

Theodore Roosevelt National Park Livestock Management Plan



Welcome

The meeting will begin momentarily.
Thank you for your patience as we wait for others
to join.

- * Please join the meeting using computer audio
- * For Closed Captioning, click on the Closed Caption icon at the bottom of your Zoom screen
- * If you are having technical issues, please let us know in the chat box at the bottom of your Zoom screen

Meeting Agenda



- Welcome and Introductions
- Presentation
- Question-and-Answer (Q&A) Session
 1. Questions submitted through the registration portal
 2. Questions submitted through Q&A box

This meeting is being recorded and will be posted to the NPS PEPC website

Meeting Details



- Questions will be received through the Q&A box
- Questions we are not able to answer today will be answered on the FAQ pages

<https://www.nps.gov/thro/learn/nature/frequently-asked-questions-about-horses.htm>

<https://www.nps.gov/thro/learn/nature/frequently-asked-questions-about-longhorn-cattle.htm>

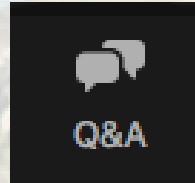
- Comments may be submitted online or by U.S. Mail
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/LMP>

Meeting Details

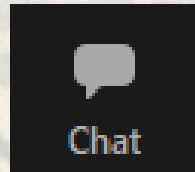


Tips for Zoom

- Use the Q&A icon for submitting questions:



- Use the Chat icon only for urgent technical questions:



- For technical assistance, you may also email Clayton McGee at:
clayton.mcgee@empsi.com

Welcome



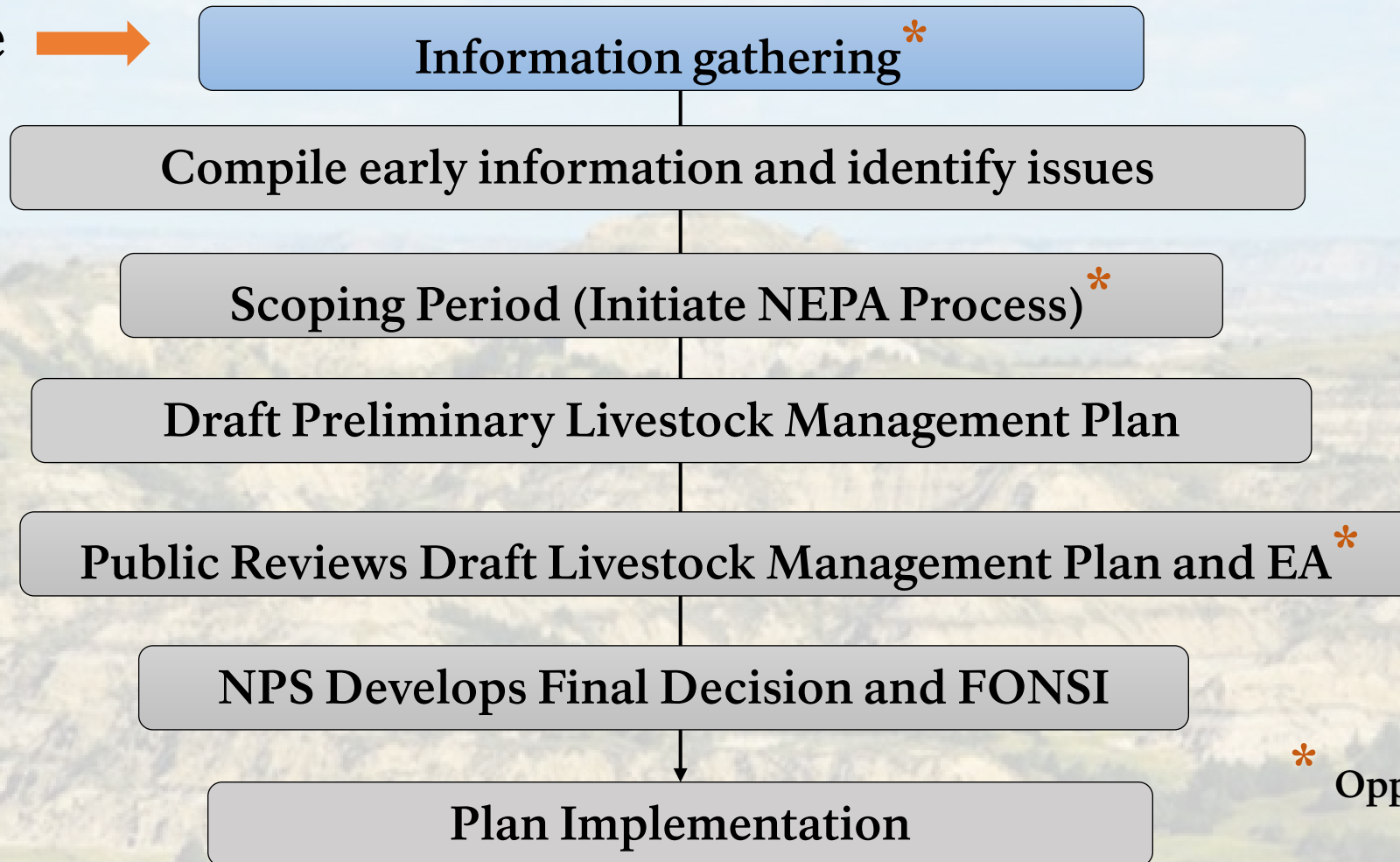
The National Park Service is developing a Livestock Management Plan (LMP) to manage cattle and horse herds at Theodore Roosevelt National Park



