



Prairie Sun

The official park guide for Agate Fossil Beds and Scotts Bluff National Monuments and Fort Laramie National Historic Site

Volume 3, 2012



Your Wyo-braska National Park Sites

Welcome to the heart of the Great Plains, and to three jewels of the National Park System! Scotts Bluff National Monument, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, and Agate Fossil Beds National Monument all tell facets of the marvelous story of life here.

You are at one of the great crossroads of the American West. Places older and wilder than myth or movie have ever portrayed, where ecological and cultural pageants unfolded on a grand scale. It's a landscape that 20 million years ago looked like the Serengeti plains of Africa. Where a short 150 years ago western pioneers, military troops, cattle ranchers, scientists, and sovereign Native American peoples collided to form the modern United States.

What awaits you as you visit these three parks? At Agate Fossil Beds National Monument you can enjoy hiking trails through mixed-grass prairie to the locations of great bone beds of fossilized mammals uncovered by paleontologists in the early 1900s. Or, view the Cook Gallery which features displays of Indian artifacts that were gifts from Red Cloud to James Cook.

At Fort Laramie National Historic Site, park rangers dressed in reproduction historic clothing provide visitors the opportunity to step back in time. During your visit you might come in contact with fur traders, emigrants, laundresses, soldiers and officer wives as well as many other characters from the Fort's colorful past. A buffalo hide tipi exhibit dominates the visitor center museum.

Scotts Bluff National Monument, known in historical times as the "Sentinel on the Plains," guided travelers on the Oregon, California and Mormon Pioneer Trails. The park offers Ranger-led programs and shuttle rides to the summit for spectacular views. You will enjoy the

collection of original paintings of noted artist William Henry Jackson as he documented the westward migration.

Opportunities await our young visitors as well. We invite young people (or the young at heart) ages four to 90 to participate in a series of National Park Service Junior Ranger Programs. By completing fun educational activities at each park site, kids learn about the site and how to protect it for future generations. The Junior Ranger will then receive a badge from each site.

So come on, join us and embrace this rich heritage. Stay awhile and explore what we have to offer. Landmark Country, Indian Country, Fossil Country; it is all here. And while you are here, take time to visit other area attractions, many of which are listed on the back page of this publication.

Be safe and enjoy!

James Hill, Superintendent
Agate Fossil Beds National Monument

Mitzi Frank, Superintendent
Fort Laramie National Historic Site

Ken Mabery, Superintendent
Scotts Bluff National Monument

General Park Rules and Regulations

- Pets must be kept on a leash, under physical control and may not be left unattended or taken into park buildings.
- Beware of stinging insects, especially in late summer and early fall.
- Please watch your footing on the stairways in the historic buildings and as you walk the grounds and hiking trails.
- Smoking, eating and drinking are prohibited in all buildings.
- Removal of natural and historic objects is prohibited.
- Fireworks are not allowed within the park boundaries.
- Smoking is not allowed on hiking trails.
- Do not harass park wildlife.
- First aid is available. Contact any employee or ask for assistance at the information desk at the visitor center.
- A complete list of park regulations and additional safety information is available at the visitor center.

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Looking for Junior Rangers!



Every park has a badge waiting for someone to earn it. Ask for the Junior Ranger Activity book in the visitor center and start your adventure. Finish the required activities and take the pledge to earn your own badge. Collect them from the almost 400 National Park Service sites located throughout the country. Check for special Junior Ranger programs at each park too.

There is even more! If you are fascinated by fossils or like to gaze at the night sky, ask for the Junior Paleontologist and Junior Ranger Night Explorer Activity books.



National Park Service
Department of the Interior

Agate Fossil Beds



The Horse – An Enduring Symbol of the West



Along with dogs and cats, the horse is perhaps one of human kind's best animal friends. In fact, it is not surprising that when horses first appeared on the High Plains of North America, startled Dakota tribes called the mysterious beings "sunka wakan" or sacred dogs. They soon more than deserved their admiration – allowing semi-woodland tribes to permanently move out onto the prairies to harvest their mainstay, the buffalo (or bison), as never before. A new era began of fabled, mounted warriors cruising the plains in search of buffalo, and asserting their dominance over neighboring tribes.

Agate Fossil Beds is proud to temporarily share with the Smithsonian Museum one of their prized possessions from the Cook Collection for a special exhibit created in honor of the horse, and its place in the "Horse Culture" of American Indians. The park has loaned the historic American Horse club for a special exhibit at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington D.C. called "A Song for the Horse Nation." This club was used by young American Horse in 1866 in the defeat of Lt. Fetterman's forces along the Bozeman Trail in present day Wyoming (a location preserved as Fort Phil Kearney State Historic Site).

Had Custer not topped the lopsided casualty figures ten years later on the Little Bighorn, this would represent one of the greater U.S. military defeats on the Western Frontier. It certainly helped establish Red Cloud's reputation, as well as that of another younger warrior named Crazy Horse.

