

Buffalo Gap National Grasslands National Grasslands Visitor Center

National Forest Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture



South Dakota



Things to See & Do

Popular activities at the National Grasslands Visitor Center

- Watch "America's National Grasslands" DVD in the theater.
- The entire family can participate in the Jr. Ranger and Families program free of charge.
- Several books, posters, and other items are available for visitors. Some require payment while a wide variety of instructional brochures are free to the public.
- *StoryWalk* is a reading adventure that travels along Badlands Wall. Signs are posted along the walk with pages from a book.

Can we see National Grasslands? What can we do there?

The Wall Ranger District of the Buffalo Gap National Grassland is in the Wall – Badlands area. This National Grassland surrounds Badlands National Park and Minuteman Missile National Historic Site. There is much shared between these three areas.

- Camping
- Hunting and fishing
- Rock hounding
- Hiking, biking or horseback riding cross-country or on the two trails; Prairie Path and Saddle Pass Horse Trail. Prairie Path is located south of I-90 Exit 116. Park near the MIMI missile silo. The path is marked with wooded posts.
- Mountain bike anywhere on the two-track roads, Prairie Path.
- Motorized travel is permitted on designated roads and trails. Cross-country or off-road motorized travel is prohibited. Pick up a free map at the National Grasslands Visitor Center.

Pick up one of several check lists to guide your visit, including:

- Prairie plants - there are over 250 grass species in North America.
- Grass and forbs check list, featuring 45 grass species commonly found on the mixed grass prairie of Buffalo Gap National Grassland.
- Bird watching
- Other wildlife; wildlife of interest on the Buffalo Gap National Grasslands are black-footed ferrets, black-tailed prairie dogs, burrowing owls, swift fox, and numerous raptors.

Directions

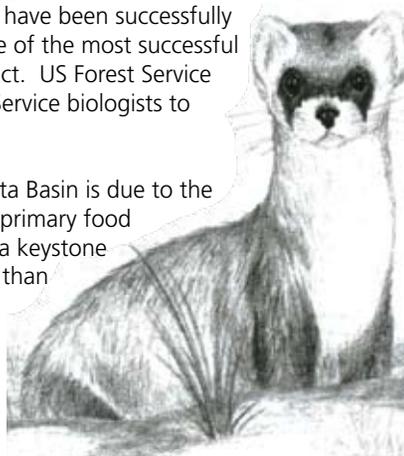
How do I get to the National Grasslands Visitor Center and the Wall Ranger Station?

The National Grasslands Visitor Center and Wall Ranger Station are located in Wall, SD. Traveling on Interstate 90 in South Dakota, take exit 110 and follow the signs, turn left on South Boulevard, and right on Main Street. We are located at 708 Main Street.

Black-footed Ferret

Black-footed ferrets, one of the original animals placed on the endangered species list in 1967, remains one of North America's most endangered mammals. Once thought to be extinct, black-footed ferrets were rediscovered and have been successfully reintroduced across the Great Plains, including one of the most successful sites in the Conata Basin on the Wall Ranger District. US Forest Service biologists work hand-in-hand with National Park Service biologists to save these animals.

Black-footed ferret reintroduction success in Conata Basin is due to the area's large black-tailed prairie dog colonies, their primary food source. The black-tailed prairie dog is considered a keystone species along with black-footed ferrets, and more than 130 other wildlife species rely on their ecosystem. Their extensive networks of tunnels provide homes to burrowing owls, prairie rattlesnakes, and numerous other species. Other predators that rely on prairie dogs as a critical food source include the ferruginous hawks, swift fox, and golden eagles.



US Forest Service Photo

Become a Junior Ranger!

Become a National Grassland Junior Ranger! Pick up your Junior Ranger booklet at the front desk of the National Grassland Visitor Center and complete it while exploring our exhibit room full of hands on materials! Kids ages 5 and up are encouraged to become a Junior Ranger year round. When you complete your booklet, you will receive a National Grassland pin and a bag full of goodies to help you learn and explore some more! For those under 5 years, come spend time in our kids' coloring corner!



US Forest Service Photo



US Forest Service Photo

Service First

Different Agencies, Different Missions, Different Activities Allowed

Don't be surprised if you see an NPS ranger at the visitor center in Wall, or a Forest Service ranger at the Ben Reifel Visitor Center in Badlands. This is a unique opportunity for the National Park Service and the US Forest Service to provide better information for our visitors. Service First is an agreement between these agencies to acknowledge work already being accomplished together, to expand abilities to deliver a broader 'on-the-ground' program of work, and to staff the respective visitor centers with Forest Service and Park Service professionals.

The missions of the two agencies are quite different. The mission of the US Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The mission of the National Park Service is to preserve unimpaired the natural and cultural resources of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. We are building a better team to better serve the public.

Contact Information

Mailing Address
National Grasslands Visitor Center
708 Main Street / PO Box 425
Wall, SD 57790

Website
www.fs.usda.gov/nebraska

Visitor Center Phone Number
605-279-2125

Fax Number
605-279-2725

Hours of Operation

Winter hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday through Friday

Summer Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sunday through Saturday