

THE  
**FUTURE**  
OF  
**AMERICA'S**  
**NATIONAL**  
**PARKS**

First Annual  
Centennial Strategy for

# Pipestone National Monument

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: PIPE

Year: 2007

### Vision Statement

Located in southwest Minnesota, Pipestone National Monument protects a significant cultural/ethnographic landscape and is the only location where Native Americans have quarried the red pipestone (catlinite) rock from very early times to the present for carving pipes that are central to Plains Indian religion. The landscape consists of tall grass prairie that developed in association with the site's distinct geologic and hydrological features. These features combine to provide an unusual array of habitats supporting a diverse assortment of prairie plants and animals and rare habitats, federally listed threatened and endangered species, and globally rare remnant plant communities.

The park will continue to actively explore, inventory, and evaluate all park resources to bring an understanding of cultural and natural resources to visitors, the community, and especially schoolchildren by using exciting, intriguing, and appealing modern media and strategies. We will work to make a new visitor center a reality that increases the value of the recreation experience and incorporates environmentally sound building materials and systems that will be interpreted to visitors. We will continue to build and strengthen partnerships, particularly with our recently organized Friends of Pipestone National Monument, our cooperating association, and local government to promote understanding and the value of diversity, and the protection of park resources from external impact. Based on our soon to be completed General Management Plan, the park will initiate and request the 23 affiliated tribes to create an informal consultation group to provide insight for best park management practices and sensitivity to spiritual values in daily operations. Our vision is that when American Indians visit, they feel their stories are told correctly, and that all visitors are provided the opportunity to learn why Pipestone National Monument holds such a central place in their culture and the history of this country.

To attain this vision requires staff members to receive quality training to attain excellence in performance, stimulate professional growth and leadership, and provide understanding of local and national park system values. The park will seek new ways to build complimentary relationships that encourage tourism, understanding of park resources, and demonstrate environmental awareness in all operations. The park will strive to increase its base funding so that it is fully staffed in accordance with its approved organizational chart. As a first step, funding has been proposed in the Administration's FY2008 budget to support one additional seasonal maintenance position as part of the Centennial Challenge.

### Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

M. James LaRock, Park Superintendent



Site: PIPE

STEWARDSHIP

**Improve the condition of park resources and assets.**

**Rehabilitate high-priority historic buildings to good condition, and help communities to preserve their history through programs like Preserve America.**

The story of the original 1858 treaty lands and the later construction of a large Indian School complex on those lands is a story intertwined with the history of Pipestone National Monument, the city of Pipestone and the nation. Over 300 acres of the original 648 acre treaty parcel containing the famous pipestone quarries is now within the Monument boundary. We propose to enlist the help of local Minnesota State legislators to enact a bonding bill dedicated to the rehabilitation and restoration of the home, a national register property, and matched with NPS Centennial Challenge funds. The home is located adjacent to Monument lands and resides on land owned by the Minnesota West Community and Technical College, also located on the original treaty lands. A small portion of their parking area would be utilized for visitor parking by a future agreement. This story is also a part of the Interpretive Themes contained in the GMP.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

**Restore native habitats by controlling invasive species and reintroducing key plant and animal species.**

Restore 18 acres of recently donated land and 5 acres of disturbed lands to native tall grass prairie using established methods and locally collected genotypes of native forbs and grasses. The initial effort to accomplish restoration and exotic species control goals will take three years followed by annual work to continue the restoration process that can be accomplished through base funding. PMIS #136614, cost of \$68,400 over three years will be used. Additional funding is required to create a discovery zone for fourth grade schoolchildren involving tall grass prairie habitat and cultural resources located on the property.

A second project in this category is the control of exotic species. Several existing projects, PMIS #112547, 112585, and 112591 all address this issue.

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**Improve the natural resources in parks, as measured by the vital signs developed under the Natural Resource Challenge.**

All exotic species continue to be controlled through increased base funding utilized for Youth Conservation Corps and permanent less than full time biological technicians. Results of an increase in base funding will result in permanent protection of remnant prairie species and globally rare plant communities independent of annual and competitive external program funding. The tall grass prairie is increasingly recognized as an integral resource link with the pipestone quarries and provides the context for the cultural component. PMIS #112547, 112585, and 112591 all address this issue as well as

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STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

OFS #21947A.

