

a voice for wild North Dakota places

WILD BADLANDS

BADLANDS CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

BadlandsConservationAlliance.org

FOUNDED IN 1999.
INCORPORATED IN THE STATE OF
NORTH DAKOTA SEPTEMBER 2001.

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SPRING 2023 ISSUE No. 50

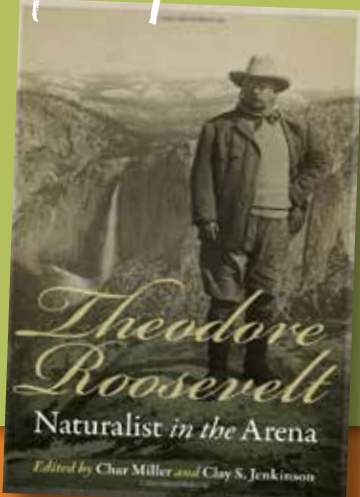
NEW Office!

Last autumn, after more than 20 years of relying on staff to work from home offices, BCA moved into a dedicated office for staff, as well as the use of meeting rooms and other

common spaces for board meetings, membership meetings, and coordinating activities. We are co-located with other like-minded groups including the Meadowlark Initiative and the ND Wildlife Federation, within the Bismarck offices of the ND Natural Resources Trust at 1605 East Capitol Avenue.



*Books
to
Inspire*



“I KNEW THE WILD RIVERS AND THE VACANT LAND WERE ABOUT TO VANISH FOREVER, AND THE MORE I CONSIDERED THE SUBJECT, THE BIGGER THE FOREVER LOOMED.”

- FREDERIC REMINGTON

Note:

Your membership matters! If your membership has lapsed, this will be the last issue of the newsletter you will receive.

Be sure to let us know if you wish to receive emails only by writing to us at BCA@BadlandsConservationAlliance.org

Visit the BCA website at BadlandsConservationAlliance.org for the most current information, announcements, and more.

“After more than thirty years I have at last arrived at the candor necessary to stand on this part of the earth that is so full of my own history and so much damaged by it, and ask: What is this place? What is in it? What is its nature? How should men live in it? What must I do? I have not found the answers, though I believe that in partial and fragmentary ways they have begun to come to me.” - Wendell Berry, *A Native Hill*

BADLANDS MAMMALS II: North Dakota Bighorns

by Dr. Robert Seabloom

In 2021, I wrote a bit about one of the Badlands' smaller charismatic denizens, the Ord's Kangaroo Rat. This time it's a much larger one, our Bighorn Sheep, its near extinction and recovery. The bighorn had its origin in the Old World during the last ice age. It is in the cattle family, the Bovidae, along with bison, mountain goats and a plethora of other Old World and domesticated species. They crossed to North America via the Bering Straits Land Bridge at the end of the Pleistocene, the oldest North American fossils having been dated at around 110,000 years. We don't know how long bighorns have existed in North Dakota but most fossil remains from Natural Trap Cave in northern Wyoming have been aged at 12,000 – 21,000 years before present. Erosional processes along the Little Missouri and Missouri Rivers in North Dakota would have been going on long enough to create the rugged habitat favored by the sheep. So, we could conclude that they were well-established and living along side of early Native American tribes as well, at least until the advent of white exploration and settlement in the early 19th century.

Discovery and Near Extinction



On May 25, 1805, the Lewis and Clark party was working up the Missouri River after spending the preceding winter with the Mandans. Clark's journal entry for that day included, "I walked on shore and killed a female Ibi or big horn animal in my absence Drewyer & Bratten killed two others, this animal is a species peculiar to this upper part of the Missouri, the head and horns of the male which Drewyer killed to day weighed 27 lbs. ---". This event occurred in the Badlands bluffs of the Missouri between the mouths of the Little Knife and White Earth Rivers just northwest of the present New Town. So, began the 100-year slide of this fascinating charismatic species to extirpation from North Dakota.



William Clark's sketch of a bighorn

Teddy Roosevelt hunted bighorns in the Little Missouri Badlands in the 1880's, but by that time the population had been so reduced by earlier adventurers he found them difficult to hunt. The last of the original bighorn population was killed along Magpie Creek west of the Killdeer Mountains in 1905.

