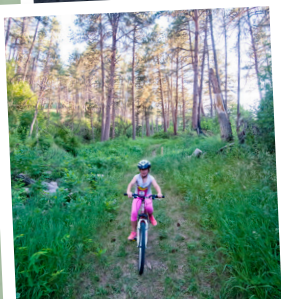


NORTHWEST NEBRASKA

RECREATIONAL TRAILS GUIDE



A GUIDE TO OVER 30 TRAILS
EQUESTRIAN • HIKING • BIKING

WELCOME TO

Northwest Nebraska



Northwest Nebraska is a haven for outdoor adventurers. Contained within the 180,000 plus acres of public land in Dawes and Sioux County are nearly 200 miles of trails that feature a variety of terrain. They weave among incredible scenery sculpted by time, including pine forests, coldwater streams, grasslands, badlands, and the Pine Ridge escarpment, directly south of the Black Hills of South Dakota. All of this variety results in something for everyone.

Nebraska's Pine Ridge escarpment is the focal point of attractions in northwest Nebraska. It extends over 100 miles across the northern portions of Dawes, Sioux and Sheridan counties. The Pine Ridge also extends into South Dakota's Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and, to a lesser degree, the north side of Wyoming's Niobrara River watershed. The formation is characterized by several hundred square miles of forests, meadows, steep buttes, small canyons,

minor peaks and numerous streams. The altitude ranges from about 3,000 feet in Sheridan County to over 5,200 feet in Sioux County, providing excellent conditions for ponderosa pine, ash and cottonwood trees in the forest, and even occasional groves of aspen. There is an abundance of wildlife in the area, with large numbers of wild turkeys, mule and white-tailed deer. There are also elk, bighorn sheep, pronghorn, coyotes, foxes, raccoons, porcupines, occasional mountain lions, sharp-tailed grouse, ducks, wild geese, and pheasants.

Outside the Pine Ridge, there are other areas that provide great trekking. For the purposes of this guide, we've included public lands and trails in Dawes and Sioux counties. With such diverse terrain, we have included a wide range of trails, from easy to difficult. It's up to you to decide which of the many routes described would fit your level of adventure.



History

While northwest Nebraska provides great hiking, biking and equestrian trails, it also has places of significant historical interest. A fur trading post was established on Bordeaux Creek in 1839, not far from the present-day location of Chadron. That post continued in operation until 1872 and has been restored as part of The Museum of the Fur Trade.

Farther west, the landmark Crow Butte was the sight of a legendary battle between the Crow and Sioux tribes in 1849. Fort Robinson was established in 1874, and is where the famous Sioux chief Crazy Horse was killed in 1877. Two years later, Cheyenne chief Dull Knife led the famous Cheyenne Breakout. The Buffalo Soldiers of the U.S. Cavalry made Fort Robinson their home from 1885 until 1898. For more northwest Nebraska history visit: discovernwnebraska.com.

Getting There

The region is situated at the junction of two highways that have been designated Nebraska Scenic Byways. U.S. Highway 20, known as the Bridges to Buttes Byway, is the primary east-west route, while U.S. Highway 385, the Gold Rush Byway, carries travelers north and south. Other blacktop serving the region includes U.S. Highway 2, Nebraska 71, Nebraska 29 and Nebraska 87.



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The numbered orange shapes correspond to the complex locations pictured on the area overview map on pages 5-6.

How to use our maps

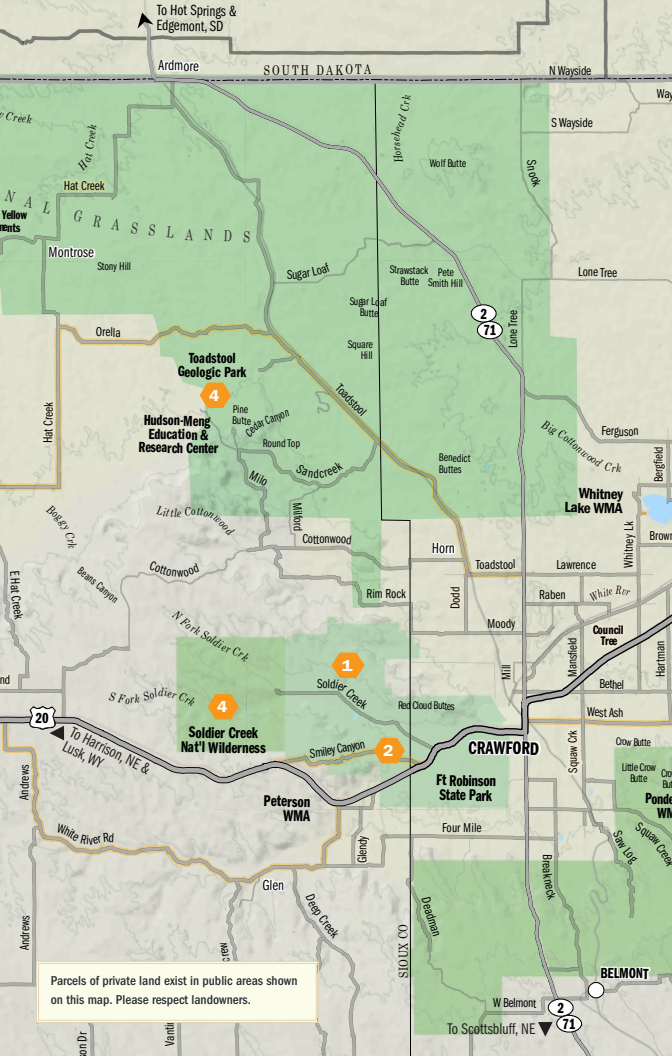
Within these pages, you will find some of our favorite trails conveniently organized by region. There are countless other trails, many connecting with these designated routes, which provide ample opportunity for adventure.

Near the maps, each designated route has information for elevation and distance. Circular arrows show the corresponding direction for trails that contain loops.

The levels of difficulty are derived from a formula for hiking, which considers the trail's length and total elevation gain. Of course, the level may differ for other activities, such

as horseback riding and mountain biking. Note that cases in which more than one level of difficulty is listed, it's considered to be harder to hike it one direction than the other. The direction which begins where the number is on the map is listed first.

This book provides outstanding guidance for getting people into the field, but some may prefer more detail. We recommend pairing the guide with a GPS, or smartphone apps, such as Avenza and OnX. KML files for each of the routes, which may be used in Google Earth and other programs, may be found at our website, nwnebraskatrails.com.



To Hot Springs & Edgemont, SD

Ardmore

SOUTH DAKOTA

N Wayside

S Wayside

Yellow
Mountains

Hat Creek

Montrose

Stony Hill

Orella

Toadstool
Geologic Park

Hudson-Meng
Education &
Research Center

Pine Butte
Cedar Canyon

Round Top

Milo

Sandcreek

Little Cottonwood

Cottonwood

Cottonwood

N Fork Soldier Crk

S Fork Soldier Crk

Soldier Creek
Nat'l Wilderness

Soldier Creek

Smiley Canyon

Peterson
WMA

SIoux CO

Glen

Deep Creek

Glendy

Ft Robinson
State Park

Four Mile

Horn

Dodd

Moody

Mill

Raben

White Ror

Council
Tree

Bethel

West Ash

Squaw Crk

Crow Butte

Little Crow
Butte

Pond

Saw Log

Squaw Creek

Deedman

Breakneck

W Belmont

To Scottsbluff, NE

CRAWFORD

BELMONT

Parcels of private land exist in public areas shown on this map. Please respect landowners.



- 1 Fort Robinson State Park - North
- 2 Fort Robinson State Park - South
- 3 Chadron State Park
- 4 Soldier Creek Wilderness and Toadstool Geologic Park
- 5 Nebraska National Forest - the Cliffs
- 6 Nebraska National Forest - Spotted Tail
- 7 Nebraska National Forest - West
- 8 Mari Sandoz Heritage Trail Chadron State College

Northwest Nebraska

Public Lands

Northwest Nebraska is sublime for both its amount and variety of public land, each acre accentuated by alluring topography. The region boasts two state parks, numerous tracts of national forest and grasslands, a national recreation area, a national wilderness and more than a half-dozen state wildlife management areas. Each of these lands are managed with distinct goals in mind for the users, so we encourage visitors to

be mindful of their intent and any special regulations.

With such a variety of lands, Northwest Nebraska is the perfect setting for camping, hiking, horseback riding, biking, hunting and fishing – or just wishing to catch a breath of fresh air in the great outdoors.

Pine Ridge Trail

The Pine Ridge Trail stretches from the Spotted Tail Trailhead on the Nebraska National Forest, through Chadron State Park to West Ash Creek. The trail totals approximately 38 miles. The eastern portion from Spotted Tail to Chadron State Park is suitable for mountain bikers, but steep climbs and sandy soils make the western portion ideal for hikers and equestrians. See Spotted Tail, Chadron State Park, Coffee Mill and Roberts Trailhead for access points.

Pine Ridge Wildlife Management Areas

Northwest Nebraska is home to a diverse array of flora and fauna and its public lands provide outstanding opportunities to experience nature.

The Pine Ridge region consists of many Wildlife Management Areas managed by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to provide outdoor recreational





and educational opportunities while protecting, enhancing and sustaining diverse wildlife, fish and plant resources. The lands were purchased with funds derived from hunters and anglers to serve as public resources for pursuing game and fish. Another management goal is to provide the public with an opportunity to experience wildlife and their habitats within a natural outdoor environment.

There are no maintained or signed recreational trails on the Pine Ridge WMAs, except for a portion of the Pine Ridge Trail crossing the far western edge of Chadron Creek Ranch WMA. Please be respectful of these management goals if you decide to visit and dress in visible

clothing (hunter orange isn't just for hunters) if present during hunting seasons.

Pine Ridge WMAs, from west to east:

- Gilbert-Baker WMA, 2,537 acres
- Petersen WMA, 2,740 acres
- Fort Robinson WMA, 640 acres, (adjoins Fort Robinson State Park)
- Ponderosa WMA, 4,020 acres
- Bighorn WMA, 1,270 acres
- Chadron Creek Ranch WMA, 2,529 acres
- Bordeaux Creek WMA, 1,915 acres
- Metcalf WMA, 3,237 acres

Fort Robinson 1

North



Both Fort Robinson State Park, with 130 miles of trails, and Chadron State Park, with another 33½, offer trails for a variety of users. Mountain bike rentals and guided horseback rides are available at each location.

Among the many small canyons at Fort Robinson State Park, Mexican Canyon is one of the most scenic. The sculpted walls on the east side of Mexican Canyon are magnificent representations of the rugged beauty of the whole system of buttes, ridges and canyons found at Fort Robinson.

There is an abundance of wildlife at Fort Robinson. Deer are commonly seen along the trail and

bighorn sheep tend to be found on all the buttes, either roaming or congregating at certain areas depending on the time of year. Wild turkeys are also abundant in the area and eagles are sometimes seen soaring above the high cliffs and most remote locations.



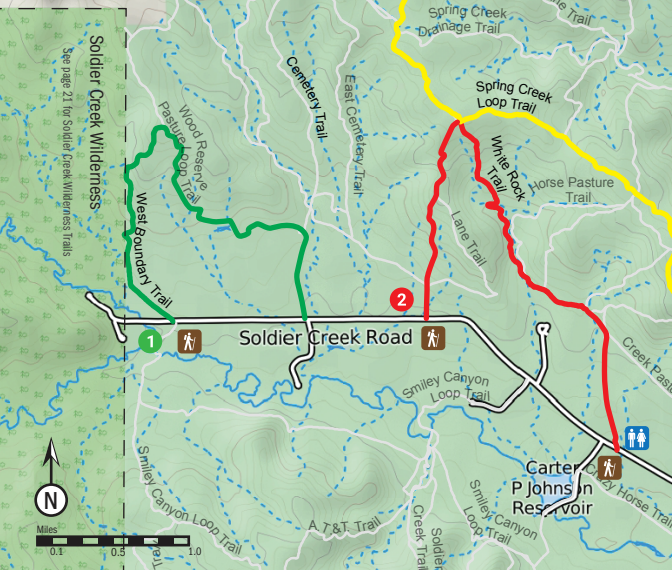
Getting There

Primary access to Fort Robinson is via U.S. Highway 20, just west of Crawford. From Scottsbluff, take Nebraska Highway 71 north to Crawford. Fort Robinson is 26 miles west of the U.S. Highway 20 and 385 junction near Chadron.



Fort Robinson

North



1 West Boundary to Cemetery Trail Moderate

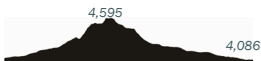
Miles

Approved Activities

3.3



Elevation Gain/Loss: 633/654 ft
Avg Slope (%): 6.9, -6.9



2 Lane to White Rock Trail Moderate

Miles

Approved Activities

3.8



Elevation Gain/Loss: 754/869 ft
Avg Slope (%): 8.3, -7.0





3 Mexican Canyon to Spring Creek Loop Challenging

Miles

Approved Activities

12.2



Elevation Gain/Loss: 2,651/2,651 ft
Avg Slope (%): 7.3, -6.8



4 Shelter Trail Moderate, Easy

Miles

Approved Activities

1.3



Elevation Gain/Loss: 289/165 ft
Avg Slope (%): 6.5, -6.3



Fort Robinson 2

South

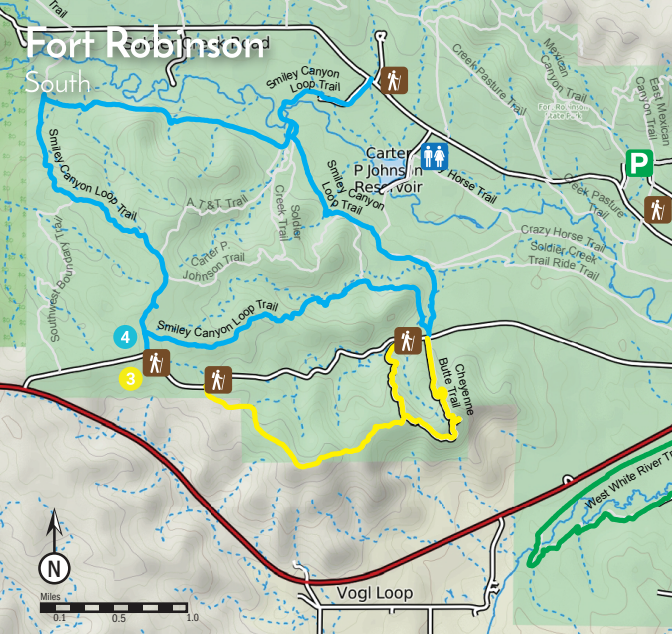


Lovers Leap is one of Fort Robinson's best climbing destinations. The route to the summit of Lovers Leap is a rugged adventure, requiring some careful scrambling to reach the top. The summit area of Lovers Leap is somewhat flat in parts, rewarding the climber that has made the route to the top. At the summit, the climber will find incredible views in all directions, because the butte stands higher than all other summits nearby.

The White River Trail runs westward for 3 miles from the intersection of 1st Street and Main Street in Crawford to Fort Robinson State Park. The crushed rock trail, traverses a couple of trestles where the railroad corridor originally crossed the White River and offers stunning views of the surrounding buttes.

Please visit www.maps.outdoornebraska.gov/Trails/ for a detailed map of Fort Robinson State Park.





1 White River Moderate

Miles

Approved Activities

8.4



Elevation Gain/Loss: 976/849 ft
Avg Slope (%): 2.9, -3.4



2 Wagon Wheel to Lover's Leap Challenging

Miles

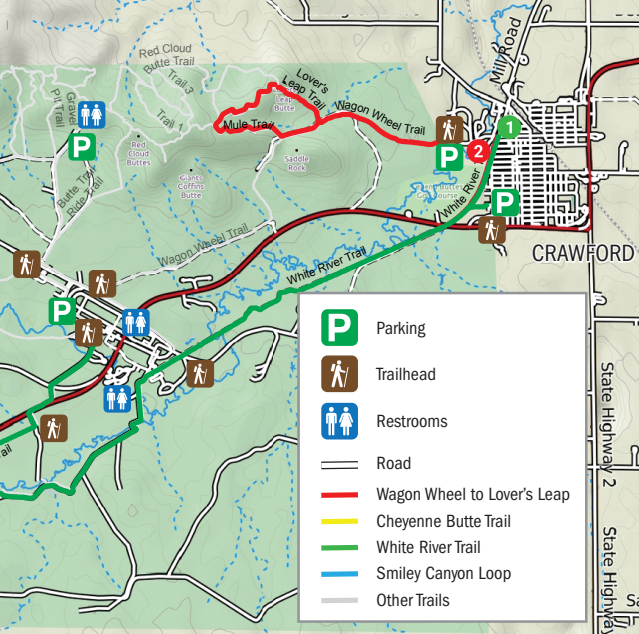
Approved Activities

2.8



Elevation Gain/Loss: 826/826 ft
Avg Slope (%): 8, -7.5





3 Cheyenne Buttes Moderate, Challenging

Miles

Approved Activities

3.1



Elevation Gain/Loss: 522/898 ft
Avg Slope (%): 7.4, -8.5

4,518



4 Smiley Canyon Loop Challenging

Miles

Approved Activities

9.1



Elevation Gain/Loss: 1,489/1,489 ft
Avg Slope (%): 5.7, -5.0

4,599



Chadron State Park

3



Chadron State Park is Nebraska's first state park and is located eight miles south of Chadron on U.S. Highway 385. A 3.6 mile paved roadway loop through the park is often used by walkers and road cyclists. Smaller paved loops provide cabin and camping access. Free trail maps are available at the park headquarters.

Steamboat Loop trail is one of the most popular short hikes in the park and leads through ponderosa pine, ash and cottonwood trees to reach the summit of Steamboat Butte. The trail begins at the Sawmill Shelter and a spur at the south end

leads to a gravel road to the Black Hills Overlook on the Nebraska National Forest. From the overlook, a trail leads back to the state park campground.

The park also is among the highlights along the Pine Ridge Trail.

Directions to Chadron State Park:

The park is conveniently situated along U.S. Highway 385 eight miles south of Chadron and 46 miles north of Alliance. When driving through the Pine Ridge, keep an eye out for the park's entrance on the west side of the road.



Chadron State Park

1 Cabin Loop Moderate

Miles

Approved Activities

2.5



Elevation Gain/Loss: 574/574 ft — Avg Slope (%): 8, -8.2



2 Black Hills Overlook Moderate, Challenging

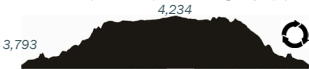
Miles

Approved Activities

4.7



Elevation Gain/Loss: 986/986 ft — Avg Slope (%): 6.8, -6.5



3 Norwesca Trail Challenging, Moderate

Miles

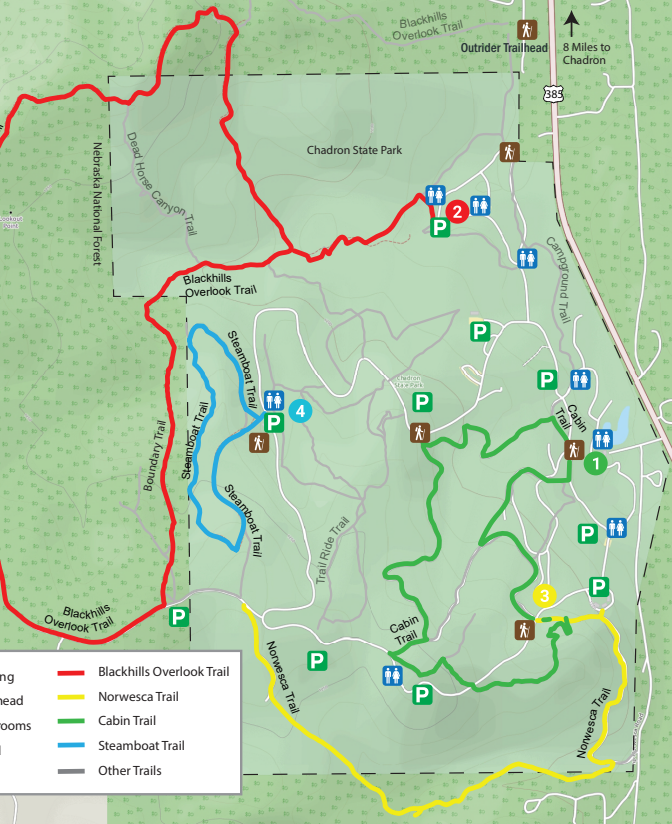
Approved Activities

1.6



Elevation Gain/Loss: 479/246 ft — Avg Slope (%): 8.1, -7.3





4 Steamboat Loop Moderate

Miles

Approved Activities

Elevation Gain/Loss: 319/319 ft
Avg Slope (%): 10.2, -8.8

1.2



Soldier Creek Wilderness & Toadstool Geologic Park

Soldier Creek Wilderness

The U.S. Congress designated the Soldier Creek Wilderness in 1986 and it now has a total of 7,794 acres, managed by the U.S. Forest Service. From the 1870s to after World War II, Fort Robinson soldiers pastured their horses, gathered wood, and relaxed along Soldier Creek, now a playground for elk, white-tailed deer, mule deer, turkeys, coyotes, bobcats, eagles, and hawks.

Here the ponderosa pine-covered ridges of northwest Nebraska give way to grassy upland parks. And while the Wilderness is recovering from a wildfire that destroyed about 90 percent of the pine trees in July 1989, the devastation wrought by those raging flames will be evident for a long time to come.

Several well-developed trails loop through the area, which shares a border with Fort Robinson State Park.

Old windmills spaced around Soldier Creek continue to draw up water.

Facilities at the trailhead and campground include a graveled parking area, hand water pump, modern accessible vault toilets, fire grates, and picnic tables.

The Wilderness is closed to mountain bikes and motorized vehicles. A small fee is charged for camping at the trailhead from mid-May to mid-November, with no charge for day use.

Boots and Saddles Trail

The trail follows part of the North Fork of Soldier Creek and passes near the old Fort Robinson Officers' Club site. The Boots and Saddles Trail connects to Trooper Trail for a loop and it is 2.7 additional miles back to the Soldier Creek Campground from that intersection.

Trooper Trail

This trail follows part of the South Fork of Soldier Creek. Most of the trail follows ridge lines and higher elevations providing views of the wilderness.





Directions to Soldier Creek Wilderness Campground:

From Crawford, take U.S. Highway 20 to Fort Robinson, then turn right on Soldier Creek Road. Continue for 6 miles to the Soldier Creek Campground.

Toadstool Geologic Park

Representing Nebraska's badlands, Toadstool Geologic Park is named for its sandstone slabs resting on narrow pedestals, resembling toadstools. The park is one small part of the 94,682 acre Oglala National Grassland. Here, among the park's unique-looking moonscape of highly eroded rock landforms, visitors may discover, but not collect, well-preserved fossils of extinct species that date back over 10,000 years.

An interpretive kiosk at the campground explains and illustrates the area geology. The Toadstool Loop Trail from the picnic area highlights many examples of eroded clay/sandstone landforms and accesses the 3-mile Bison Trail.

The Bison Trail winds through

badlands, canyons and grasslands to the Hudson-Meng Education and Research Center, and was named a Top 10 memorable spring hike in USA Today.

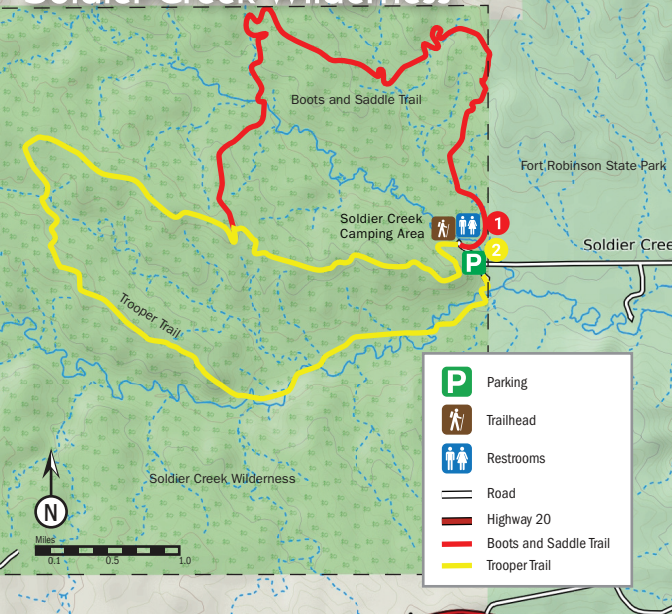
Hudson-Meng is highlighted by a 10,000-year-old *Bison antiquus* bonebed. It is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day from 9 a.m.–4 p.m. Call the visitors center for more information, 308-665-3908.

The Toadstool campground consists of six sites with picnic tables and fire grates, and fully accessible modern vault toilets. A \$3 per vehicle day use fee or \$5 per night camping fee is charged from mid-May through mid-November.

Directions to Toadstool Geologic Park

Along U.S. Highway 71, 4 miles north of Crawford or 37 miles south of Hot Springs, is the Toadstool Road intersection. From there, take Toadstool Road west and north for 11.4 miles to Forest Service Road 902. Follow the road 1.4 miles to Toadstool Campground.

Soldier Creek Wilderness



1 Boots and Saddle Trail Challenging, Difficult

Miles

Approved Activities

8.9



Elevation Gain/Loss: 2,189/2,189 feet
Avg. Slope (%): 7.9, -7.8



2 Trooper Trail Challenging

Miles

Approved Activities

9.5



Elevation Gain/Loss: 1,593/1,593 feet
Avg. Slope (%): 5.1, -5.2



Toadstool Geologic Park



1 Toadstool Loop Easy

Miles

Approved Activities

.84



Elevation Gain/Loss: 89.3/89.3 feet
Avg Slope (%): 3.1, -4.2

3,784

3,829



2 Bison Trail Easy, Moderate

Miles

Approved Activities

2.74



Elevation Gain/Loss: 226/585 feet
Avg. Slope (%): 5.1, -4.8

4,164

3,805



Nebraska National Forest 5

The Cliffs

The Cliffs Trailhead is one of the most popular access point to the numerous trails, both motorized and non-motorized, in this area of the Nebraska National Forest.

The trails are suited for cyclists of many skill levels and highlight one of the best hiking areas in the region.

The trails in this area are identified by U.S. Forest Service road numbers. The trail names identified on our map correspond with the following road numbers:

Gobbler Loop: 209, 728, 727, 24, 209

Water Loop: 209, 728, 24B, 24

Road Loop: 723, 718, 772, 24D, 24, 209

Big Bordeaux Loop: 723, 718, 773, 210

Canyon Loop: 210, 212, 718, 773, 210

Many other trail combinations are possible in this network.





Trail Notes:

Trail 209-24, which follows Bordeaux Creek, is flat with multiple water crossings. The King Canyon Trail can be accessed by heading east from Trail 210 to where it connects with Trail 24.

Trail 210 is a long two-track climb that leads to Forest Service Road 773 (about one-quarter mile south of the junction of Forest Road 718 is the access trail which will drop you to the King Canyon section of the Pine Ridge Trail identified with trail marker 24 and a post with four white diamonds.)

Trail 211 is a long climb with a fast descent accessed west off of Trail

210. Many local riders prefer to ride this as a climb and then descend on Trail 212.

Trail 212 is a fun technical climb to Forest Service Road 723 and a rollercoaster descent through forest.

Directions to The Cliffs Trailhead and Picnic Area:

From Chadron, proceed 5 miles east on U.S. Highway 20. Take Bordeaux Road south 7 miles to Forest Service Road 723. Go west 1.4 miles to Cliffs Trailhead and Picnic Area.

Nebraska National Forest

The Cliffs

1 Big Bordeaux Moderate

Miles

5.4

Approved Activities



Elevation Gain/Loss: 814/814 feet
Avg. Slope (%): 4.9, -5.4



2 Gobbler Loop Challenging

Miles

7.6

Approved Activities



Elevation Gain/Loss: 1,151/1,151 feet
Avg. Slope (%): 4.9, -4.7



3 Water Loop Moderate

Miles

4.4

Approved Activities



Elevation Gain/Loss: 676/676 feet
Avg. Slope (%): 5.1, -5.5



4 Road Loop Moderate

Miles

3.7

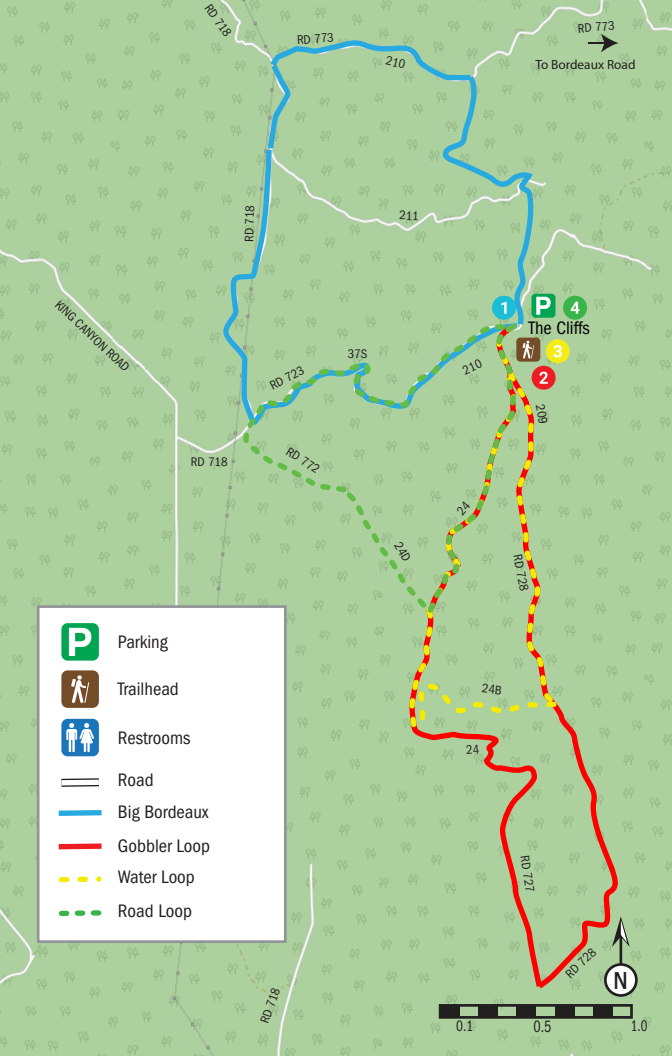
Approved Activities



Elevation Gain/Loss: 622/622 feet
Avg. Slope (%): 5.6, -5.1



Notes:



Nebraska National Forest

Spotted Tail

The Spotted Tail Parking Area provides an access point for a number of trails featuring the canyons and buttes of the Pine Ridge. Serving as the eastern terminus of the Pine Ridge Trail, users may access both Chadron State Park or The Cliffs Complex.

Spotted Tail Loop

This is a fun bike ride with some exposure, rock drop-offs and longer and steep climbs, especially in the northern sections. It is a strenuous but beautiful hike. Shade is sparse, so bring plenty of water during summer.

Explored counter-clockwise, the trail descends to east Spotted Tail, a descending trail, including one of the longer, steeper descents in the Pine Ridge region. It features steep terrain with multiple water bar drop-offs, exposure and tight turns.

Traveled clockwise to west Spotted Tail is more of a climbing trail, but adventurers are rewarded at the finish with a long flowing descent to the trail head.

The southeastern section of Spotted Tail connects with the King Canyon and Strong Canyon sections of the

Pine Ridge Trail. A long lollipop loop ride is created when Strong Canyon is accessed from U.S. Highway 385.

King Canyon

When accessed from King Canyon Road, this trail makes for a fun there-and-back ride. It features terrain that is challenging for beginning riders. This trail has both fun descents and climbs, and passes through a deep sandstone canyon. It connects to the southern section of the Spotted Tail loop and crosses Forest Service Road 718. Forest Service roads 733, 718 and 723 can be used to ride east and access the Cliffs Complex.

Strong Canyon

It can be accessed from King Canyon Road and Highway 385. This trail is a short section of fun single and double track riding. From Highway 385, it can be ridden north to connect with King Canyon and Spotted Tail trails or The Cliffs Complex of trails. Riders can also gain access from Chadron State Park which is a short distance across Highway 385.



Nebraska National Forest

Spotted Tail

1 Spotted Tail Challenging

Miles

Approved Activities

5.3



Elevation Gain/Loss: 1,295/1,295 feet
Avg. Slope (%): 8.1, -8.3



2 Pine Ridge Trail (East) Challenging

Miles

Approved Activities

7



Elevation Gain/Loss: 1,445/1,346 feet
Avg. Slope (%): 6.4, -7.3



3 Strong Canyon Moderate

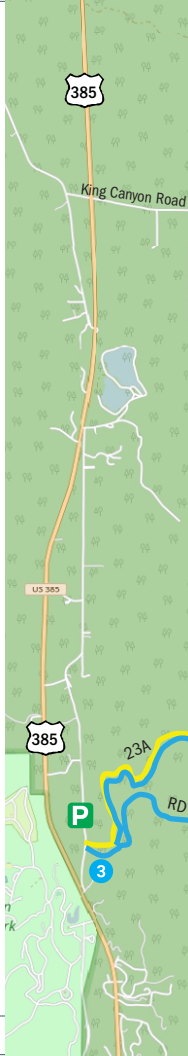
Miles

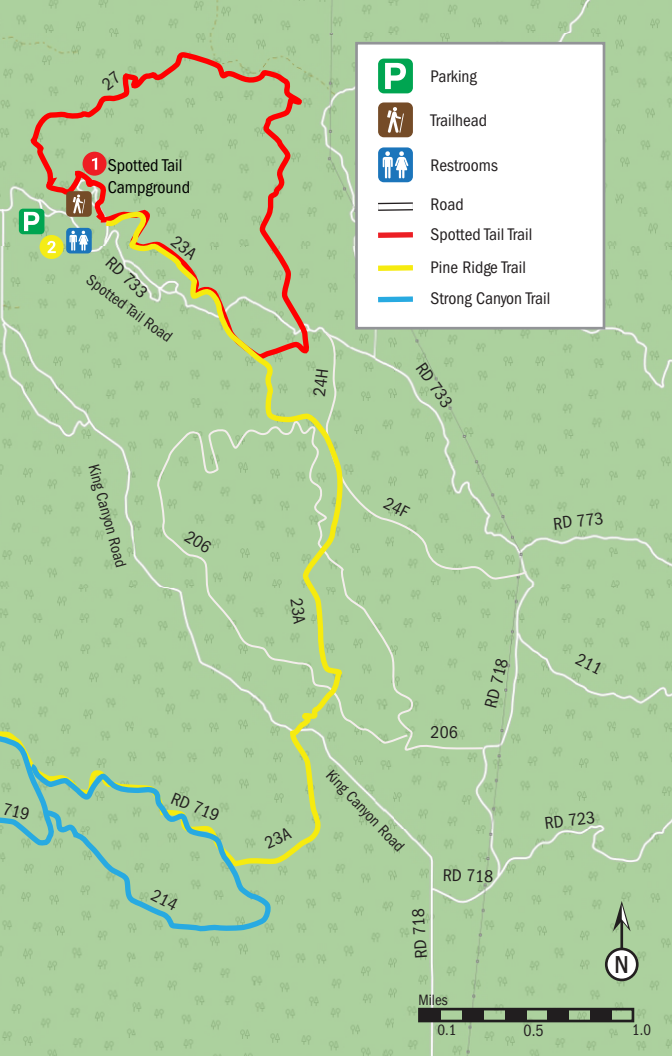
Approved Activities

5.3



Elevation Gain/Loss: 1,032/1,032 feet
Avg. Slope (%): 6.8, -6.7





Nebraska National Forest



West

East Ash Trailhead

Trail enthusiasts using a two-vehicle shuttle are often dropped off at the East Ash Trailhead and then descend to Coffee Mill Trailhead to the second car. For experienced and fit riders and hikers it can be done as a out-and-back trip from either trailhead. The terrain is varied with some fast, challenging descents and climbs. Navigation and route finding skills are a must as the trail is faint and fire-damaged in areas.

