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Passages

2002 Visitor's Guide to Wind Cave National Park

The Incredible Wind Cave Prairie

Swaying grasses blown by a gentle wind create a fascinating motion on the prairie; the grasses seem to move in waves. Seeing these wind-caused waves prompted early travelers to call the prairie a "sea of grass." The prairie conjures many images. For people living on the prairie, there is no sight equal to the sweeping view of a land stretching for miles under a towering sky. To Stephen Long crossing the prairie in 1820 it was "a region of hopeless and irreclaimable sterility." He was puzzled by the abundance of wildlife, but concluded that they survived only through stupidity.

There is no sight equal to the sweeping view of a land stretching for miles under a towering sky.

This sea of grass or prairie is very much like an ocean. It contains many habitats, with numerous species of plants. Wind Cave National Park is part of this sea of grass. It is also part of the Black Hills. It is in a meeting zone, a mixed-grass prairie that combines many of the features of the eastern tall-grass prairie and the western short-grass prairie. It is a place where the mountains touch the plains.

Confronting adversity through diversity ensures that there will always be a prairie.

Because it is a meeting zone, or an ecotone, Wind Cave National Park has many different vegetative, or plant, communities. According to The Nature Conservancy these communities are noteworthy because of their condition. The Nature Conservancy evaluates ecosystems based on their health and diversity. They have identified 16 exemplary vegetative sites within the Black Hills. Nine of those sites are with-

in Wind Cave. These sites are rated on their diversity and management plans. The park itself is recognized as an exemplary site because of the quality and diversity of plant communities found here and the natural way they are managed.

Why is diversity important? Plants are the basis of most food chains and are critical to the survival of animal life. The blending of diverse plant communities means that the park has hundreds of species growing at different times. This variety does more than look pretty; it ensures

against biological disaster. During wet years, tall grasses dominate. During dry years, short grasses thrive. Some grasses grow in warm seasons, others in cool seasons. When insects or diseases strike, some plants suffer - others survive. These plants have evolved to withstand drought, drying winds, grazing, and frequent fires. Confronting adversity through diversity ensures that

there will always be a prairie and food for the wildlife.

Animals eat different plants. Some prefer grass; some prefer wildflowers; some prefer to browse on shrubs. This helps them avoid competition in obtaining food. There are over 20 different vegetative communities within the park. For the casual observer, there are three major categories: the forest, the prairie, and the riparian or stream habitats. However, within those categories there are others. Each community is characterized by its dominant plant species. In the prairie, you may see an abun-



dance of little bluestem grass in one place and an abundance of needle-and-thread grass in another. The understory of the ponderosa pine forest may change from wheatgrass to sunsedge. These different communities supply the required habitats for the large variety of animals living in the park.

Today, much of the prairie that once stretched across the Great Plains has been plowed and settled. There are few places man-

aged to protect prairie ecosystems and their natural processes.

Wind Cave National Park is one of those places. Here we can explore grassland communities, behold thundering herds of bison, or listen to the riotous noise in a prairie dog town.

To experience these diverse communities, drive the park roads or hike the trails. The gravel roads, NPS 5 and 6, travel through the prairie portions of the park. The more than 30 miles of hiking trails allow you to explore many different habitats. As you travel, look for the vast array of life supported by the sea of grass in this remarkable national park.



those sites are with-



Contacting the park:
In case of Emergency dial 911
Visitor Center: 605-745-4600
Wind Cave's website: www.nps.gov/wica/

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE

If you are planning your visit or doing a project about Wind Cave, look for us at www.nps.gov/wica/ on the Internet. Our website has almost anything you might want to know about the park, the cave, the animals, or the plants. We have even included some animal sounds. If you want to know what's happening in the park, this is the place to be.



FOOD, LODGING AND GASOLINE

The park operates one campground and has limited food and beverage vending services in the visitor center. There are no lodging, gasoline, grocery, or restaurants available in the park. These services are available in the nearby towns of Hot Springs (15 minutes south) and Custer (25 minutes north). The town of Pringle (10 minutes west) has gasoline and limited food services. For information regarding services in Hot Springs, call 605-745-4140 or 800-325-6991. In Custer, call 605-673-2244 or out of state call 800-992-9818.



Custer State Park, bordering Wind Cave National Park on the north, has campgrounds, restaurants, motels, and some grocery services. Information about Custer State Park is available by calling 605-255-4515. For information about state park lodging, please call 800-658-3530.