Vernon Bailey, former chief biologist of the old Bureau of Biological Survey and author of his (1926) "A Biological Survey of North Dakota I. Physiography and Life Zones II. The Mammals," wrote in his bighorn account, "*In the destructive and constructive periods of the West, as it passed from savage to civilized life, the bighorn of this open and accessible area contributed its all. Besides its most savory of wild meats, its magnificent head and horns offered a highly prized trophy not often obtained in the low country or where hunting on horseback was possible. Whether for sport or profit there was always a high price on the head of the bighorn, and this spells the doom of any species.*" Similar events took place throughout the deserts, rough arid grasslands, and high country of the west, bringing about the near extinction of the species.



1895 - A couple of contributors to the demise of bighorns in North Dakota
North Dakota Historical Society

Habitat, Habitat, Habitat!

"Habitat, Habitat, Habitat!" This was the response a few years ago when a few of us were asked what the three main

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They knew we were watching!

factors are affecting North Dakota wildlife. And that certainly applies to bighorns. Bighorn researchers have denoted two principal components of bighorn habitat, foraging areas and escape terrain. Once, one of my students and I wanted to get a better look at a group of ewes foraging in the distance. So, we “bellied” closer, carefully keeping heads down and using tall grasses and shrubs as cover. When we were about 200 yards from the sheep, we decided to take a look, very carefully moving the cover aside. There they were, looking straight at us – they had known all the time! When real danger (like coyotes) threatens, the bighorns will take off from foraging to the nearest escape terrain, steep rugged terrain with at least an 80% slope and 10 meters vertical rise. A problem for much of North Dakota’s bighorn habitat is the distance of escape terrain from many foraging areas. So, while adults escape, many (up to 90%) of young lambs do not, providing tasty meals for local coyotes.

Once the sheep reach escape terrain there is usually little a potential predator can do about it. Bighorns are remarkably well adapted to utilization of their escape terrain. Their sharp-edged hooves with concave bottoms enable them to dig into steep slopes with tiny ledges unavailable to other animals. They are excellent jumpers, giving them the ability to achieve safety on the slopes before the predators arrive. So, while the adults may have a good chance for longevity, the picture for lambs is another story.



Escape terrain

Recruitment

Lamb survival is contingent on two major hurdles, predation (primarily coyotes) and disease. As mentioned above, proximity to escape terrain is essential and most foraging occurs within 300 meters of it. If foraging is too far out, the ewe might escape an attack, but the lamb is lunch. The second is if the lamb survives the summer, in the fall it is likely to contract lungworm-related pneumonia which has ravaged

bighorn populations throughout the west. It is carried by domestic sheep and goats, which are able to survive infection with little harm. I was told that some years ago goats were brought into the southern Badlands as an experiment to control leafy spurge. Within a year the southern Badlands bighorn population was essentially gone.

Introductions

Obviously, this is what got the process started in our state but consider all of the negotiations among the interested/affected regulatory entities. And then begins the complex planning process leading to capture, transport and release.

Unless handled very carefully, captured sheep get readily stressed, go into shock, and die (Capture Myopathy). Veterinary assistance is required.

High Expense – Helicopters, specialized personnel, telemetry, etc. don’t come cheap!

In 1956, North Dakota was one of the first states to attempt reestablishing bighorns within its boundary. After much negotiation sheep were captured and brought in from arid regions of British Columbia and in subsequent years from other western U.S. states as well. The population grew slowly or remained stable at about 320 animals. However, because of favorable reproduction and survival in recent years the state population may now be as high as 500 animals, according to ND Game and Fish Biologist Brett Wiedmann, who attributes the gain to recent reintroductions from habitats in Montana similar to North Dakota’s northern Badlands.



Moving sheep by helicopter - tranquilized, carefully wrapped, blindfolded

Once bighorns are released in favorable habitat they develop a high home range affinity and do not readily disperse. If some are to be used to “seed” new sites, they must be physically moved.

Interactions with humans

In the wild, bighorns are very shy and wary of any sort of human activity. Our studies in the Badlands indicated negative responses to oil development activity, including vehicles, low flying aircraft, drilling, etc. and resulting in denial of foraging habitat and lambing grounds. Routine activity by ranchers did not seem to affect their behavior.

