

CUSTER STATE PARK

# TATANKA

2022



# WELCOME TO CUSTER STATE PARK



Thank you for choosing to visit Custer State Park where our goal is to continually enhance the visitor's experience. Several enhancements have taken place or will be in progress during 2022 that will improve the visitor experience.

The most exciting enhancement is the opening of the Bison Center located near the bison corral complex. The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust awarded a \$4 million grant to the South Dakota Parks

and Wildlife Foundation to construct the Custer State Park Bison Center. The Center focuses on the tenured history of our bison herd. The new bison center will educate visitors through dynamic interpretive displays and tell the origin story of the park's bison, herd management, and the annual Buffalo Roundup and Auction. There is no better place to tell the story of the park's bison than at the corrals—the very location where our bison story began and continues today. The Bison Center gives visitors the opportunity to dive deeper and learn more about the country's national mammal.

The Visitor Center continues to be the center piece for visitors to become orientated with Custer State Park, this has not changed. The Visitor Center remains open year-round and showcases what makes Custer State Park so unique.

Road construction is never fun, but a road free of potholes and bumps makes it all worth it. This past fall the Wildlife Loop Road experienced a complete overlay of asphalt. The first time it has been completely redone since the early 1980s. Staff are overjoyed to have this project behind us.

The Playhouse Road is scheduled to be replaced in 2022 and will definitely add to the visitor experience. Travelers will only have to worry about dodging deer rather than the potholes and bumps.

Stay tuned for future visitor enhancements, as the fall of 2022 will see the construction of a new store at Sylvan Lake. Staff have also recognized the need for trail enhancements around Sylvan Lake. The goal is to create a sustainable, environmentally friendly trail that offers the same great hikes, views, and access to the lake while leaving a lighter footprint.

As the world continually changes around us, Custer State Park is also changing with the goal to enhance, not detract, from your experience.

Once again, thank you for choosing to visit Custer State Park.

*Matt Snyder, Custer State Park Superintendent*



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**KEVIN ROBLING** | Department Secretary, Game, Fish and Parks

**SCOTT SIMPSON** | Director, Division of Parks and Recreation

**MATTHEW SNYDER** | Superintendent, Custer State Park

**BROOKE SMITH** | *Tatanka* Editor

*Positions current at time of publication.*



The mission of South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks is to serve and connect people and families to the outdoors through effective management of our state's parks, fisheries, and wildlife resources.

## CONTENTS

- 4 THINGS TO KNOW
- 6 VISITOR CENTERS
- 8 NEW IN CUSTER STATE PARK
- 10 WILDLIFE
- 14 SCENIC DRIVES
- 16 SPECIAL EVENTS
- 17 PARK PROGRAMS
- 18 BUFFALO ROUNDUP
- 20 WINTER
- 22 LAKES AND STREAMS
- 24 HIKING TRAILS
- 26 CAMPING

### CUSTER STATE PARK RESORTS

#### LODGING, DINING, SHOPPING

- 28 STATE GAME LODGE
- 30 SYLVAN LAKE LODGE
- 32 BLUE BELL LODGE
- 34 LEGION LAKE LODGE
- 36 RESORT ACTIVITIES
- 38 BLACK HILLS PLAYHOUSE
- 39 AREA STATE PARKS
- BACK PARK MAP

## TATANKA | VOLUME 43 • 2022

*Tatanka* is the Lakota word for bison or buffalo.

Photos provided by SD Departments of Tourism and Game, Fish and Parks, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and CSP Regency Adventures.

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# THINGS TO KNOW



## PARK RULES

Regulations are designed to protect both park visitors and park resources. Park rangers enforce the park's laws and regulations.

- » **DO NOT approach the buffalo.**
- » Do not feed or disturb wildlife.
- » All vehicles must stay on designated road ways.
- » Drones in South Dakota state parks are permitted but must follow state park and FAA rules and guidelines.
- » Open fires are prohibited unless in an approved fire grate located in campgrounds or picnic areas.
- » Pets need to be on a leash no longer than 10 feet. Pets are not allowed in any park buildings or on designated swimming beaches. Please clean up after your pet, and do not leave pets unattended. Service animals are welcome.
- » Removal of any natural or cultural features such as rocks or artifacts is prohibited.
- » Any person, regardless of their residency, who is able to lawfully possess a firearm/pistol can conceal their weapon without permit while in South Dakota.

- » Visitors are not allowed to jump or dive from bridges, rocks or cliffs into any of the park's lakes.
- » Only state-sponsored geocaches are allowed in the park.

## LOST AND FOUND

All lost and found items and records are kept at the park office. If you find or lose an item, stop at one of our entrance stations, visitor centers or the park office and fill out a lost and found form.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### Camping reservations

1.800.710.2267

[campsd.com](http://campsd.com)

### Custer State Park

Park Office | 605.255.4515

[custerstatepark@state.sd.us](mailto:custerstatepark@state.sd.us)

[custerstatepark.com](http://custerstatepark.com)

### Custer State Park Resort

Information | 605.255.4772

Reservations | 1.888.875.0001

[info@custerresorts.com](mailto:info@custerresorts.com)

[custerresorts.com](http://custerresorts.com)

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## FEES

An entrance license is required for all park visitors. Only people traveling non-stop on U.S. Highway 16A are exempt from this requirement. Entrance licenses are valid at all South Dakota state parks.

**Temporary Entrance License** | \$20/vehicle (1-7 consecutive days)

**Annual Park Entrance License** | \$36

**Second Annual Park Entrance License** | \$18 with coupon

**Transferable Park Entrance License** | \$80

**Camping Fees** | See page 27

**Motorcoach License** | \$3/person per visit (Valid only at Custer State Park.)

# VISITOR CENTERS

## CUSTER STATE PARK VISTOR CENTER

The Custer State Park Visitor Center explores an iconic species of the prairie, the bison. Open year-round, the visitor center is a great starting point for all of your adventures. Stop in and chat with the knowledgeable staff or take a break in the 100-seat theater and watch the 20-minute movie, "Spirit of Tatanka," narrated by Kevin Costner.



## CUSTER STATE PARK VISITOR CENTER

*The visitor center is located at the junction of Wildlife Loop Road and Highway 16A*

### Memorial Day - Labor Day

Open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

### Labor Day - September 30

Open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### October 1 - Memorial Day

Open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter

Closed

## BISON CENTER

*Located on Wildlife Loop Road.*

### Memorial Day – Labor Day

Open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

### Labor Day - September 30

Open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### October 1 – November 5

Open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### November 6 – Memorial Day

Closed

## PETER NORBECK OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER

*Located on Highway 16 near the State Game Lodge.*

### Memorial Day – September 30

Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### October 1 – Memorial Day

Closed

## WILDLIFE STATION VISITOR CENTER

*Located on Wildlife Loop Road.*

### Memorial Day – Labor Day

Open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

### Labor Day – September 30

Open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### October 1 – Memorial Day

Closed

## BADGER HOLE HISTORIC SITE

*Located 1/2 mile south of Highway 16A on Badger Clark Road.*

### Memorial Day – August 31

Open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### September 1 – Memorial Day

Closed



PETER NORBECK OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER



WILDLIFE STATION VISITOR CENTER



BADGER HOLE

# NEW IN CUSTER STATE PARK

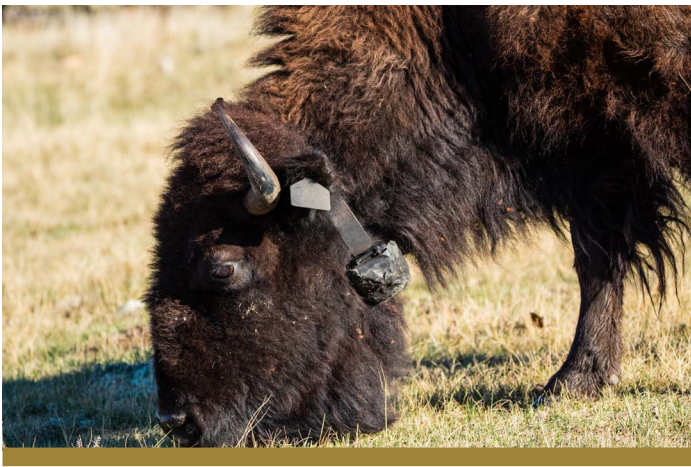


## GIFT SHOP

A gift shop located at the Custer State Park Bison Center will offer bison-inspired gifts and souvenirs to remember your experience with these majestic creatures. In addition to bison mementos, the shop will offer an assortment of snacks, drinks, and ice cream novelties.

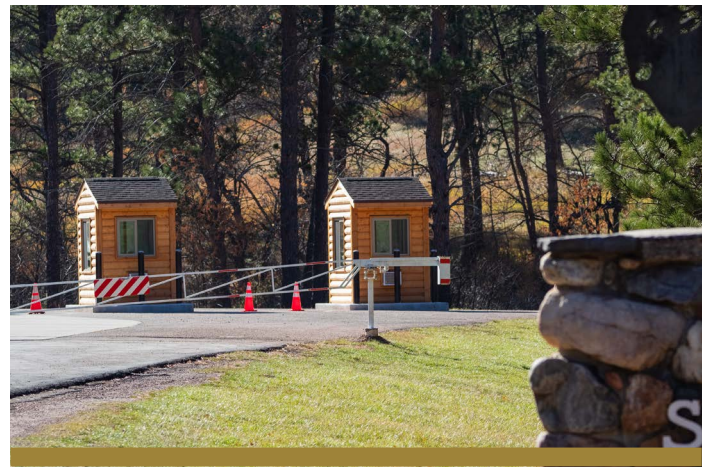
## BISON CENTER

In 2020, the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust awarded a \$4 million grant to the South Dakota Parks and Wildlife Foundation to construct the Custer State Park Bison Center. The Center will open May of 2022 and will focus on the tenured history of the bison herd at Custer State Park. The new center will educate visitors through dynamic interpretive displays and tell the origin story of the park's bison, herd management, and the annual Buffalo Roundup and Auction.