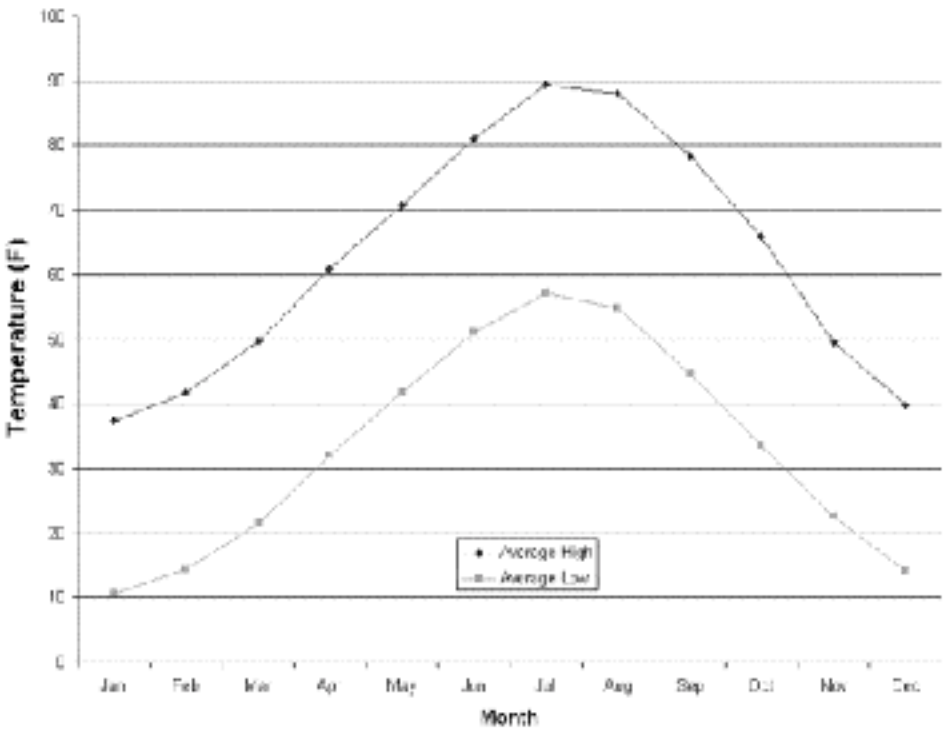
WEATHER

Wind Cave National Park and the rest of the southern Black Hills are much warmer and drier than the northern hills. Winter snowfall averages 30 inches annually. The spring and fall can be warm and sunny, or rainy and snowy with a chilly wind. Summer brings warm daytime temperatures with cool evenings.

Severe thunderstorms are common in June and July and occasionally in August. Thunderstorms can be dangerous and visitors should be pre-

pared for them. Large hail is common and the storms can produce severe lightening. Slow moving storms can dump great amounts of rain over a small area. The steep canyons, rock cliffs, and small creeks of the Black Hills are prone to flash flooding. Be cautious when camping near a creek bed even if it is dry.

For current forecasts and warnings, listen to NOAA Weather Radio on 162.425 MHz in the southern Black Hills or 162.550 MHz in Rapid City.



RANGER PROGRAMS

When you are planning your visit, plan to attend a ranger-led program. There are many interesting programs each day. Programs include a hike on the prairie or in the forest investigating the natural history of the park. Topics might include edible plants, the relationships of the park's animals and plants, the effects of exotic plants, or the importance of fire to the park's ecosystems. For more information, please ask at the visitor center information desk.

Nightly, during the summer months, park rangers present campfire programs. These are great opportunities to learn

about the park. Again, the topics vary. Check with the campground hosts or at the visitor center information desk for more information.

Cave tours are offered daily (except Thanksgiving and Christmas) throughout the year. Tours provide opportunities to discover new things about this unusual cave. Tour schedules vary throughout the year. The schedule is listed on page 7.



VISITOR CENTER EXHIBITS

The Visitor Center is a great place to start your park visit. Whether you are intrigued with the cave, prairie, or both, it is easy to discover more about the park by exploring the exhibit rooms. The upper exhibit room has displays ranging from how the Plains Indians used the bison to how the park manages the prairie. The cave exhibit room explains

cave formations and the colorful history of the park. A slide program explains the development of the cave. A video about the cave, the prairie, and the park is shown in our auditorium.

Stop in the visitor center for cave tours, maps, exhibits, book sales, backcountry permits, and Golden Age and Golden Access Passports, or National Parks Passes.

