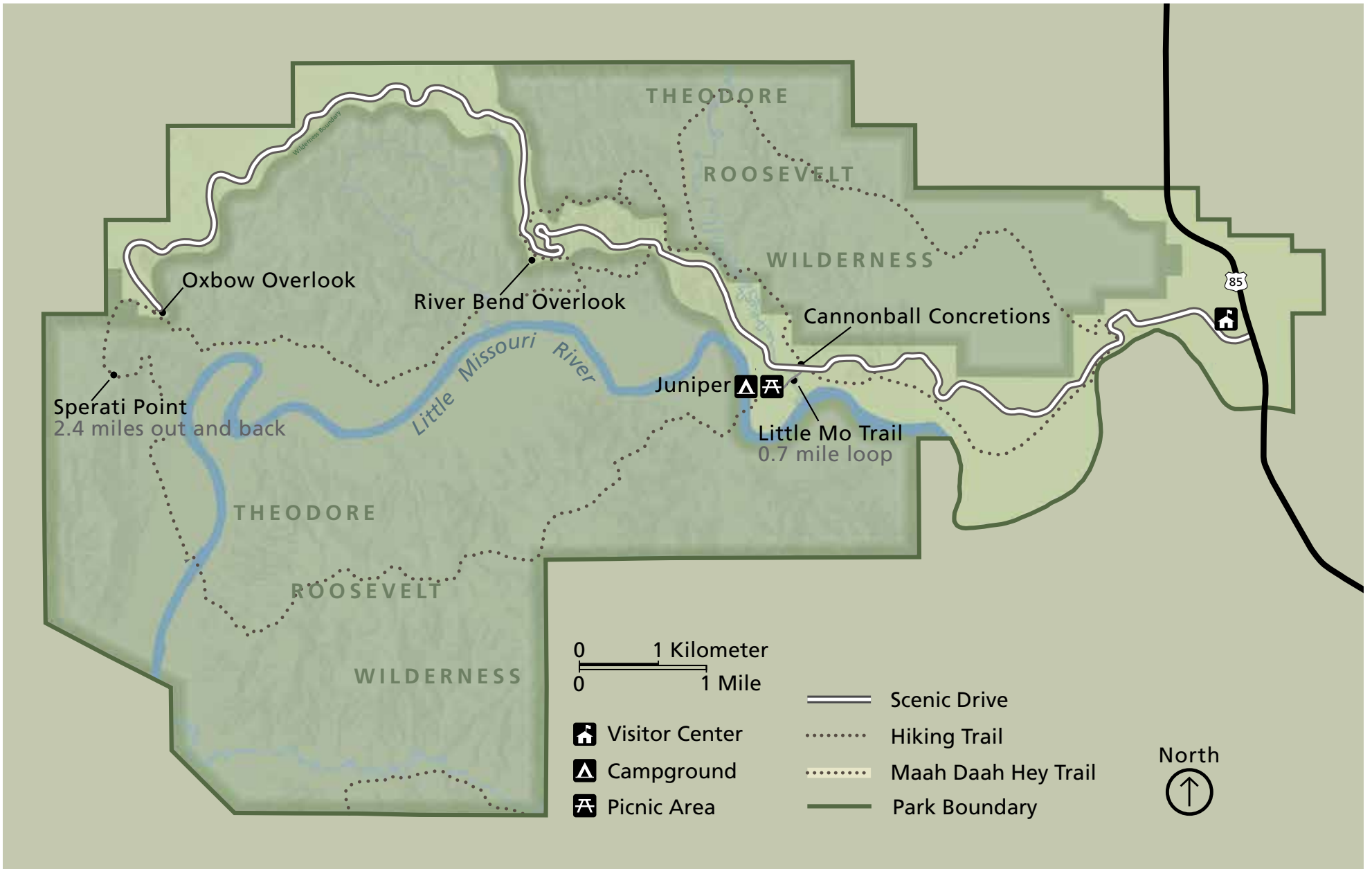
WELCOME TO KNIFE RIVER INDIAN VILLAGES NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, where history comes alive. Learn about Northern Great Plains Indian Culture as well as native plants and animals by touring the visitor center. Enjoy the museum and a 15-minute film describing life in an Indian Village from the perspective of Maxidiwiac. Step back in time as you walk through the remains of village sites.