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Along US-85, ND

Prolonged exposure to human activity, especially in park-like situations, can result in habituation, not good for sheep or people (although tourists love it), and leading to accidents, disease transmission, injuries, and a degraded wilderness experience. I've seen habituated sheep in South Dakota (Badlands National Park), Colorado (Front Range) and New Mexico (Pecos Wilderness). In the Pecos, full-curl rams would crowd around us, wanting to lick the salty sweat off our arms!

Harvest

In North Dakota, about 5 rams are harvested annually, via lottery or auction. Recently there were 19,000+ applicants for a once in a lifetime license. Maintaining a bighorn population based on license sales alone and some federal aid money certainly doesn't come close to covering the management requirements of the species. However, one license is set aside annually for auction by the Midwest Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation which provides funding for bighorn management in North Dakota. This year's auction tag raised \$135,000 and will go a long way in restoration of a once extirpated species to North Dakota.

Public Information and Acceptance

A frequent failing in the wildlife field has been in convincing the general public of the soundness of its conservation programs. Historically, wildlifers would much rather be out in the woods or prairies than making speeches in town halls. And that certainly applies to bighorn sheep as well as ducks or mulies. Why should a wealthy few be privileged to buy a tag when thousands of average folks have to take their chances on being drawn on the few remaining? Well, the answer, I think, was covered above. Furthermore, many fail to recall that in the late 19th century it was wealthy sportsmen who had the foresight to realize the imminent loss of the quarry they loved to hunt and had the means to do something about it. It was hunters like Teddy Roosevelt and George Bird Grinnell who founded the Audubon Society, Boone and Crocket Club, National Parks Conservation Association and others. They fought to prevent the extinction of the bison, obtained protection for Yellowstone National Park, helped found Glacier National Park, and the list goes on. Today many of the same organizations are still active, and newer ones are carrying on, including the Wild Sheep Foundation. Its quite a legacy, for which all of us who love wildlife and wild places should be grateful.

Dr. Bob Seabloom is one of the authors of **Mammals of North Dakota** (NDSU Press)

Seabloom's book **Mammals of North Dakota** is available for purchase at NDSU Press at <https://northdakotastate-ndus.nbsstore.net/mammals-of-north-dakota-2nd-edition-the>

Item from **North Dakota Outdoors**, October 2022



Lillian Crook, Autumn 2023

"In summer, the North Dakota Game and Fish Department documented for the first time bighorn sheep ewes leading their young through a wildlife crossing that runs under U.S. Highway 85 in western North Dakota. The trail camera photograph is significant because wildlife literature suggests ewes are less likely to use an underpass because they don't feel comfortable, fearing predators might be hiding in the passage. Yet, the photograph shows adults leading young safely through the crossing and instilling in the latter that the underpass is indeed safe. Plus, it keeps them off the busy highway, where a number of vehicle-bighorn accidents have been documented in the past."

MEMBER PROFILE

Jon Rask

The Newest Member of the Board



Jon Rask is a scientist whose research interests span the fields of astrobiology and space biology and focuses on the search for life on other planets and moons. Jon's interests in space exploration were sparked by observations he made as a child at the family farm southwest of Mandan, that centered on life's ability to survive the extreme conditions of North Dakota droughts and winters. During his time at NASA, Jon has led desert, hydrothermal, and polar field expeditions on six different continents that explored the coevolution of life and the Earth. He also led Spaceward Bound North Dakota, a teacher-centered scientific expedition that featured site visits in the Badlands.

Jon is also a farmer rancher in Morton County and sees first-hand the effects of climate change on the local environment. Throughout his career, Jon has championed the importance of training the next generation, preserving native ecosystems, learning from our rural communities, and emphasizing the critical role that food production plays on Earth and in space. Rask has received numerous NASA honor awards and is the recipient of the United States Antarctica Service Medal. His work has been featured by TEDx, museums, radio, and television, and is published in the proceedings of international conferences and scientific journals.

ANOTHER RECOMMENDED READ:

The Designed Landscape of the North Dakota Badlands: Weldon and Marjorie Gratton, Faithful Stewards and Genuine Collaborators, by Steve C. Marten. *North Dakota History*, v. 80, no. 2, Summer 2015. "Gratton's successful career as a landscape architect for the National Park Service [NPS] yields insight into the historical period in which he worked (1934-1976), and to the design methods he used to interpret the powerful sublime landscape of the North Dakota badlands we see today...Gratton (and other designers with whom he collaborated) deferred to the power and character of the natural setting...his peers, a cadre of young transient recruits at the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps and Works Progress Administration (WPA) project site...left modern visitors a lasting gift that communicates landscape heritage in a powerfully evocative way."