The equine saga in the fossil record also provides many fascinating twists and turns. After a long evolution from tiny forest dweller to thundering plains grazer, the horse vanished from North America. When Spanish conquistadores eventually brought their descendants back in the 1500s they ultimately escaped or were acquired by indigenous tribes, who jealously guarded their spread to others who might gain an advantage. After the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, in which many horses were forcefully liberated from their colonial landlords, it still took about a hundred years until they finally reached the northern plains in some abundance.

Following its stay in the nation's capital, this exhibit will travel to various venues around the country ranging from Indianapolis to Austin to Los Angeles, where perhaps millions of viewers might profit from its beauty and historical significance. An overview is also available at <http://nmai.si.edu/home/>.



Our Park Partner In Northwest Nebraska Hudson-Meng Bison Kill Visitor Center



The Hudson-Meng Bison Kill Visitor Center interprets the largest extinct bison bonebed in the world and one of the most important discoveries of Archaeology and Paleontology in North America. Hidden beneath the prairie of the Oglala National Grassland in northwestern Nebraska are the bones of up to 600 *Bison antiquus* that are 10,000 years old. Explore the mystery of why these ancient bison died and the role humans played in their deaths.

The mystery of what may have happened to the bison has sparked lively discussions since the bonebed was discovered by a rancher during the 1970s. Initial studies by Dr. Larry Agenbroad theorized that it was a single kill event of up to 600 bison. In the 1990s after excavating a different area of the bonebed, Dr. Larry Todd theorized it was the result of different events, such as multiple hunts, or a natural incident such as fire or a winter blizzard. Beginning in 2006 Dr. Mark Muniz has been excavating and studying the bonebed and other nearby sites. He theorizes that recent cultural data findings link kill events to domestic campsites which show how the entire valley was used time and again for hunting, shelter, and water by ancient peoples.

Different Agencies, Different Missions, Working Together

Don't be surprised if you see a National Park Service ranger at the visitor center at Hudson Meng, or Forest Service personnel at Agate Fossil Beds. Even though the two agencies have different missions, a Service First agreement allows them to work together to enhance experiences for all our collective guests.

Come visit Hudson Meng and see active archaeological excavations in progress, while you take time to explore the unique, beautiful area and create your own theories. Located 19 miles NW of Crawford, NE and open 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. – Memorial Day to October 1. Visit www.fs.fed.us/r2/nebraska or call (308) 432-0300 for more information or to schedule a tour. School groups and special tours are available year-round.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Park Hours

Summer: 8:00 - 6:00
Winter: 8:00 - 4:00

Trails are open from dawn till dusk, year round

Visitor Center is closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Park Mailing Address

Agate Fossil Beds
National Monument
301 River Road
Harrison NE 69346

Phone

(308) 436-9760 or
(308) 668- 2211

Email

AGFO_ranger_activities@nps.gov

Website

www.nps.gov/agfo



www.facebook.com/pages/Agate-Fossil-Beds-National-Monument



Things to Do

Agate Fossil Beds is a fee free park

- Check out the exhibits in the Visitor Center (Miocene mammal fossils; Cook Collection artifacts).
- Watch the 12 minute movie “The Fossil Hills”.
- Walk on one or both trails.
- Kids, earn your Junior Ranger badge.
- Attend a ranger program .

Summer Activities

Daily: Walks or Talks with a Ranger as staffing permits.

On most weekends, **Traditional Cultural Demonstrators** will be working in the visitor center. Call or e-mail for additional dates.

May 26 -28	Sandy Swallow-Morgan
June 8 - 10	Genevieve Bluebird
June 22 - 24	Floyd Nez
June 29, 30 and July 1	Carol Snow
July 13 - 15	Lynn Burnette
August 10-12	Jhon Goes In Center



Annual Events

- May 20 2:00 Attend a **Paleontologist Talk** with South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln paleontologists in the Visitor Center.
- May 20 After the talk, rangers will assist visitors in viewing the **Annular Eclipse** with a sun funnel.
- June 2- 10 **Nebraska Wildflower Week:** Rangers will offer morning wildflower walks as staffing permits or walk on your own using plant signs on the trail.
- June 3 2:00 **Wildflower Talk** with Lue Jensen and Wildflower walk with Lue and a ranger after the talk.
- June 5 Afternoon: watch the **Transit of Venus** with solar glasses, provided at park, and go on a night hike with a ranger.
- June 16 Starting at dusk, **Night Sky program** with Ranger Anne at Fort Robinson State Park near Crawford, NE .
- July 21 Starting at dusk, **Night Sky program** with Ranger Anne at Fort Robinson State Park near Crawford, NE.
- July 28 **Agate Fossil Beds Summer Event**, daytime speakers, artists, then view the award winning documentary “The City Dark” and enjoy the Night Sky.
- August 11 Starting at dusk, **Night Sky program** with Agate Fossil Beds and Scotts Bluff rangers at Wildcat Hills Nature Center south of Scottsbluff, NE.
- Sept. 14, 15 **Star Party** at Agate Fossil Beds National Monument with Panhandle Astronomy Club, afternoon and nighttime activities.
- Oct. 13 or 20 Celebration of **3rd Annual National Fossil Day** and 20th Birthday party for Agate Fossil Beds Visitor Center.
- Dec. 26 **Boxing Day Open House**--reminiscent of gatherings held at Agate Springs Ranch.
- Feb. 16, 2013 **Great Backyard Bird Count**--Use Agate Fossil Beds as your backyard.
- April 21-27, 2013 **National Park Week**
- April 27, 2013 **National Junior Ranger Day**

Check the Agate Fossil Beds website, visit Facebook, or call to confirm dates and times.