## BISON COLLARING

The park partnered with South Dakota State University on a project to study grazing behavior and movements of bison within Custer State Park. Twenty-five mature bison cows received radio collars to track their movements throughout the year. The radio collars will be retrieved next year, allowing the data to be downloaded and studied. We hope to gain a better understanding of how the herd utilizes areas in the park for grazing, so we can fine tune our management practices.



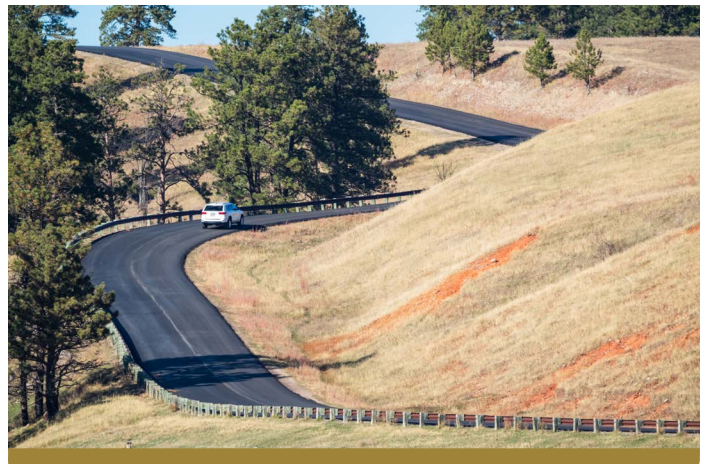
## EAST GATE BOOTHS

The park added three entrance booths at our East Gate entrance to cut down the wait time for visitors entering Custer State Park. Each booth will be manned in the summer months, allowing visitors to drive right up to the booth windows to purchase their park entrance license. With the additional booths, visitors can purchase their park entrance licenses quicker and more efficiently.



## SELF-SERVE KIOSKS

Park visitors can now use self-service Flobird Kiosks to purchase park entrance licenses. These kiosks are located at all five entrance stations as well as the visitor center. The new kiosks allow for an easy and seamless process for visitors entering the park.



## WILDLIFE LOOP ROAD RESURFACING

All 18 miles of the Wildlife Loop Road was resurfaced in the fall of 2021 giving visitors a smooth drive during their journey at Custer State Park. This was the first time since the road was originally paved in 1985 that the entirety of the road was repaved.

## CUSTER STATE PARK WILDLIFE

Custer State Park is one of the few places in the world where you are able to see an abundance of wildlife in their natural habitat. Visitors may encounter a variety of wildlife throughout the park's 71,000 acres, including along trails, in the campgrounds, and beside the road. Wildlife Loop Road is particularly known for its common sightings of buffalo, pronghorn, and prairie dogs, but keep an eye out for white-tailed and mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep, and a host of birds and smaller wildlife as well. For the best results, travel the loop during the early morning or later in the evening, when wildlife are most active.



### KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

When viewing wildlife, please remain in your vehicle or stay at least 100 yards from bison, elk, and other animals. Regardless of distance, if any wild animal changes its behavior due to your presence, you are too close. Please back away.

# WILDLIFE



# WILDLIFE



## ELK

Elk are the second largest member of the deer family with only moose larger. Mature bulls grow and shed heavy, wide antlers each year. They are shy and seldom seen during the daytime hours. They are best found in early morning or evening hours.

## COYOTES

Coyotes hunt in all habitats of Custer State Park. Their diet is varied, but consists mainly of small mammals.



## MOUNTAIN LIONS

Chiefly nocturnal and reclusive toward humans, mountain lions are found within the Black Hills and Custer State Park. These predators feed on several species, including deer, elk, rabbits, and wild turkeys.



## BIRDS

The park's diverse habitat makes for exciting bird watching. Visitors can find the mountain bluebird, white-winged junco, golden eagle, prairie falcon, and western tanager, to name but a few.



## BIGHORN SHEEP

A herd of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep was reintroduced to Custer State Park in 1922. Rams have thick, curled horns and ewes have smaller curved horns.

## HUNTING: A MANAGEMENT TOOL

Some animal species in the park are managed through hunting programs. Hunting helps reduce the size of populations, preventing overcrowding within the park. Control of numbers ensures an adequate supply of food for all species and prevents habitat loss and competition between species.

Most hunting seasons typically occur from mid-September through early January. Turkey hunting takes place in the spring from mid-April through mid-May each year.

The fees collected from hunting licenses generate revenue which help fund wildlife management programs.

Species managed through hunting in the park include bison, elk, deer, pronghorn, mountain lion, and turkey.

## MOUNTAIN GOATS

The mountain goat was not found in South Dakota until 1923, when it was introduced to the Black Hills. Today, they are found in the granite outcroppings and crags around Black Elk Peak, Needles, and Mount Rushmore areas. The all-white mammal feeds on grasses, ferns, moss, and lichen among other high-elevation plants. Both sexes have sharp, slender, black horns.



## BURROS

The burros in Custer State Park are not native to the Black Hills. They are descendants from the herd that once hauled visitors to the top of Black Elk Peak. The rides were discontinued years ago and the burros were released into the park.



## PRONGHORNS

Pronghorns, commonly referred to as antelope due to their similar appearance, live on the open grassland. The name pronghorn comes from the buck's large pronged horns. The horn sheaths are shed each year. The fastest land animal in North America, pronghorns can run 60 mph for great distances.

## PLEASE DON'T FEED US!

Feeding the park's wildlife is prohibited. In fact, feeding any wild animal can be dangerous to both you and the animal.



## PRAIRIE DOGS

The black-tailed prairie dog is found on the dry, upland prairie. It is a rodent that lives in large social groups called towns. Prairie dogs get their name from their bark-like call.



## WHITE-TAILED DEER

White-tailed deer live mainly in the timberlands. As its name implies, the white-tailed deer has white hair on the underside of its tail. When the animal runs, the tail is flipped up and looks like a waving white flag.



## MULE DEER

These deer are aptly named for their large ears. Their black-tipped tails, which are short and narrow, are carried down when the deer runs. Mule deer often bound with a stiff-legged gait as if bouncing on powerful springs when they flee.

# SCENIC DRIVES



# TAKE YOUR TIME

These winding drives are best enjoyed at a slower pace. When making plans, please allow ample time to travel at a safe speed – generally 25 miles per hour or slower.

*“You’re not supposed to drive here at 60 miles an hour. To do the scenery half justice, people should drive 20 or under; to do it full justice, they should get out and walk.”*

- PETER NORBECK

## NEEDLES HIGHWAY | 14 MILES

- » Expect travel time of about 45 to 60 minutes.
- » Closed in the winter.

The Needles Highway is more than a 14-mile road – it’s a spectacular drive through pine and spruce forests, meadows surrounded by birch and aspen, and rugged granite mountains. The road’s name comes from the needle-like granite formations which seem to pierce the horizon along the highway.

## IRON MOUNTAIN ROAD | 18 MILES

- » Expect travel time of about 45 to 60 minutes.

This winding road runs between Mount Rushmore National Memorial and the junction of US 16A and SD 36. Constructed in 1933, only a portion of this road lies within the park, but it is a must-see.

Along the highway, visitors will find wildfire exhibits, pigtail bridges, magnificent Black Hills scenery, and tunnels that frame Mount Rushmore.

## WILDLIFE LOOP ROAD | 18 MILES\*

- » Expect travel time of about 45 minutes.
- » Open year-round.

The 18-mile Wildlife Loop Road takes visitors through the open grasslands and pine-speckled hills that much of the park’s wildlife call home.

*\*from the Visitor Center to Blue Bell Entrance Station*

## PETER NORBECK SCENIC BYWAY

- » Expect travel time of about two to three hours.

The Peter Norbeck Scenic Byway complements the park’s three scenic drives and includes some of the most dramatic natural and historic features in the Black Hills.

Sites include the Needles, Mount Rushmore, and a bird’s eye view of the rocky peaks and forested hills of the Black Hills National Forest.

## TUNNEL INFORMATION

Tunnels are found on three highways in or near Custer State Park. Drivers of travel trailers, campers, recreational vehicles, and buses should be aware of the tunnel sizes. *Note: The following tunnel measurements are the most current.*

### Iron Mountain Road — US 16A N

Doane Robinson	12' 0" Wide	11' 4" High
C.C. Gideon	13' 0" Wide	11' 0" High
Scovel Johnson	10' 9" Wide	11' 0" High

### Sylvan Lake Road — SD 87/89, North of Sylvan Lake

Hood Tunnel	8' 9" Wide	9' 8" High
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### Needles Highway — SD 87 N

Needles Eye Tunnel	8' 0" Wide	9' 9" High
Iron Creek	8' 9" Wide	10' 10" High

# SPECIAL EVENTS



EVENTS ARE SUBJECT TO WEATHER. MORE INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT THE VISITOR CENTERS OR AT [CUSTERSTATEPARK.COM](http://CUSTERSTATEPARK.COM).

## JANUARY

January 1 | First Day Hikes

January 17 | Full Moon Hike Stockade Lake

## FEBRUARY

February 12 | Lovers Leap Snowshoe Hike

## MARCH

March 18 | Moon Hike

March 20 | Bluebird Box Workshop and Hike

## APRIL

April 10 | Stockade Lake Snowshoe Hike

## MAY

May 20-22 | State Park Open House/Free Fishing Weekend

## JUNE

June 4 | National Trails Day

## STURGIS MOTORCYCLE RALLY

AUGUST 5-14, 2022

Every August, thousands of motorcyclists visit the Black Hills during the annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. Below are the next several years' rally dates, so you can either join 'em or avoid 'em.