"Throughout the 1930s State Historical Society Superintendent Russell Reid showed great initiative as the driving force behind the Society's acquisition and development of parks and historic sites in all parts of North Dakota. Weldon Gratton maintained a close relationship to Reid, who served simultaneously as NPS 'procurement



officer' for CCC and WPA work in the state. There was clearly a meeting of their two minds on the way materials should be used to integrate design and construction into historic, naturalistic settings without detracting from the main feature. Gratton's design proposals, embodied in design drawings retained by the State Historical Society, reflect that shared understanding. A skilled landscape architect can 'improve' a natural landscape without visitors realizing that a designed intervention has been made. Though Reid held his own personal ideas about design, there can be little question that Gratton explored design and detailing in ways that contributed to Reid's growth in understanding landscape design."

2022 Annual Meeting Potluck That Leads To Hope

by Rick Watson



Linda Suchy, David Schwalbe, Bonnie Palacek, Lillian Crook, Liz Lucas, Chuck Suchy, Greg Lucas, Judith Hammer, Tama Smith, Tom Dable, Karen Obey, Val Naylor, Connie Triplett, Gerry Groenewold, Laura Anhalt, Jim Fuglie, Rick and Jonelle Watson, and Cynthia Wagner Goulet.

I suppose I will claim that the Badlands belong to no one and to everyone: national status should be a shared sense of belonging for yucca, sheep, juniper, rattlesnakes, wolves, coyotes, Cottonwoods, scoria and gumbo, buffalo, wild horses, tourists, golfers, hikers, Cottonwoods, the watercourses, Cottonwoods, historical faith in our country and its hopes, Cottonwoods,

And so much more—prairie dogs and sagebrush for instance—



Connie Triplett and Rick Watson



So we joined BCA—I have been to too many annual meetings for banks, credit unions, co-ops, and churches, churches and more church-

es. It was pretty much the same age groups, 50 to 100, at all those meetings. But at BCA there was an amazing sense, of common ground, literally and spiritually—here were people you had known or should have known all your life if your life includes the Badlands; here were the elements of the true potluck, true shared bread, true sense of preserving, stewarding, and loving a particular place that becomes idea and reality. The tone was shared hope, shared food, shared spirit of place, and common cause. We did not notice the sense of conflict and market forces that we have run into in churches and credit unions—instead, we found a will, the common will to take care of a place, to protect a place...and to share a place. BCA is here to treasure one of our world's great treasures for one and all, the Children of the world and the plants and animals too. Sign me up again.

Oh, and besides, these people seem to have a generous love of acoustic guitars, minstrels and songs of this place, and ALL the arts and magic that goes into loving that place. What more can a minstrel of Dakota land ask?

North Dakota Wilderness and Regions of the Mind (2001)

by Dr. Stephen L. Robbins, Retired Professor of English, Dickinson State University

In 1999, the United States Forest Service's requirement to review and revise its management plans for the Dakota Prairie Grasslands sparked into life not only a controversy about politics and range management but also once again questions about wilderness in the Little Missouri National Grasslands. Should the Forest Service recommend wilderness areas for the grasslands? What is wilderness? What value, if any, does wilderness contain? Is wilderness important to the state? What would be the effects of wilderness areas on the economics of the region?

Reprint of a tabloid from 2001 by BCAer, Steve Robbins (permission granted by Humanities ND) can now be read on the BCA website at [BadlandsConservationAlliance.org/news/north-dakota-wilderness](https://www.badlandsconservationalliance.org/news/north-dakota-wilderness)

Steve, a charter member, retired Dickinson State University faculty, and voracious reader, has served on the board and continues to write for BCA from time to time. He hopes to visit the Badlands again this summer.



NEW BOARD MEMBER

Bill Knudson

Bill has lived nearly his entire life in western North Dakota. He was absent for a few years so as to learn that this is a pretty amazing part of the world. His mother grew up between Golva and Bullion Butte and was the only family member of five who did not stay and farm in that area. His father was raised along the tracks of the Soo Line Railroad in the north central part of the state moving from town to town as his dad, a depot agent, was “bumped” by seniority from one town to the next. Bill decided to go to work for his dad who had recently started a real estate appraisal business after many years as a small town banker in 1975. Recently retired after a forty-four year career Bill calls Mandan home. Bill discovered in his job that the value inherent in real estate includes many components not mentioned in the “legal bundle of rights”. The sense of place derived from land—the history we and others before us have created. That geology, topography and a commonly

recognized beauty all create value as well. That this value that has been heart felt by many people creates special places which need to be preserved through good stewardship.

Bill finds solace in nature. He has spent a lifetime learning to appreciate his surroundings and continues to be in awe under the Dakota sky. It has become his goal that this same chance exist for his seven grandchildren and those people who may grace this land in a hundred years and beyond.

“BILLIONAIRE WILDERNESS: THE ULTRA-WEALTHY AND THE REMAKING OF THE AMERICAN WEST”

By Justin Farrell (Princeton University Press 2020)

Reviewed by Bill Knudson



Teton County in Wyoming has the highest per capita income of any county in the United States at \$194,485.00. New York County (Manhattan) with \$148,002.00 is a distant second. Eighty percent of the income in the county where Jackson Hole is located is derived from investment income. These numbers from 2015 indicate the disparity of wealth between those who earn their income through labor and those receiving income from investments. Farrell interviews hundreds of people from both segments of the spectrum and highlights these conversations. It appears that the wealthy are taking over the west and using environmental philanthropy to largely benefit and protect their own turf. “Wyoming is America’s tax haven; Bloomberg calls it ‘America’s wealthiest state.’ This arrangement is made possible by the state’s lucrative oil, gas, and coal industries and is spurred on by its proud antipathy toward government and taxes.”

The author grew up in Wyoming and his mother ran an in-home daycare and cleaned houses while his dad worked on the railroad. Today he is a Yale Professor in the School of the Environment. This dual identity of the common man from the west who “makes it” at a prestigious institution is the epitome of what those with wealth are trying to do only in

reverse. The wealthy dress like ranchers and drive pickups to become “the local” while living, often for only a few weeks per year, in mansions costing tens of millions of dollars. Most of those they hire for childcare, landscaping, and homebuilding needs are Latino (Latinx) and many are undocumented. The workers are happy to have jobs but cannot afford housing, work multiple occupations, and just eke by.

Farrell spent five years researching and interviewing to write this book. The book is a sociological study of a community where the rich chase beautiful, tax-friendly places and as the author says, “game the system. In most counties in the United States, the population estimates from the census are similar to the number of people claiming residency for tax purposes. Not in Teton County. It has the largest discrepancy between the number of people who actually live there and the number of people who claim to for tax purposes.”

Billionaire Wilderness is a challenging read. Professor Farrell creates a better understanding of the various viewpoints while discussing the aspects of the dynamic society being studied. He gives readers an insight into what appears to be a societal enigma.



Clay Jenkinson and Jim Fuglie

Badlands Conservation Alliance Statement on the Proposed Bridge over the Little Missouri State Scenic River

The Badlands Conservation Alliance (BCA) board of directors met Saturday, March 4, in Medora, and confirmed its deep concern about Billings County’s proposed bridge over the Little Missouri River north of Medora.

BCA is a 25-year-old conservation organization with offices in Bismarck, ND, which bills itself as “A voice for wild North Dakota places.”

The BCA board was aware of the Billings County Commission’s 2-1 vote on February 7 to proceed with its long-proposed bridge by way of the doctrine of eminent domain—using its power to take private property and convert it to public use—commonly known as “condemnation,” or a “taking.”

The Commission has begun legal proceedings to take land from the family of the late North Dakota Congressman Don Short for the bridge and the road leading to it, although it will have to pay a fair price for the land. The Short family has long stated its opposition to the location of the bridge on their ranch.

“We oppose the use of eminent domain for this or any other project in the Badlands,” said BCA board president Christine Hogan, a retired Bismarck attorney. “Eminent domain is not the spirit of the North Dakota Badlands. Such tactics inevitably create bitterness in the ranch community. If Billings County wants a bridge, they should work to obtain the consent of the ranch owners whose private property would be impacted by the project.”