Wonders of the Night

Perceptions change. What is beautiful and wonderful during the day is no longer visible at night. Come join us on special evenings to enjoy the beautiful and wonderful things to see at night as well as some daytime wonders! Gaze with us at the wonders of our universe. View the Milky Way, galaxies, nebulas and stars and other planets in our solar system with telescopes and the naked eye.

Agate has a terrific night sky with very little light pollution. Our park uses night-sky friendly lighting to help limit light pollution and energy costs. Lights are shielded to aim the light where it’s needed instead of glaring in eyes or escaping into space. This also helps preserve our native plants and wildlife in their proper habitat.

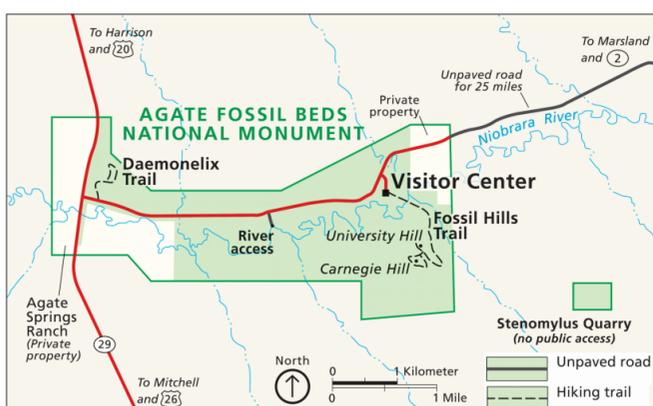
Daytime Night Sky programs include solar eclipse viewing and the transit of Venus. Rangers at Agate Fossil Beds have worked with students and visitors to produce an interactive play entitled, “The Rescue of Andromeda.” There are no spectators as even the audience has a role.

To the right Cetus, a constellation in the night sky as well as a sea creature from the Greek myth of Andromeda, comes alive...



Oregon Trail Museum Association supplies a variety of items on the topics featured at Agate Fossil Beds National Monument. Books about James Cook, the Miocene mammals, fossil exploration and Native American culture supplement the information in the visitor center. Posters, magnets and pins are also found in the book sales area. This year’s featured book is “A Song for the Horse Nation” from the Museum of the American Indian.

Their primary function continues to be the support of park interpretive and related visitor service activities. OTMA memberships are available by contacting Oregon Trail Museum Association, Box 27, Gering, NE 69361 or by calling 308-436-9715.



Trail Name

Miles

Fossil Hills	2.7
with Bone Cabin Loop	3.7
Daemonelix	1
All mileages are round trip	
Trails are paved except the optional Bone Cabin Loop	
Bicycling on the trails is prohibited.	
Trails are open from sunrise to sunset.	
Be aware of snakes, take water and hat.	

Fort Laramie



Crossroads of a Nation Moving West

Fort William, the first “Fort Laramie”, was constructed here in 1834. This small, cottonwood-stockaded fort was established to trade with the Northern Plains tribes. In 1841, this deteriorating log fort was replaced by a new, larger adobe structure named Fort John. Fort John became an important stop for thousands of emigrants on Oregon, California and Mormon Trails.

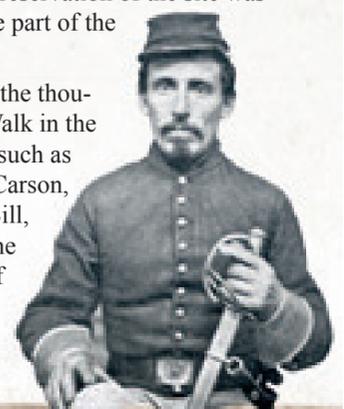
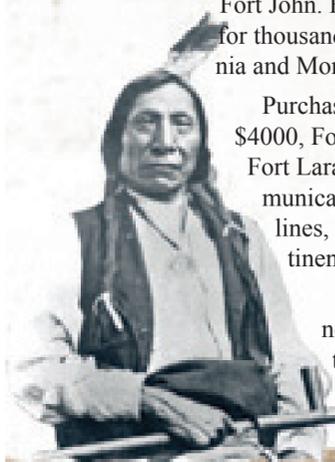
Purchased by the Government in 1849 for \$4000, Fort John, was “officially” renamed Fort Laramie. Fort Laramie became a communications and transportation hub as stage lines, the Pony Express, and the transcontinental telegraph passed through.

Fort Laramie hosted several treaty negotiations with Native Americans, the most famous of which were the Horse Creek Treaty and the still controversial treaty of 1868.