August 4-13, 2023

August 2-11, 2024

August 1-10, 2025

## SEPTEMBER

September 29-October 1 | 29th Annual Governor's Roundup Up Arts Festival

September 30 | 57th Annual Governor's Buffalo Roundup

## OCTOBER

October 21-22 | Halloween Night Hike

## NOVEMBER

November 5 | 57th Annual Fall Classic Bison Auction

November 25 – January 2 | 7th Annual Festival of Trees

# PARK PROGRAMS



Custer State Park has a variety of programs available year round. The park offers programs such as water sports, fishing, hiking, or outdoor skills. Our Junior Naturalist program will engage younger visitors in outdoor learning. Programming is free and open to all ages.

## INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

Weekly interpretive programs are provided at Custer State Park visitor centers and education center. Current schedules are posted in the campgrounds or can be picked up at any of the visitor centers.

Come join us at any of these great programs and explore the park.

# BUFFALO ROUNDUP

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

The park began to gather the herd back in the 1960s when the decision was made to eradicate the disease brucellosis from the herd. The herd was certified brucellosis free in 1965 allowing the sale of live animals. Since that time, the roundup has been used in conjunction with the fall sale as a way to manage the size of the herd and to provide an opportunity to brand and vaccinate the calves.

“Studies show that during normal moisture years, the park’s grassland can support about 1,400 head of bison,” explains Chad Kremer, herd manager for Custer State Park. “That number fluctuates depending on rainfall and the available rangeland forage.”

The buffalo are on their own to forage. The park does not supplement their food supply.

“We inventory the range conditions each year and that determines the number of buffalo we sell at the fall auction in November,” says Kremer. “We need to keep the buffalo numbers compatible with available forage, and that is why you may see varying numbers for the size of our herd. This year we have about 1,400 buffalo in the herd, and we are looking at slowly increasing the herd over time.”

Kremer points out that for Custer State Park, the Buffalo Roundup is a management tool to prepare for the annual buffalo sale. But he says, “It is an event that is open to the public, and we are happy to share it with the thousands of guests who come to experience something out of the old west.”

“It truly is a magnificent sight to see—buffalo rumbling across the plains driven by cowboys and cowgirls on horseback. It takes you back to days gone by and lets the spectators catch a glimpse of old west history,” adds Kremer.

### ARTS FESTIVAL

#### SEPT 29 - OCT 1, 2022

Enjoy three days of continuous music, entertainment, and food, along with over 100 arts and craft booths near the State Game Lodge on Highway 16A. Visit with artisans and crafters from across the Midwest as they exhibit and sell their wares.

### BUFFALO ROUNDUP

#### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2022

- » The roundup takes place near the corrals on Wildlife Loop Road.
- » Two viewing areas are set aside for spectators — the north and south viewing areas.
- » Parking begins at 6:15 a.m., please plan to arrive early.
- » The Buffalo Roundup will begin at 9:30 a.m. Guests must stay in the viewing areas until the herd is safely in the corrals (usually around noon). Testing, branding, and sorting will begin 30 minutes after the Roundup is complete and will go until all animals have been run through the corral system.
- » Reservations are not required.
- » Food concessions available on site.
- » Free park entrance Friday, Sept. 30.



# BUFFALO ROUNDUP



## OPEN YEAR-ROUND

Beat the winter blues and escape to the park! During the months of January, February and March the park offers a variety of programming from ice fishing, to winter survival, to guest speakers, and even live music.

Winter is a great time to explore the park; the season brings a quiet serenity to the place and there are fewer visitors to share it with. During the months of January, February, and March, the park takes guests on a series of guided hikes. If there is enough snow, guests can experience snowshoeing throughout the park free of charge; however a park entrance license is required.

» Snowshoes are available for check out from January to March. Stop by the visitor center to get fitted and learn about which trails are best suited for snowshoe hiking.

During the month of December the visitor center takes on a holiday feel with the Festival of Trees. Local businesses and community partners decorate trees which are on display and visitors can vote for their favorite.

## WINTER TRAIL CHALLENGE

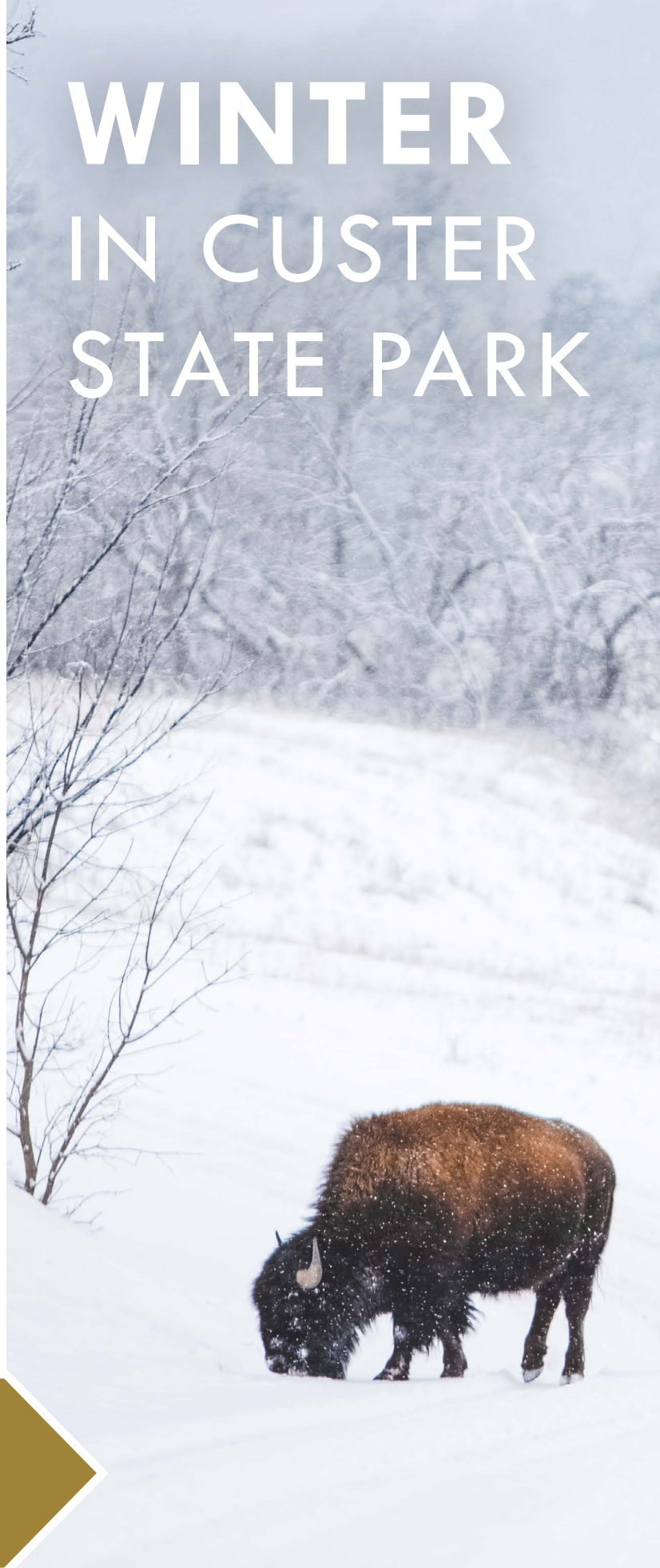
Get out and explore Custer State Park in the winter with the Winter Trail Challenge. The winter trail challenge will run from Thanksgiving until the spring. At one point along each trail there will be a 2022 Winter Trail Challenge Selfie Sign. To complete the Trail Challenge, participants must hike all the listed trails and collect a selfie at each Winter Trail Challenge Sign.

Each year the trails and the challenges change, so make sure to stop at the visitor center and pick up the official flyer, so you know how to complete the Custer State Park Winter Trail Challenge.

## WINTER ROADS

Note some roads may be closed during the winter. Please check SD 511 for the most up-to-date road information.

# WINTER IN CUSTER STATE PARK





## SWIMMING

Swimming is allowed at the park's five lakes: Center Lake, Legion Lake, Stockade Lake, Sylvan Lake, and the Game Lodge Pond.

There are no lifeguards on duty. Jumping from cliffs and rocks into the water is illegal and strictly prohibited. Pets and glass containers are prohibited from all zoned swimming beaches.

## BOATING

For your safety, wear a personal flotation device (PFD), or life jacket, whenever you are on the water. PFDs are mandatory for all people riding in a boat on South Dakota waters.

Boating is permitted within Custer State Park with the following restrictions:

- » Sylvan Lake, *Electric motors only*
- » Legion Lake, *Electric motors only*
- » Stockade Lake, *All boats allowed*
- » Center Lake, *Only slow, non-wake boating allowed*

## FISHING

Fishing is allowed anywhere in Custer State Park. A valid South Dakota fishing license is required and can be purchased online at [gfp.sd.gov](http://gfp.sd.gov).

Anglers will find rainbow, brown, and brook trout in the park's waters. Only one trout can exceed 14 inches, but there is no minimum size restriction. Daily limit is 5.