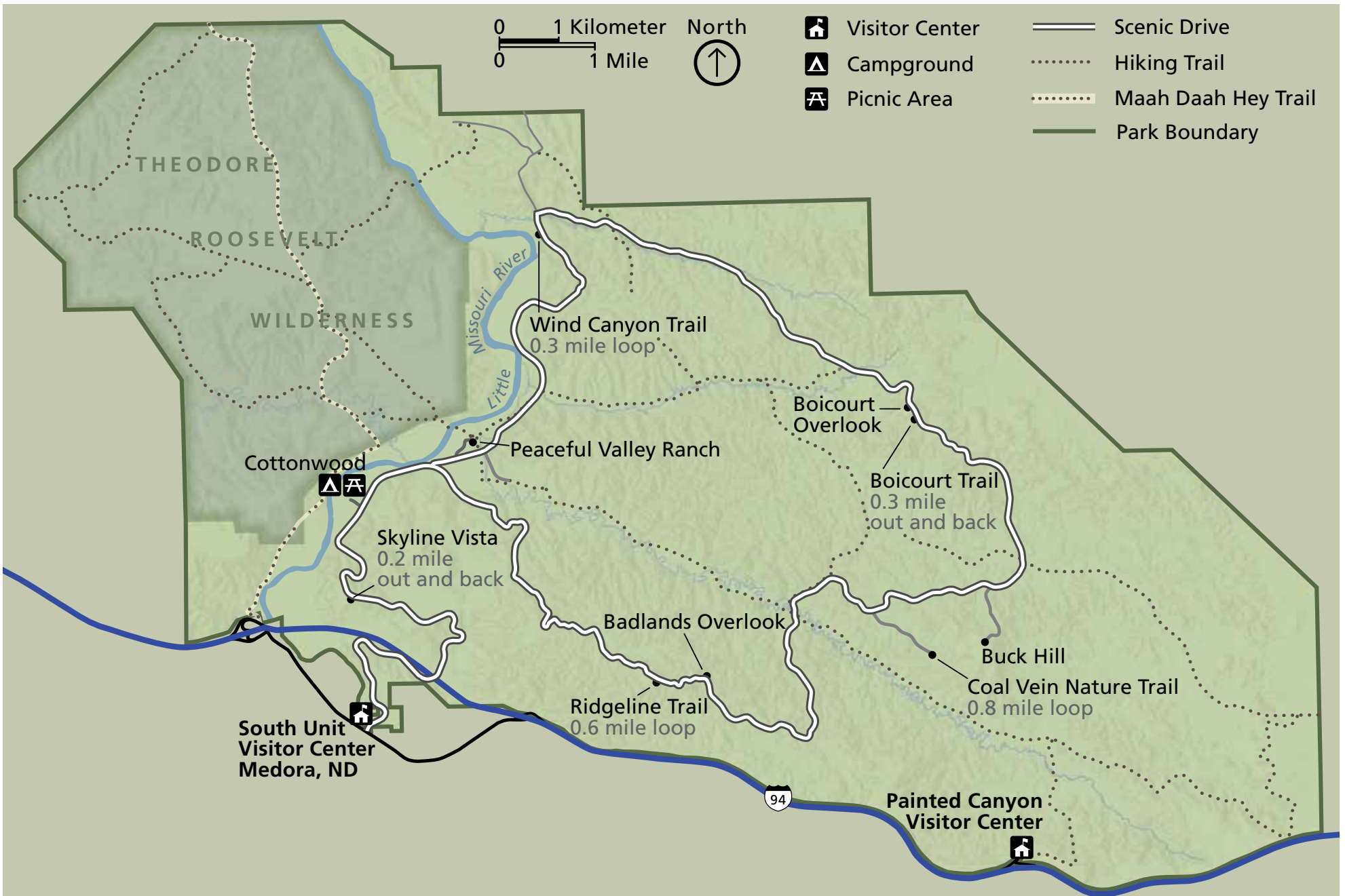
KNIFE RIVER INDIAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION
Friends of Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site

