

South Unit General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

August 2010



Public Meetings on the Draft South Unit General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement

Please join us at a public meeting on the Draft South Unit General Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement (GMP/EIS). The purpose of this brochure is to share with you information and dates for the open house meetings for the Draft GMP/EIS and how to provide your comments on the Draft GMP/EIS.

Public Meetings - Purpose and Process

The purpose of the open house meetings is to inform the public on the general management planning process for the South Unit, and to provide opportunities for public comment on the Draft GMP/EIS. Upon entering the meeting you will be asked to sign in (this is for administrative use only). The meeting will begin with light refreshments, followed by opening remarks and a prayer. You will have the opportunity to visit the various stations located throughout the room, which will have displays, maps, and other information related to the Draft GMP/EIS. You will have the opportunity to provide comments to GMP team members at these stations, which the team members will record. There will be additional ways to provide comments at the meetings, such as writing comments on a comment card and placing it in a drop-box at the meeting. Written comments will be accepted at the public meetings, on-line through the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website, or through the mail, as described in this newsletter.

You Are Invited to Join Us!

Public Meeting Times and Locations:

Tuesday, September 14, 2010

Sacred Heart Church
US Highway 18 and Main, Pine Ridge, SD 57770
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Tuesday, September 14, 2010

Red Shirt School (*lobby*)
HC 83 BIA Highway 41, Red Shirt, SD 57744
5:30 pm to 8:30 pm.

Wednesday, September 15, 2010

Wall Community Center
501 Main Street, Wall, SD 57790
11:30 am to 2:30 pm

Wednesday, September 15, 2010

Dahl Fine Arts Center
713 7th Street, Rapid City, SD 57701
5:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Thursday, September 16, 2010

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Hall
1 Church Road, BIA Highway 2, Kyle, SD 57752
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Tuesday, October 12, 2010

US Department of the Interior Building
1849 C Street NW, Rooms 7000 A & B
Washington, DC 20240
4:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Purpose of the GMP/EIS

The South Unit GMP/EIS will provide comprehensive guidance for perpetuating natural systems, preserving cultural resources, and providing opportunities for quality visitor experiences at the South Unit. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that park managers and the public share the same vision of how best to achieve the park's purpose and protect its resources unimpaired for future generations.

Need for Action

The South Unit GMP/EIS will describe the general path for park managers to follow in managing the South Unit for approximately the next 20 years. The plan does not provide specific and detailed answers to every issue facing the South Unit. Rather, it is a framework to assist South Unit managers in making decisions today and into the future. The plan will:

- provide general guidance for how best to manage natural and cultural resources and provide for visitor use;
- clearly define the resource conditions and visitor experience opportunities to be achieved;
- present a general approach for facilities and access; and
- ensure that the foundation for decision making is developed in consultation with an interested public and adopted by South Unit management after sufficient analysis of the benefits, impacts, and economic costs of alternative courses of action.

Preferred Alternative

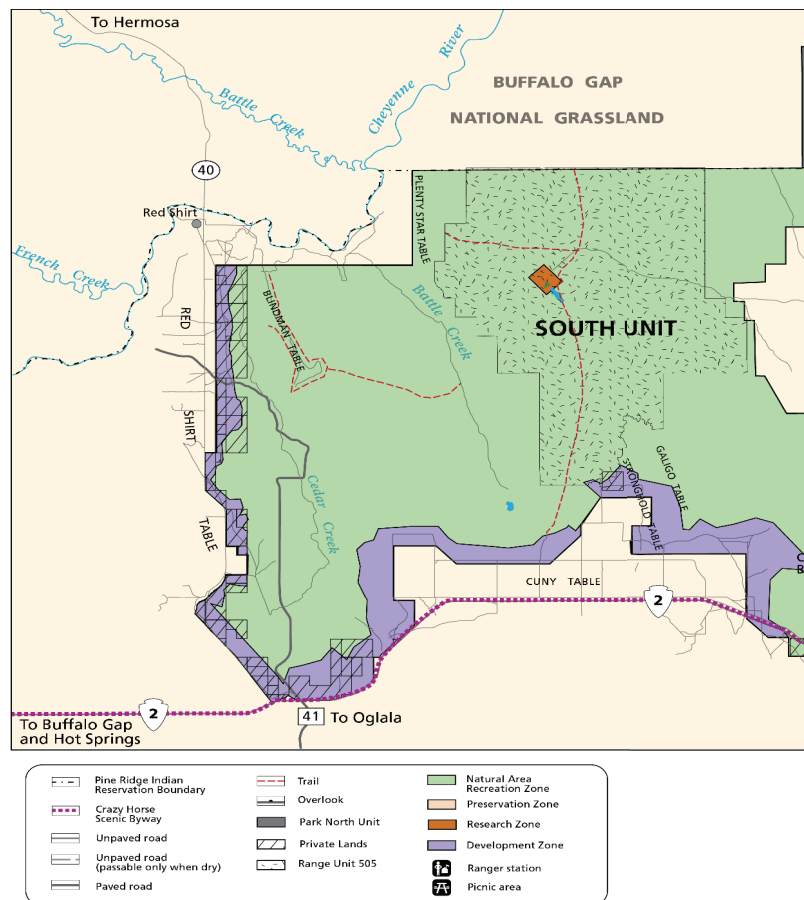
Alternative D: Protect Resources While Expanding Interpretive Experience.

The Draft GMP/EIS considers a range of reasonable alternatives to accomplish the purpose of and need for action and that would meet the objectives. After taking into consideration the analysis of impacts, alternative D: Protect Resources While Expanding Interpretive Experience was identified as the preferred alternative. Alternative D would focus primarily on restoration with expanded access and opportunities for visitors. Opportunities would include interpretation of natural, cultural, and paleontological resources. The preferred alternative would promote understanding of Oglala Sioux history, culture,

and land management principles through education and interpretation. Visitor activities would be focused in a developed front-country area that would provide a variety of opportunities around the perimeter, while the interior of the South Unit would be managed as backcountry. Natural resources management would focus on surveys and research to provide data to support future restoration, interpretation, and educational activities. Cultural resources management would focus on protection and preservation of historic, spiritual, and ceremonial sites and materials.

Under Alternative D, the NPS would:

- Develop active restoration programs.
- Develop surveys for all resources, including fossil resources, cultural resources, paleontological locations, wildlife, and vegetation, and create databases to support management decisions.
- Reintroduce bison into the White River visitor use area for demonstration purposes, and in Range Unit 505 to create a bison preserve/reserve.
- Develop associated corrals and handling facilities to manage bison.



- Restore the South Unit to natural conditions (where necessary) by removing exotic species and revegetating disturbed sites with native plants.
- Lift the moratorium on paleontological collecting.
- Open one active quarry for visitor viewing. All fossils collected from quarry operations and associated surveys would be prepared and curated by trained park personnel. As appropriate, newly collected fossils and the specimens from the quarry and surveys would be stored in a location deemed appropriate by the OST.
- Protect paleontological and geological resources from poaching through increased law enforcement patrols.
- Protect and preserve cultural materials and medicinal and edible plants (ethnobotanicals).
- Identify and preserve cultural, historic, and spiritual sites; visitation would be restricted in some of those sites with interpretation taking place outside of those sites.
- Interpretation of Oglala Sioux history and culture would continue at the White River Visitor Center and the Lakota Heritage and Education Center (once fully operational).

Other Alternatives Evaluated

Alternative A: No Action (Continue Current Management).

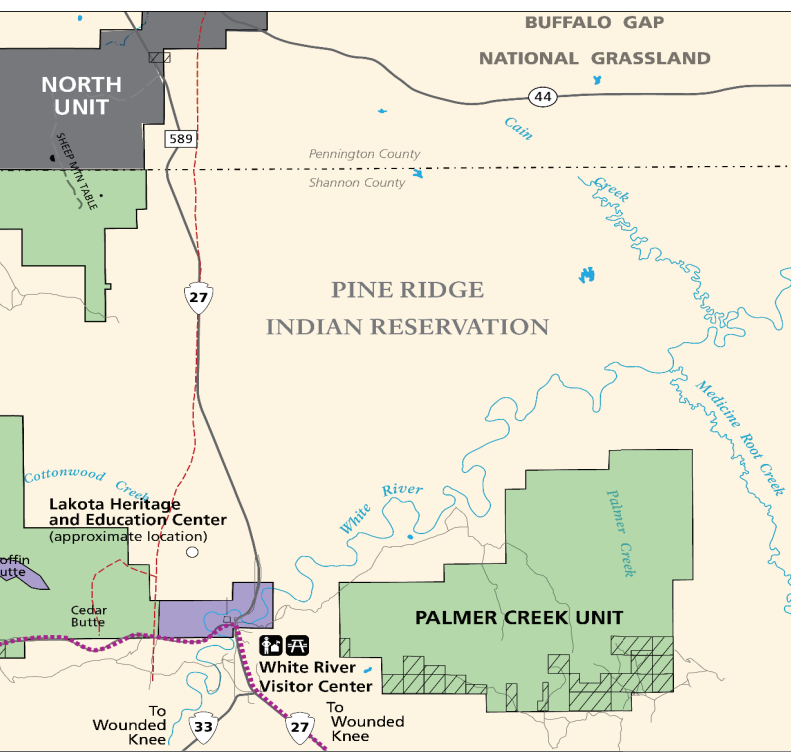
Current management would continue. Operations, visitor opportunities, and resources would continue as currently managed. There would be no designation of management zones.