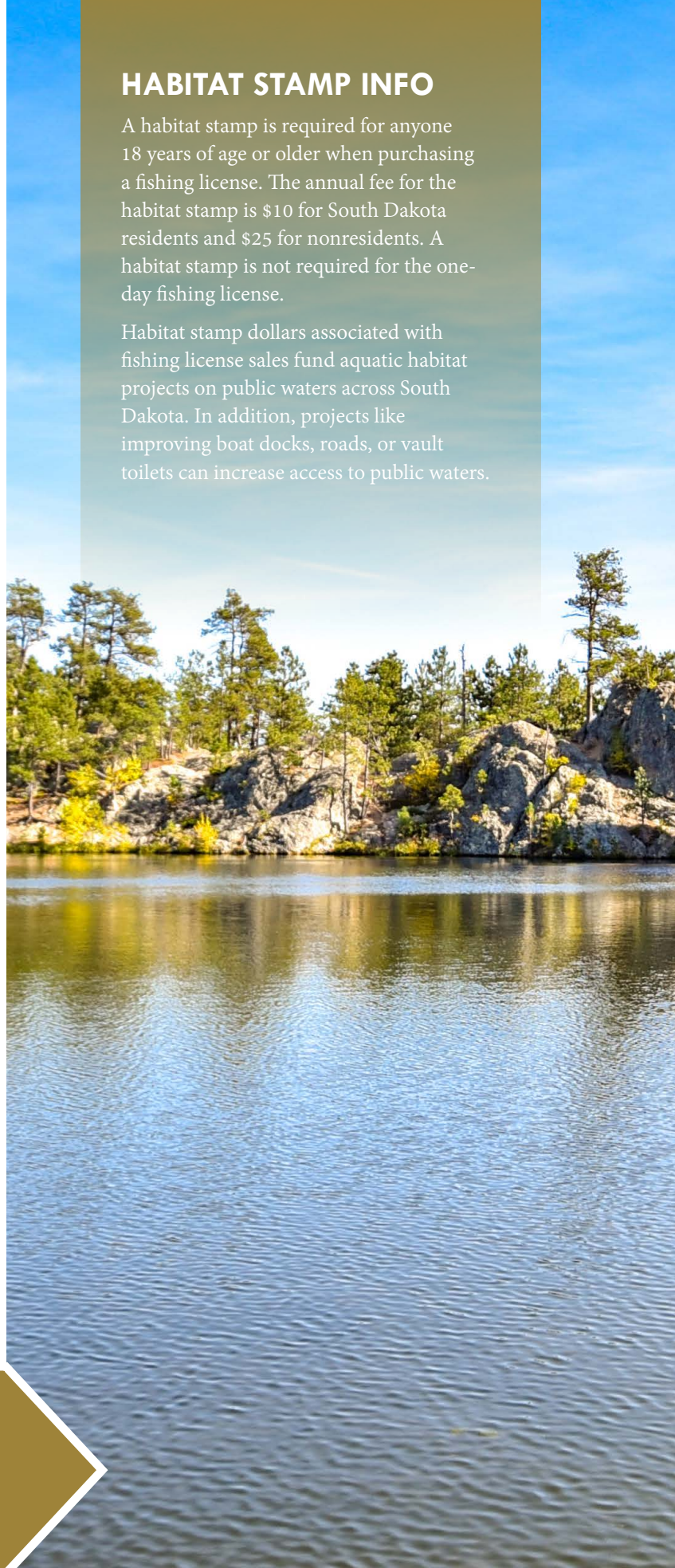
It is legal to use artificial lures, flies, worms, or other bait. A variety of sport and panfish are found in Stockade Lake including northern pike, bass, perch, crappie, bluegill, and bullhead.

Licenses, bait, and tackle are available at each of the four resort areas. For daily limits and rules, please refer to the *2022 Fishing Handbook*, available at the visitor centers and the park office. The handbook is also available online at [gfp.sd.gov](http://gfp.sd.gov) and on our mobile app, Go Outdoors South Dakota.

## HABITAT STAMP INFO

A habitat stamp is required for anyone 18 years of age or older when purchasing a fishing license. The annual fee for the habitat stamp is \$10 for South Dakota residents and \$25 for nonresidents. A habitat stamp is not required for the one-day fishing license.

Habitat stamp dollars associated with fishing license sales fund aquatic habitat projects on public waters across South Dakota. In addition, projects like improving boat docks, roads, or vault toilets can increase access to public waters.



## FISHING LICENSE FEES

LICENSE	RESIDENT	NON-RESIDENT
One-Day	\$8	\$16
Three-day	N/A	\$37
Annual	\$28	\$67

# LAKES AND STREAMS



## TRAIL RATINGS

**EASY** | The trail mainly follows level ground with very little elevation change.

**MODERATE** | Parts of the trail include more inclines, hills or elevations changes. May have more technical terrain such as rocky or root-covered trail, loose gravel on inclines, or narrow paths.

**STRENUOUS** | Much of the trail includes very steep slopes and rocky areas. May include; a long, steady climb; many steps or stairs; and roots, slippery rocks or other difficult terrain

### BADGER CLARK TRAIL

*1.2 mile loop (1.6 km) | Moderate*

**Trailhead location:** Park at Badger Hole parking lot, trail starts right of the cabin.

*Located behind the historic Badger Hole, this trail winds through a mixed pine and hardwood forest and along rocky hillsides.*

### BARNES CANYON TRAIL

*4.7 miles one way (4.8 km) | Moderate*

**Trailhead location:** Wildlife Loop Road | Turn on the airport road on the north end of the loop road. A second trailhead is located on the Badger Hole Road.

### BLACK ELK PEAK TRAIL #4

*3.25 miles one way (5.2 km) | Strenuous  
More up and down hill than #9*

**Trailhead location:** South of Sylvan Lake on Needles Highway (87), shares Little Devils Tower trailhead.

### BLACK ELK PEAK TRAIL #9

*3.3 miles one way (4.8 km) | Strenuous*

**Trailhead location:** Park at Sylvan Lake Day Use Area and walk east.

### CAIRN TRAIL

*0.3 miles one way (1.6 km) | Easy - Moderate*

**Trailhead location:** South end of the Peter Norbeck Outdoor Education Center parking lot.

# HIKING TRAILS

### CATHEDRAL SPIRES TRAIL

*1.5 miles one way (2.4 km) | Moderate to strenuous*

**Trailhead location:** South of Sylvan Lake on Needles Highway (87) along the north side of the road. Can also be accessed by hiking Black Elk Peak Trail #4. There is a sign indicating the branch for Cathedral Spires.

### CENTENNIAL TRAIL

Reference trail specific brochure.

### CREEKSIDE TRAIL

*3 miles on way (4.8 km) | Easy*

**Trailhead location:** Can be accessed at multiple points from visitor center to Grace Coolidge Campground.

### FRENCH CREEK NATURAL AREA

*12 miles one way (19 km) | Moderate to strenuous | No marked path on over 7 miles of the trail, hikers walk around/through brush and cross the creek several times.*

**Trailhead location:** East | South of the airport on Wildlife Loop Road. West | Inside Horse Camp

### GRACE COOLIDGE WALK-IN AREA

*3 miles one way (4.8 km) | Moderate*

**Trailhead location:** South | At Grace Coolidge Walk-in area across Highway 16A from Grace Coolidge Campground.

North | Across from shower house at Center Lake.

*Trail has 15 creek crossings with no bridges, which may be difficult. Hikers will get wet. There is poison ivy along the trail. The lowhead dams provide excellent fishing.*

### LEGION LAKESHORE TRAIL

*Less than 1 mile (1.6 km) | Easy*

**Trailhead location:** At west end of fishing dock parking lot.

### LITTLE DEVILS TOWER

*1.5 miles one way (2.4 km) | Strenuous  
Last half mile is a steep rocky incline with large granite boulders you will need to scramble over.*

**Trailhead location:** Less than one mile south of Sylvan Lake General Store on Needles Highway (87), clearly visible from the road.

### LOVERS LEAP TRAIL

*4 mile loop (6.4 km) | Moderate to strenuous | Mostly uphill to start with some rocky hills*

**Trailhead location:** Behind School House Facilities building directly across from Peter Norbeck Outdoor Education Center, next to the resort wedding pavilion.

### LOST TRAILS

*3.5 miles | Moderate to strenuous*

**Trailhead location:** Two trailheads, one at the south end of the Center Lake beach parking area. The other, at the Center Lake boat dock.

### PRAIRIE TRAIL

*3 mile loop (4.8 km) | Moderate  
One steep hill at halfway point*

**Trailhead location:** On Wildlife Loop Road south of prairie dog towns, toilet at trailhead.

### STOCKADE LAKE TRAIL

*1.5 mile loop (2.4 km) | Moderate  
Includes a short rocky incline for the first half*