For special events, log on to <https://www.nps.gov/knri>

North Unit Map

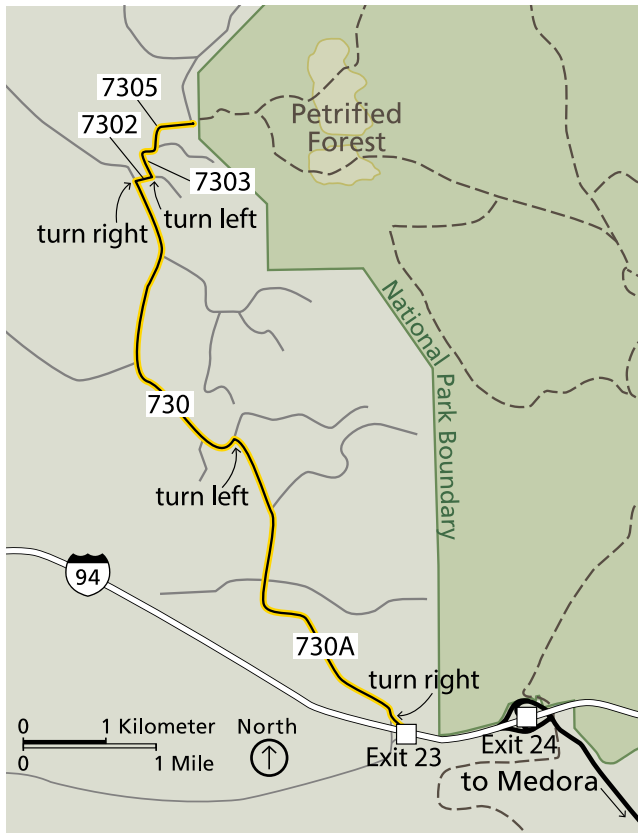


South Unit Map



Theodore Roosevelt National Park

Petrified Forest



The Petrified Forest is located in the Theodore Roosevelt Wilderness in the park's South Unit. This area can only be accessed on foot or on horseback.

The petrified wood lies in two main concentrations, both roughly 1.5 miles from the parking area. (Out-and-back is about 3 miles.)

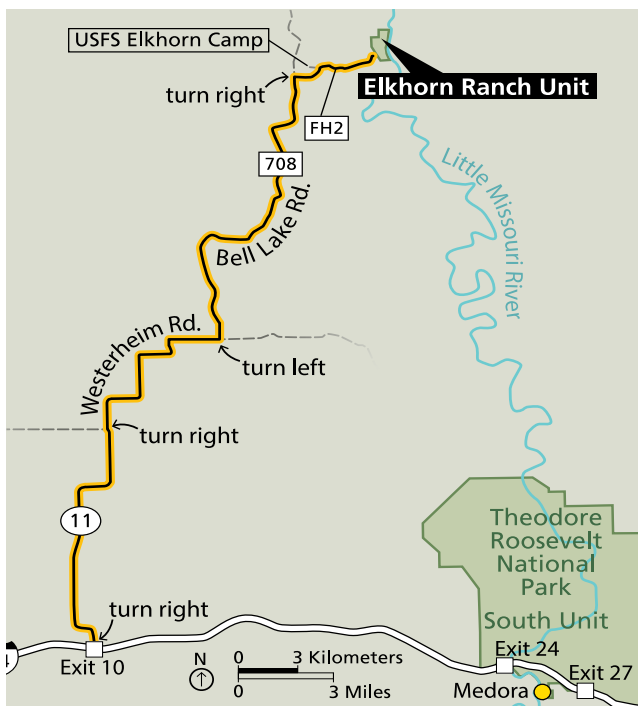
ATTENTION: If you continue beyond the Petrified Forest, the loop trail is 10.5 miles long and requires a map, compass, and extra water and supplies.

Driving Directions

From the South Unit, it is a 30-minute drive to the trailhead. Most turns are marked by signs pointing to the Petrified Forest. A high-clearance vehicle is recommended. Ask about road conditions at the visitor center.

- Take I-94 westbound to exit 23.
- At the end of the exit ramp, turn right on Forest Service Road 730.
- At the entrance to the Myers ranch, turn left to stay on 730. You will pass a "Private Road" sign; you have permission to continue.
- Continue until you reach Road 730-2. Turn right.
- Immediately after turning on 730-2, take the first left.
- At the next "Y", veer left and continue to the parking area.
- The trail begins at the lift gate in the fence east of the parking area.

Elkhorn Ranch Unit



The Elkhorn Ranch brought much comfort and solitude to Theodore Roosevelt during a difficult time in his life. Many say this is where he developed his conservation ethic.

Today, the National Park Service chooses to leave this special place as undeveloped as possible.

The cabin site is accessible only by trail. A 1.5 mile round-trip path leads to the cabin site, where only the foundation stones remain.

Driving Directions

From the South Unit, it is a 90-minute drive to the Elkhorn Ranch Unit. A high-clearance vehicle is recommended. Ask about road conditions at the visitor center.

- Take I-94 westbound to exit 10.
- At the end of the exit ramp, turn right on County Road 11. Follow County Road 11 for 8.8 miles.
- Turn right on Westerheim Road. Follow Westerheim road for 6.5 miles.
- Turn left on Bell Lake Road. Follow Bell Lake Road 11.7 miles.
- Turn right onto FH 2 towards the USFS Elkhorn Campground. Follow FH 2 for about 3 miles (continue past the campground) to the Elkhorn Ranch Unit parking area.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Theodore Roosevelt National Park

Mailing Address

Theodore Roosevelt National Park
P.O. Box 7
315 2nd Avenue
Medora, North Dakota 58645

Park Information & Lost and Found

701-623-4466

Hours of Operation

Visitor center hours vary by season.
Check our website for current hours.

The park is open 24 hours a day.

Website

www.nps.gov/thro

Follow us Online

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram