

The Bureau of Land Management cares for nearly 60,000 acres of public land in North Dakota and some 274,000 acres in South Dakota. These public lands are concentrated in the western portions of both states.

As elsewhere across the West, BLM lands in the Dakotas support a myriad of uses including recreation. BLM lands are often noted for providing recreation opportunities such as hunting, fishing, camping, hiking or wildlife watching in an undeveloped setting, and certainly those opportunities exist here. But there are also some special recreation areas highlighted in this brochure.

As the accompanying maps indicate, BLM lands are often intermingled with state, private or other federal lands. It's up to you to know where you are and to be aware of any special rules that may be applicable. Always respect private landowner rights, and ask permission before entering private land whether or not it is posted.

Cross-country travel by motorized, wheeled vehicles is prohibited on BLM lands year-round unless otherwise noted. Please stay on existing travel routes. By restricting travel to established roads, we can better protect riparian areas, wetlands, crucial wildlife habitat, threatened or endangered species, soils and vegetation, and aquatic resources. User conflicts are also reduced.

Wildfire danger may necessitate specific restrictions from time to time.

You can check with the nearest BLM office for access information and other advice for having a safe outing.

Fort Meade Recreation Area and Back Country Byway



The BLM manages about 6,700 acres of the original Fort Meade Military Reservation just east of Sturgis and South Dakota's famous Black Hills. Established in the 1870s to protect settlers in the region between Fort Laramie (Wyoming) and existing forts in Montana, Fort Meade has been the home of nearly every cavalry regiment in the U.S. Army. Soldiers trained at Fort Meade served in the Spanish American War, the Pancho Villa Incursion, and World Wars I and II.

Fort Meade was closed as a military post in 1944 and jurisdiction was transferred to the Veterans Administration. Ten years later, the VA transferred more than 2,000 acres of the old Fort Meade Post to the Department of the Interior, and by 1960 a total of 6,700 acres had been transferred to BLM administration.

The area accommodates grazing, forestry, wildlife and a variety of recreational uses. Approx-

mately a third of the area is on the National Register of Historic Places. Most of the numerous historic sites are remnants of early cavalry life at the fort, and many are still in good condition making for a great outing of sightseeing and exploring, the most popular activities here.

Camping and picnic facilities within the recreation area include 22 family picnic units, three group picnic units, six tent camping sites, a six-unit campground for horseback riders, toilets and water. Camping is only allowed in established campgrounds and incurs a fee. The area also contains two fishing reservoirs. Fires are allowed in fire pits or grates, but open fires are prohibited throughout the remainder of the recreation area.

The Fort Meade Back Country Byway transects the area. A brochure available from BLM's South Dakota Field Office will lead you on a self-guided tour along the Byway beginning at the Black Hills National Cemetery interchange (exit 34) on Interstate 90 about three miles southeast of Sturgis.

The Byway winds its way through the recreation area passing pine-covered hills, grass-covered prairies and steep, rocky ledges for about five miles before reaching the old Fort Meade cavalry post. Deer, turkeys and song birds are common sights along the way. The historic sites and the museum at Fort Meade give the visitor a fascinating insight to frontier military life.

The Byway itself is a two-lane improved gravel surface that is suitable for any normal touring car. From the north, the Byway intersects Highway 34 just east of Sturgis.



George S. Mickelson Trail

South Dakota's George S. Mickelson Trail runs 109 miles from Edgemont to Deadwood on the abandoned Burlington Northern railway bed. The trail runs through the heart of the Black Hills and crosses more than 100 converted railroad bridges and four rock tunnels.

The trail is open for hiking, biking and horseback riding. Motorized vehicles are not allowed except for a section of the trail between Dumont and Deadwood that is open to snowmobiles. All trail users 12 and older need a trail pass. The passes can be purchased for a nominal fee at any of the 14 trailheads along the way.

The trail surface is primarily crushed limestone and gravel, and

with few exceptions, grades do not exceed four percent. The surface is more suited to wider, mountain bike type tires than to thinner road tires. The trail makes a gradual climb into jagged cliffs and pine forests and reaches an elevation of 6,100 feet near Dumont. The 19-mile stretch between Dumont and Deadwood is the longest grade on the trail. Riders and hikers alike are treated to spectacular vistas and pristine pastoral settings. The overall trail rating is easy to moderate, and the trail is open from dawn to dusk.

There are no phones directly on the trail, but pay phones can be found in the towns along the trail. Don't depend on getting cell phone service along the trail.

The risk of wildfire is high. Consequently, no open campfires are allowed along the trail. Likewise, neither smoking nor the discharge

of firearms or fireworks is allowed.

There are a few areas with shelters, toilets and drinking water on the trail, but for the most part, these are widely spaced. Camping is not allowed on the trail right-of-way or at the trailheads, and there are no other opportunities for lodging along the trail. Parking is available at trailheads, but you may have to travel some distance toward civilization to find other facilities such as toilets or drinking water. Also keep in mind that the distance between trailheads varies from less than one to more than 16 miles. Plan ahead and come prepared.

Call (605) 773-3391 for more information. You can download a complete mile-by-mile trail guide and map at www.MickelsonTrail.com.

Schnell Recreation Area

Beginning in the late 1800s, the 2,000 acres covered by the Schnell Recreation Area was a working cattle ranch. It was operated by the Schnell family for 80 years of its history. This area is an oasis of native prairie and wooded draws that is set aside for non-motorized recreation, wildlife habitat and environmental education.



Historically, the Sioux and Hidatsa were two of the American Indian tribes that relied on this area for hunting. Later, General George Armstrong Custer and his 7th Cavalry passed this way. Custer and his troops camped in the area three times between 1873 and 1876. Beginning in the late 1870s, stagecoaches running mail between Bismarck and Fort Keogh made regular stops in the area.

This area contains native prairie and riparian plant communities, rangelands and wetlands, and hardwood draws where centuries-old bur oaks still thrive. These diverse habitats result in a thriving wildlife community. More than 100 species of birds are found in this part of North Dakota, and it's not uncommon to see them at the Schnell Recreation Area. Ducks, ring-necked pheasants, sharp-tailed grouse and turkey are common sights. Bluebirds, warblers, finches and other migratory birds are also plentiful. White-tailed and mule deer, porcupine,

rabbit, raccoon and squirrels also call the area home.

The area includes six large campsites complete with picnic tables, fire rings, grills, potable water and toilets. A daily fee is charged for this camping area. Tent camping is also allowed throughout most of the area. A separate picnic area adjoins a pond that is an ideal spot for watching song birds and waterfowl.

There is a 1.5 mile interpretive nature trail that begins near the area's entrance kiosk. It includes some rough ground, obstacles and bridged crossings. In the spring and early summer, ticks can be an issue. Hiking boots, drinking water and insect repellent are recommended for hikers. If your interests lean toward prairie flora and fauna, you can take a self-guided tour.

Another 1.5 mile trail leads to a parking lot on the eastern edge of the property and around Slater Pond. The pond is stocked with fish when annual runoff is sufficient. If you prefer a less structured outing, you are welcome to hike cross-country. This area is also well-suited for horseback riding, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, nature study and photography.

The area has a pack-in, pack-out policy regarding paper, beverage containers and other trash, so please come prepared to leave the area clean and litter free for the enjoyment of others.

To get there, from I-94 take Richardton exit #84, drive 3/4 mile north to Highway 10, turn right and head east for 1-1/4 miles, turn left and go north for 1 mile, continue as the road curves to the right and travel east for 1 mile to the parking area.



Centennial Trail

From north to south, South Dakota's 111 mile Centennial Trail stretches from Bear Butte State Park northwest of Sturgis to Wind Cave National Park near Hot Springs. Along the way it crosses BLM's Fort Meade Recreation Area, Custer State Park, the Black Hills National Forest and the Black Elk Wilderness Area.

The Centennial Trail was established in 1989 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of South Dakota's statehood. The trail crosses prairie grasslands, passes near seven lakes, skirts Mount Rushmore, and climbs through South Dakota's famed Black Hills. Along the way, you will see evidence of the area's complex geology, and there's a good chance you'll get to see some of the region's animal residents. Popular species include antelope, bighorn sheep, mule and white-tailed deer, elk, turkey and mountain goats. Trout inhabit many of the streams the trail crosses.

Detailed maps of the trail can be purchased at BLM, Forest Service, National Park Service and South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks offices that are in the vicinity of the trail. There are different requirements (including permit requirements) and use restrictions for different

segments of the trail, so it's a good idea to acquaint yourself with the rules of the trail before heading out.

There are numerous trailheads along the way so it is possible to travel the trail for just a couple of hours or for a week or more. Some of the trailheads are equipped to handle recreational vehicle camping, while others are only for day use. Some areas are set up for horse camping. Water and restrooms are available in some areas while other areas along the trail are primitive. With proper planning, the Centennial Trail can provide an outstanding adventure.

Open campfires are not permitted anywhere along the trail. Fires are only allowed in a spark-proof incinerator, an enclosed stove or an established fireplace approved or constructed by public agencies in designated recreation areas. Many of the established campgrounds include campfire grates for visitor use. Please be careful with all fires.

You can help keep the trail clear of trash by packing out all litter. When camping, use minimum impact techniques. If you're on a portion of the trail where motorized vehicles are allowed, tread lightly. When meeting others on the trail, allow plenty of room to pass, especially for riders on horses.

Use, Share and Appreciate

- Public lands are your lands. Please treat them accordingly.
- Use common sense.
- Pack out what you pack in.
- Leave the area as undisturbed as possible.
- Do not collect or excavate any archaeological artifacts.
- Leave all gates as you found them. Abide by all signs and posted areas.

- Always keep safety in mind.
- Enjoy your time on public lands. Take only pictures and leave only your footprints behind.

Tread Lightly

Travel only where permitted

Respect the rights of others

Educate yourself

Avoid streams, meadows, wildlife, and other sensitive living things

Drive and travel

responsibly

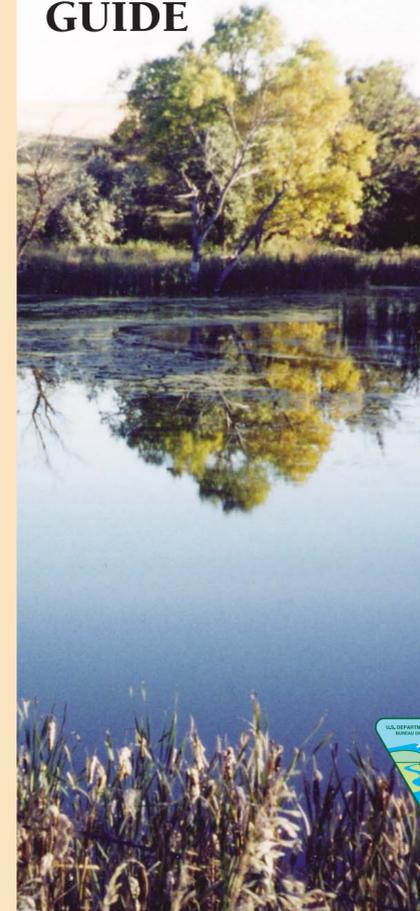
Contacts

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NORTH DAKOTA/ SOUTH DAKOTA RECREATION GUIDE



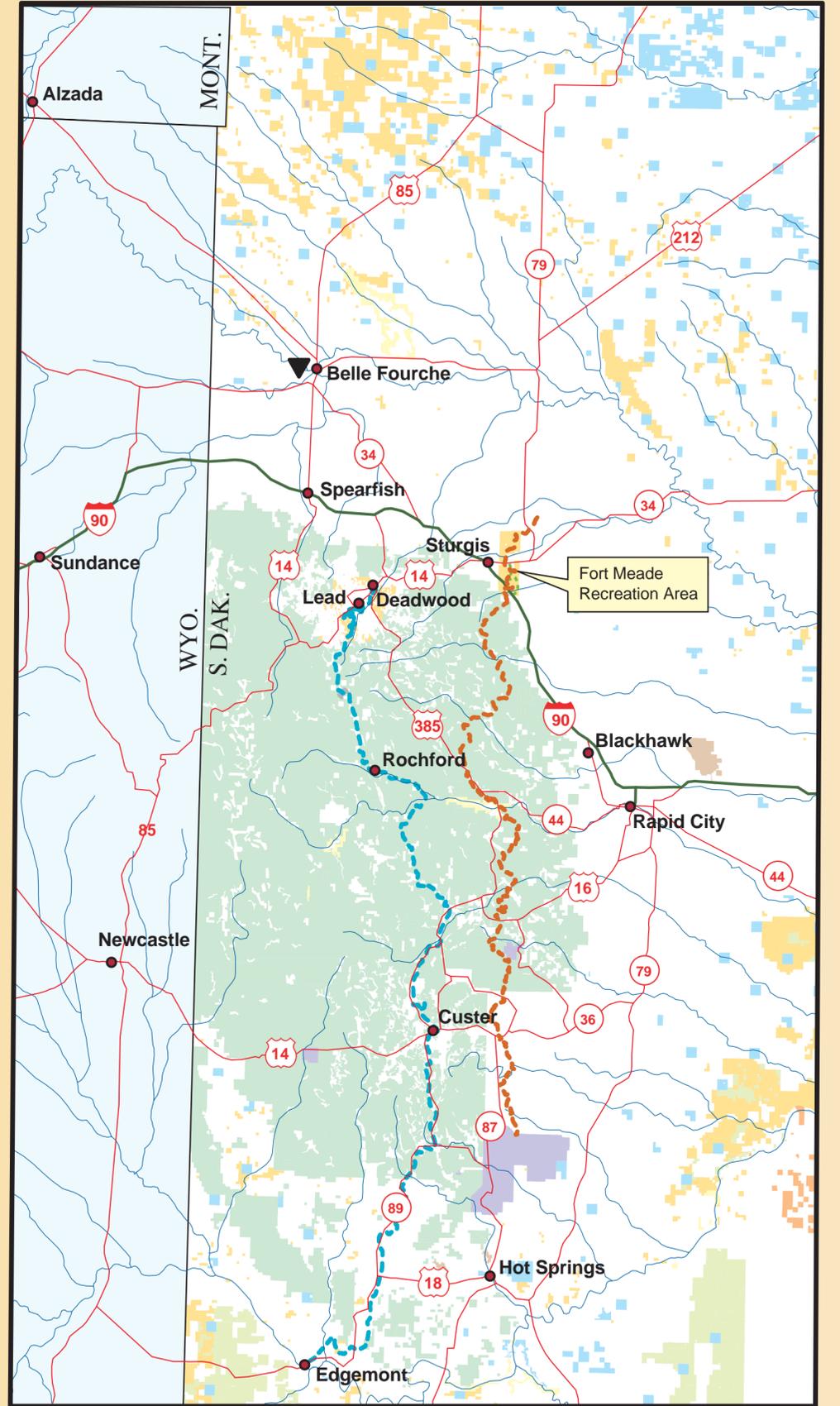
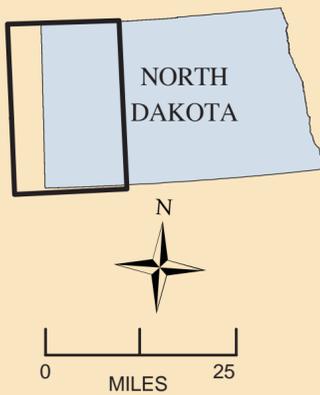
BLM

Montana State Office





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| State | Schnell Recreation Area |
| Bureau of Land Management | Lewis & Clark Trail |
| Forest Service | City, Town |
| Bureau of Reclamation | Interstate Highway |
| National Park Service | U.S. Highway |
| U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service | State Highway |
| Indian Reservation | BLM Field Office |
| National Grasslands | |
| Private | |



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|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
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| National Grasslands | BLM Field Office |
| Other Federal | |
| Private | |