Alternative B: Expand Interpretive Opportunities.

Restoration programs would be developed with the goal of managing natural conditions in areas not grazed. Native species would be reintroduced in some areas. Natural resource management would focus on surveys and research. Cultural resource management would focus on protection and preservation of historical, spiritual, and ceremonial sites. Interpretive programs focused on Oglala Sioux history and culture would be provided. Cultural and natural resource self-guided and other discovery tours in the interior and on the perimeter of the South Unit would be provided for. There would be three different management zones: Natural Area / Recreation Zone, Research Zone (quarry), and Development Zone along perimeter. Management would focus on restoration with expanded access and opportunities for visitors. Opportunities would include interpretation of natural, cultural, and paleontological resources.

Alternative C: Focus on Resource Protection/Preservation.

Restoration programs would be developed with the goal of restoring natural, pre-expansion conditions, expanding into Range Unit 505. Livestock would be gradually eliminated and native species reintroduced. Natural resource management would focus on preservation and restoration. Cultural resource management would focus on protection and preservation of historical, spiritual, and ceremonial sites. Focus would be on providing a range of appropriate visitor uses on the perimeter of the South Unit. There would be three management zones: Natural Area / Recreation Zone, Preservation Zone, and Development Zone. Management would focus on preservation, protection, and restoration of natural and cultural resources. Access would be limited primarily to the perimeter.



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ALTERNATIVE D
 PROTECT RESOURCES WHILE EXPANDING
 INTERPRETIVE EXPERIENCE (PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE)

BADLANDS NATIONAL PARK
 United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service



How to Comment

If you wish to comment electronically, you may submit your comments:

Electronically:

You may submit your comments online in the PEPC website by visiting <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/badl>, clicking on ***Open for Comment**, clicking on the **South Unit General Management Plan / EIS**, and then clicking on **Comment on Document**.

In Writing:

Send comments by U.S. Postal Service or other mail delivery service or hand deliver them to: Superintendent, Badlands National Park, 25216 Ben Reifel Road, P.O. Box 6, Interior, SD 57750.

At the Open Houses:

Oral and written comments will also be accepted during the open house meetings.

Comments will not be accepted by fax, e-mail, or in any other way than those specified above. Bulk comments in any format (hard copy or electronic) submitted on behalf of others will not be accepted.

The 60-day public comment period begins August 20, 2010, and the comment period will end on October 19, 2010.

Your comments would be most helpful if received no later than October 19, 2010.

Please Note: Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment - including your personal identifying information - may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Completion of the Final GMP/EIS

The final GMP/EIS will be prepared following consideration of all comments. Distribution of the final GMP/EIS and the NPS Record of Decision is anticipated for Winter 2010-2011. The timeframe for completion of the final document could vary from these estimates depending on the volume and content of public comments received during the review period for the draft GMP/EIS.

Obtaining a Copy of the Draft GMP/EIS

If you have not received a copy of the draft GMP/EIS, you can visit the NPS PEPC website (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/badl>) and download it. This is the same website you will visit for making electronic comments as described in this newsletter. CDs and hard copies of the Draft GMP/EIS may be picked up at the park headquarters, or a copy may be requested by mail, as long as supplies last, from the Superintendent, Badlands National Park, 25216 Ben Reifel Road, P.O. Box 6, Interior, SD 57750. Copies of the GMP/EIS will also be provided to local libraries in Rapid City, Wall, Martin, South Dakota and at the Oglala Lakota College Library on the Piya Wiconi campus near Kyle, South Dakota on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Schedule

August 2010	Draft GMP/EIS Released
September 2010	Public Meeting on Draft GMP/EIS
September 2010	60-Day Comment Period Ends
Fall/Winter 2010	Comment Analysis
Winter 2010/2011	Final GMP/EIS Released
Winter 2011	30-Day Waiting Period
Winter/Spring 2011	NPS Decision