**Trailhead location:** Across from swim beach on Stockade Lake Drive.

### SUNDAY GULCH

*3.2 mile loop (4.8 km) | Strenuous*

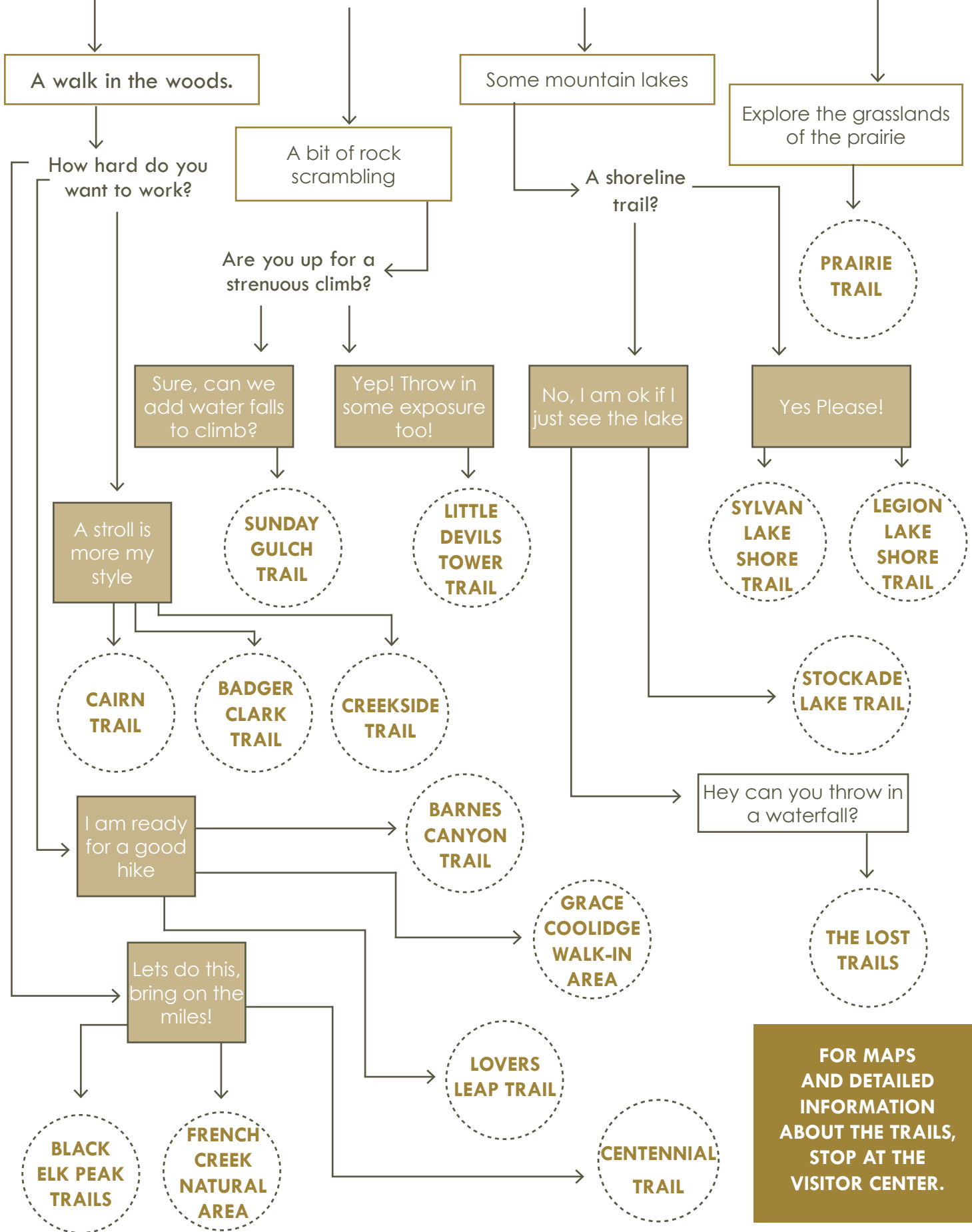
**Trailhead location:** Follow Sylvan Lakeshore Trail, trailhead is behind the dam.

### SYLVAN LAKESHORE TRAIL

*1 mile loop (1.6 km) | Easy to Moderate*

**Trailhead location:** Can be accessed from any portion of Sylvan Lake.

# WHAT DO YOU WANT ON YOUR HIKE?



**FOR MAPS AND DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE TRAILS, STOP AT THE VISITOR CENTER.**

# CAMPING



**CAMPING RESERVATIONS: CAMPSD.COM | 1.800.710.2267**

## CAMPING RESERVATIONS

### Reservations required

Campsites and group areas can be reserved one year in advance.

Camping cabin reservations can also be made a year in advance, but must be made at least two days prior to your arrival. Call the park office at 605.255.4515 to check on availability for last minute trips.

### Fees

There is a non-refundable reservation fee of \$7.70 for non-residents.

A \$2 fee is assessed to all phone reservations.

Camping fees for the entire stay must be paid at the time the reservation is made.

A Park Entrance License is not included in camping reservation fees and must be purchased separately.

### Cancellations

If you cancel your reservation, you will be charged one night's camping fee for each campsite reserved or \$25 per camping cabin.

Because of its unique use, French Creek Horse Camp cancellation policy is:

- » *30 or more days before arrival:* you will be charged one night's fee for each campsite reserved.
- » *29 - 14 days prior to arrival:* one-half of your entire camping fee.
- » *Less than 14 days prior to arrival:* non-refundable.

## SAME DAY RESERVATIONS

### Center Lake Campground

- » All open sites can be reserved beginning at 6 a.m. MT each day.
- » Checkout time is noon MT.
- » Campers occupying a "same day reservation" site must call before 6 a.m. MT to extend their stay.
- » Campers are required to occupy their site by 10 p.m. MT on the night of their arrival. If they fail to do so, they are charged a cancellation fee and forfeit the remainder of their reservation.

## CAMPING

Camping is permitted only in designated areas. One camping unit permitted per site. A camping unit is any one hard-sided camper and/or one or more tents, if all occupants meet the definition of family (parents or grandparents and their minor children) or do not exceed six people.

### Checkout

Checkout time for campsites is noon and 11 a.m. for camping cabins.

## PRIMITIVE CAMPING

For a primitive outdoor experience, backpackers should try the French Creek Natural Area. Hikers using this area can camp anywhere along the canyon bottom. Open fires are prohibited. Campers must self-register at the stations located on each end of the natural area. The fee is \$7 per person, per night.

## CAMPING CABINS

### Locations

Blue Bell, Game Lodge, Stockade South, French Creek Horse Camp

### About cabins

- » Sleep four to five people.
- » Linens are not included.
- » Check-in time is 4 p.m.
- » Checkout time is 11 a.m.
- » No smoking or cooking in the cabins.
- » Pets, except for service animals, are not permitted in cabins.

### Amenities

- » Heating and air conditioning
- » Electricity
- » Picnic table
- » Fire ring
- » Porch
- » Bunk bed and double bed
- » Table
- » Benches

## GROUP CAMPING

Group campgrounds are located near Stockade Lake and the Game Lodge Campground. These areas feature picnic shelters, vault toilets, fire grates, picnic tables, and water on site. Showers and flush toilets are available within walking distance from the campgrounds. Evening programs are located nearby on most nights during the summer. Designated swim beaches can also be found close by. Call 1.800.710.2267 for reservations. Reservations are not available online.

## NON-PROFIT YOUTH CAMPING AREAS

The park offers two primitive areas (Shady Rest and Center Lake) for non-profit youth tent camping only. Call 1.800.710.2267 for reservations. Reservations are not available online.

CAMPGROUNDS	Number of sites	Tent only site, no electricity	Campsite, no electricity	Campsite w/electricity	Camping cabins*	Camping cabin fee	Showers	Flush toilets	Vault toilets	RV dump station	Large trailer sties	Handicap access	Laundromat	Concessions	Fuel	Evening program	Hiking trail	Fishing dock	Boating (motorized)	Swimming	Fishing	Playground	Resrvable sites*	Accessible sites
Blue Bell*	31	\$15		\$30	23	\$55	●	●	●		●	●	✓	✓	✓	●					✓		30	1
Center Lake+	71	\$15	\$19				●		●		●					●	●		●	●	●	●	71	
Game Lodge*	57	\$15	\$26	\$30	11	\$55	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓	✓	✓	●	✓			●	●	●	55	2
Grace Coolidge*	27	\$15		\$30			●	●			●	●		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	●		26	1
Legion Lake*	22			\$30			●	●			●	●		✓			●	✓		✓	✓	✓	21	1
Stockade Lake North*	42		\$26	\$30			●	●	●		●	●				●	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	●	40	
Stockade Lake South*	25	\$15		\$30	13	\$55	●	●	●		●					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	23	
Sylvan Lake*	39	\$15		\$30			●	●	●			●	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓		36	
French Creek Horse Camp*	29			\$40	3	\$55	●	●	●		●	●					●				●		26	
SPECIALIZED CAMPING AREAS																								
French Creek Natural Area	\$7/person																●				●		0	
Calvin Coolidge Group Area**	\$7/person, minimum \$140						✓	✓	●	✓	●		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	●	✓	all	
Stockade Group Area**	\$7/person, minimum \$140						✓	✓	●							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	●	✓	all	
Non-profit Youth Areas**	\$0.50/person, minimum \$6								●															

\* Reservations available at campsd.com or by calling 1.800.710.2267. \*\* Reservations only available by calling 1.800.710.2267. ● Within the campground  
 ✓ Available within two miles + Same day reservation, see above. Camping fees subject to sales tax.

# LODGING, ACTIVITIES AND RESTAURANTS



## STATE GAME LODGE

### LODGING | 888.875.0001

All resort accommodations feature climate controlled rooms, private bath(s), flat-screen TVs, refrigerator, microwave, coffee pot, and hair dryer. Some cabins feature kitchenettes or full kitchens.

- » **Historic Lodge Rooms** – The seven original rooms occupied by Presidents Coolidge and Eisenhower and their staff.
- » **State Game Lodge Hotel Rooms** - Located steps away from the historic Dining Room. Exterior hallways and large windows for wildlife watching.
- » **Creekside Lodge Rooms** - Thirty Junior Suites with a private lobby and Front Desk.
- » **Cabins** - Single-family cabins, 2-bedroom/2-bath cabins, and group cabins with kitchens.

### HISTORIC STATE GAME LODGE DINING ROOM | 605.255.4541

Be part of the grand ambiance that harkens back to the state dinners of the 1927 Summer White House. Enjoy the view from the historic front porch.

Open daily all season long for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Dinner reservations recommended but not required.

### BUFFALO SAFARI TOUR | 605.255.4388

Details on page 36.