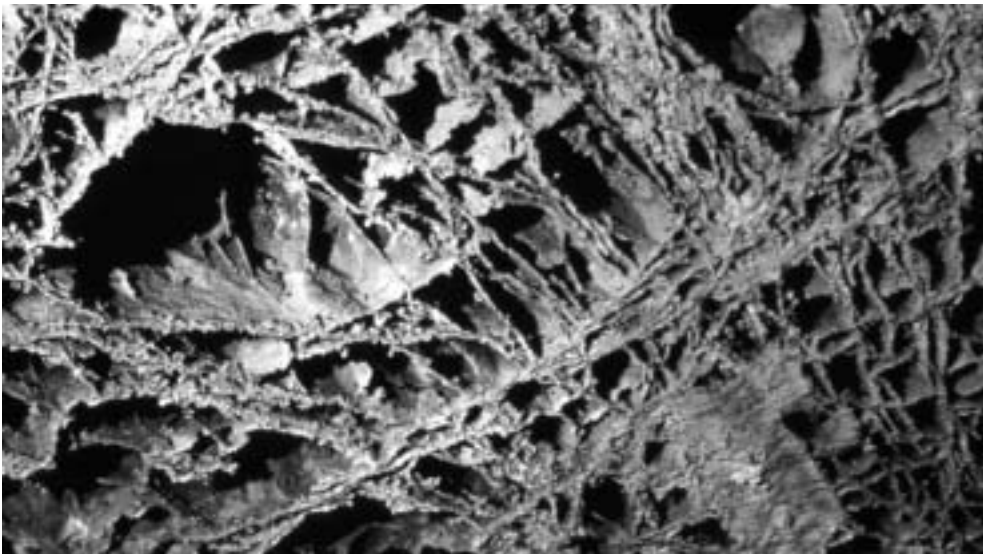


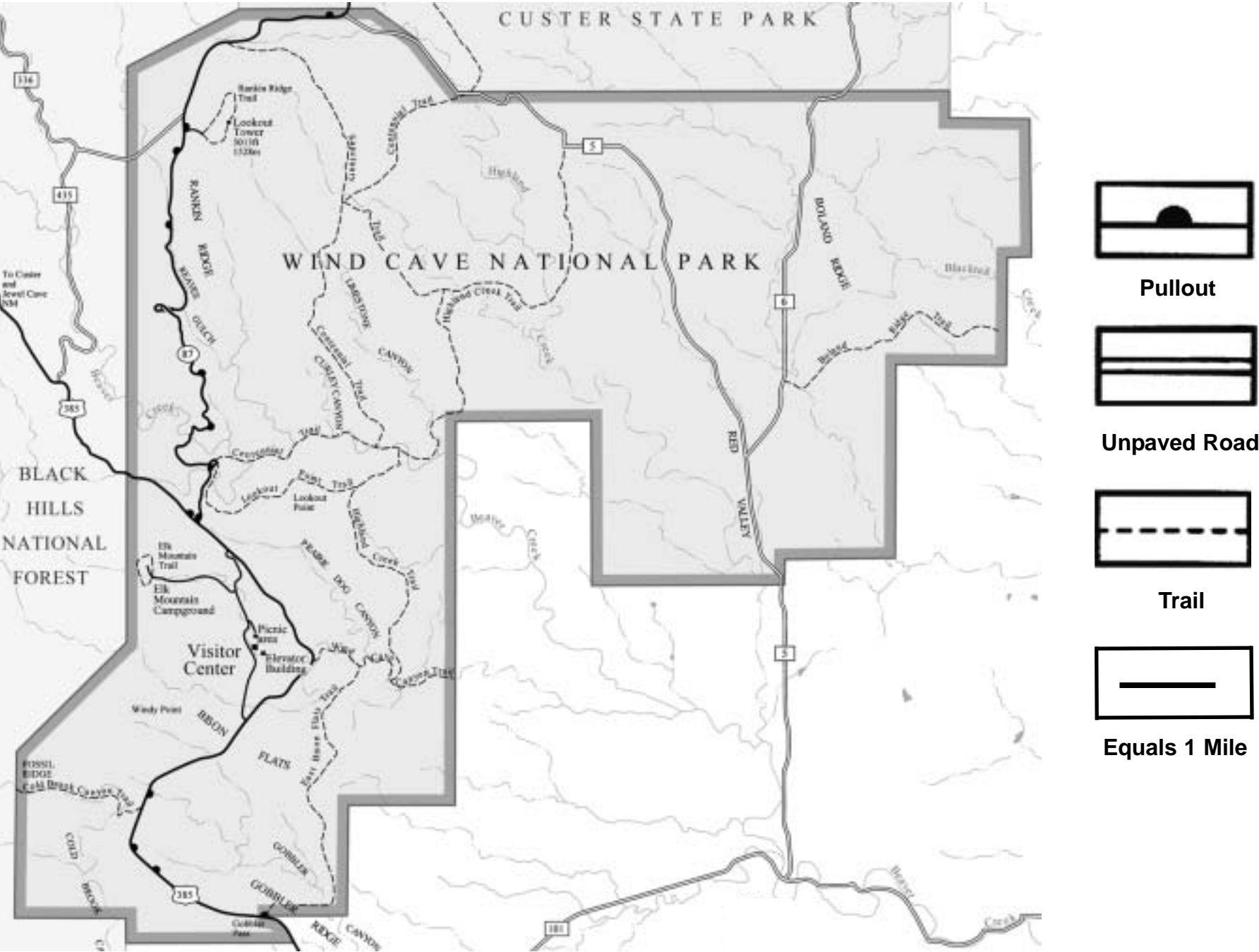
THE CAVE

Wind Cave is quite different from other caves. Instead of stalactites and stalagmites, the cave is decorated with boxwork. Boxwork is a crystalline formation that probably predates the cave. We believe that it formed in tiny cracks within the limestone. Later, when the cave formed, the water dissolved the limestone and the delicate crystal fins that had

filled the cracks were revealed. Wind Cave is also known for the maze-like configuration of its passageways. Few caves are longer or more complex. All of the known cave passageways lie beneath a land area of about one-square mile.

To see the cave, stop at the visitor center. The newspaper has a complete schedule of available tours on page 7.





HIKING TRAILS



Wind Cave National Park includes 28,295 acres of prairie grasslands and ponderosa pine forest. The park is a fascinating combination of ecosystems where eastern habitats meet western ones. They support a diverse assortment of life. Hiking any of the 30 miles of trails can help visitors better understand the park. You may want to leave the trails and travel cross-country along the ridges, through the canyons, or across the rolling prairie. A topographic map is recommended and can be purchased at the visitor center.

CENTENNIAL TRAIL
An excellent example of the diversity of the park is Wind Cave's six-mile section of the Centennial Trail. This trail crosses the prairie, climbs the forested ridges, and explores the wetter, riparian habitat of Beaver Creek. The 110-mile Centennial Trail meanders from Wind Cave National Park north through the Black Hills.

NATURE TRAILS
There are three nature trails in the park. The Rankin Ridge Nature Trail leads to the highest point in the park, where the views are spectacular. The Elk Mountain Nature Trail explores an ecotone, or meeting zone, where the grassland and forest converge. The Prairie Vista Nature Trail starts at the visitor center and explores the prairie grasslands. Booklets are available at the trailheads. The trails are about one mile in length.

CAMPING

Wind Cave National Park maintains a developed campground one-mile north of the visitor center. The campground is open from the first Monday in April until the last Monday in October. The campground rarely fills to capacity. Occupancy is on a first-come, first-served basis. Each site accommodates up to eight people. There are two sites accessible for campers with disabilities. Restrooms have cold water and flush toilets, but no showers or dump stations. The fee for camping is \$10.00

per night from mid-May to mid-September. From April to mid-May and mid-September to late October facilities at the campground are reduced. The fee is \$5.00 per night during these times. Visitors holding a Golden Age or Golden Access Passport pay a half price fee. The campground is closed from late October until the first Monday in April. For more information call 605-745-4600. Group camping is available by reservation. Contact the park at 605-745-4600 for group camping reservations or information.