Ultimately, Fort Laramie served as a major base of military operations against the Northern tribes who fought desperately to defend their homeland against further incursions by an ever-expanding nation.

As the Indian Wars came to a close, Fort Laramie’s importance diminished. Abandoned and sold at public auction in 1890, the old fort nearly succumbed to the ravages of time. Preservation of the site was insured in 1938 when Fort Laramie became part of the national park system.

Come visit the past. Hear the voices of the thousands who passed through Fort Laramie. Walk in the footsteps of the characters of the old west such as Red Cloud, Spotted Tail, Jim Bridger, Kit Carson, Generals Sherman and Sheridan, Buffalo Bill, Wild Bill Hickock and Calamity Jane. Come see Fort Laramie... truly the “crossroads of a nation moving west”.



Park Library

Are you looking for information on a relative who traveled on the overland trails or who served in the military at Fort Laramie?

The park librarian will gladly assist you with your search. Our database currently contains records on nearly 35,000 individuals.

We are constantly updating the files. If you have information on a relative who was associated with Fort Laramie, we would be glad to include them our database.

Check at the Visitor Center for hours of operation and directions to the Library. Scholars requiring extended research time should contact the librarian in advance to schedule an appointment.

Join The Fort Laramie Historical Association

Benefits of an annual \$20.00 membership are:

- 15% savings on regular-priced items at our Bookstore & Gift Shop
- 10% savings at all other participating National Park stores
- Post Bugler – an FLHA annual newsletter
- e-Bugler – a monthly electronic newsletter with information on events, history, tidbits, and sales
- Invitation to our Annual Membership Meeting and a voice in FLHA decision making
- Satisfaction of knowing you are helping to preserve Fort Laramie National Historic Site



Alfred Jacob Miller’s *Moses Harris*

175th Anniversary of Alfred Jacob Miller’s Journey West

In 1837 artist Alfred Jacob Miller accompanied an eccentric Scottish adventurer, Sir William Drummond Stewart, on an expedition to the American West. Fortunately for history, Stewart’s expedition travelled with the annual trapper’s caravan west along the route that would later become famous as the Oregon Trail.

Miller documented the landscapes and peoples that he encountered in his paintings and drawings. During their trek Miller’s party stopped and he sketched many of the famous landmarks of the old west including Chimney Rock, Devils Gate and Fort William (the first Fort Laramie). Miller documented activities such as buffalo hunting and the camp life of many of the native peoples he encountered. His trip culminated in his visit to one of the last of the large fur trappers rendezvous which was held on the Green River that year.

Miller’s trip resulted in over 166 sketches. He later developed many of these into oil paintings depicting favorite episodes of journey. Miller’s works provided people living in the east and Europe with some of their earliest glimpses of scenes of the west.



Park Hours

Visitor Center

Summer: 8:00-7:00

Winter: 8:00-4:30

Grounds open sunrise to sunset

Park Mailing Address

965 Gray Rocks Road
Fort Laramie, Wyoming 82212

Phone

(307) 837-2221

Email

FOLA_Information@nps.gov

Website

www.nps.gov/fofa



www.facebook.com/
FortLaramieNHS



www.twitter.com/Fort-
LaramieNPS

Things to Do

- Start your visit in the visitor center. Explore the exhibits and visit our book store and gift shop.
- Watch the 18 minute video on the history of Fort Laramie
- Visit the park’s ten restored and refurbished historic buildings. See the ruins and foundations of many others.
- Take a guided tour with a Ranger or attend a cannon firing demonstration.
- Kids - become a Junior Ranger and receive a badge - become a Junior Ranger at Fort Laramie and Guernsey State Park and receive a challenge coin - Ask at the visitor center for details.
- Visit with a ranger dressed in period clothing around the grounds and in the historic buildings

Park Passes

7-Day Pedestrian/ Motorcycle (per person)	\$3.00
Annual Bi-Park Pass (Ft. Laramie & Scotts Bluff)	\$15.00
Interagency Annual Pass	\$80.00
Senior Pass (US Citizens, 62 or over)	\$10.00
Access Pass (US Citizens, Permanent Disability)	Free



Summer Activities

Living History Programs:

Each day during the summer months, park staff dressed in reproduction historic clothing provide interpretive information for park visitors from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The stories and facts they share bring the fort to life and aid visitors in gaining a greater understanding of 19th century life.

Interpretive Programs and Ranger Led Tours:

Interpretive talks, covering a variety of topics related to Fort Laramie's history, last approximately 20 minutes each and are held daily during the summer months at 10:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Hour-long Ranger - guided tours of the fort are scheduled twice daily, at 10:45 a.m. and at 2:45 p.m.

Please check at the visitor center for a daily schedule of program availability, topics, locations and details.



Historic Weapons Demonstrations:

Wednesday through Sunday, park staff will present a historic weapons program in the black powder demonstration area, north of the visitor center at 12:30 p.m.

Programs vary according to staffing but include demonstrations on the history and operation of the 1841 Mountain Howitzer or a discussion of the evolution of American military long arms.



Soldier's Bar:

Join us for a cool, refreshing drink and for lots of good conversation in the historic Soldiers' Bar, open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Bar-tenders serve up sarsaparilla, old-fashioned root beer, cream soda and ginger beer. **No alcoholic beverages are available.**

Please help keep the park clean and return empty drink bottles to the Soldiers' Bar.

Annual Events

June 15-17, 2012. **Alfred Jacob Miller Fur Trade Event.** The 175th anniversary of artist Alfred Jacob Miller's trip to the Rocky Mountain West will be commemorated over Father's Day Weekend. From the evening of Friday, June 15, to noon of Sunday, June 17, 2012, the Site will host artists, speakers and a fur trader's encampment to recreate what Miller would have seen in 1837.

Amateur artists and photographers are encouraged to bring their sketch pads and cameras. For those who want coaching or advice on how to capture just the right image, artists with experience photographing and drawing early western scenes will be on hand in the living history camp. Activities for children will also be provided.



July 4, 2012: **Old Fashioned Fourth of July Celebration.** Fort Laramie will celebrate Independence Day in genuine frontier style. Old fashioned games, a Native American warrior program, equestrian drill team, Living History demonstrations and special activities will make Fort Laramie the place to be on Independence Day. The fort invites the public to bring their friends and families and plan to have a fun filled day. Admission to the park on the Fourth of July is free.

July 21: **Night Sky Program.** Join us for a "walk among the stars" This special star gazing program begins at 8:30 p.m. on the historic parade ground.

Your guide will take you on a tour of the bright stars, constellations, and visible planets. Science fact, sky lore, myths and legends make this a wonderfully informative and entertaining family program. Weather permitting; we will view nebula, star clusters, galaxies, the Moon, Jupiter, and Mars through telescopes. Deep space objects we will look at include the Ring Nebula, Andromeda Galaxy, Globular Cluster in Hercules, Lagoon Nebula, and Albireo.

Observing will last until the last stargazer falls asleep or the sun comes up - whichever comes first.

August 11, 2012: **Annual Moonlight Tour.** Fort Laramie National Historic Site will hold its annual "Moonlight Tour" on Saturday, August 11th, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Traditionally, the "Moonlight Tour" is one of our most popular summer events. During this special program visitors will encounter many of the characters associated with the rich history of Fort Laramie. Tour guides will take groups of visitors through a series of lantern lit vignettes depicting life at Fort Laramie in the 19th century.

December 16, 2012: **Christmas on the Frontier.** From 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. the park will hold its annual Christmas event. Visitors will be entertained in the mess room of the historic 1874 Cavalry Barracks. Park staff, dressed in period clothing, will present skits illustrating some of the more memorable Christmases celebrated at the historic fort.

April 21-27, 2013: **National Park Week** is the annual celebration of the nation's parks. All National Park Service site are free during the week.

April 27, 2013: **National Junior Ranger Day** will give kids a chance to participate in a variety of activities that will help them learn more about the parks and earn their Junior Ranger badges.

Scotts Bluff



A Landmark for Many Peoples

Scotts Bluff has stood as a landmark for innumerable people. From the early natives to modern motorists, it has been a beacon. It marks the North Platte River for those traveling north or south. It is the beginning or ending of the plains for those traveling east or west. It is a puzzle with its different geologic layers, an obstacle for roads and trails, a photo-

graphic opportunity in its many lights and a repository of both natural and cultural history.

Discover the different facets of Scotts Bluff National Monument as you look through the museum, walk the trails or drive up the road to the summit.

The Road To The Top - 75 Years Strong

One of the most popular activities at Scotts Bluff National Monument is driving to the top of the bluff, through the only vehicular tunnels in the state and looking out over the plains. Although the road and tunnels impress visitors, most people are unaware of the amazing amount of work that went into building them or what having the jobs meant to the men who did the work.

likelihood of rock falls, several which delayed work while they were cleared, and at least one person's fall from the bluff proved fatal. During the five months the CWA enrollees worked on the road, they painstakingly dug the first two tunnels by hand while trucks hauled the rock and dirt down the hill. They also rough graded the road to above the second tunnel and started digging the third tunnel. Simultaneously the summit parking area was being graded by hand because the men were required to walk to the top each day and carry their tools.



Handcarving the first tunnel

After Scotts Bluff National Monument was designated in 1919, there were few improvements to the site for another 14 years. During a visit in 1931, National Park Service director Horace Albright verbally approved construction of a road to the top of the summit and two years later work was begun by the Civil Works Administration

(CWA), one of several work relief programs of the Great Depression.

In a time when many people were out of jobs, the CWA provided funding for over 200 men in the Scottsbluff area to start building the new "pass-to-summit" road. The project abounded with challenges for the engineers and road builders. The bluff's clay and sandstone erodes very easily and the use of explosives for excavating tunnels through such soft rock was not practical. Hazards of working on the bluff included the

Due to lack of funding, little work was done between April 1934 and April 1935. Then the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) arrived and set up their camp in the badlands north of the bluff ready to work. They started laboring on the road, but were soon diverted to other projects throughout the monument.