Roberts Loop

This trail is a bit difficult to access, but well worth the hassle. The ride or hike from Roberts to Coffee Mill is an epic trip. This trail features big climbs and descents and some two-tracks. Roberts also contains a shorter loop for a condensed ride.

Coffee Mill

Trails include part of the Pine Ridge Trail, Forest Service Road 702, motorcycle trail 222, and ATV trail 221. Trails pass through areas of light to severely burned Ponderosa Pine forest, open grassland, canyons and along ridges and hillsides. Excellent place for hiking. (This area has substantial fire damage, expect downed trees and overgrown trails). The climb from the parking area east of Coffee

Mill Butte is one of the longest and most challenging in the Pine Ridge. It can be ridden as a long climb and descent or down the west side to cross Turkey Track spring and towards East Ash Trail or Roberts Trailheads.

The trails in this area are identified by U.S. Forest Service road numbers and trails. The trail names identified on our map correspond with the following road numbers:

Coffee Mill Butte Loop (Trailhead): 702, 222, 702

Pine Ridge Trail: 23C

Canyon Trail: 702, 221, 202

Roberts Loop: Trailhead, 25, 25A

Pine Ridge National Recreation Area

This 6,600-acre area is designed to provide a primitive/semi-primitive recreational opportunity in a natural environment and is managed for non-motorized recreation.

The primary access point is from Roberts Trailhead. It consists of horse corrals, a fully accessible rider ramp, modern vault toilet, hand water pump, and picnic tables. A small fee is charged for camping at Roberts Trailhead from mid-May



to mid-November; no charge for day use, open year round. Hiking, horses, and mountain bikes are allowed. The 3.1 mile Roberts Loop Trail south from the trailhead connects to the Pine Ridge National Recreation Area, which traverses east-west through the Pine Ridge.

Directions to Roberts

Trailhead: From Chadron, proceed 8 miles west of Chadron on U.S. Highway 20. Go south on Eleson Road 7 miles to Bethel Road. Follow Bethel Road 1.5 miles east to Roberts Trailhead.

Directions to Coffee Mill

Trailhead: From Chadron, proceed south on U.S. Highway 385 for 13.5 miles to Antelope Road. Turn west and continue 5 miles to Dead Horse Road. Go north 3.2 miles to Forest Service

Road 713 to Coffee Mill Trailhead.

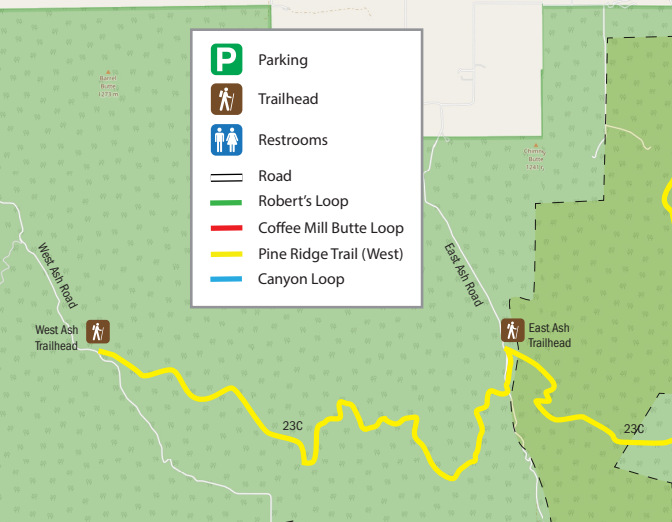
Directions to East Ash

Trailhead: From Chadron, proceed west on U.S. Highway 20 for 9.4 miles to Eleson Road. Go south for 3 miles, road jogs .5 miles to the west, then continues south 5.4 miles past Bethel Road. Turn west and to Forest Service Road 706. Go south 2.4 miles to East Ash Trailhead.



Nebraska National Forest

West, and Coffee Mill Butte



1 Coffee Mill Butte Loop

Moderate, Challenging

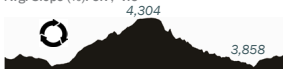
Miles

Approved Activities

4.4



Elev. Gain/Loss: 970/970 ft
Avg. Slope (%): 6.7, -7.6



2 Roberts Loop

Challenging

Miles

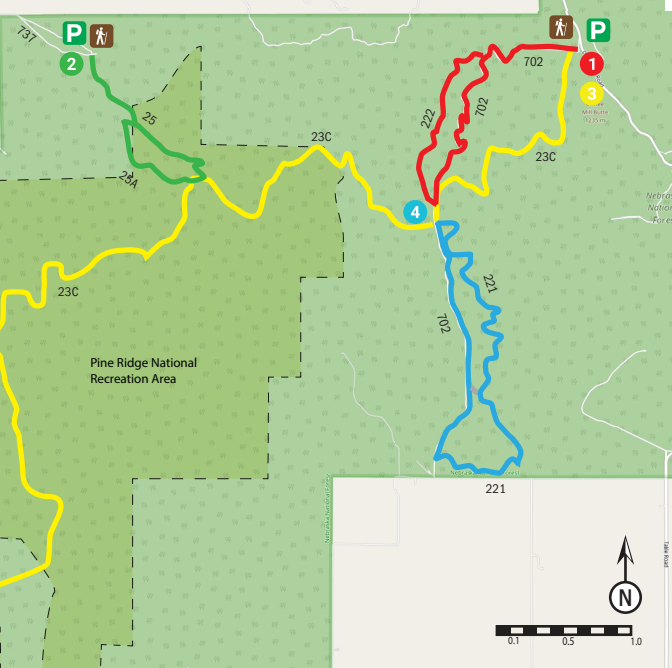
Approved Activities

3.2



Elev. Gain/Loss: 977/977 ft
Avg. Slope (%): 10.6, -10.7





3 Pine Ridge Trail (West) Very Difficult

Miles

Approved Activities

16.9



Elev. Gain/Loss: 3,265/3,145 ft
Avg. Slope (%): 4.3, -4.2



4 Canyon Loop Moderate

Miles

Approved Activities

3.9



Elev. Gain/Loss: 522/522 ft
Avg. Slope (%): 4.3, -4.2





For those wanting to stay close to the city, a system of trails near C-Hill, among the terrain south and southwest of Chadron State College's main campus, provides a way for people to step into nature.