BUFFALO SAFARI TOUR



SHOPPING | 605.255.4541

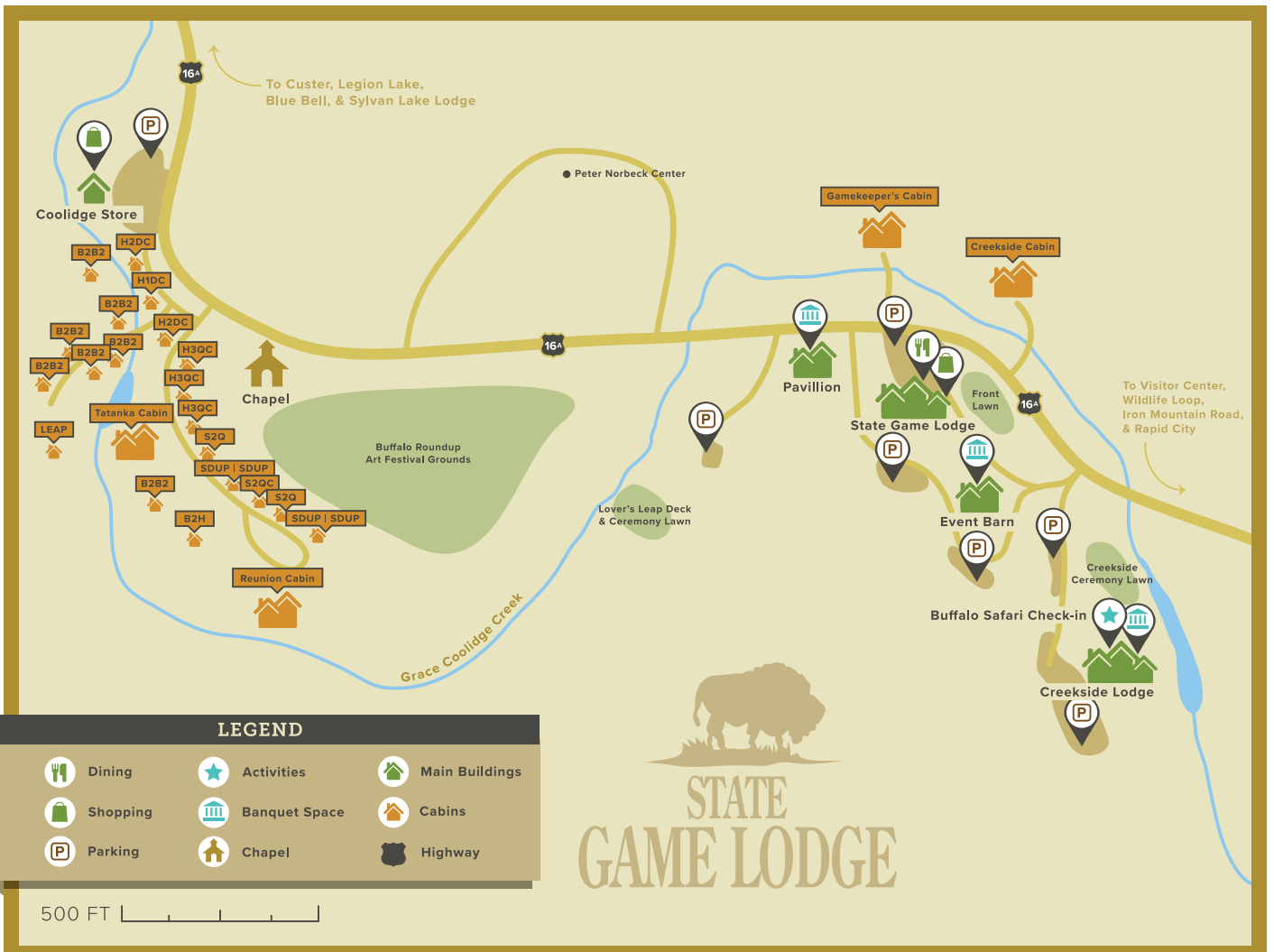
Small Gift Shop in the State Game Lodge with Artist-in-Residence

Coolidge General Store (walking distance)

Located a half-mile west of the State Game Lodge. Here you can see a buffalo up close and personal, but don't worry it's safe—it is stuffed! From convenience items to grab-and-go eats to a wide assortment of gift and souvenirs to take home to remember your visit, you will find it here. Be sure to check out the 2022 Buffalo Roundup collection, offered all season long. And don't forget to get your soft serve ice cream treat to enjoy any time of the day!

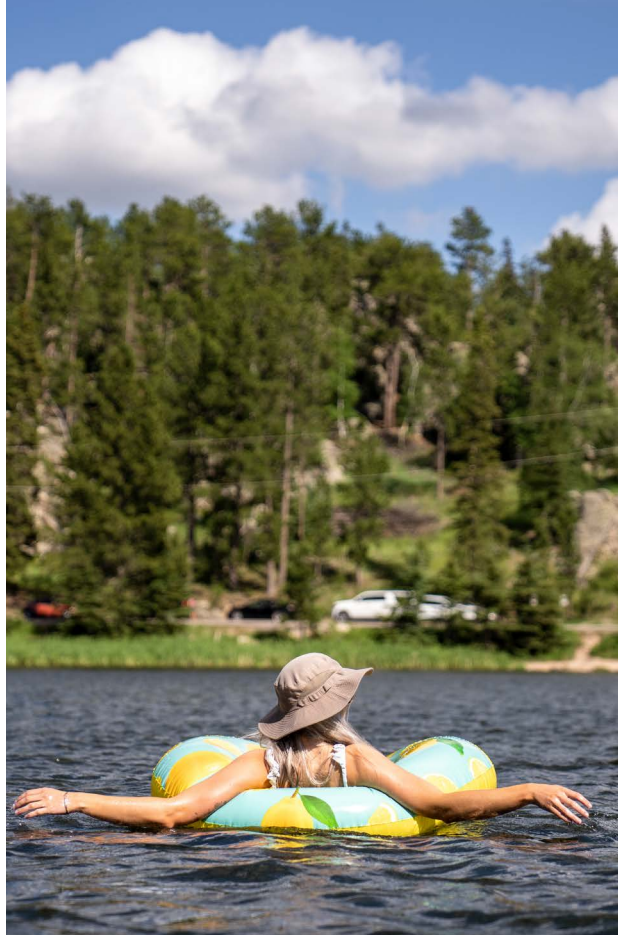
Offerings:

- » Souvenir and gifts
- » Convenience items
- » Grab and go sandwiches and pizza
- » Soft serve ice cream
- » Ice
- » Fishing gear: license, bait, tackle
- » Firewood



# LODGING, ACTIVITIES AND RESTAURANTS





# SYLVAN LAKE LODGE

## LODGING | 888.875.0001

All resort accommodations feature climate controlled rooms, private bath(s), flat-screen TVs, refrigerator, microwave, coffee pot, and hair dryer. Some cabins feature kitchenettes or full kitchens.

- » **Sylvan Lodge Hotel Rooms** - Located steps away from the Dining Room and Lounge.
- » **Cabins** - Single-family cabins, 2-bedroom/2-bath cabins, and one group cabin.

## RESTAURANT, VERANDA AND GREAT ROOM LOUNGE | 605.574.2561

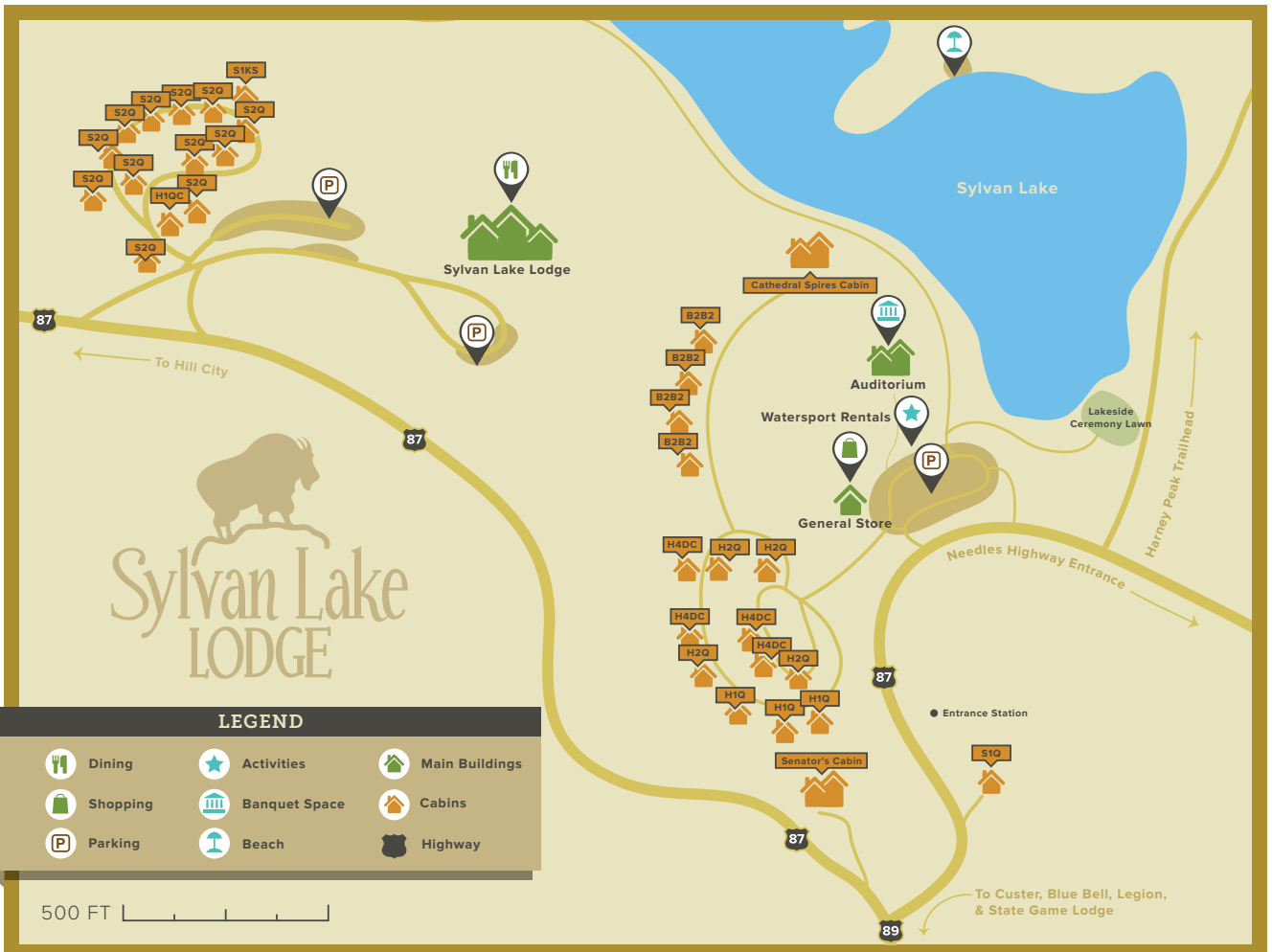
Enjoy meals made from fresh, locally sourced ingredients while surrounded by natural beauty at Sylvan Lake Lodge

Open daily all season long for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

## SHOPPING AND WATERCRAFT RENTALS | 605.574.2561

General store and gift shop by the lake; Artist-in-Residence in the lodge

Rental details on page 37.



