



## Great Sand Dunes National Park

National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior

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### Superintendent's Compendium 2026

Of Designations, Closures, Permit Requirements and Other Restrictions Imposed Under Discretionary Authority.

In accordance with regulations and the delegated authority provided in Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1, Parts 1 through 7, authorized by Title 54, United States Code, subsection 100751, the following regulatory provisions are established for the proper management, protection, government and public use of the portions of Great Sand Dunes National Park under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service.

Unless otherwise stated, the regulatory provisions apply in addition to the Requirements contained in 36 CFR, Chapter 1.

**ZACHARY PARKES** Digitally signed by ZACHARY PARKES  
Date: 2025.12.29 09:43:46 -07'00'

Recommended by: Zachary Parkes - Chief Ranger

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**ANDREA COMPTON** Digitally signed by ANDREA COMPTON  
Date: 2025.12.30 18:01:38 -07'00'

Approved by: Andrea Compton - Superintendent

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Date

### 36 CFR § 1.4 –DEFINITIONS

***Bear Pepper Spray*** - Also known as bear deterrent, bear repellent or bear spray. Bear pepper spray is a chemical formula designed specifically to deter aggressive or attacking bears. It must be registered with the Environmental Protection Agency and individual states. It must be commercially manufactured and labeled as “Bear Pepper Spray”. Bear spray must contain between 1% and 2% of the active ingredients capsaicin and related capsaicinoids.

***Noxious weeds*** - Those weeds, including any weed seed or propagative plant parts, designated by the Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture as noxious and which are prohibited pursuant to Title 35 Article 27.5-103.

***Weed free*** - Free from propagative plant parts or weed seed from plants identified in state and regional lists of weeds published by Colorado Department of Agriculture Weed Free Forage Crop Certification Act, Title 35 Article 27.5-103, CRS (1993 Supp.) Sections 1.01 and 1.02.

***Weed free certification*** - Those crops inspected and certified as free of noxious weeds by a Commissioner of Agriculture from either Colorado or those states identified in Title 35 Article 27.5-103 C.R.S. Section 1.02 Regional List.

***Four wheel Drive:*** Four-wheel-drive vehicles have a driveshaft that can directly power each wheel at the same time and a transfer case that can shift between powering two wheels or four wheels in low or high gear. All-wheel-drive (AWD) vehicles do not meet this definition.

### 36 CFR § 1.5 -CLOSURES AND PUBLIC USE LIMITS

**(a)(1) The following closures and public use limits are established for all or listed portions of the Park to all public use or to a specific use or activity for reasons of public health and safety, protection of environmental and scenic values, and protection of natural and cultural resources:**

#### **Closures**

##### **Public Entry:**

The following areas are closed to public entry:

- The National Park Service (NPS) residential, horse barn, resource office, administrative sites, firearms range, and maintenance shop area.
- The water tank road at the Pinon Flats Campground.
- Entering the National Park from San Luis State Wildlife Area, from the Lane 6 North right-of-way, or from the Colorado State Highway 150 right-of-way unless accompanied by an authorized National Park employee or contractor.
- The area referred to as the “Bison Fence Enclosure” (See page 20)

*Determination: This restriction is intended to provide for the privacy and security of Park residents by limiting entrance to the housing area to residents and their invited guests, employees, and contractors. Similarly, this restriction provides additional security for*

*government facilities, vehicles, equipment, and other property kept at the NPS Maintenance Area.*

*The water tank road at the campground is for service use only.*

*Those areas of the National Park accessible from the San Luis Lakes State Wildlife Area, Lane 6 North, or Colorado Highway 150 are closed to Park entry for the following reasons: 1) Numerous sensitive archaeological sites have been documented in this area plus it is probable that there are additional undocumented sites. This area is well known in the local community for the abundance of artifacts present and has been targeted for collection as recently as 2010. 2) Much of the area is within an area zoned as “Guided Learning” as designated in the 2007 GRSA General Management Plan (GMP). This area was so zoned to protect sensitive archaeological resources and is intended for public visitation only when accompanied by an authorized Park employee or contractor.*

*The area known as the Bison Fence Enclosure encompasses the lands that contain the Medano Ranch, a private ranch owned by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and is under contract for purchase by the National Park Service. The TNC is operating a bison ranch operation within that area. This measure is intended to prevent disturbance of privately-owned livestock as well as protection of individuals from these unpredictable and dangerous animals. In addition, a high voltage electric fence contains the bison herd and persons who come in contact with the fence could be seriously injured.*

#### Public Use Closures:

Specific areas within the Park may be closed to visitors or both visitors and employees by posting appropriate signs when, in the opinion of the superintendent, there are conditions that warrant such a closure. These conditions may include, but are not limited to, extreme fire danger, fires, hazardous conditions, aviation operational needs or construction. This determination is made for both visitor and employee safety.

*Determination: The closure is to provide for visitor and employee safety and preclude interference with emergency and administrative operations by visitors.*

#### Visitor Center:

The Visitor Center will be closed on the following days:

- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day
- New Years Day

*Determination: Federal Holidays*

#### Parking Areas:

The following areas are closed to public parking:

- Along the east side of state highway 150 from the intersection of Pinon Circle and highway 150 to the Great Sand Dunes National Park Headquarters
- Parking lots located north and south of Great Sand Dunes National Park Headquarters

➤ Visitor Center employee parking lot

*Determination: The area defined above is centered around the entrance station and headquarters building. This area experiences congestion on a regular basis with traffic often backed up a quarter mile or more. Parking along the side of the road adds to the potential for congestion and increased risk of visitors entering the roadway.*

*The parking lots surrounding the headquarters building are limited in spaces and require advanced maneuvering to safely enter and exit the parking spaces.*

*The Visitor Center employee parking lot is a small parking lot with minimal parking spaces. This area allows a safe access point to the visitor center for employees and persons conducting business with the Visitor Center*

Camping:

The following areas are closed to overnight camping:

➤ The **No Camping Zone** as described below and as shown on the attached map.

The **No Camping Zone** (excluding designated backcountry campsites and within designated sites at the Pinon Flats Campground) is defined as within a boundary line beginning where the southern Park boundary intersects with the eastern Great Sand Dunes Wilderness boundary, then northeasterly along the Wilderness boundary to a point due west of Park headquarters, then westerly to the west bank of Medano Creek, then northerly to the top of the main ridge on the eastern front of the dune field, then following this ridgeline in a northerly direction to the juncture of Little Medano Creek and Medano Creek, then easterly to the Wilderness boundary, then northeasterly along the Wilderness boundary to the boundary between the Park and Great Sand Dunes National Preserve, then southerly along the Park/preserve boundary to the southeastern corner of the Park, then westerly along the Park boundary back to the beginning. A map depicting this area is attached. (See page 22)

➤ The Pinon Flats Campground from November 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>.

*Determination: The No Camping Zone is the most frequented and popular area of the Park. This restriction is intended to prevent unnecessary visual intrusions for day users and prevent additional resource impacts associated with camping, primarily waste disposal, sanitation, and degraded water quality. Designated campsites are established to concentrate campsite impacts to areas where such impacts can be managed and minimized.*

Unmanned Aircraft:

Launching, landing, or operating an uncrewed or remotely piloted aircraft from or on lands and waters administered by the National Park Service within the boundaries of Great Sand Dunes National Park (Preserve) is prohibited except as approved in writing by the superintendent:

➤ The term “unmanned aircraft” means a device that is used or intended to be used for flight in the air without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the device, and the associated operational elements and components that are required for the pilot or system operator in command to operate or control the device (such as cameras,

sensors, communication links). The term includes all types of devices that meet the definition (e.g., model airplanes, quadcopters, ) that are used for any purpose, including for recreation or commerce.

*Determination: Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve were created to provide extensive opportunities for educational activities, ecological research, and recreational activities; and are publicly used for hiking, camping, and fishing, and for wilderness value (including solitude). This closure is to facilitate and maintain the public health and safety, protection of environmental and/or scenic values, protection of natural and cultural resources, and to avoid conflict among visitors use activities.*

#### Use of Remote-Controlled Vehicles:

The use of remote-controlled vehicles, including toy- or hobby-grade ‘RC cars’ or similar devices, is prohibited except pursuant to the terms and conditions of a special use permit.

- “Remote-Controlled Vehicle” is defined as a motorized device that is used or intended to be used for transport over ground without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the device, and the associated operational elements and components that are required for the driver or system operator in command to operate or control the device.

*Determination: Remote-controlled vehicles can cause resource damage, interfere with vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic on paved roads, and are often associated with persons altering the natural landscape to create courses or obstacles for the vehicle.*

#### Fire Closures:

- Any portion of the Park may be temporarily closed, due to wildfire and/or fire management activities, which pose a threat to visitor safety.

### **Public Use Limits**

#### Camping group size limits:

- The overnight group size limit for all Wilderness and other backcountry areas of the Park is 6 persons. Additionally, groups with livestock may have up to 6 animals per group.
  - Exception: The Superintendent may issue a Special Use Permit or a Commercial Use Authorization that would increase the permitted group size.
- The group size limit in Loops 1 and 2 of the Pinon Flats Campground is 8 persons or one immediate family (defined as parents and children) per site.
- The group size limit in Loops 3 of the Pinon Flats Campground is: site A 20-40; site B 20-40; and site C 15-30.

*Determination: Group size limits are set to minimize or prevent undue impacts to individual campsites and surrounding areas; to prevent campsites from growing to prevent the increase of social trails; to prevent intrusions on other visitors enjoying backcountry or campground experiences; and to manage human waste accumulations in backcountry areas, thereby protecting water quality.*

Vehicles in Pinon Flats Campground:

- All vehicles must fit within the confines of the parking spaces for any campsite in Loops 1 and 2 of the Pinon Flats Campground. All vehicles must remain on the asphalt and be clear of the traffic lane. A trailer of any type or a motorcycle is counted as a vehicle for the purposes of this section.
- Recreational vehicles/camper trailers are not allowed without prior approval from Fee or Law Enforcement staff, to be parked in the group loop (Loop 3) of Pinon Flats Campground.

*Determination: The parking spaces for individual campsites in Loops 1 and 2 are limited in size. This limitation is intended to prevent extra vehicles from being parked in a manner so as to extend out into the roadway and present a traffic hazard and to prevent resource damage from individuals parking off the paved area and on vegetation. Finally, this limitation is published on the [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) website which is the internet location for campers to use to reserve campsites in the campground and we must enforce this limitation per agreement.*

*RV's and camper trailers are not allowed in Loop 3 because that loop is identified as a tent camping area only and none of the parking spaces available are configured for RV or camper trailer parking.*

Number of Tents

Maximum 3 tents per sites provided that all tents and sleeping covers used by a group at a campsite must fit within tent pads provided or, where no tent pad has been constructed, within the rock walls.

*Determination: This restriction is intended to minimize impacts within the campground.*

Hammocks

The use of hammocks is prohibited in the Pinon Flats Campground as well as any backcountry camp site. Free standing hammocks that do not require modification to the campsite are not prohibited.

*Determination: The use of hammocks can damage trees, which weakens them and may cause them to die.*

Tarps/Shade Structures/Clotheslines:

Securing tarps, shade structures, or clotheslines to trees in the Pinon Flats Campground is prohibited.

*Determination: Securing tarps, shade structures, or clotheslines to a tree with rope can damage trees, which weakens them and may cause them to die.*

### Hunting camps:

Hunting camps are not allowed within any backcountry/Wilderness area of the Park as well as the Pinon Flats Campground. A hunting camp is defined as a campsite occupied by one or more persons who are conducting, or intend to conduct, any hunting activities.

*Determination: Hunting is not allowed within Great Sand Dunes National Park. This restriction is intended to protect the wildlife residing within the Park and to prevent giving others the mistaken idea that hunting is allowed.*

### Glass Containers

Possession or display of glass bottles or glass containers on any portion of the Dunefield is prohibited. This includes the area commonly referred as the “Escape Dunes”.

*Determination: Glass containers were determined to be unsafe and detrimental to public health and safety.*

### Medano Pass Primitive Road

The Medano Pass Primitive Road may be closed to motor vehicle traffic during under these conditions:

- When stream crossings become hazardous due to weak ice or excessive runoff
- Snow accumulations make travel hazardous or may result in motorists traveling off-road to bypass snowdrifts
- When muddy and wet conditions may result in road damage or motorists traveling off-road to bypass muddy sections
- When the road washes out due to flooding or landslide
- When hazard trees have fallen across the road
- Sand conditions become too dry to allow travel without vehicle becoming stuck
- Other hazardous conditions as determined by Ranger staff

*Determination: During the late fall or early winter when stream crossings begin to ice over an ice condition often results wherein the ice cannot support the full weight of a vehicle. During this time one or two wheels of the vehicle may break through causing the wheel or wheels to get stuck behind a ledge of ice from which it is impossible to get out without significant help. Closing the road at these times is intended to protect drivers who may get stuck at remote crossings during cold weather.*

*Snow accumulations can cause the road to become impassable, thereby presenting a safety hazard should motorists become stuck. Patrol resources are limited, and stuck motorists may not be discovered for days. Also, experience has shown that many motorists will attempt to drive off road around snowdrifts so this measure will prevent associated off-road travel impacts.*

*During spring snowmelt or warm periods, the road frequently becomes very muddy and snowmelt often runs down or across the roadway. During these periods' vehicle traffic can cause damage to the road in the form of rutting or by causing additional erosion due to increase runoff. This temporary closure is intended to minimize road damage. Also, during*

*runoff, stream flows may reach a point where vehicles could be swept downstream when attempting to cross.*

*Due to past wildland fires in the area; thunderstorms can cause flooding that creates debris flows that cover the road making it impassable due to rocks, dirt and trees. Fires also have created areas of dead standing trees. Winds from thunderstorms can cause these trees to fall across the road.*

Motor and Non-motorized Vehicles:

The following roads are closed to the use of two-wheel and all-wheel drive vehicles:

- The Medano Pass Primitive Road between the *Point of No Return* and the Northwestern Park/Preserve boundary.

*Determination: The Medano Pass Primitive Road traverses a section of soft, deep, sand that frequently results in even four- wheel drive vehicles becoming stuck. Much of the road is also only one lane in width. When vehicles become stuck, traffic can be obstructed until the roadway is cleared. This restriction is intended to prevent two-wheel drive motorists from becoming stuck with the subsequent inconvenience to them and other motorists, as well as preventing them from incurring costly tow bills. This restriction may also prevent damage to private property that may occur while trying to free a stuck vehicle, and damage to natural resources as other motorists may travel off road to get around the stuck vehicle.*

The following roads are closed to the use of motorized and non-motorized vehicles, including bicycles and livestock or human drawn carts, wagons, sleighs, or sleds except for administrative use:

- All roads within the area referred to as the “Baca Unit”. This includes the lands now owned by the National Park Service, but which were owned by private parties prior to November 22, 2000.
- All roads located on lands now owned by the National Park Service, but which were formerly administered by the Bureau of Land Management prior to November 22, 2000.
- All roads located on lands now owned by the National Park Service, but which were formerly owned and administered by the State of Colorado prior to December 14, 2009.

*Determination: Until future management actions are approved in accordance with the 2007 General Management Plan, these roads are closed to public vehicle use to ensure that non-conflicting, inappropriate, or resource degrading activities do not occur.*

All-terrain vehicles (ATVs), off highway vehicles (OHVs) and utility terrain vehicles (UTVs):

All-terrain vehicles (ATV) and utility terrain vehicles (UTVs), and any other type of motorized conveyance manufactured for recreational, non-highway, off-road or all terrain travel, including those licensed by a state for street use, within park boundaries is prohibited. The prohibition includes any vehicles defined by Colorado revised statues 33-14.5-101.



***Determination:*** *The public use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and utility terrain vehicles (UTVs) and other motorized conveyances manufactured for recreational, non-highway, off road, or all-terrain travel within the park boundaries poses a significant risk to visitor safety; and park resources and values which cannot be appropriately mitigated, and which cannot be sustained without causing unacceptable impacts. The use of such vehicles is, therefore, not consistent with the protection of the park.*

### Overnight Parking

Overnight parking (excluding registered campers in Pinon Flats Campground) is prohibited in all areas of the Park except for the following locations upon condition that the owner/operator has obtained a Backcountry Use Permit and associated trailhead parking pass:

- Amphitheater Parking Lot
- Horse Trailer Parking Lot
- Dunes Parking Lot
- Dunes Overlook Trailhead
- Point of No Return Trailhead
- Montville Trailhead
- Sand Ramp Trailhead
- Sand Pit Picnic Area
- Castle Creek

*Determination:* *Reasonable accommodation for parking is provided for visitors engaged in overnight backcountry trips for which a Backcountry Use Permit has been issued. Parking spaces are limited at each of these areas so, in order to provide fair allocation, permits must be obtained beforehand.*

### Picnicking

The Pinon Flats Campground is closed to picnicking during the period of April 1<sup>st</sup> – October 31<sup>st</sup>.

*Determination:* *This limitation is instituted in order to prevent persons who are not intending to camp from occupying a site for an unreasonable amount of time or discouraging would-be campers from using the campground.*

### Animals or livestock that may be ridden

Horse, mules and burros are designated as authorized for riding within the National Park.

*Determination:* *The animals listed have historically and traditionally been ridden within the area now encompassed by the National Park. All other animals capable of being ridden have neither a traditional presence in the area nor have they been evaluated for the possibility of being a disease vector to wildlife.*

### Curfew

Visitors seventeen years or younger must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian after the hours of 11:00 p.m. within the boundaries of Great Sand Dunes National Park.

*Determination: The purpose of this public use limit is to maintain consistency with the surrounding communities' curfew times.*

**(a)(2) The following areas have been designated for a specific use or activity, under the conditions and/or restrictions as noted:**

Wildlife

For Informational Purposes: **Bear Pepper Spray** as defined in Section 1.4 of this document may be carried by individuals within the Great Sand Dunes National Park for the strict purpose of protecting one's self or others from bodily harm against aggressive wildlife. It should not be applied to people, tents, packs, or other equipment or surrounding area as a repellent.

**Willfully approaching within 50 yards of bear or elk, or within any distance that results in their disturbance or displacement,** is prohibited.

*Determination: Wild animals have behavior that is often unpredictable. Engaging in any activity which places a person in close proximity to wild animals places the person at risk for injury or death. Wildlife may interpret this human behavior as threatening or aggressive, which in turn jeopardizes the well-being of the animal. This restriction does not apply to inadvertent or casual encounters with wildlife in developed areas where foot traffic is normal and routine, e.g. sidewalks and established walkways, campground roads, etc. or in other areas where there is no reasonable alternative route.*

Designate Areas for a specific use or activity or impose conditions or restrictions on a use or activity.

Filming, still photography, and audio recording activity may require a permit, consistent with 54 U.S.C. 100905.

- Filming, still photography, and audio recording activity that occurs in closed areas, requires exclusive use of a site or area, or involves a set or staging equipment other than handheld equipment (such as a tripod, monopod, and handheld lighting equipment) requires a permit, unless the activity is affiliated with an activity or event that has been allowed under a written authorization, such as a special use permit.
- Filming, still photography, and audio recording that involves more than eight individuals requires a permit, unless the NPS has specifically notified an individual or group that a permit is not required, or if the activity is affiliated with an activity or event that has been allowed under a written authorization, such as a special use permit.
- If a permit is required for the reasons stated above, or if the NPS otherwise determines and then notifies an individual or group that a permit is required for a filming, still photography, or audio recording activity, then engaging in that activity without a permit is prohibited. Violating a term or condition of a permit issued by the NPS for a filming, still photography, or audio recording activity is prohibited, and may result in the suspension or revocation of the permit, in addition to any penalties that may apply under 36 CFR 1.3.

*Determination: Federal law at 54 U.S.C. 100905 states that permits and fees are not required for filming, still photography, or audio recording in park areas if certain requirements are met. These requirements address various topics, including, but not limited to, group size, location, equipment, potential impacts to resources and visitors, and the likelihood that the NPS will incur related administrative costs. If any of these requirements are not met, the law allows the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the NPS, to require a permit for the subject activity. Permit requirements are imposed by the superintendent under discretionary authority provided by 36 CFR 1.5(a)(2), which allows the superintendent to impose conditions or restrictions on a use or activity, consistent with applicable legislation, to implement management responsibilities. The general regulations for permits in 36 CFR 1.6 do not apply to permits issued for filming, still photography, and audio recording, which instead are governed by the statutory provisions in 54 U.S.C. 100905. The imposition of permit requirements, on a case-by-case basis, for filming, still photography, or audio recording does not require rulemaking under 36 CFR 1.5(b). Requiring a permit with reasonable terms and conditions in accordance with statutory requirements at 54 U.S.C. 100905 is not highly controversial, will not result in a significant alteration in the public use pattern of the System unit, will not adversely affect the System unit's natural, aesthetic, scenic or cultural values, or require a long-term or significant modification in the resource management objectives of the System unit, because the permit requirement is limited in time and scope to the specific activities authorized by the permit, which contain terms and conditions that protect the values, resources, and visitors of the System unit, and implements federal law.*

### **36 CFR § 1.6 –PERMITS**

**(f) The following is a compilation of those activities for which a permit from the superintendent is required:**

§ 1.6 Some filming, still photography, and audio recording (depends upon the facts and circumstances; contact the park for more information). 36 CFR 1.5(a)(2) and 54 U.S.C. 100905.

- § 2.1 Wood Sales/Collection
- § 2.5 Research Specimens
- § 2.10 Camping
- § 2.12 Audio Disturbances
- § 2.17 Aircraft and Air Delivery
- § 2.23 Recreation Fees
- § 2.37 Noncommercial Soliciting
- § 2.38 Explosives
- § 2.50 Special Events
- § 2.51 Public Assemblies, Meetings
- § 2.52 Sale or Distribution of Printed Matter
- § 2.60 Livestock Use and Agriculture
- § 2.61 Residing on Federal Lands
- § 2.62 Memorialization
- § 4.11 Load, Weight, and Size Limits
- § 5.1 Advertisements
- § 5.3 Business Operations
- § 5.5 Commercial Photography
- § 5.7 Construction of Buildings or Other Facilities

### **36 CFR § 2.1 – PRESERVATION OF NATURAL, CULTURAL, AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

**(a)(4) Dead wood on the ground that is less than four (4) inches in diameter may be collected for use as fuel for campfires within the Park in the following areas:**

- Within ¼ mile of the Sawmill Canyon (temporary closed) and the Sand Creek backcountry campsites that have fire grates provided.

*Determination: Adequate quantities of dead and down wood exist to provide fuel for campfires in these areas without causing significant negative resource impacts. Wood that is less than four inches in diameter can be easily sawn or broken into manageable pieces and help ensure that firewood is burned completely. This requirement also reduces smoldering and subsequent fire hazards associated with larger pieces.*

**(c)(1) The following fruits, berries, or nuts may be gathered by hand for personal use or consumption:**

- Edible nuts
- Edible Mushrooms
- Edible berries

**(c)(2)(i) Quantities of designated fruits, berries, or nuts that may be gathered by one person during a calendar year are as follows:**

- Nuts – 1 gallon
- Berries – 1 quart each
- Mushrooms – 2 pounds

*Determination: Adequate quantities of the named fruits exist to allow for personal use in the designated quantities without causing undue competition with wildlife for their food needs.*

## **36 CFR § 2.2 - WILDLIFE PROTECTION**

**(a)(2) All Park areas are closed to the use of elk bugles, varmint calls, audio attractions or other artificial or natural means of attracting or disturbing wildlife, including rattling antlers or verbal imitations.**

*Determination: The Superintendent has determined that the prohibition for the use of such devices or related behavior is necessary for the protection of wildlife.*

**(d) Conditions of Transport through the National Park:**

- Wildlife legally taken outside the Park in accordance with applicable Federal and Colorado hunting laws and regulations, and properly tagged and identified, may be transported through the Park via the following Transport Corridors: (see page 22)
  - Highway 150 (Entrance Road) through the Park from the Pinon Flats Campground to the southern boundary.
  - Medano Pass Primitive Road from the National Preserve to the Pinon Flats Campground.
  - Liberty Road within the boundary of the National Park.
  - Animal Transport Corridors via trails:

- North of Point of No Return to the Medano Pass Primitive Road along the Sand Ramp Trail.
  - Sand Ramp Trail north of the Medano Pass Primitive Road.
  - Liberty Trail along the Park boundary.
  - Mosca Pass Trail (for small game, turkey, mountain lion and bobcats only)
- Hunters must pay all applicable entrance fees.
  - Hunters are **not** required to contact the Park prior to transporting legally taken game through the Park via the approved Transport Corridors.
  - Hunters must present their hunting license, carcass tag, and driver's license upon request of any Park Ranger.
  - Transport of carcasses in vehicles and horseback should be done in a manner that the animals are not readily visible as to prevent causing alarm in other visitors.

*Determination: Adjacent to the Park are lands on which it is lawful to hunt but the only reasonable way to access these areas is by traveling through the Park, either on foot or horseback.*

*The Superintendent has also determined that individuals with a government issued identification and valid legal Colorado hunting license do not need a further permit for these activities.*

**(e) The following areas are closed to the viewing of wildlife with the use of an artificial light:**

- All areas within the Park.

*Determination: This closure is intended to prevent frightening or disturbing wildlife engaged in their normal activities and maintain natural lighting conditions for wildlife to the extent possible. It is also intended to prevent using light as an aid in the unlawful taking of wildlife and to maintain natural darkness for the enjoyment of other visitors.*

**36 CFR § 2.10 - CAMPING**

- (a) The sites and areas listed below have been designated for camping. A permit system has been established for camping areas and camping activities, and conditions for camping and camping activities are in effect as noted:**

**Pinon Flats Campground:**

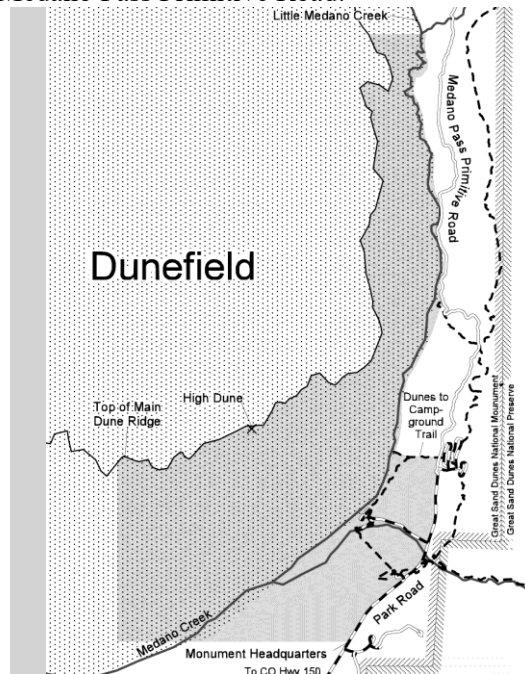
- A permit is required to camp. During the period of April 1<sup>st</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>, the permit must be obtained through the on-line reservation system at Recreation.gov.
- Tents must be pitched within tent pads provided or, where no tent pad has been constructed, within the rock walls.
- Portable showers are allowed provided all used water is captured and disposed of properly at a comfort station wastewater disposal sink.
- Tables may not be removed from within the designated site and moved to another site.
- Checkout time is 1:00pm MST.
- Check-in time is 2:00pm MST.

- Generator use is permitted only between the hours of: 8:00 am to 10:00 am 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm and 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

*Determination: These requirements are intended to provide for the equitable use and allocation of campsites and campground facilities, prevent undue impacts or wear and tear to campsites, prevent undue intrusions on other visitors, and help manage and maintain campground facilities.*

**Wilderness/ Non-Wilderness Backcountry areas:**

- A backcountry use permit, available online via Recreation.gov, is required to camp in the Great Sand Dunes Wilderness portion of the Park as well as the non-Wilderness portions.
- Camping along the Sand Ramp Trail is allowed only at designated backcountry campsites, namely:
  - Little Medano Campsite
  - Aspen Campsite
  - Cold Creek Campsite
  - Sand Creek Campsite
  - Sawmill Canyon Handicapped Accessible Campsite (temporary closed)
  - Buck Creek Campsite
  - Escape Dunes Campsite
  - Indian Grove Campsite
- Tents and sleeping areas at the above sites must be within 50 feet of the brown arrowhead post at each campsite.
- Camping in the main dunefield is permitted outside of the day use zone, as defined by the 2007 GMP. This is generally the first high ridge of the dunes as seen from the Visitor Center and the Medano Pass Primitive Road.



*Determination: These requirements in wilderness and non-wilderness areas are intended to provide for the equitable use and allocation of backcountry campsites, inform visitors of regulations or leave-no-trace principles, and prevent unnecessary visual intrusion on other*

*visitors hiking along the Sand Ramp or other trails. Designated campsites are established to concentrate campsite impacts to areas where such impacts can be managed and minimized.*

**(d) Food Storage**

Except while being consumed or being prepared for consumption, food and lawfully taken fish, plus garbage, toiletries, and equipment used to cook or store food, must be stored:

- sealed in a vehicle
- in a camping unit that is constructed of solid, non-pliable material,
- in provided bear-proof storage lockers
- a hard-sided commercially-made carry in/carry out bear-resistant food storage container.

Only in designated backcountry campsites where bear boxes are not provided can food, lawfully taken fish, garbage, toiletries, and equipment used to cook or store food, be suspended at least 10 feet above the ground and 4 feet horizontally from a post, tree trunk, or other object.

Ice chests/food coolers are not appropriate food storage devices.

Park Rangers may inspect all unattended items that have the appearance of being used for food storage, food preparation, or food waste.

These regulations apply park-wide to include park housing.

*Determination: Bears and many other species of wildlife are found throughout the Park. These requirements are intended to provide for the personal safety of visitors, prevent property damage, maintain cleanliness and sanitation, and prevent habituation of wildlife to human food sources thereby maintaining natural conditions.*

**Annual Camping Limits:**

The overnight stay limit within the Park for all persons, groups, and organizations is 14 consecutive days and 21 total days per calendar year. This limit does not apply to holders of Commercial Use Authorization (CUA) permits or their employees who are conducting business operations under the terms and conditions of the company's CUA, but it does apply to their clients. The total days is to reflect time within the National Park and National Preserve combined.

*Determination: Overnight stay limitations are a 'standard industry practice' to ensure the equitable use and allocation of campsites and campground facilities.*

**36 CFR § 2.11 - PICNICKING**

**Conditions for picnicking:**

The maximum time limit for parking or using a picnic table and associated parking spaces in the picnic area or at pullouts along the Medano Pass Primitive Road that have picnic tables provided is three hours, excluding persons who have reserved the South Ramada area of the picnic area.

*Determination: This limitation provides for the fair and equitable use and allocation of limited picnic area facilities.*

### 36 CFR § 2.13 - FIRES

**(a)(1) The lighting or maintaining of fires is generally prohibited, except as provided for in the following designated areas or receptacles, and under the conditions noted:**

#### Lighting and maintaining fires

- A fire may be ignited and maintained only by using fuel sources designed and commonly used for warmth or the preparation of food, such as charcoal briquettes or natural firewood. Lighting or maintaining a fire with other materials including, but not limited to, flammable liquids, garbage, fireworks, plastics, aerosol canisters, batteries, or other manufactured or synthetic materials, is prohibited.

#### Designated Areas:

- Campfires are allowed only in provided fire grates in the Pinon Flats Campground, park employee housing, park administrative sites, and Sand Creek backcountry campsites.
- Fires are permitted in self-contained wood stoves inside shelters provided the wood stove and chimney are equipped with a spark arrestor.

#### Established Conditions:

- Only charcoal fires are allowed in the picnic area fire grates.

*Determination: This action is necessary for the maintenance of public health and safety, protection of environmental or scenic values, protection of natural or cultural resources, and the implementation of management responsibilities. Materials other than approved combustibles – especially fire accelerants and substances prone to wind transport or explosion – creates serious risks when used to light or maintain fires. These combustibles can ignite or spread wildfires that directly threaten people and valuable resources and assets. The burning of manufactured or synthetic materials can contribute to air pollution, contaminate soil and water, and be toxic to humans and the environment. Less restrictive measures, such as an education campaign informing visitors of the risks of using certain materials to light or maintain a fire, would not be commensurate with the substantial risks associated with those activities and could lead to adverse outcomes that might be prevented by establishing an enforceable condition.*

*These designations and conditions are intended to prevent wildfires by restricting campfires to provided fire grates and prevent proliferation of fire pits. The picnic area has only pedestal grates which are intended only for charcoal fires to grill food.*

### 36 CFR § 2.14 - SANITATION AND REFUSE

**(b) Conditions for the disposal, containerization, or carryout of human body waste:**

- Toilet paper must be carried out of backcountry and Wilderness areas except where toilet facilities are provided.



- Human body waste shall be disposed of in the following manner:
  - Within the dune field – buried in six (6) inches of sand.
  - Within all other backcountry areas – buried in six (6) inches of soil at least 200 feet from any water source.
  - Removed in EPA-approved methods for disposal in landfills (WAG bags, etc. may be deposited in a park receptacle at the trailhead or other appropriate location).

*Determination: These designations and requirements are intended to maintain sanitary conditions for both humans and wildlife.*

### **36 CFR § 2.15 - PETS**

#### **(a)(1) The following areas are closed to the possession of pets:**

- All areas within the following zones as described in the 2007 General Management Plan (GMP) and shown on the GMP Preferred Alternative map:
  - Guided Learning
  - Backcountry Adventure (excluding the Sand Ramp Trail from Loop 2 in the Campground to Point of No Return, the Dunes Overlook Trail, and the Point of No Return to Sand Pit Trail).
  - Natural/Wild

Stated conversely, pets are allowed in the following zones as described in the GMP plus the Sand Ramp Trail from Loop 2 in the Campground to Point of No Return, the Dunes Overlook Trail and Point of No Return to Sand Pit Trail:

- Frontcountry
- Dunes Play
- Backcountry Access
- Liberty Road Administrative Zone

The open and closed areas are also shown on the attached map titled “Where Can I Walk My Dog?” (See page 23)

*Determination: This restriction is in accordance with a management action prescribed by the 2007 General Management Plan (GMP). The issue of dogs was raised in scoping prior to preparation of the GMP. After considerable discussion of visitor comments and environmental consequences, the planning team decided on a “middle ground” policy restricting dogs (leashes required) to the described zone. The action was approved by the Great Sand Dunes National Park Advisory Council.*

#### **(a)(5) Pet excrement must be disposed in accordance with the following conditions:**

- Persons possessing pets in areas that are open to pets must remove pet excrement and deposit it in toilet facilities or dumpsters only.

#### **(e) Pets may be kept by Park residents under the following conditions:**

- Park residents must have approval to keep a pet in park housing and adhere to the pet policy as established by the Superintendent.

## 36 CFR § 2.16 - HORSES AND PACK ANIMALS

### (a) The following are designated as pack animals:

- Horses
- Mules
- Burros, donkeys, asses
- Llamas, alpacas

*Determination: The Superintendent has determined that the use of equine pack animals is a historical use within the Park, has limited impact on Park resources and offers a significant benefit and visitor activity supported by the Park. Goats are not permitted due the sensitivity of the local bighorn sheep population and the risk of goats serving as a disease vector.*

### (b) The use of horses or pack animals is permitted on the following trails, routes, or areas:

- All trails and areas within the Park except for the following:
  - The No Public Horse Use Zone as described below and shown on the attached map: (see page 25)

The **No Public Horse Use Zone** is defined as the visitor center area; the main dune use area (that area within the no camping zone from the southern shore of Mosca Creek Island north to the ‘Campground-to-Dunes’ trail); Picnic Area, Dunes Parking Lot; and the Pinon Flats Campground. A map depicting this area is attached. *Exception: For those riders who want to ride south from the horse trailer parking lot, horses may be ridden southerly between the Park road and Medano Creek, then across Mosca Creek, and continuing southerly between the visitor center and Medano Creek until out of the No Public Horse Use Zone.*
  - Visitor Center to Montville Parking Lot Trail
  - Montville Nature Trail (excluding that portion of the trail which coincides with the Mosca Pass trail)
  - Visitor Center to Picnic Area Trail
  - Sand Sheet Loop Trail
  - Wellington Ditch Trail
  - Pinon Flats Trail
  - The portion of the Sand Ramp Trail between the Dunes Overlook trailhead (Loop 2 in the campground) and Point of No Return trailhead, including the Buck Creek Campsite access trail.
  - Dunes Overlook Trail
  - Any paved road, except when crossing

*Determination: Horse and pack animal use in the Park is a long-standing and appropriate recreational activity. The exceptions listed above are to prevent conflicts with other users, primarily pedestrians, in concentrated use areas and trails in the developed area.*

**(g) Other conditions concerning the use of horses or pack animals:**

- Horses may be unloaded year-round only at the Horse Trailer Lot. Horse trailers may be left overnight only at the Horse Trailer and Amphitheater lots provided an overnight parking pass has been obtained.
- Horses may also be unloaded at large turnouts south of the visitor center during the period of October 15<sup>th</sup> – April 30<sup>th</sup>. Trailers and towing vehicles may be left unattended at these turnouts during daylight hours only and may not be left overnight.
- Owners must shovel any manure into trailers at the parking area before and after riding.
- Horses and pack animals may be kept overnight only at the Little Medano, Aspen, Cold Creek, and Sand Creek backcountry campsites. Livestock must be picketed at least 100 feet away from the campsite marker post.
- Livestock must be picketed or corralled in a manner as to prevent damage to trees and pawing around tree trunks, grazing to an extent that plants are eaten to ground level or individual plants pulled up by the roots, denuding the area of vegetation by grazing or trampling and other damage to natural or cultural resources.
- Livestock may also be kept overnight in Wilderness portions of the Park. Leave-no-Trace principles must be followed at all locations where stock is kept overnight.
- Possessing, storing, or transporting any hay, straw, mulch, or forage, which has not been certified as free of noxious weeds and seeds by a certified State or County Agriculture Officer, is prohibited within the boundaries of Great Sand Dunes National Park (*Refer to Section 1.4 for definitions of weed free, noxious weeds, etc.*).
- Possessing, storing, or transporting non-certified weed free forage beyond any Park trailhead is prohibited within the boundaries of Great Sand Dunes National Park.

*Exclusions:*

- *Persons with a permit specifically authorizing the otherwise prohibited act.*
- *Any Federal, State or local law enforcement officer, or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force in the performance of an official duty.*
- *Persons possessing or using pelletized feed, hay cubes, or grain products.*

*Determination: These conditions are intended to provide for the fair and equitable use and allocation of Park facilities and areas, prevent conflicts with other users, help maintain Park facilities, prevent damage to campsites, prevent damage to or degradation of natural resources, and prevent introduction or proliferation of invasive plant species.*

*The Superintendent has determined that the hay restrictions are necessary to prevent the introduction of exotic plant species and to protect scenic values of the Park.*

**36 CFR § 2.21 - SMOKING**

**(a) The following portions of the Park, or all or portions of buildings, structures, or facilities are closed to smoking:**

- All buildings and facilities.

*Determination: This restriction is intended to reduce the risk of fire in government facilities and provide for the comfort and health of employees and visitors.*

### **36 CFR § 2.23 - RECREATION FEES**

**(a) The following areas within Great Sand Dunes National Park are designated recreation fee areas:**

- Entrance Station- Entrance Fees
- Pinon Flats Campground- Camping Fee

**(b) The superintendent may, when in the public interest, prescribe periods during which the collection of recreation fees shall be suspended.**

*Determination: Recreation and entrance fees are charged according to criteria set forth in 36 CFR Part 71.*

### **36 CFR § 2.51 – PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES, MEETINGS**

**(c) The locations available for public assemblies are designated as:**

- Those areas shown on the attached map entitled “Public Assemblies Areas”. These areas are described as:
  - At the Visitor Center parking lot, the first three parking spaces immediately west of the handicapped space.
  - At the Dunes parking lot, the first three parking spaces immediately south of the handicapped parking spaces adjacent to the Main Boardwalk.
  - At the Amphitheater parking lot, the paved area within 50 feet of the tire air station.
  - See attached pages on Pages 26 and 27.

*Determination: These areas provide for First Amendment activities that are visible to the public while allowing for other visitor activities to safely proceed without disruption.*

### **36 CFR § 4.10- Travel on park roads and designated routes**

- (a) Electronic Personal Assistive Mobility Device (EPAMD), motorized scooters and similar devices, as defined under 36 CFR 1.4 are motor vehicles. The Park has imposed a restriction on the use of EPAMDs, motorized scooters and similar devices from all park areas including roads, sidewalks and trails.

However, any visitor or employee with a disability is permitted to use EPAMDs, motorized scooters, motorized wheelchairs or similar devices in park buildings and developed areas, such as campgrounds and parking lots, when the sole purpose for use of such devices is mobility assistance. For safety reasons, EPAMDs, motorized scooters and similar devices may not be used on any park road or trail.

Individuals with disabilities who operate one of the above-described devices must operate the device in a safe and responsible manner so as not to endanger one's self or other park visitors. The maximum speed for such devices is 8 mph. The operator of an assistive mobility device will have the same rights applicable to a pedestrian under the same circumstances, except the operator must yield to other pedestrians.

Wheelchairs (either manual or motorized) are not considered motor vehicles or mechanized vehicles and are allowed on park trails, although this is not recommended.

*Determination: The preserve wishes to provide as much access as possible to visitors with disabilities while maintaining an environment that is safe for all visitors and protects park resources.*

### **36 CFR § 4.21 - SPEED LIMITS**

#### **(b) The following special speed limits are established:**

- 30 mph in both directions along that portion of the Park Road known as the ‘S-curves’.
- 30 mph along the northbound portion of the Park Road beginning ¼ mile south of the entrance station to the beginning of the posted 10 mph zone.
- 30 mph along the southbound portion of the Park road beginning 300 feet south of the entrance station to the beginning of the posted 45 mph zone.
- 30 mph in both directions along that portion of the Park Road north of the entrance station to Amphitheater Parking Lot
- 30 mph in both directions along the Dunes Lot Access Road.
- 10 mph in both directions from the amphitheater parking lot throughout Pinon Flats Campground
- 10 mph in both directions along that portion of the Park Road within 300 feet of the entrance station.

*Determination: The reduced speed limit along the ‘S-curves’ portion of the Park road is intended to prevent recurrence of auto accidents, including roll-overs with injuries, that had occurred when the speed limit was set at 45.*

*The 30-mph zone for northbound traffic nearing the entrance station is intended to slow traffic prior to reaching the 10-mph zone.*

*The 30-mph zone north of the entrance station to the Amphitheater Parking lot is in an area with concentrated pedestrian and motor vehicle traffic with autos frequently pulling into and out of pullouts and parking lots along curves and hills with limited sight distance.*

*The 10-mph zone for the entirety of the campground is to slow traffic down in an area where pedestrian traffic is concentrated.*

*The Dunes Lot Access Road is relatively short with limited sight distance and autos frequently park along the roadway shoulders when the parking lot is full.*

*Visitors must stop at the entrance station when entering and leaving. Additionally, the northbound lane is constricted. This zone is established to slow traffic down in preparation for stopping.*

### **36 CFR § 4.30 Bicycles**

- (a) Bicycle use within Great Sand Dunes National Park is permitted only on routes open to public motor vehicle use. They are prohibited on administrative roads and all trails.
- (h) Off-trail riding or riding a bicycle off a permitted trail, and entering closed areas is prohibited.
- (i) E-Bikes

“The term “e-bike” means a two- or three-wheeled cycle with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts (1 h.p.).

E-bikes are allowed in Great Sand Dunes National Park where traditional bicycles are allowed. E-bikes are prohibited where traditional bicycles are prohibited. Except where use of motor vehicles by the public is allowed, using the electric motor to move an e-bike without pedaling is prohibited.

A person operating an e-bike is subject to the following sections of 36 CFR part 4 that apply to the use of traditional bicycles: sections 4.12, 4.13, 4.20, 4.21, 4.22, 4.23, and 4.30(h)(2)-(5).

Except as specified in this Compendium, the use of an e-bike within Great Sand Dunes National Preserve is governed by State law, which is adopted and made a part of this Compendium. Any violation of State law adopted by this paragraph is prohibited.”

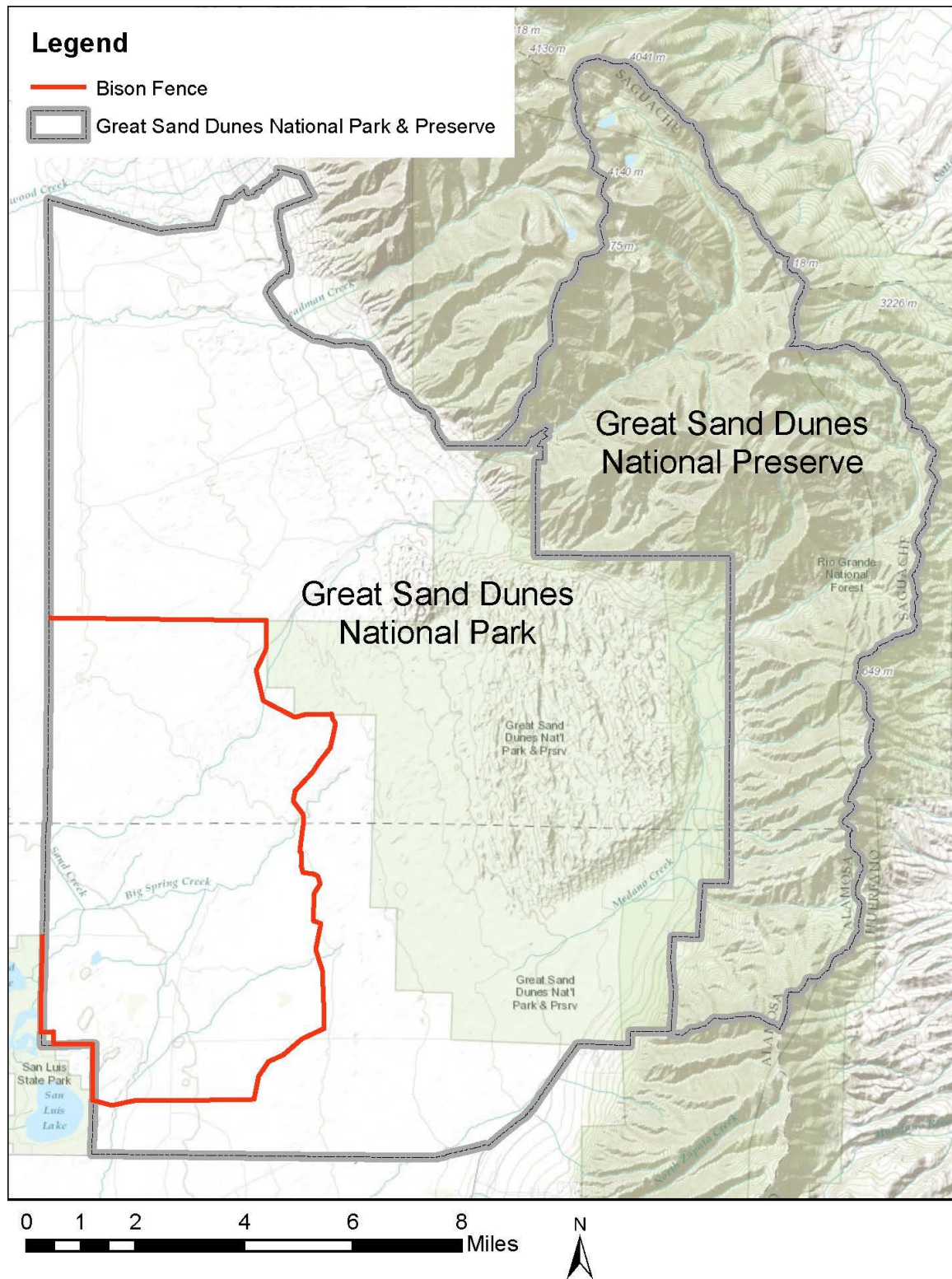
*Determination: Bicycle use including e-bikes is permitted on all roads open to public motor vehicle use. They are not permitted on trails or roads closed to the public. Much of the park is designated wilderness where wheeled vehicles are prohibited.*

### **36 CFR § 4.31 - HITCHHIKING**

#### **Hitchhiking is allowed in the following areas:**

- Along all roadways.

*Determination: The Park is remote from the nearest city served by public transportation and so other transportation options are not available to some visitors. Up to now hitchhiking has been an infrequent occurrence that has not presented any problems related to criminal activity, traffic obstruction, or other safety hazards.*





**Great Sand Dunes National Park**  
Great Sand Dunes National Preserve  
Colorado

**Hunting Areas and Animal Transport Corridors**

**Legend**

- Park Visitor Center
- Medano Road Campsite  
No Hunting within 50 yards
- Trail
- Highway/Road
- Stream
- Hunting Transport Corridor
- Park/Preserve Boundary
- Open to Hunting
- Closed to Hunting
- Animal Transport Zone/No Hunting

**Map Labels:**

- Do not use this map for hiking or navigation purposes. For information about maps, ask a park ranger or write to the Park.
- Great Sand Dunes National Preserve is adjacent to Great Sand Dunes National Park. Please notify a Park Ranger if wounded game goes onto the National Park.
- Great Sand Dunes National Park (Closed to Hunting)
- Point of No Return

**Scale:** 0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

**North Arrow:** N

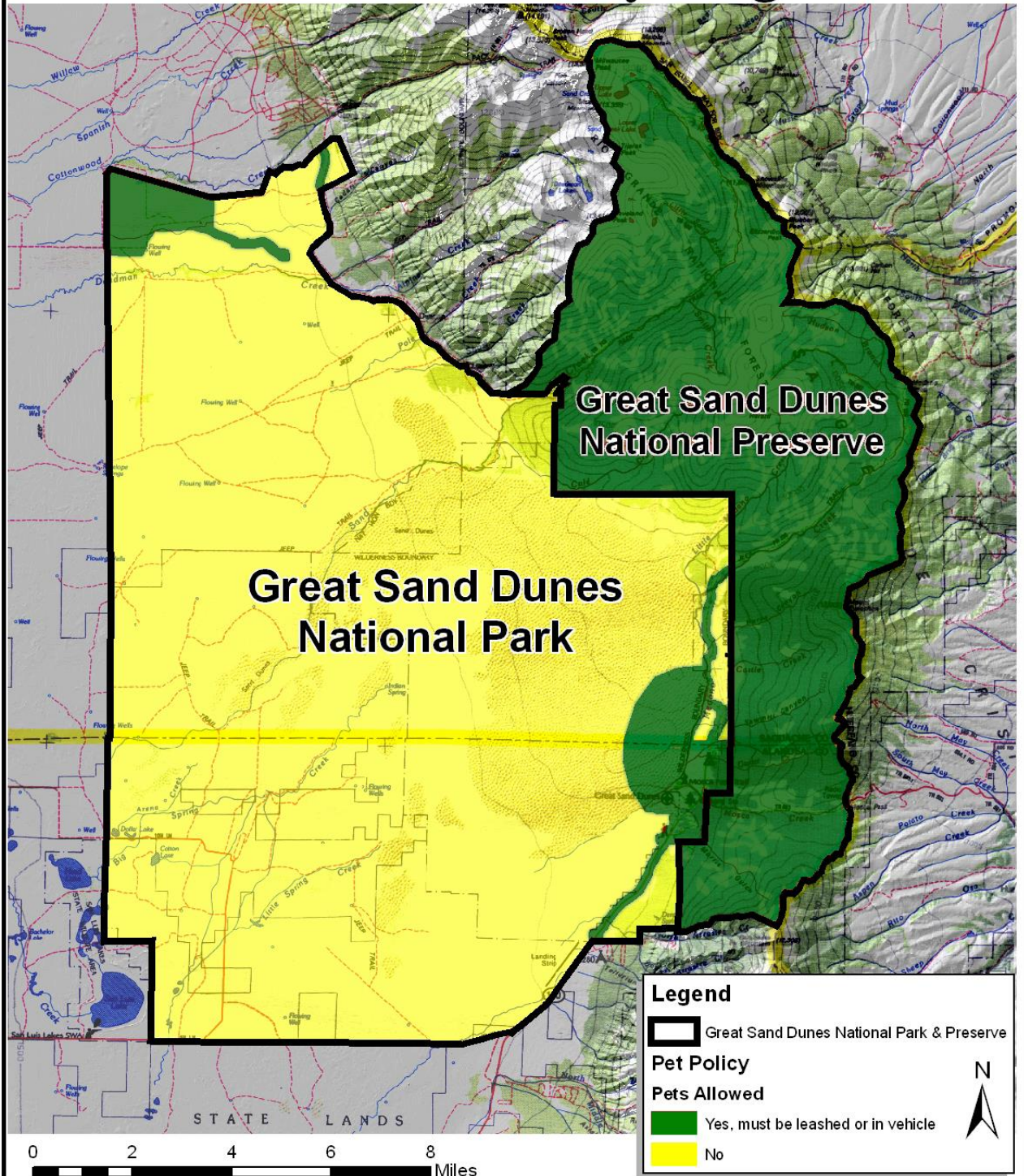


Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve  
Colorado

National Park Service  
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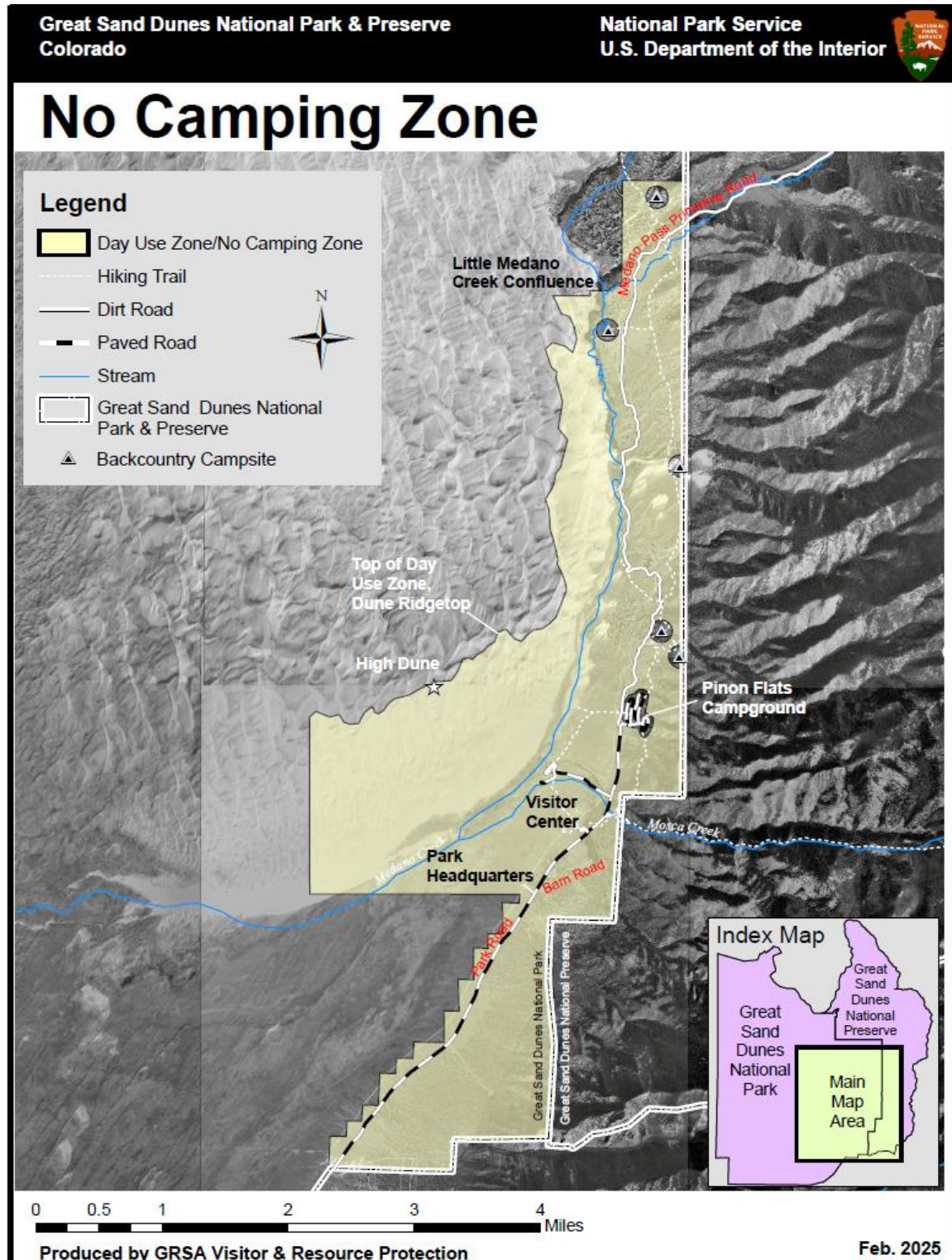


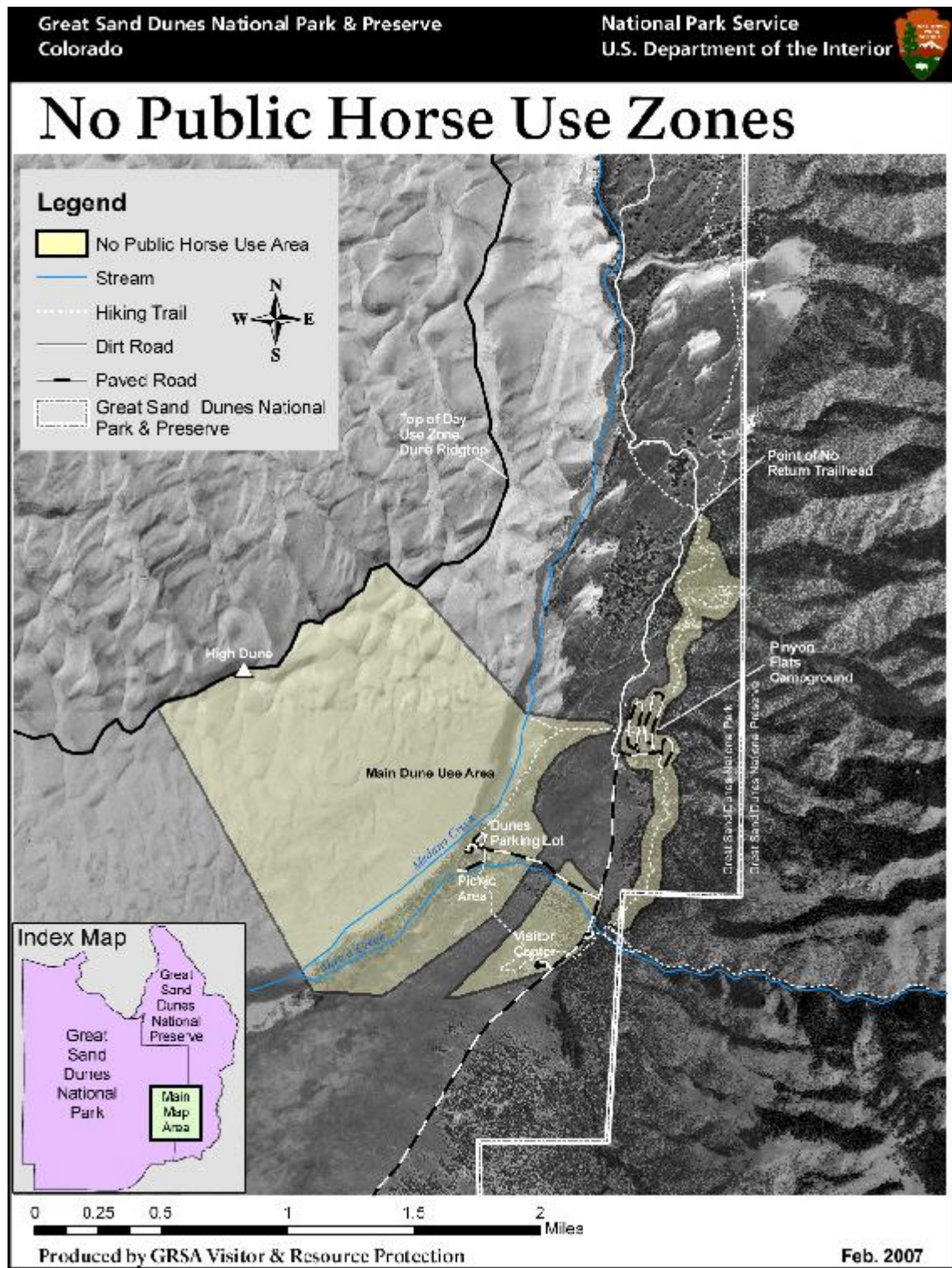
# Where can I walk my dog?



FILE: GRSA Pet Areas.mxd







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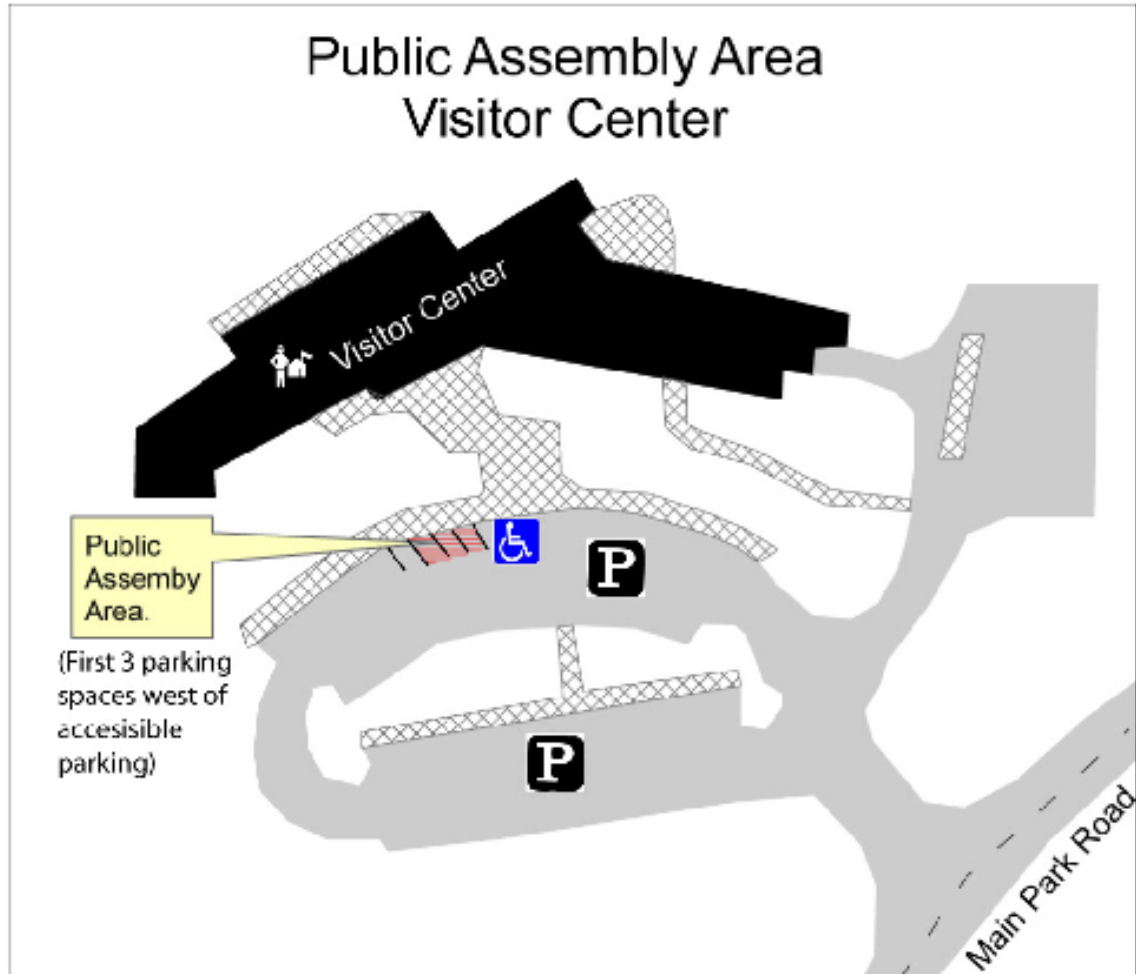


# Great Sand Dunes

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve



## Legend

- Public Assembly Area
- Sidewalk
- Paved Area
- Visitor Center



0 50 100 150 200 Feet

## Great Sand Dunes

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Great Sand Dunes National Park &amp; Preserve



Public Assembly Area  
Dunes Parking Lot