BACKCOUNTRY CAMPING

The backcountry of Wind Cave National Park offers visitors an excellent opportunity to experience and enjoy the abundant resources of the park. Backcountry camping is permitted in the northwestern part of the park. Within this area are

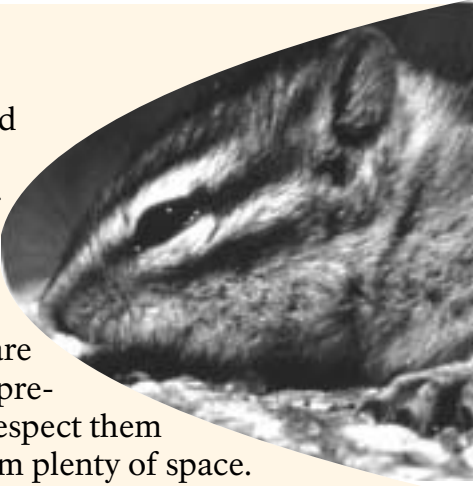
several different habitats - prairie, forest, and riparian - with a variety of plants and animals living there. Permits are required and are free. They can be obtained at the visitor center or at either of the Centennial Trailheads.

PROTECTING PARK RESOURCES

Park resources are for everyone to enjoy. Antlers, bones, rocks, and plants are part of the ecosystem and important for the survival of some animals. Please do not collect or remove anything from the park. Please do not feed the wildlife. When you feed animals they become attracted to highways where they can be struck by passing vehicles. They also may become dependent on handouts and fail to store fat reserves they

need to survive the winter. When driving park roads please obey all speed limits. They are designed to protect you and the wildlife. Be aware that rattlesnakes are sometimes found in dog towns and in rocky areas of the park. Bison also frequent dog towns. They can run 35 mph and may weigh a ton! Do not approach them or any wildlife. Do not leave traces of your visit. Litter is

unsightly and spoils the park experience for everyone. Animals in the park are wild and unpredictable. Respect them and give them plenty of space.



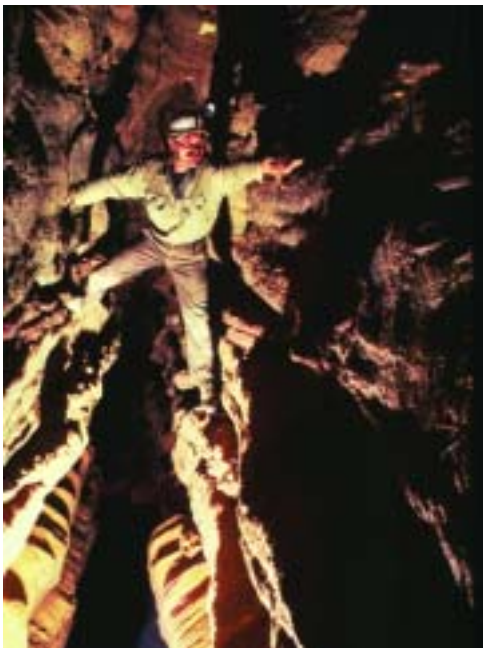


Crawling through tight passages and climbing high chimneys, Alvin McDonald explored Wind Cave using only a candle for light and string to mark his trail. McDonald was one of the first explorers of Wind Cave. As he explored, he recorded his underground adventures in his diary. From this information, we believe he discovered about eight miles of subterranean passages. January 23, 1891, he wrote that he had given up the idea of ever finding the end of Wind Cave. Today, we have surveyed more than 100 miles of cave and McDonald's challenge is still a hopeless endeavor.

“Have given up the idea of finding the end of Wind Cave.” Alvin McDonald, 1891

Exploring and mapping the cave is an ongoing process. With more than one hundred miles of passageways documented in this multi-level labyrinth, indications are that we have done little more than scratch the surface, or sub-surface, that is. To determine how much cave we might eventually find, cave specialists have compared the volume of air moving through the openings of the cave to the volume of the rooms and passages discovered thus far. These studies indicate that only a fraction of the cave has been found.

Who are the people that venture beyond the lighted walkways and into the unrelenting darkness of the cave, and why do they do such a thing? The first part of the question is easy to answer;



they're called cavers. They are people who enjoy climbing high chimneys, slithering through tight passages, and learning about caves as a hobby. There are perhaps ten thousand such people in this country. Scientists who study caves are speleologists, and their numbers are very few. Many cavers and speleologists volunteer their time to assist the



National Park Service in exploring and studying Wind Cave.

The 'why' part of the question is harder to answer. To quote Jules Verne, in *Journey to the Center of the Earth* “There is nothing more powerful than this attraction toward an abyss.”

Mountain climber George Mallory, when asked why he wanted to climb Mount Everest, replied, "Because it is there." This reasoning does not seem to be applicable to cave exploration.

“There is nothing more powerful than this attraction toward an abyss.” Jules Verne

A mountain stands in the open for all to see. The route to the summit can be scrutinized. The only evidence of a cave's existence is a hole in the ground - the cave's entrance. The entrance usually gives no indication as to what the interior of the cave will be like. The only way to find out what's down there is to start exploring.