# LODGING, ACTIVITIES AND RESTAURANTS



TRAIL RIDE





# BLUE BELL LODGE

**LODGING | 888.875.0001**

All resort cabins feature climate controlled rooms, private bath(s), flat-screen TVs, refrigerator, microwave, coffee pot, and hair dryer. Some cabins feature kitchenettes or full kitchens.

» **Cabins** - Single-family cabins, log cabins with wood-burning fireplaces, and one group cabin.

## SALOON-STYLE RESTAURANT, LOUNGE, AND PATIO | 605.255.4531

Enjoy saddle stools at the bar! Specialty burgers, South Dakota dip, salads, and buffalo.

Open daily all season long for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

## SHOPPING | 605.255.5431

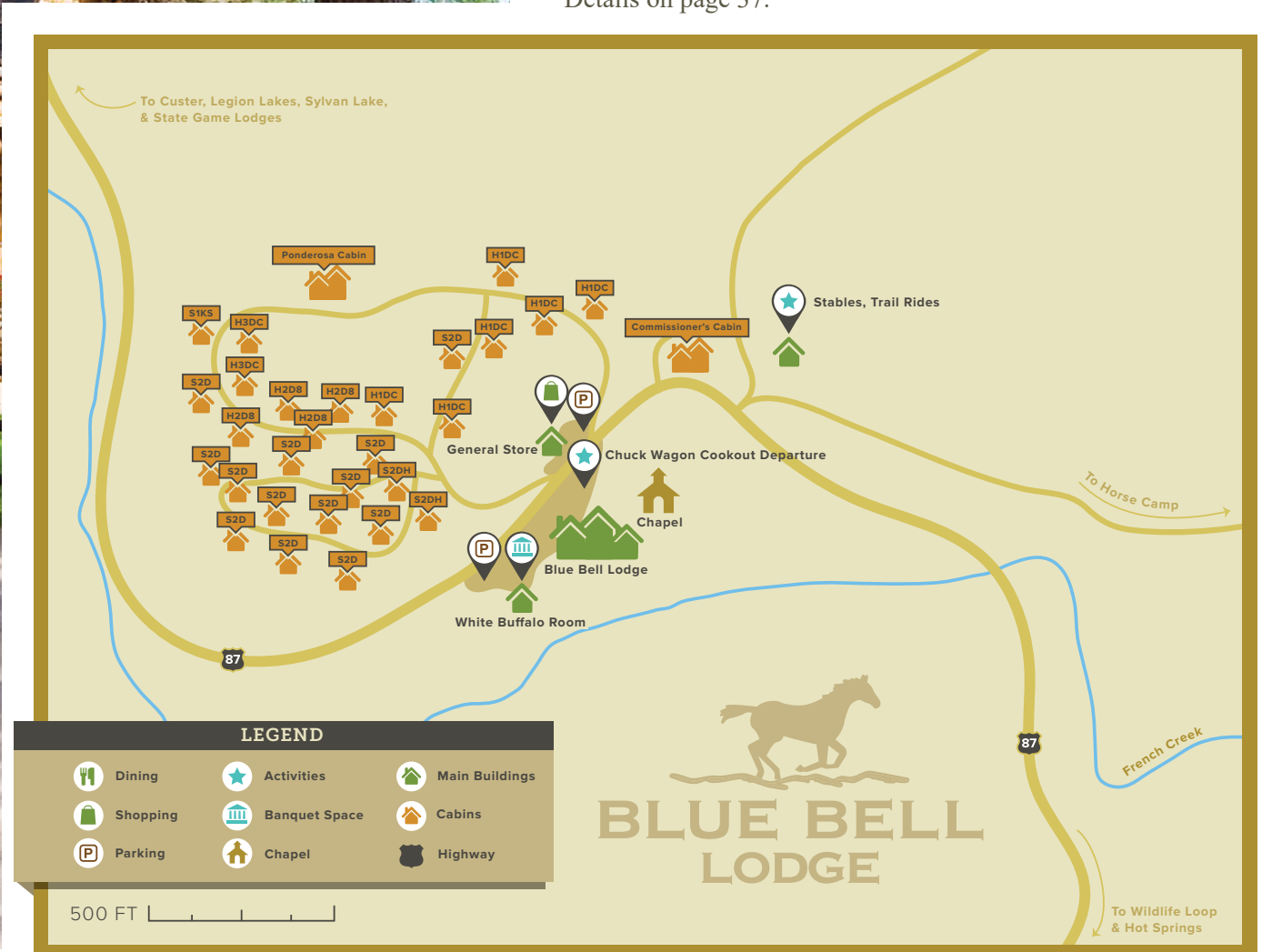
General store with gasoline

## CHUCKWAGON COOKOUTS | 605.255.4531

Details on page 36.

## TRAIL RIDES | 605.255.4700

Details on page 37.



# LODGING, ACTIVITIES AND RESTAURANTS





# LEGION LAKE LODGE

**LODGING | 888.875.0001**

All resort cabins feature climate controlled rooms, private bath(s), flat-screen TVs, refrigerator, microwave, coffee pot, and hair dryer. Some cabins feature kitchenettes or full kitchens.

» **Cabins** - Single-family cabins near the swimming beach and playground. One-mile hike around the lake.

**DOCKSIDE GRILL | 605.255.4521**

Delight in a day at the water's edge. Small plates, salads, sandwiches, and all-day favorites. Tap beer and specialty coffee. Open daily all season long for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

**SHOPPING AND WATERCRAFT RENTALS**  
**605.255.4521**

Rental details on page 37.



# ACTIVITIES



## HAYRIDE CHUCK WAGON COOKOUT AND WILDLIFE TOUR

### Blue Bell Lodge

- » Reservations required by 2 p.m. | 605.255.4531
- » Arrive at Blue Bell Lodge by 4:30 p.m.
- » Departure at 5 p.m.
- » Arrive back around 8 p.m.

A vehicle-drawn hay wagon takes you on a 45-minute tour before stopping in a mountain meadow canyon for a chuck wagon feast. Sing-along country/folk music entertains everyone throughout the evening. A souvenir cowboy hat and bandanna for each paying guest.

### Chuck Wagon Cookout Menu

- » An 8 oz. choice sirloin steak or a 1/3 lb. hamburger entrée (vegetarian option available)
- » Cowboy beans
- » Cornbread
- » Potato salad / coleslaw
- » Watermelon
- » Cookies
- » Coffee and lemonade

**Adults** | \$58

**Children (11 and under)** | \$51

**Children 3 years and under** | Free (if child sits on a parent's lap on the ride and eats from a parent's plate).

## BUFFALO SAFARI JEEP TOUR

### State Game Lodge

- » Reservations Required with 72-hour advance payment and guarantee. No refunds. | 605.255.4541
- » 1.5 to 2 Hour Tours
- » Departing 6 a.m. thru 6 p.m. from Creekside Lodge

Driver/guide takes you where only they are permitted - off-road - to provide historical and educational information about the park and wildlife on this scenic tour of the backcountry. Named "Top 10 Safaris in the US" by MSN.

**Adults** | \$60

**Children (11 and under)** | \$50

## BUFFALO SAFARI JEEP TOUR AND COOKOUT

### State Game Lodge

- » Reservations required by 2 p.m. | 605.255.4541
- » Departs at 4 p.m. each night from Creekside Lodge

Jeep Safari takes you on a 1.5-hour tour followed by the Chuckwagon Cookout at Blue Bell Lodge. Jeeps bring you back to the Game Lodge after the cookout.

**Adults** | \$93

**Children (11 and under)** | \$86

**Children 3 years and under** | Free

## NEEDLES HIGHWAY SUNRISE JEEP TOUR

### State Game Lodge

- » Reservations Required | 605.255.4541
- » 1.5 to 2-hour Tours
- » Departs at 6 a.m. only

Driver/guide takes you on a peaceful cruise up Needles Highway and back.

Adults | \$60

Children (11 and under) | \$50

## HORSEBACK TRAIL RIDING

### Blue Bell Lodge Stables

- » Reservations Recommended | 605.255.4700
- » Arrive 30 minutes prior to scheduled trail ride to complete the required insurance-related paperwork.
- » Children must ride alone and meet minimum safety requirements.