Mari Sandoz Heritage Trail

This concrete trail winds through the Thompson Natural History Preserve, highlighted by crossing the upper dam at Briggs Pond and coursing to a scenic overlook of the city at the top. Benches allow users to rest and take in the views.

Chadron State College Trails

As the home course of the college's cross country team, these grass trails are designed to include a 5k run, and overlooks many of the college's athletic facilities and passes by the Rangeland Complex.





Chadron State College Trails



1 Mari Sandoz Heritage Trail

Easy

Miles

1.1

Approved Activities



Elev. Gain/Loss: 170/118 ft
Avg. Slope (%): 4.9/-3.9



2 C-Hill Loop

Easy

Miles

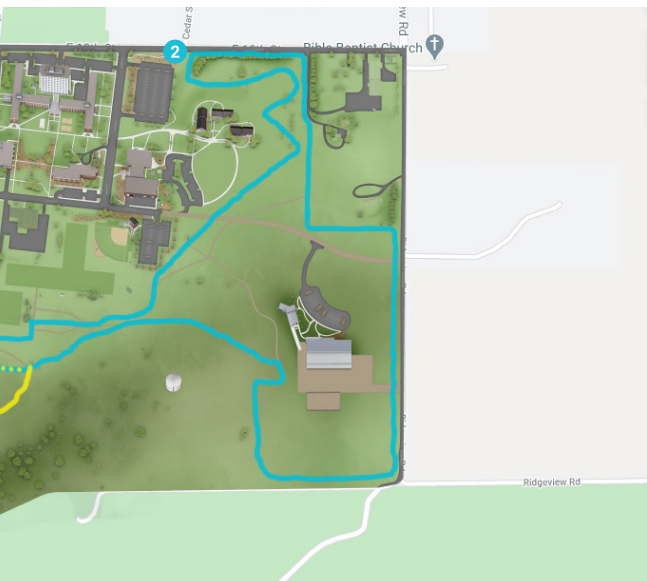
2.8

Approved Activities



Elev. Gain/Loss: 292/292 ft
Avg. Slope (%): 3.7/-3.7





3 King's Chair Loop Moderate

Miles

Approved Activities

1.8



Elevation Gain/Loss: 421/421 feet
Avg. Slope (%): 8, -8.6

3,702

3,479



Additional Information

Trail Etiquette:

Few things are more irritating or distasteful than finding aluminum cans, candy wrappers and other litter along the trail. “Pack it in, pack it out” should be the working motto of every explorer. This is true for short day adventures as much as it is for the wilderness backpack trips. Get in the habit of taking an extra garbage bag on hikes just to pick up litter left by unthinking people on the trail. A clean trail is less inviting to those who litter.

Parts of northwest Nebraska are “multiple-use areas” meaning that ranchers and their livestock share the fields and the woods. Hikers often encounter gates, which should be left – open or closed – as they are found. Multiple use also means that hikers and bikers share the trail. Trail etiquette requires that bikers yield to hikers and that

bikers and hikers yield to stock and horseback riders. Trail etiquette also confers the responsibility to care for the environment and respect the rights of others and their private property.

Suggested Equipment:

Even the most experienced explorers are sometimes well into a trail when he or she remembers a forgotten but necessary item. The following is a list intending to help in preventing such occurrences, ensuring a more enjoyable trip. If you have purchased something new, it's a good idea to try it out, break it in or set it up before embarking on your trek.

Don't drink creek or pond water unless it has been purified with an proven system. It is best to pack water, but account for the weight factor when planning the trip length.



Clothing:

- Good-quality rain gear
- Warm jacket
- Windbreaker
- Wind pants
- Long underwear
- Long pants
- Lightweight long sleeve t-shirts
- T-shirts and shorts
- Sweater or heavy shirt
- Socks for each day plus spare
- Underwear
- Hat
- Gloves
- Belt
- Hiking boots
- Sandals for camp or stream crossing

Food:

- Hot and cold drink mixes
- Dry food
- Hot cereal to mix with water
- Trail mix
- High-energy snacks

Backpacking Equipment:

- Tent and rain fly
- Warm sleeping bag
- Full-size backpack or day pack for short trip
- Backpack stove and fuel

- Cooking pot
- Cup
- Bowl
- Utensils
- Water bottles
- Matches or lighter (waterproof)

Miscellaneous:

- Compass
- Maps
- Tick and insect repellent
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Toilet paper
- Toothbrush
- Biodegradable soap/hand sanitizer
- Backpack shovel
- Garbage bag
- Pocket knife
- Binoculars
- Water filter or purification tablets
- First aid kit
- Flashlight/headlamp and batteries
- Camera
- Fishing/hunting gear and license
- Notepad and writing utensil
- Waterproof backpack cover

Notes:

Northwest Nebraska Wildlife



Pronghorn



Merriam's Wild Turkey



Sharp-tailed Grouse



Mule Deer



Bighorn Sheep



Northern Pike



Elk



American Bison



The purpose of the Northwest Nebraska Trails Association is to develop, enhance, maintain and promote public non-motorized recreational trails in northwest Nebraska. Those interested in trail promotion, maintenance and development in Northwest Nebraska may visit the NNTA website or social media channels. Please tell us about your northwest Nebraska trails experiences!

www.nwnebraskatrails.com

facebook.com/nwnebraskatrails

instagram.com/nwnebraskatrails

Email: nwnebraskatrails@gmail.com



Photos courtesy NEBRASKAland Magazine/Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

Additional Photos of Chadron State College campus by Daniel Binkard/Chadron State College

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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



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