Colorado caver Donald G. Davis once observed that "Caving is the only endeavor where a person of modest means can actually explore the unknown." A person can start caving with about a hundred dollars' worth of equipment. The kind of money required for the exploration of our other frontiers, the deepest oceans or vast reaches of space, is beyond the

reach of most individuals. What causes these otherwise normal people to crawl around in the dank and dark bowels of the earth? Is it beauty they seek or the physical challenge? Certainly, the lure of the unknown compels many cavers. When further pressed as to what motivated him, Mallory responded, "What we get from this adventure, is just sheer joy. And joy is, after all, the end of life."

“What we get from this adventure, is just sheer joy.” George Mallory

For the cavers who wish to "go where no person has ever gone before," Wind Cave does not disappoint. Once a month, cavers gather at the park to continue the exploration. Their activities are coordinated by the park's cave management staff. These cavers receive a list of 'leads' - which means a hole or passage that needs to be 'pushed' or explored. If the lead 'goes,' the resulting passage is mapped and inventoried.



The park requires that cavers map and inventory passages as they are explored. The explorers spend very long days pushing and mapping. On a good day, they may find a thousand feet of cave - on a not so good day, much less.

Why does the park permit exploration of the cave? We must know where the cave passages are in order to insure protection. Some human activities on the surface can alter the flow of water and damage cave resources.

It is also important that people visiting or exploring the cave cause no damage. Boxwork, frostwork, helictites, gypsum



flowers, popcorn, and other features are extremely delicate and may never form again. The leaders of Wind Cave expeditions are highly experienced cavers certified by the National Park Service. They have proven that they care about caves and are proficient in the exploration of them.

Most cavers gain experience through the National Speleological Society (NSS), an organization dedicated to the study and conservation of caves. The Society has chapters in major cities and towns located in prime caving areas. If you think that you might be interested in caving, the Society is a good place to start. You can find information about the NSS at www.caves.org. Another option would be to try one of the wild cave tours offered at most National Park Service cave sites.

Caving is definitely not for everyone. It is an acquired taste. Those who are even slightly claustrophobic know to look elsewhere for amusement. Those who don't like to get dirty need not apply; anyone who detests physical exertion should steer clear. When considering cave exploration, keep in mind the words of Herb Conn, a Jewel Cave explorer:

*You have to be a little brave
To seek adventure in a cave.
But if you find you like it,
chum,
You have to be a little dumb.*





Imagine heading west on a wagon trail and crossing 900 miles of prairie. Feel the wind in your face, smell the grasses, hear the haunting bugle of elk, and behold the bison.

These views, smells, and noises welcome visitors today as they drive through Wind Cave National Park. However, when Wind Cave was established as the seventh national park in 1903, there were no bison, elk, or pronghorn roaming the plains; they had been hunted to near extinction in the late 1800's. What happened to change that?

The return of the wildlife to Wind Cave National Park mirrors the many changes our country has gone through. As our ideas of what is important change, the emphasis of our national parks also changes.

When Wind Cave was established as a park, all the emphasis was on the cave. Its underground scenery rivaled that of surface wonders like Mt. Rainier. At that time the reason for creating national parks wasn't to protect ecosystems. The 11,000 acres of prairie above the cave was the domain of ranchers and farmers.

CREATING A GAME PRESERVE



At the beginning of the twentieth century, the debate over the demise of the bison raged across our nation. Why were these majestic animals being killed and what were we willing to do about it?

The newly created American Bison Society wanted to reestablish herds of bison throughout the country. Wind Cave National Park was a perfect place for that. Within the park's mixture of wide-open prairie and small-forested areas, a variety of habitats exist. In 1912, Congress established the 4,000-acre Wind Cave Game Preserve. This pre-

serve included some park land. The reintroduction of the wildlife began the following year when fourteen bison were shipped to the park from the New York Zoological Society.

PROTECTING PRONGHORN

In 1914, twenty-one elk arrived from Yellowstone National Park and fourteen pronghorn came from Alberta, Canada. The elk and bison thrived. The pronghorn did not. A.P. Chambers, the first warden of the game preserve, fed the captive pronghorn ground corn and alfalfa. The food disagreed with them; that winter three died of indigestion and the rest were eating each other's hair!



Chambers also had trouble from predators. In 1918, two coyotes became such nuisances that a federal trapper was brought in. It took him 5 weeks to catch the coyotes. In the meantime, they killed 13 more pronghorn! During the winter of 1922, bobcats or coyotes killed twenty more. By 1924, the herd was down to six does.

You can imagine the anti-predator sentiment at this time. So much effort was put into these animals only for them to become dinner for predators. Between 1912 and 1921, trappers killed 598 predators. They did not discriminate. Not only were bobcats and coyotes destroyed, but porcupines, raccoons, skunks, magpies, and even black-footed ferrets were targeted.

Eventually, Chambers realized that the problem was not totally the fault of predators. Pronghorn are the fastest North American land mammal and they need space to escape predators.



Keeping them in enclosures was like serving them up as a meal.

Chambers summarized his experience saying, "The propagation of the (pronghorn) antelope is difficult ...the only way this can be accomplished is by setting aside large tracts of land... They will not thrive in confinement."

"Pronghorn... will not survive in confinement."

A.P. Chambers

In 1935, when the game preserve became part of Wind Cave National Park, the Civilian Conservation Corps tore down the interior fences creating a large range for all the animals. Additional land was acquired in the 1940's and by 1960, the park was more than 28,000 acres and 300 pronghorn lived here.

CHANGING IDEAS

Beginning in the 1950's, the emphasis of the National Park Service changed from simply protecting game animals and scenery to understanding the animals and the ecosystems supporting them. Learning about their habits and habitat is important in protecting any animal. The pronghorn survive best when they have lots of space. They prefer to eat broad-leaved plants called forbs. Park managers began to look at the importance of maintaining native prairie plants needed to support the animals.