Livestock Management Plan Planning Process



We are here →



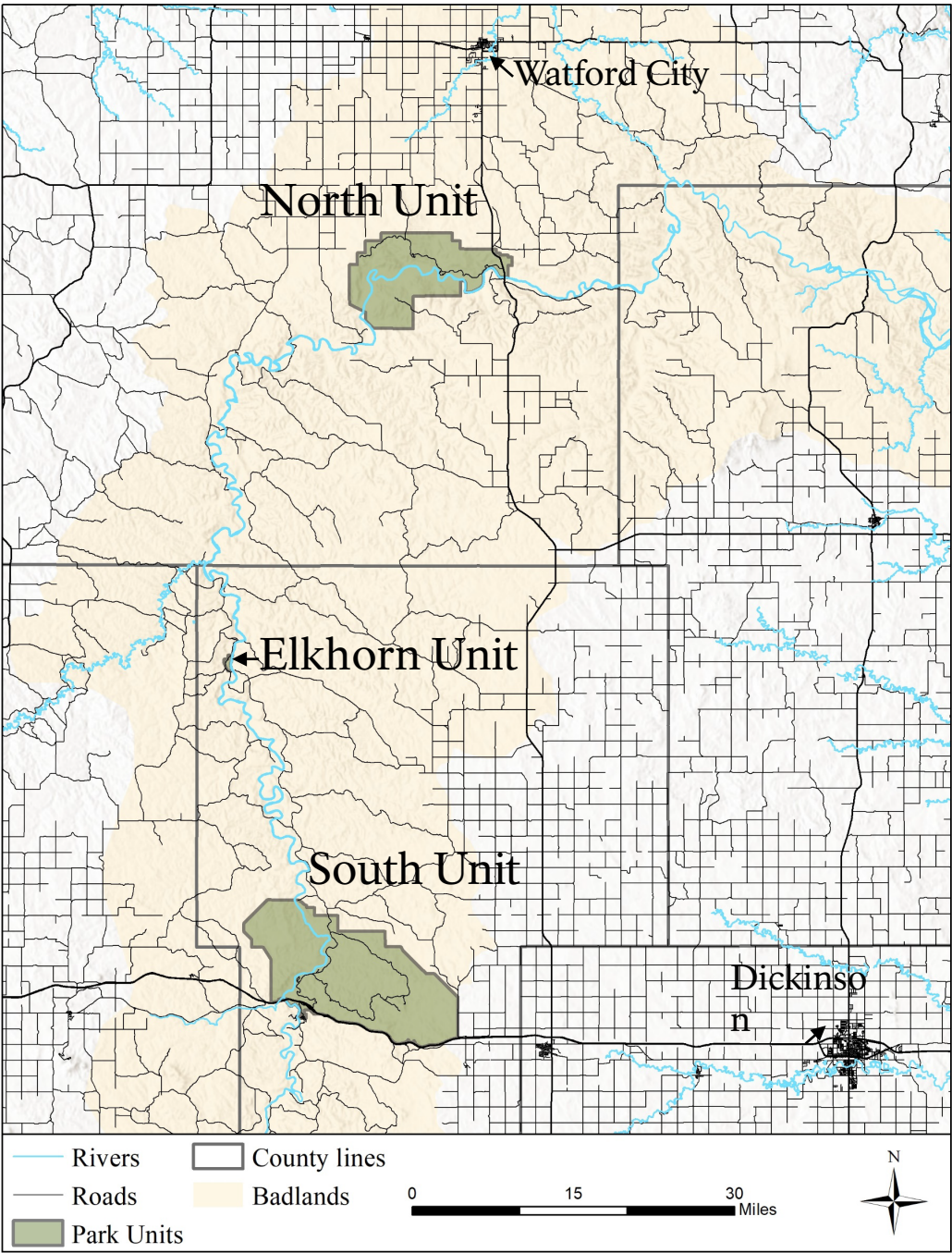
* Opportunities for Public Input



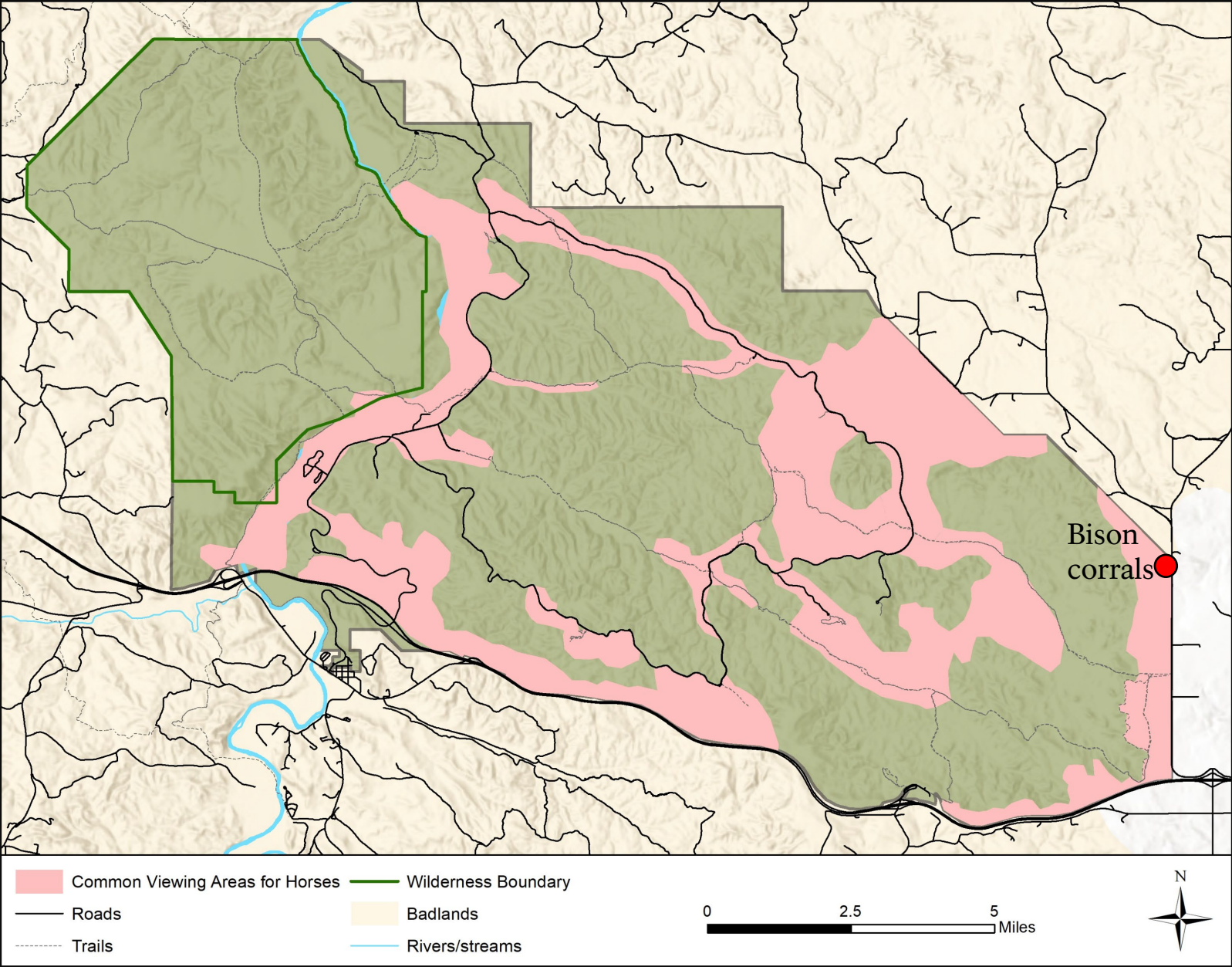
Meeting Goals and Objectives

- Provide a history of horses and cattle in the Park
 - Horses – South Unit
 - Longhorn Steer (cattle) – North Unit
- Describe our goals in developing a livestock management plan
- Present a range of preliminary options for horse and cattle management
- Answer your questions related to development of a livestock management plan