### 1-hour trail ride

Adults | \$50

### 2-hour trail ride

Adults | \$90

### Half-day ride with lunch

\$190 per person

### Full-day ride with lunch

\$275 per person

## BOAT AND WATER SPORT RENTALS

Legion Lake Lodge | 605.255.4521

Sylvan Lake Lodge | 605.574.2561

- » All persons under 18 years of age must have an adult sign for rental with adult supervision while in the water.
- » Life jackets are furnished and required to be worn.

### Capacities

- » Paddleboards | 1 person
- » Canoes and kayaks | 1-3 people

Half-hour | \$14 per person

Family rate | \$50

4-6 people for 1 hour/1 boat

1-hour | \$24 per person





# BLACK HILLS PLAYHOUSE

Black Hills Playhouse is located at 24834 S Playhouse Road in Custer State Park. A park entrance license is required.

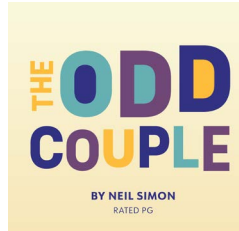
## THE MOUNTAINTOP | JUNE 3 – 12



It's April 3, 1968, in Memphis. Dr. Martin Luther King has just given his legendary "I've Been To The Mountaintop" sermon and has retired to room 306 of the Lorraine Motel. He couldn't know that the maid who delivered his room service would bring

him to a deeper understanding of the movement he helped create, and what his legacy would inspire. Rated R

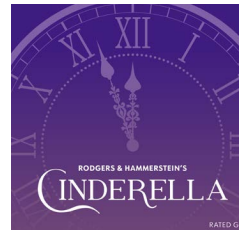
## THE ODD COUPLE | JUNE 18 – JULY 3



A centerpiece of American comedies, our production of *The Odd Couple* will take on a whole new dimension! Beloved BHP actors Dan Workman and Jeff Kingsbury will alternate as Felix and Oscar at different performances. You won't want to

miss a single guffaw when these two mismatched, recently divorced "bachelors" move in together to save on expenses. Rated PG

## CINDERELLA | JULY 13 – 31



Poor Ella. When her wicked step mother and her two less-than-desirable step sisters leave her at home while they attend the Prince's Ball, she seems destined to live her life among the cinders. But her fairy godmother has other plans. She transforms the

young waif into a ravishing beauty. But the magic wears off at midnight. Hardly enough time to fall in love. Or, is it? Rated G

## SOMETHING ROTTEN! | AUG 10 – 20



Set in the '90s – the 1590s – this hilarious smash tells the story of Nick and Nigel Bottom, two brothers who are desperate to write their own hit play while the "rock star" Shakespeare keeps getting the limelight. When a local soothsayer foretells that the future

of theatre involves singing, dancing, and acting at the same time, Nick and Nigel set out to write the world's very first MUSICAL! Rated PG-13

### TICKET PRICES

ADULTS | \$41  
 SENIOR/MILITARY | \$34  
 STUDENT (COLLEGE AGE) | \$28  
 KIDS (16 AND YOUNGER) | \$18

### PERFORMANCE TIMES

WEDNESDAY - SATURDAY | 7:30 P.M.

TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, AND SUNDAY  
 2 P.M. MATINEE

Visitors advised to arrive 1/2 hour before curtain, reservations recommended.

For tickets, call 605.255.4141 or purchase online at [blackhillspayhouse.com](http://blackhillspayhouse.com).

# BLACK HILLS PLAYHOUSE 2022

## \$3 OFF

THEATRE PERFORMANCE  
 Present this coupon for discount or use online with code CSP22. Discount offers may not be combined.

# AREA STATE PARKS



Your Custer State Park entrance license is valid at all South Dakota State Parks including Angostura Recreation Area near Hot Springs, Bear Butte State Park near Sturgis, and Rocky Point Recreation Area near Belle Fourche. An additional trail pass is required for the George S. Mickelson Trail. There is no fee for Spearfish Canyon Nature Area.

## ANGOSTURA RECREATION AREA

*Located 10 miles southeast of Hot Springs, off US 18/385  
605.745.6996*

Angostura Reservoir is a water-lover's haven in the southern Black Hills. With plenty of room for boating, fishing, swimming and camping, this recreation area attracts visitors to its clear waters and natural sand beaches.

## BEAR BUTTE STATE PARK

*Located 6 miles northeast of Sturgis off SD 79  
605.347.5240*

Mato Paha or "Bear Mountain" is the Lakota name given to this site. The mountain is sacred to many American Indian tribes. A rugged two-mile hike to the summit rewards visitors with a view of four states.

## ROCKY POINT RECREATION AREA

*Located 8 miles east of Belle Fourche off SD 212  
605.641.0023*

A popular fishing and boating park, Rocky Point Recreation Area is located on the 8,000-acre Belle Fourche Reservoir.

## GEORGE S. MICKELSON TRAIL

*Runs 109 miles from Edgemont to Deadwood  
605.584.3896*

**Additional pass required.**

The George S. Mickelson Trail runs through the heart of the Black Hills. The trail's gentle slopes and easy access enables people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the scenery.

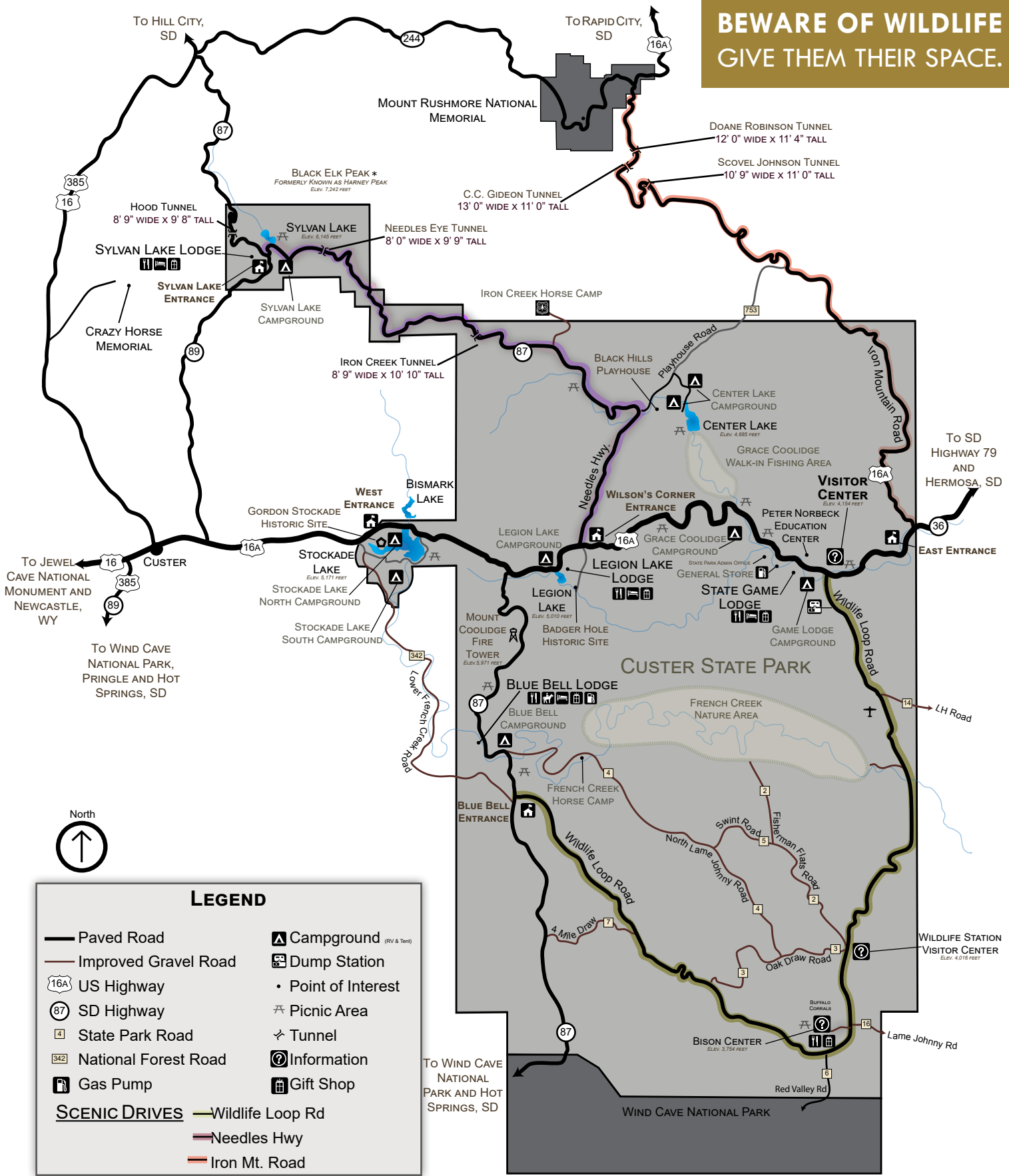
## SPEARFISH CANYON NATURE AREA

*Located 1 mile west from the Scenic Byway at Savoy on FDR 222 in Spearfish Canyon  
605.584.3896*

Spearfish Canyon Nature Area is considered one of the most beautiful locations in the Black Hills. The water feeding Roughlock Falls flows into Spearfish Canyon from Little Spearfish Creek.

# CUSTER STATE PARK

**BEWARE OF WILDLIFE  
GIVE THEM THEIR SPACE.**



## LEGEND

- Paved Road
  - Improved Gravel Road
  - 16A US Highway
  - 87 SD Highway
  - 4 State Park Road
  - 342 National Forest Road
  - Gas Pump
  - Campground (RV & Tent)
  - Dump Station
  - Point of Interest
  - Picnic Area
  - Tunnel
  - Information
  - Gift Shop
- SCENIC DRIVES**
- Wildlife Loop Rd
  - Needles Hwy
  - Iron Mt. Road