An outside contractor from Scottsbluff was responsible for completing the grading of the road and excavation of the third tunnel in 1936. They also lined the tunnels with gunite, a "shot" type of dry mix concrete. A company out of Rapid City, South Dakota paved the road in 1937 and poured the concrete guard walls. The contract stipulated they had 50 days in which to complete the 1.6 miles of road. With up to 212 men on the job working in two shifts each day, the road was finally ready in late summer.

"Road to Top of Bluff Is Open for Autoists Today" was the headline in the Scottsbluff Star-Herald on September 19, 1937. The next day the newspaper boasted that 600 cars made the trip to the top of the bluff. In fact, the road proved so popular that the top parking area had to be enlarged in 1940 due to traffic jams.



Cars on summit road in 1939

The construction of the road and tunnels required four years, hundreds of laborers and close to \$200,000. They excavated tons of rock by hand and poured thousands of yards of concrete. Although repairs have been made to the road over the intervening years, they have been minor. The men who labored on the road were dedicated and hardworking; they were glad to have jobs in tough times and proved it by the enduring legacy they left.



Early auto crushed by rock slide before road was paved



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Park Hours

Summer: 8:00-7:00
Summit Road: 8:00-6:30

Winter: 8:00-5:00
Summit Road: 8:00-4:30

Grounds open sunrise to sunset

Park Mailing Address

P.O. Box 27
190276 Old Oregon Trail
Gering, NE 69341

Phone
(308) 436-9700

Email
SCBL_ranger_activities@nps.gov

Website
www.nps.gov/scbl



www.facebook.com/scottsbluffnps



www.twitter.com/Scotts-BluffNPS

Things to Do

- Check out the exhibits in the Visitor Center
- Watch the 12 minute video on the Oregon Trail
- Walk on one or all five of the paved trails
- Listen to the cell phone tour on the Oregon Trail and the Saddle Rock Trail
- Drive to the top of the bluff and gaze at Chimney Rock, Laramie Peak and other sights
- Kids can earn their Jr. Ranger badge
- Attend a ranger program or special event (listed on the next page)

Park Passes

7-Day Pedestrian/ Motorcycle (per person)	\$3.00
7-Day Auto (per vehicle)	\$5.00
Annual Bi-Park Pass (Ft. Laramie & Scotts Bluff)	\$15.00
Interagency Annual Pass	\$80.00
Senior Pass (US Citizens, 62 or over)	\$10.00
Access Pass (US Citizens, Permanent Disability)	Free

Oregon Trail Museum Bookstore

The Oregon Trail Museum Association (OTMA) offers educational books, toys and other items related to the historic trails, emigrant travelers and natural resources of Scotts Bluff National Monument. OTMA has continually provided sales items and support to the park since 1956.



Summer Activities

From living history on the Oregon Trail to ranger walks and talks, interpretive programs will open your eyes to the rich human and natural history of Scotts Bluff National Monument.

Daily:

10 a.m. – 4 p.m.: Visit with a ranger in clothing from the past. They may be a fur trader, an emigrant from the Oregon Trail or a worker from the Civilian Conservation Corps. If you see a sign designating a date in the past as you approach, it is time to leave modern times behind. The character you meet will believe you and they are from that time period and they will not be able to answer questions about anything later.

Fridays:

8 p.m.: Join a ranger in the amphitheater for an evening of fun and new experiences.

Saturdays:

10 a.m.: A ranger will give a walk or talk. Be prepared to discover the importance of the geology of the bluffs, the variety of flowers that bloom on the plains or more about the human history of the area.

4 p.m.: Guest speakers take the spotlight as they present programs on topics ranging from the Plains Indians to the Orphan Train.

Sundays:

4 p.m.: During June the popular “Music at the Monument” series will set toes tapping in the amphitheater as different performers liven the air with their tunes.

All programs are free with a valid park entrance pass.



Annual Events

June 20, 2012: **The Pony Express Re-ride:** Witness a rider dash up on their horse, leap off, grab the Mochilla, put in on a fresh horse, mount and ride on just as in 1860.

July 4, 2012: **Fireworks Viewing.** The park will remain open until 10:30 for visitors to hike to the top of the bluff to watch the Jaycees fireworks.

July 12-15, 2012: **Oregon Trail Days** is a community wide celebration and the park participates in the parade and by hosting the Bike Hill Climb on Saturday morning.



September 29, 2012: **National Public Lands Day** is a fee free day and a day to volunteer at a national park.

December 1, 2012: **Christmas on the Prairie** is a chance to learn how Christmas was celebrated in the 19th century as you and your children make old fashioned ornaments while listening to live music of the period. This event is held in conjunction with the Farm and Ranch Museum’s High Plains Christmas and North Platte Valley Museum’s Christmas Tree Celebration.

Mid-December 2012: For one weekend the summit road will be open after dark for holiday lights viewing from the top of the bluff.