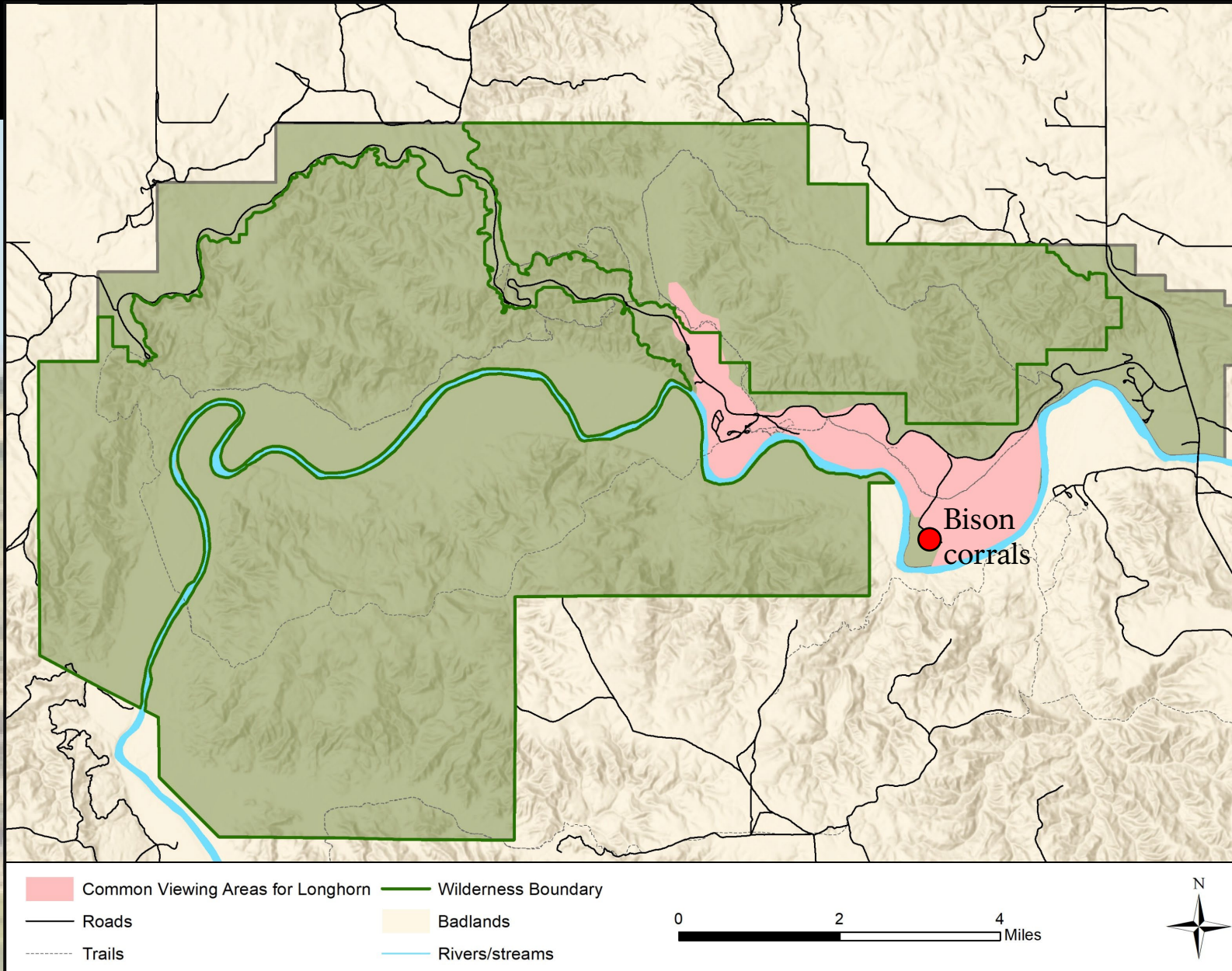
Geographic Location of Park Units



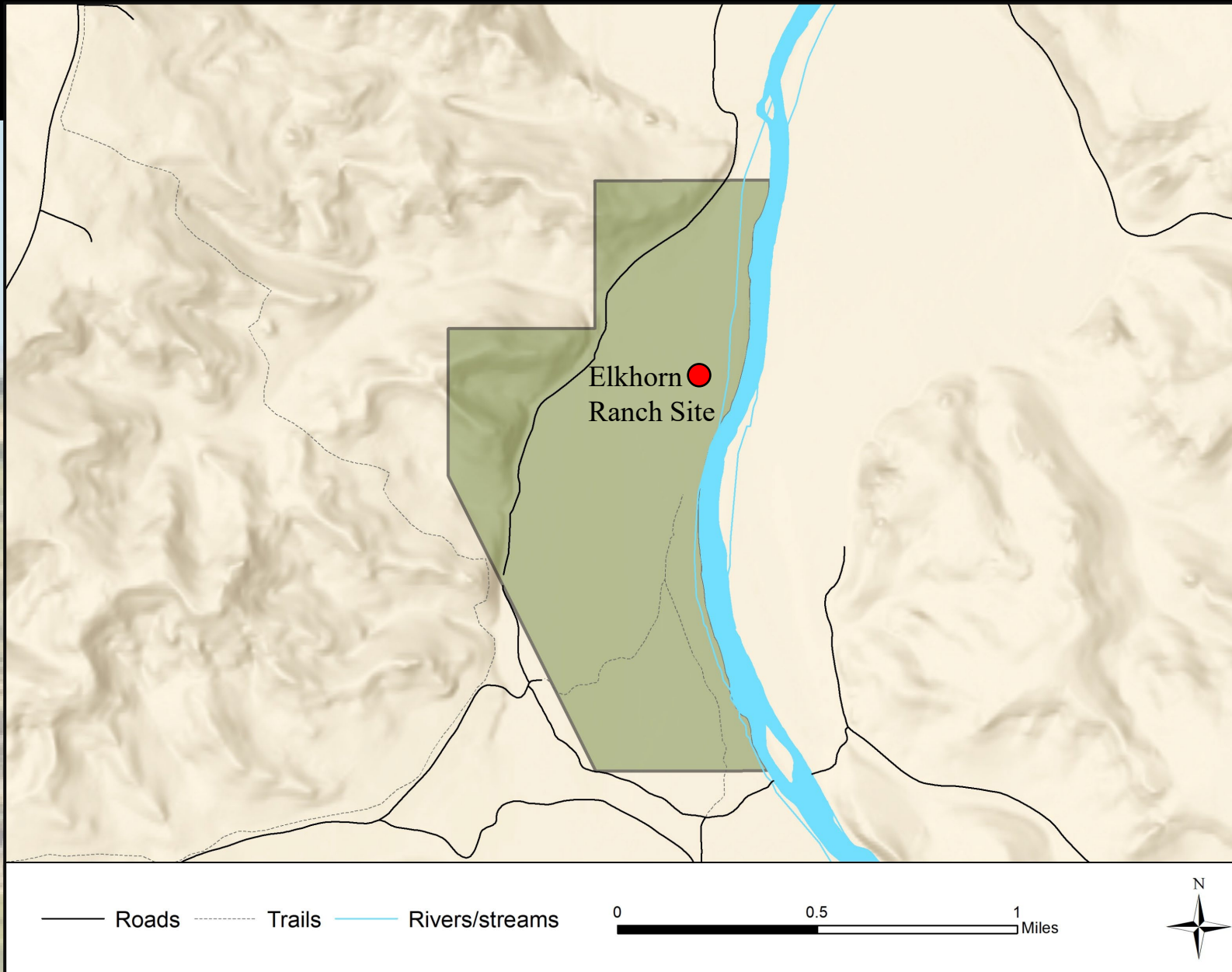
South Unit



North Unit



Elkhorn Unit



History of Horses



- Horses evolved in North America and dispersed to the Eastern Hemisphere, where they were domesticated – they became extinct in North America during the Pleistocene
- **1500s onward** Horses were reintroduced to North America by European explorers and settlers
- **1700s** Horses were present on the plains of North America and widely used by Native Americans
- **Late 1800s** Tribal herds were largely disbanded
- **1880 onward** Horses were commonly seen on the landscape as open range livestock practices were common in the Dakotas

History of Horses



- 1947 Free-ranging horses were present in the Badlands of North Dakota when the Park was established
- 1956 Herd was confined to the South Unit when the boundary was fenced for bison.
- 1950s onward Roundup and sale common practice for management
- 1978 EA defined management techniques and population goal of 35 – 60 head
- 2009 onward Darting, trapping, and contraception techniques were developed
