



South Dakota State Park Facts 2012

Mission Statement

The South Dakota State Park System is committed to providing diverse outdoor recreation opportunities, acting as a catalyst for a growing tourism economy and preserving the resources with which we are entrusted.

Definitions

State Parks | Areas with outstanding natural beauty, containing significant historical, botanical, archeological, ecological or geological values developed to provide compatible resource-oriented recreation.

Recreation Areas | Areas which may contain both natural and constructed features developed to maximize outdoor recreational opportunities compatible with the resources.

Nature Areas | Undeveloped land having a variety of natural resources which may have facilities and services designed to conduct outdoor educational programs.

Lakeside Use Areas | Areas normally smaller and less developed than recreation areas, managed to maximize outdoor recreation especially for boating and shoreline access.

Public Water Access Areas | Lands managed by the Division of Wildlife, maintained by the Division of Parks and Recreation to provide access for boating and fishing.

Number of Parks

The South Dakota State Park system includes 12 state parks, 42 recreation areas, 5 nature areas, 1 historic prairie, 70 lakeside use areas, and 10 marina/resorts. In addition, the Division of Parks and Recreation manages the 114-mile Mickelson Trail, South Dakota's Snowmobile Trail Program, and maintains 240 public water access areas.

Number of Visitors

In 2011, South Dakota hosted 7.2 million park visitors. The number of overnight camping units at South Dakota state parks in 2011 totaled 239,038. This is down 9 percent over 2010, which was a record high for campground use. Flooding throughout the state closed over 550 campsites, which greatly impacted visitation and camping.

Ten Most Visited Parks in 2011

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|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Custer - Custer Co. | 4. Roy Lake - Marshall Co. | 8. Spring Creek - Hughes Co. |
| 2. Lewis and Clark - Yankton Co. | 5. Angostura - Fall River Co. | 9. Chief White Crane - Yankton Co. |
| 3. Cow Creek - Hughes Co. | 6. Snake Creek - Charles Mix Co. | 10. Indian Creek - Walworth Co. |
| | 7. Oahe Downstream - Stanley Co. | |

Total State Park System Acres

State parks encompass a total 102,142 acres. Custer State Park is largest park with 70,840 acres.

State Parks Contain

4,268 campsites | 197 camping cabins | 6 lodges | 116 comfort stations | 32 fishing docks | 74 playgrounds | 49 beaches | 667 miles of trails | 546 vault toilets | 11 welcome centers | 123 picnic shelters | 291 boat ramps | 309 miles of roads

Natural and Cultural Resources

The State Park System actively protects, preserves and restores historic cultural resources and natural areas. Designated National Historic Places include Bear Butte, Spirit Mound, Fort Sisseton, Palisades Bridge, the Herman Luce Cabin at Lake Herman and the following structures at Custer State Park: the Badger Clark Memorial, the Peter Norbeck Visitor Center and the State Game Lodge. In addition, several National Historic Landmarks, National Natural Landmarks, and National Recreational Trails are located in South Dakota state parks.



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Park Activities

Popular park activities include camping, walking/hiking, boating, swimming, fishing, snowshoeing, attending park programs, and picnicking.

Park Programs

A wide variety of opportunities are available at parks across the state. These include environmental education programs, nature walks, interpretive signs and exhibits, special events, theater productions, guest performers, and musicians.

New Parks

Most recently, Roughlock Falls Nature Area in Spearfish Canyon was acquired from Barrick Gold Corporation in 2006. Since 2002, the state park system added the Spirit Mound Historic Prairie, Rocky Point Recreation Area at Belle Fourche Reservoir, and 13 existing recreation areas and 22 lakeside use areas along the Missouri River transferred to the state from the US Corps of Engineers.

Oldest State Park

The South Dakota State Park System was established in 1919 when Custer State Forest was designated Custer State Park. Until 1945, Custer State Park was the only park managed by the state. In 1945, the legislature established the statewide park system and added Hartford Beach, Lake Herman, and Oakwood Lakes State Parks.

Park Entrance Fees in 2012

Annual Park Entrance License - \$28
George S. Mickelson Trail Pass - \$3/day or \$15/year
Second Vehicle Annual License - \$14
Daily License - \$4/person (12 and older) or \$6/vehicle
Transferable Annual License - \$60
Valid for only one vehicle at a time.
Seven-Day License at Custer State Park- \$15/vehicle

Camping Fees in 2012

Campsites - \$10 to \$24/night
Camping cabins - \$37 to \$47/night
Equestrian campsites - \$12 to \$27/night
Group lodges - \$125 to \$225/night

First Park Entrance License

The first park entrance license was issued in 1967.

State Park Benefits

Visitors benefit by having opportunities for recreation to:

explore | enjoy solitude or quality time with family and friends | learn | be active |
experience the natural world | enhance physical health and well-being | relax

Communities benefit by:

having places they can enjoy at their fingertips | increasing community pride |
gaining appreciation for the natural world around them | enhancing quality of life

Economic benefits from:

visitor spending | employment opportunities | park spending in the community |
economic growth generated by the parks

Environment benefits by:

protecting natural/unique landscapes | helping visitors learn and gain appreciation for nature |
having parks model sound environmental practices