The BCA board also reaffirmed its more general concern about a Little Missouri bridge.

“Nothing should be constructed that would have a degrading impact on Theodore Roosevelt National Park, especially the Elkhorn Ranch Unit,” said Clay Jenkinson, a BCA board member and a Roosevelt historian. “Previous studies have shown that a bridge within five or six miles on either side of the Elkhorn would create noise and dust

pollution and impair the serenity of the Elkhorn.”

Theodore Roosevelt National Park is divided into three units: the South Unit near Medora and mostly north of Interstate 94; the North Unit just south of Watford City west of US 85; and the 218-acre Elkhorn Ranch Unit equidistant between the north and south units.

“The Elkhorn Ranch is one of the most important of all Theodore Roosevelt sites,” Jenkinson said, “and it should be protected forever as a shrine to American conservation as TR understood it. Anything that impairs the beauty and solemnity of the site is an affront to Roosevelt’s legacy. He came to the Badlands to hunt, to heal, to forge his adult identity, and to drink in the American frontier before it closed.”

The BCA has long registered its doubt about a bridge over the Little Missouri.

“Whatever some Billings County commissioners say to justify the bridge—for emergency fire and ambulance access—is a public relations smokescreen to build the bridge for the convenience of the oil industry. Any demographic study of the ranch population between the two units of the national park indicates that the bridge would be of very limited utility, except for oil trucks,” said Christine Hogan, BCA’s president.

“If there must be a bridge, we very much hope that it will be sited far away from the Elkhorn Ranch, and that no eminent domain ‘takings’ will be imposed on ranch families that oppose the bridge,” said Ms. Hogan.

Said Clay Jenkinson, “95% of the landscape of North Dakota is open for mineral development, including the Little Missouri National Grasslands. There is more to Great Plains life than economic development. We should agree to limit the impact on the Little Missouri Badlands as much as is possible without actually prohibiting oil development.”



Jay Grantier and Clay Jenkinson

An Evening with Jay Grantier *by Clay Jenkinson*

Jay Grantier has been vital to the BCA mission since its very first meeting, in part because he has authentic roots in the North Dakota Badlands. His father was a cowboy in the “way back” time when cattle were first making their way to the Badlands from Texas. Jay spent some of his young years on the fabled Triple V (VVV) ranch south of Bullion Butte. He pursued a career as a mechanical engineer, but his heart has always been in the broken country west of Belfield. I had

the good fortune to have dinner with Jay at a riverside restaurant in Bismarck last summer. Jim Fuglie and Lillian Crook were there, too, and since both Jim and Jay have significant hearing loss, it was sometimes a circus; but once we settled in with our entrees and Jay began to tell us stories of his family’s life in the place we hold dearest in all four of our hearts, it was a magical evening on the big river that eventually absorbs the flow of the sacred Little Missouri. He gave me a copy of a family history he has written. I wish there were a granting agency to encourage every rancher and cowboy in the North Dakota badlands to write the story of their family, their relationship with the badlands, their management philosophy, and their best sense of the future of the badlands. Jay has contributed financially to the success of BCA, but it is his attachment to the badlands that is his greatest gift to North Dakota.



Jay Grantier at the Triple V Ranch, summer 2023



Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Peaceful Valley Ranch (formerly the Buddy Ranch) by Lillian Crook



Save the Date

APRIL 14, 2023 Almost Earth Day

Meet & Greet in Dickinson with TRNP Superintendent Angie Richman.

RSVP Members Only to bca@badlandsconservationalliance.org or call 701-450-1631

JUNE 9-11, 2023 TRNP North Unit Weekend Outing

Please RSVP so we know you are attending. Camping space is limited, and a variety of lodging is available in nearby communities. Bring a new friend! *Details are on the website*

OCTOBER 7, 2023

BCA 2023 Annual Potluck and Meeting

at the Bismarck BCA office, 1605 E. Capitol Ave., Bismarck. Tweed Roosevelt, speaker, Time TBD.