February 15-16, 2013: Join a ranger for **The Great Backyard Bird Count.** This event is for beginning and experienced birders who will be driven out to an area to identify and count birds as part of this nationwide effort to track where and how many birds are on the continent.

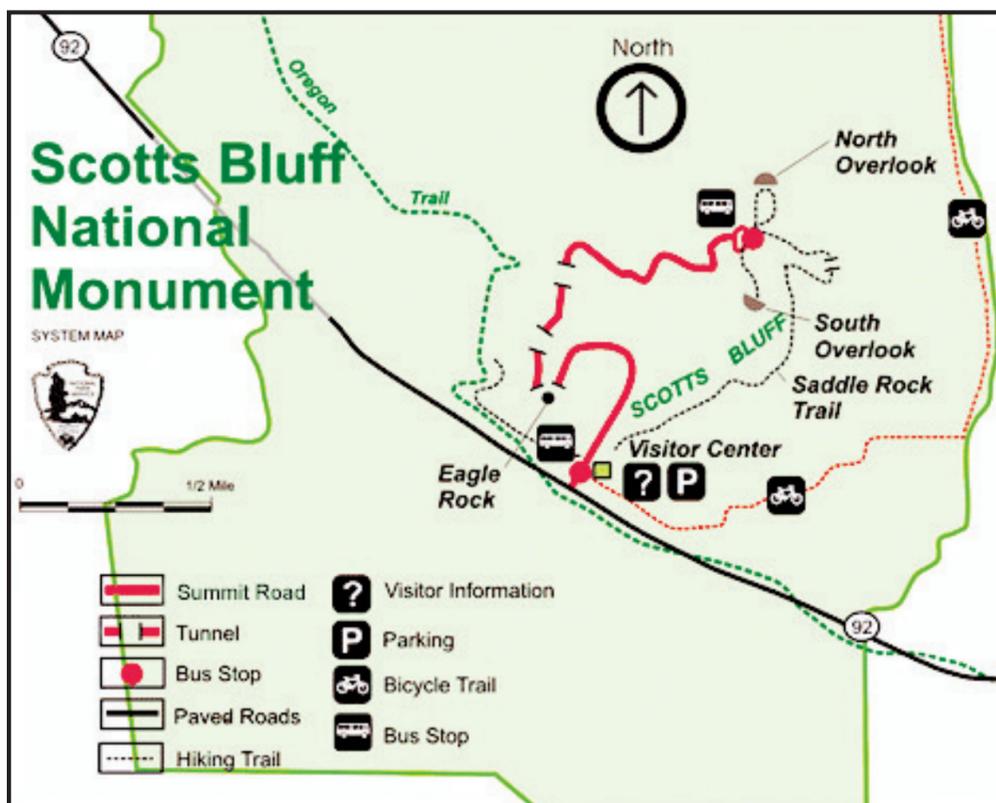
April 21-27, 2013: **National Park Week** is the annual celebration of the nation’s parks. All National Park Service site are free during the week and there are many events several events planned each year. Below are the events held at Scotts Bluff.

April 18, 2013: **Monumental Clean-up** leads up to Earth Day as volunteers help clean graffiti off of rocks and spiff up the park

April 21, 2013: The opening of “**The Artist’s Perception**” Art Show. There will be art in various media from members of the North Platte Valley Art Guild. Visitors will have a chance to vote on their favorite pieces during the three weeks of the art show.

April 27, 2013: **National Junior Ranger Day** will give kids a chance to participate in a variety of activities that will help them learn more about the park, the night sky and fossils and earn their Junior Ranger badges.

April 28, 2013: Put together a team to **Spring Up the Bluff!** People of all ages are invited to participate in this relay race where teams can walk or run and be composed of men, women or both.



Trail Name	Miles
Oregon Trail	1/2
Saddle Rock Trail.....	1.6
Prairie View Trail (bike)	1.2
North Overlook	1/2
South Overlook	1/8
Summit Road	1.6

All mileages are one way

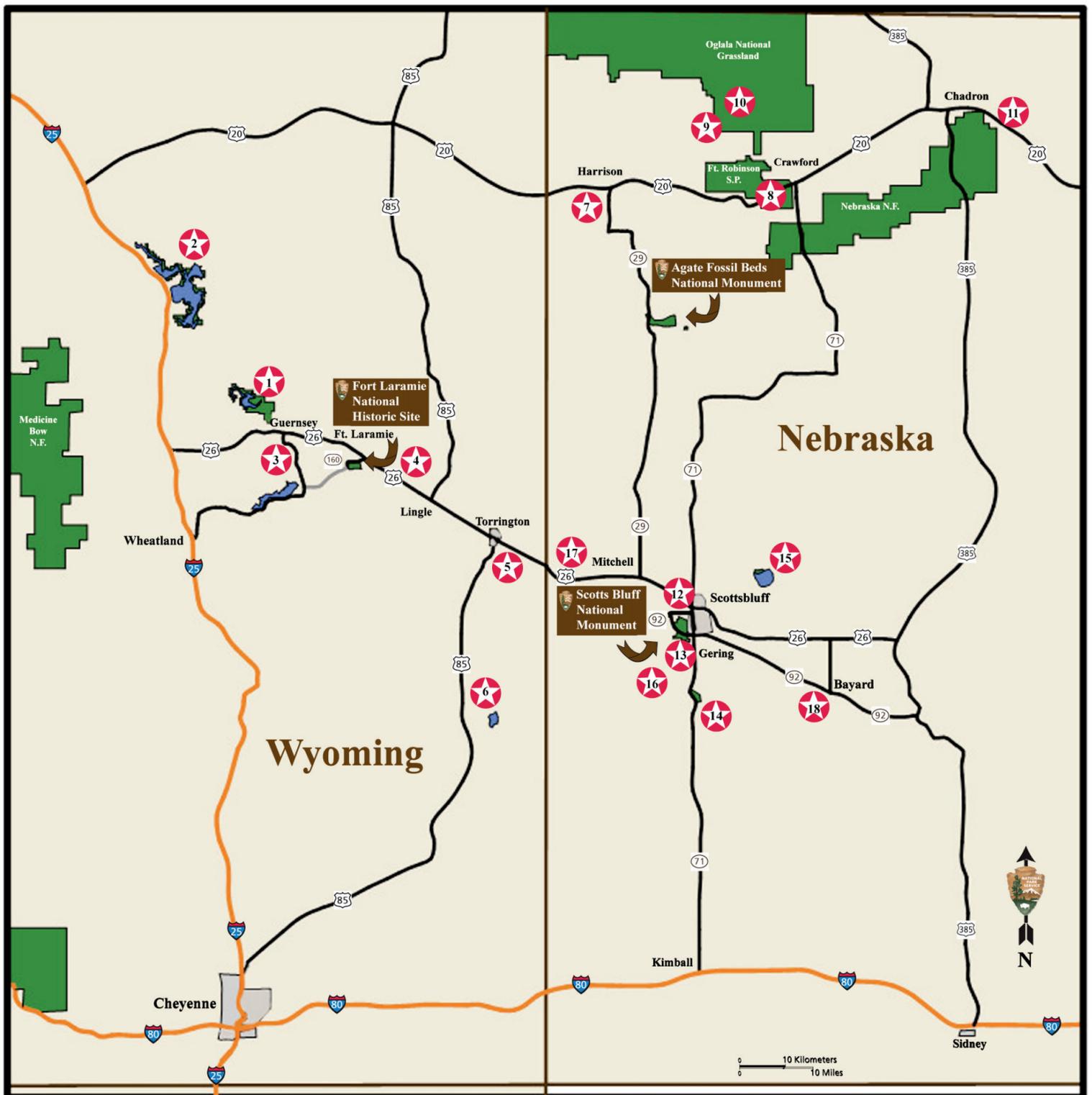
Trails are paved except the portion of the Oregon Trail that overlays the historic trail

Walking or bicycling on the Summit Road is prohibited while road is open for vehicle use.

Trails are open from sunrise to sunset

Beware of snakes, stop until they move away or turn around.

Wyo-Braska Regional Map



Area Highlights

From the Fort Laramie Area

Agate Fossil Beds National Monument	82
Scotts Bluff National Monument	52
(1) Guernsey State Park	15
(2) Glendo State Park	48
(3) Register Cliff and Wagon Ruts	15
(4) Western History Center and Museum	8
(5) Homesteader's Museum	25
(6) Hawk Springs State Recreation Area	47

From the Agate Fossil Beds Area

Scotts Bluff National Monument	50
Fort Laramie National Historic Site	82
(7) Harrison Museum	25
(8) Fort Robinson State Park	48
(8) Trailside Museum	48
(9) Hudson Meng Bison Kill Site	72
(10) Toadstool Park	75
(11) Museum of the Fur Trade	79

From the Scotts Bluff Area

Agate Fossil Beds National Monument	50
Fort Laramie National Historic Site	52
(12) Riverside Discovery Center(zoo)	3
(13) North Platte Valley Museum	2
(13) Farm and Ranch Museum	1
(14) Wildcat Hills State Recreation Area	14
(15) Lake Minatare	16
(16) Robidoux Pass National Hist. Landmark	5
(17) 1851 Horse Creek Treaty Site	18
(18) Chimney Rock National Historic Site	22

Area Travel Tips

- Temperatures over 100° in the summer and below zero in the winter are not uncommon. Weather in “Wyo-Braska” can change quickly. Stay informed about the daily weather forecast and always be alert for dangerous conditions. Take advantage of the 511 road reports.
- Be prepared and bring plenty of drinking water with you.
- The regional habitat supports rattlesnakes. Use caution when hiking.
- Be aware that distances are deceptive! In the wide open spaces of the west, it is often many miles between towns, always be prepared by having plenty of fuel for your vehicle, and plan meals and rest stops accordingly.
- Know that cell phone coverage is often spotty in the area.
- Always buckle up and drive safely.