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Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The Minnesota Geological Survey undertook a field investigation, sponsored by the National Park Service, to analyze the extent of pipestone deposits within the Monument in 1980-81. While this field investigation involved drill holes and analysis, it did not provide any data on the extent of potentially reachable deposits nor its quantity and presented in laymen's terms. In working with the 23 affiliated tribes we are often questioned on when the pipestone deposits will be exhausted, the rate of extraction and why we are not placing any limits on what is mined. The park needs to be able to make a reasonably based projection, temper excavation if need be, and reassure tribes regarding the extent of the pipestone resource. It is requested that these questions be answered through a professional analysis of the work performed to date and placed in a format designed for the lay person. Reports would be available for distribution to American Indian tribes who are concerned with this question.

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Site: PIPE

**ENVIRONMENT**

**Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.**

**Demonstrate environmental excellence through increased use of alternative energy and fuels at every park.**

The Monument would demonstrate environmental awareness and responsibility by converting its fleet to bio-diesel products or electric power by selecting and prioritizing the types of vehicles that could be converted to these power options. Additionally, replace hand powered wheelbarrows with battery powered wheelbarrows through development of prototypes with a local farm equipment manufacturer. When the Monument implements the GMP alternative, quarriers will be left with a much longer haul of extracted pipestone because the visitor center and connecting roads will be removed. This would serve as a demonstration of our sincerity in moving towards good energy practices.

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**Serve as a model for energy efficiency, under Executive Order 13423, by ensuring Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.**

Removing all existing development from the heart of the resource will result in the need to locate, design and construct a new visitor center to serve the public and staff. The planning and design process should demonstrate and incorporate environmentally sensitive and sustainable design features and materials in all possible ways. While incorporating LEED technology, the exhibit planning in the visitor center should also contain a LEED exhibit. Interpretive information will be developed to demonstrate technology used and building features to engage the public and demonstrate technology that could be applied in their personal life. The design and construction process will be linked so that all possible media recognition is engaged, particularly at the local level.

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**Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

The park will create an interactive global warming scenario that can be viewed on the computer stations that will already contain natural and cultural resource databases for visitors, particularly schoolchildren (part of another Centennial Challenge project). This program should demonstrate the effects of warming on plants, animals, and humans, suggest things we can do on a daily basis to mitigate the effects, and be supplemented by rack cards and other informational literature. The program should also vividly demonstrate the changes that could be expected within the park and regional area.

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Site: PIPE

**ENVIRONMENT**

Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Develop exhibits and rack cards in a visually stimulating manner that provides information to help visitors become more environmentally aware in their daily activities. Some connections may be made to Plains Indian culture and lifestyles of earlier times. Partner with the Friends of Pipestone National Monument to share costs of printing. As a part of this project, the cooperating association will carry one or two books that provide outstanding information on this topic that can be focused on family living.

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Site: PIPE

**RECREATION**

Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Develop a trail system partnership in concert with the city, county, Fish and Wildlife Service and the Minnesota DNR, and the Monument to develop a trail system linked to the Casey Jones State Trail that increases visitor education and quality of life in the community. Planning of the trail system would begin through a grant for trail planning assistance through the Rivers and Trails program in the Midwest Region. All entities would work together to form a single trail system that links the governmental land managers in the partnership. Links within the system could accommodate walkers and hikers and provide for bicyclists on some sections. The trail would also link and interpret the rich history of the area and interpret that with wayside exhibits.

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RECREATION

Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

Increase visitation by 25 percent at lesser-known parks through a national tourism effort aimed at helping people to discover the breadth of parks and experiences.

Create an informal partnership involving the Minnesota State Tourism Council, local and county EDA, Chamber of Commerce, State Parks, Historical Societies, and tourism centered organizations in a 9-county area of southwest Minnesota. The partnership would focus on developing a clearinghouse for information made available to perspective and incoming visitors. Centralize all information about annual events and recreational opportunities within the area in an easily accessible database and handout that would be available to all participants and their customers. The Monument would be a participant and assist in the organization of information.