Other dates of interest to Badlands lovers:

OCTOBER 13-15, 2023

Annual TR Symposium at the TR Center at Dickinson State University

JUNE 4, 2023 Theodore Roosevelt Nature and History Association

Annual Bird Walk at the South Unit



Tweed Roosevelt

BCA's gatherings, coffees, potlucks, meet & greets, hikes, camp-outs, and such are **adventures**

for all ages and abilities, and participants bring a wealth of knowledge about the landscape, the flora, the fauna, the people's history over many generations, and more, along with boundless camaraderie. Be sure to pack your personal food, hat, hiking shoes, weather gear, water, field guides, first aid kit, and the like (maybe a poem or quote to share).

Come and get better acquainted with BCA leadership and make new friends. Be prepared for changing conditions and be a #VoiceforWildNDPlaces – in our case, western ND public lands.

Membership has its privileges.



The Badlands Conservation Alliance has begun to put together a White Paper on its concerns about the North Dakota outback, particularly the Badlands. We believe that the people of North Dakota (and beyond) are eager to know just what is at stake in the Little Missouri River Valley in the third decade of the twenty-first century. They want to know what sorts of development threaten one of the most storied and important places in America.

We intend to publish under one cover a careful list of BCA concerns. We believe they are the concerns of everyone who loves the Badlands. The White Paper will not only provide the people of North Dakota a handy guide to these issues, but provide enough factual information so that our friends can make arguments on behalf of western North Dakota among their friends, colleagues, family, and legislative representatives.

We believe that most friends of the badlands are too busy to follow all the developments closely—the proposed bridge over the Little Missouri near the Elkhorn Ranch, the proposed refinery just at the portal of Theodore Roosevelt National Park—and that what they need is a concise analysis of each threat or concern, with the facts requisite for useful and meaningful conversations.

The BCA does not presume to speak for all North Dakotans. Nor do we oppose economic development in the badlands. But we do strongly believe that all development in the badlands and its environs should be undertaken with great care, to ensure the least possible impact on the environment. This includes placing industrial facilities where they are least obtrusive. It includes cooperating with Theodore Roosevelt National Park to protect its three widely separated units. It includes working hard to limit dust, noise, and other intrusions on the restorative experience of being in a National Park or in one of the nation's precious National Grasslands Units.

The great bulk of the North Dakota population lives well east of Jamestown. About 40% lives east of I-29! Those Dakotans have few opportunities to visit the badlands. When they do, they mostly stay on pavement. Our goal is to persuade more lovers of nature and the few untrammelled landscapes of North Dakota to make more frequent and more penetrating visits. We know that the more people that experience the badlands, the more we can build a consensus to conserve all of it (meaning that resource development is permitted with care) and preserve some of it (limit industrial access).

We take great joy in being the eyes and ears of the people of North Dakota (and beyond) in carefully observing developments in the badlands, and reporting to our friends and fellow Dakotans what we see and what we think is at risk.

Look for our highly-designed and illustrated White Paper sometime during the early summer of 2023. Join the Badlands Conservation Alliance to help us serve in this important capacity. Contribute to the BCA in any way you can. And please cheer us on as we do what we regard as not only important work, but in many cases urgent work to maintain the beauty, integrity, serenity, and uniqueness of the Badlands.

Clay Jenkinson



ND Department of Transportation 2023 Highway 85 construction projects.



Theodore Roosevelt National Park

FROM A 25+ YEAR BCA MEMBER:

“Being 81 years old and living in Oregon I may never hike the badlands again. I will never forget the dung beetles, camping with the bison, getting dive-bombed by a Northern Harrier. I am grateful that BCA will insure that future generations will have the same experiences that I did.”

- Duane Meissner

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BADLANDS CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

A VOICE FOR WILD NORTH DAKOTA PLACES

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Downy Woodpecker by Jeff Weispfenning

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BADLANDS CONSERVATION ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP

Badlands Conservation Alliance is dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the Badlands and rolling prairie ecosystem comprising western North Dakota's public lands, both state and federal. We provide an independent voice for conservation-minded western North Dakotans and others who are appreciative of this unique Great Plains landscape. It is also our mission to ensure that the public land management agencies adhere to the principles of the laws that guide them and provide for wise stewardship of the natural landscapes which the citizens of the United States have entrusted them with – for this and future generations.

Wild Voice \$25 Wild Place \$75 Wild Horizon \$250 Wild Vision \$1000 Other \$_____

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Return to:

BCA

PO Box 2337

Bismarck, ND 58502-2337

Or join online: BadlandsConservationAlliance.org/join