Today the pronghorn is again a species of concern. Their numbers have dropped

to less than 30 and we believe there may be too few for a healthy viable population. South Dakota State University researchers are exploring the reasons for their decline. To help find the answers, eight pronghorn were fitted with radio collars last winter so researchers can track and study them.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Over the years, each manager did the best he or she could with the information available. When A.P. Chambers started raising pronghorn, nothing like it had ever been done. The experience he gained helped future managers.

Other ideas about park management have also changed. Fire was thought to be the park's worst enemy; predators were persecuted. As times change and knowledge is gained, ideas evolve. Today we use fire as a tool and coyotes, bobcats, and even mountain lions have as important a role as bison, elk, and pronghorn.

Who knows what bit of knowledge may cause ideas to change? There is always room for new ideas. Wind Cave National Park has been managed for almost 100 years. Thriving prairie plant and animal communities are preserved and protected. Bison and pronghorn roam freely. Parks are the special places where ideas evolve, important concepts are developed, and we can all enjoy the results.



BRINGING THE BISON TO WIND CAVE

Fred Dille, of the U.S. Biological Survey, was in charge of getting the bison from the New York city Zoo to their new home at Wind Cave. They put the bison in special crates and loaded them onto an express train.

The 2000-mile journey took 2 1/2 days. When the train reached Hot Springs, every available truck and cart was pressed into service to get the animals the remaining eleven miles to the preserve. This journey alone took ten hours!

By the time the bison reached the preserve, quite a crowd had gathered to see them released.

There was only one problem. The bison had no idea how to back out of a crate! This frustrating experience is summarized in the words of Dille, "To suggest to a buffalo that he must back out of the crate by poking him in the head, will work with an elk but not a bison. Your actions are but a challenge to him and he does not propose to give ground." The final operation was more like removing the crates from the animals than the animals from the crate. At last, however, the bison were released and they wandered off into the sunset to begin their new life on the prairie.

"To suggest to a buffalo that he must back out of the crate by poking him in the head... a challenge to him and he does not propose to give ground." Fred Dille, 1913

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Wind Cave offers a variety of wonderful opportunities to learn about the natural resources of the park. Ranger guided hikes, cave tours, or campfire programs provide interesting information about many different aspects of the park. Exploring the visitor center, participating in the Junior Ranger Program, or hiking park trails are also great ways to discover what is special about this national park.

Teachers wanting an opportunity for their students can participate in the park's *Connections* program. This Parks as Classroom program allows students to explore the park with a ranger. The program is offered in May.

This year, students will be able to photograph their activities in the park. These photos will be transferred to a CD that the children can take home. This way the students can share their experiences with their families. This program was made possible in part by a grant from the National Park Foundation through the generous support of Kodak, a Proud Partner of America's National Parks.

The park also has a teaching trunk and a website titled *Water in the Environment*. The environmental education programs and the trunk are free. For more information call the park at 605-745-4600.



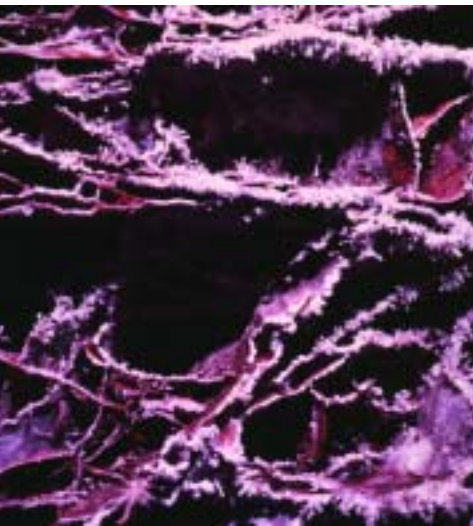
LEARNING ABOUT THE CAVE

CAVE TOUR INFORMATION

All tours are ranger guided and leave from the visitor center. Tickets are sold on a first-come, first-served basis at the park visitor center. Tickets must be purchased at least five minutes before tour times. The cave temperature is 53°F (11°C) year round. A jacket or sweater and good walking shoes are recommended.

GARDEN OF EDEN TOUR

This 1-hour tour is our least strenuous tour. It is a wonderful sample of Wind Cave. Small amounts of all of the beautiful cave formations - boxwork, popcorn, and flowstone - are seen along the ¼-mile trail. The tour is designed for people with limited time or abilities. It enters and exits the cave by elevator and has 150 stairs.



NATURAL ENTRANCE TOUR

This tour includes a visit to the natural entrance of Wind Cave where visitors can see where the cave was discovered and learn how it got its name. Participants enter the cave through a man-made entrance and journey through the middle level of the cave. Wind Cave's famous boxwork is abundant throughout this trip. Most of the 300 stairs along this route are down. This moderately strenuous tour lasts 1¼-hour and exits the cave by elevator.



FAIRGROUNDS TOUR

This 1½-hour 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 of the cave, the trail winds through the larger rooms where nice samples of popcorn and frostwork can be seen. This is our most strenuous walking tour. The tour enters and exits the cave by elevator and there are 450 stairs along the route with one flight of 90 steps up.

WALKS AND TALKS

DISCOVERY ACTIVITY

Daily, during the summer, ranger talks or demonstrations take place at the visitor center. These programs explain some facet of the park. Topics may include local wildlife, plants, geology, area history, and cave surveying. Check at the visitor center for meeting place and topic.