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Site: PIPE

EDUCATION

Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Build on the existing 4-H relationship with the Monument through expanded and appropriate resource learning material. As a corollary to this program, adopt a local 4th grade class and develop parallel learning materials with the hope to expand this opportunity to other schools in the vicinity over a period of years. With the donation of land on the east boundary, there is an opportunity to provide an outdoor classroom setting that could be exposed to prairie restoration, archeology, and other cultural and natural resources. After orientation at the visitor center, the class would take a self-guided hike through the park and end at a new picnic shelter where they could be greeted by a ranger and exposed to a "zone of discovery" with an action plan provided to teachers prior to their visit. School buses would have parking and a pickup location at this area.

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Site: PIPE

**EDUCATION**

- Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.
- Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

This project is a component of our matching Centennial Challenge project to improve our web site through an interactive virtual tour of the park. The park would provide photos and appropriate subject matter about the natural and cultural resources of the park from a menu that would be interactive with website visitors. Historical and current photos would be used to intrigue and initiate interest in visiting the Monument. The Monument website should also contain regional attractions and activities so that visitors have other reasons to visit an area 35 miles off interstate highways.

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- Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Another of the five components under our current Centennial Challenge project is the development of a hand-held GPS listening device that is rented from the cooperating association. The listening device would have an audio message programmed to play when the family or individual reaches a pre-determined coordinate. Messages would be presented on the natural and cultural resources of that location and automatically silence when moving to the next location. Messages could be easily changed from season to season and when new material is developed.

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Site: PIPE

EDUCATION

Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Develop a demonstration quarry to assist in teaching American Indians interested in quarrying while providing an opportunity for visitors to see and understand the quarrying process used to obtain the red pipestone rock. This program would be led by a seasoned quarrier employed for four to six months under the Monument's cultural demonstrator program administered by the cooperating association. Many American Indians come to the Monument with no knowledge of quarrying and discovering that the process to extract pipestone is long and laborious and quickly lose interest because no one is available to provide hands-on instruction. There are 57 quarries at the Monument, three of which are for monthly sign-up to provide short-term opportunities to quarry. The remainder are permitted on an annual basis.

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Site: PIPE

EDUCATION

Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.

An American Indian would be hired on a seasonal basis as a story teller to relate cultural stories to visitors from May through September. The Monument would work through the 23 affiliated tribes to seek out a tribal member who could communicate tribal stories, legends, and cultural information to schoolchildren and visitors. Funding for the positions would be sought and housing might also have to be supplemented. This same person might also introduce the newly produced 20-minute orientation film now under production.

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Site: PIPE

**PROFESSIONALISM**

Be one of the top 10 places to work in America.

Meet 100 percent of diversity recruitment goals by employing people who reflect the face of America.

Twenty-three American Indian tribes are affiliated with the Monument. A closer working relationship is very desirable with regard to employment opportunities. Currently four cultural demonstrators are employed from four to six months through a program funded by the NPS and working through the cooperating association. Seasonal positions are open each year for interpretive rangers and maintenance. Additionally, three permanent positions will be filled when the Monument receives a base increase. Notices regarding these positions are sent to the tribes and the Monument will develop additional avenues to make tribal members aware of potential job opportunities.

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Attain the highest employee satisfaction rate of all federal agencies, as measured by Office of Personnel Management surveys.

Staff members will have an opportunity for career growth through increased training opportunities, first to ensure professional adequacy within the job currently held. Secondly, additional training should be made available and attainable to train for career growth in supervision, management, and leadership for qualified individuals. Individual goals should be identified and matched to potential training opportunities for each staff member to take one course per year in addition to the required coursework. This would include increased travel funding.

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Site: PIPE

**PROFESSIONALISM**

Use strategic planning to promote management excellence.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

In order to create excellence in park programs, full visitor service, cultural resource protection, and maintenance operations, the Monument must fill three permanent positions, one of which is new and approved, and two that have languished for two to three years after transfer or retirement because of inadequate funding levels. Currently, seasonal positions are used as a stop-gap measure that transfers the workloads on other permanent staff or leaves things undone. New requirements are constantly developed that create additional workloads that cannot be met with seasonal employees.

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