PRAIRIE HIKE

Explore the park's habitats with a ranger. This 2-hour activity begins at the visitor center. The group will then drive to a nearby trailhead. Hiking boots or sturdy shoes and water are



advised. Check at the visitor center for details.

CAMPFIRE PROGRAM

Become better acquainted with Wind Cave National Park. Evening campfire talks are presented nightly during the summer at the Elk Mountain Campground amphitheater. Topics may include wildlife, plants, geology, park management, and history. The programs last about 45 minutes.

JUNIOR RANGERS

The Junior Ranger Program is an exciting opportunity for children and their families to learn about the park. Becoming a Junior Ranger helps youngsters understand the park's ecosystems, the cave, and the animals. It also helps them learn how they can help protect all parts of our environment. Junior Ranger booklets are available for \$1.00 at the bookstore. There are activities for children up to age 12.

This year through a special grant made possible in part by the National Park Foundation and the generous support of Kodak, a Proud Partner of America's National Parks, we will



be taking photographs of the accomplishments of our Junior Rangers. These youngsters will then be able to share their pictures and their adventures with their families and friends.

SPECIALTY TOURS

CANDLELIGHT TOUR

Experience the cave by candlelight. This tour takes place in a less developed, unlighted part of the cave. Each participant will carry a candle bucket. Shoes with non-slip soles are required. No sandals! This tour is limited to 10 people and the minimum age is 8. This more strenuous tour covers 1 mile of rugged trail and lasts 2 hours. Reservations are strongly recommended. We begin taking reservations one month before the tour. Please call the park (605) 745-4600 for more information.

WILD CAVE TOUR

Explore the cave away from the developed trails. On this 4-hour tour visitors will be introduced to basic, safe caving. Wear old clothes and gloves, as much of the trip will include crawling. Long pants, long sleeved shirts, and sturdy, lace up boots or shoes with non-slip soles are required. The park provides hard hats, lights, and kneepads. Please do not bring jewelry, watches, or other valuables on

the tour. Clothing worn on the Jewel Cave Wild Cave Tour are not permitted in Wind Cave. This tour is limited to 10 people and the minimum age is 16. We require a signed consent form for participants 17 years and under. Reservations are required for this tour. We begin taking reservations one month before the tour. Please call the park (605) 745-4600 for more information.



TOURS FOR VISITORS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The visitor center and the cave are accessible to people with limited mobility. Please call ahead to make special arrangements or ask at the information desk for a special tour. Limited areas of the cave are accessible to wheelchairs. There are fees charged for these services. Please call the park (605) 745-4600 for more information. The park has a TTY for the hearing impaired.

CAVE SAFETY INFORMATION

All tours are ranger-guided and leave from the visitor center. Tickets are sold on a first-come, first-served basis, except for the Candlelight and Wild Cave Tours. During peak summer visitation, long waits for tours may be encountered. To avoid waits, the best time to visit the cave is during the early hours of the day. During the summer, weekends are good times to visit; Tuesdays and Wednesdays are the busiest days. Reservations for organized groups are available. For more information please call (605) 745-4600.

A light jacket or sweater is recommended for all cave tours, as Wind Cave is 53°F (11°C) throughout the year. Wear low-heeled shoes with non-slip soles. Cave trails are dimly lighted and trail surfaces may be uneven, wet, and slippery. Do not wear sandals. Ceilings along the tour route are low, requiring some bending. For the protection of the cave, please do not touch or remove rocks or formations. No eating,



drinking, chewing tobacco or gum while in the cave. Please do not step off the trail. Photography is permitted, but please no tripods. Pets are not allowed in the cave. There are no restrooms in the cave. Cave tours are moderately strenuous. Persons with claustrophobia, heart or respiratory conditions, or other physical limitations should reconsider. A tour is available, by request, for visitors with special needs. Please call 605-745-4600 or ask at the information desk.

RESERVATIONS

Most cave tours are first-come, first-served, however reservations are either strongly recommended or required for the Candlelight and

Wild Cave Tours. Reservations may be made by calling the park at 605-745-4600. We begin taking reservations one month before the tour.



TOUR FEES*

Tickets must be purchased at least 5 minutes before tour time.

	Garden of Eden	Natural Entrance	Fairgrounds	Candlelight	Wild Cave
Age 17-61	\$6.00	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$9.00	****\$20.00
Golden Age**	\$3.00	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.50	\$10.00
Age 6-16	\$3.00	\$4.00	\$4.00	***\$4.50	Not Permitted
Under 6	Free	Free	Free	Not Permitted	Not Permitted

* Holders of a Golden Access Card receive a 50% discount on tours.
** Person must possess a Golden Age Passport to receive the discount.
*** Minimum age for Candlelight Tour is 8.
**** Minimum age for the Wild Cave Tour is 16. The fee is \$20.00.

PROGRAM SCHEDULES



January 2002 - April 6, 2002
Visitor Center Open daily 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Garden of Eden Tour 10:00, 1:00, and 3:00

April 7 - May 4, 2002
Visitor Center Open daily 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Garden of Eden Tour 9:30, 11:30, 1:30, and 3:30

May 5 - 24, 2002
Visitor Center 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Natural Entrance Tour 9:00, 10:30, 12:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:30, and 4:30

May 25 - 27, 2002, Memorial Day Weekend
Visitor Center 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Garden of Eden Tour 11:00, 1:00, 3:00, and 5:00
Natural Entrance Tour 8:40, 9:20, 10:30, 11:30, 12:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:30, and 4:30
Fairgrounds Tour 10:00, 12:00, 2:00, and 4:00
Campfire Program 8:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

May 28 - June 1, 2002
Visitor Center 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Garden of Eden Tour 12:30, 1:30, 2:30, and 3:30
Natural Entrance Tour 9:00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00, 1:00, 2:00, 3:00, 4:00, and 5:00

June 2 - August 17, 2002
Visitor Center 8:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Garden of Eden Tour 10:40, 12:40, 2:40, 4:40, and 5:30
Natural Entrance Tour 8:40, 9:00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00, 1:00, 2:00, 3:00, 4:00, 5:00, and 6:00.
Fairgrounds Tour 9:30, 10:20, 11:40, 12:20, 1:40, 2:20, 3:40, and 4:20
Candlelight Tour 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
Wild Cave Tour 1:00 p.m.
Ranger led Hike 9:00 a.m.
Campfire Program 9:00 p.m.

August 18 - September 2, 2002
Visitor Center 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Garden of Eden Tour 10:30, 1:40, 3:40, and 4:30
Natural Entrance Tour 9:00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00, 1:00, 2:00, 3:00, 4:00, and 5:00
Fairgrounds Tour 9:30, 11:20, 12:20, 1:20, and 3:20
Candlelight Tour 1:30 p.m.
Wild Cave Tour 1:00 p.m. Weekends Only Aug. 18, 24, 25, 31 and Sept. 1
Campfire Program 8:00 p.m.

September 3 - September 21, 2002
Visitor Center 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Natural Entrance Tour 9:00, 10:30, 12:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:30, and 4:30
Evening Program 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday beginning September 5.

September 22 - October 5, 2002
Visitor Center 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Garden of Eden Tour 9:30, 11:30, 1:30, and 3:30

October 6 - Spring 2003
Visitor Center 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. except: Thanksgiving and Christmas
Garden of Eden Tour 10:00, 1:00, and 3:00

Tour schedules are subject to change.

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY:
Contact any park ranger or call the visitor center at 745-4600. After hours call 911.



The Park Bookstore

The Black Hills Parks & Forests Association sells books, maps, and other park related publications in visitor centers at Wind Cave National Park, Jewel Cave National Monument, Custer State Park, and the Black Hills National Forest. The association also publishes interpretive

books and materials about these park and forest areas. Cooperating associations are non-profit, tax exempt organizations authorized by congress to aid and promote “educational and scientific” activities within national parks. As such, all profits from association sales support the

educational, interpretive, and research activities of these agencies. Some of the books that can be purchased in the Wind Cave National Park bookstore are shown below. There are many more titles available at the store, by mail order, or from the asso-

ciation web site, www.black-hillsparks.org. Membership in the Black Hills Parks and Forests Association supports the organization and entitles members to a 15% discount on all purchases. The membership is \$15.00 per year. For more information call 605-745-7020.

Wind Cave: An Ancient World Beneath the Hills - In this wonderful, easy to read book, Art Palmer explains the geology of Wind Cave and how it is related to the Black Hills. The charts and graphs help make the topic easily understood to people unfamiliar with geology. The pictures alone of the unusual Wind Cave boxwork, make this book well worth the investment. \$6.95



Jewel Cave: A Gift From the Past - Jewel Cave’s geological history is traced by Art Palmer in this book about Jewel Cave National Monument. As in the Wind Cave book, Palmer uses charts and graphs to make the topic easily understood to people unfamiliar with geological terms and ideas. The color photos illustrate Jewel Cave well and make this an ideal gift or souvenir. \$6.95

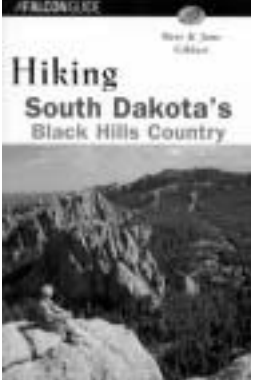


Wind Cave, The Story Behind the Scenery - If you are interested in learning more about the ecosystems, wildlife, and history of Wind Cave National Park, this book by Ron Terry is an excellent choice. It contains outstanding photographs and information about the cave and its unusual boxwork formation. This book goes beyond the cave, including photos and insights about the park’s incredible prairie. This book is part of a series that explore the natural, geological, and cultural history of the national parks. \$7.95

Jewel Cave, The Story Behind the Scenery - This book by Karen Rosga is also part of the Story Behind the Scenery series. It is well illustrated and describes the natural, geological, and human history of Jewel Cave National Monument. The book contains remarkable photographs of the cave, its unusual features, and the surrounding landscape. The relationships of the cave, the landscape, and the plants and animals are skillfully presented in this interesting story of Jewel Cave National Monument. \$7.95



Trails Illustrated Map, Black Hills Southeast - If you are interested in hiking in Wind Cave National Park or Custer State Park, this is the trail map to have. This tear-proof, waterproof map details the hiking trails, campsites, roads, elevations, and many other standard features of a topographic map. Wind Cave National Park is illustrated on one side and Custer State Park and the Black Elk Wilderness are on the other side. The map is part of a series of National Geographic Trails Illustrated Maps. \$9.95



Hiking South Dakota’s Black Hills Country - This hiking book by Bert and Jane Gildard helps visitors explore the hiking trails of the Black Hills. The book includes nearly all the trails in the area from Wind Cave, north to Devils Tower, and east to the Badlands. Detailed descriptions and maps help hikers get to the trailheads and describe what to expect on the trails. The guide also includes tips on safety, elevation charts, and tips about hiking with children. \$14.95

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Hot Springs, SD 57747

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Over \$75.00	\$7.25
Mail tube (cave maps)	\$3.50