- 2015-2017 Partnerships were explored for transfer of excess horses
- 2017 onward Excess horses sold through the General Services Administration
- 2022 Decades-long public concern about horse management requires action

History of Longhorn Cattle



- Cattle evolved and were domesticated in the Eastern Hemisphere
- 1500s onward Cattle were introduced to North America by European explorers and settlers
- 1500-1800 Cattle in Mexico and Texas were free-ranged and feral, served as origin of longhorn cattle as we know them today
- 1800-early 1900s Longhorn cattle type were recognized for hardiness; they were raised in the south and driven to northern markets - The Great Western Trail and Long-X Trail in North Dakota were drive routes
- 1920s onward Longhorn breed was maintained as an iconic western breed by enthusiasts

History of Longhorn Cattle



- 1947 Cattle expelled from park lands
- 1962 The North Unit was fenced, and no longhorn cattle were present
- 1967-1969 Twelve longhorn steer introduced to North Unit of the park
- 1970 Management Plan for Longhorn Cattle developed and implemented – The plan called for only non-reproductive animals (steer) to be maintained
- 1970s onward – As animals aged and died, new steer were introduced
- 2022 *Mycoplasma bovis* is a bacterial disease of cattle that is an emerging disease in bison, calling into question the comingling of bison and longhorn cattle

Why Complete a Livestock Management Plan?



- Examine the role of horses and cattle within the context of the Park's interpretive program
- Incorporate modern range science and best available data to inform management decisions
- Ensure protection of natural resources
- Consider ecological interactions and management effort
- Address *Mycoplasma bovis* – an emerging disease that can affect bison

Draft Preliminary Alternatives



A – No Action

B – Reduction of Herds Over Time to No Livestock

C – Non-Reproductive Herds at South Unit and North Unit

D – Non-Reproductive Herds at South Unit and Elkhorn Unit

E – Reproductive Herds of Horses and Cattle

F – Non-Reproductive Herd of Horses and Removal of Cattle

Draft Preliminary Alternative A

(Stewardship Continues under Current Management Plans)



- Population objective: 35 – 60 horses; 12 longhorn steer
- Horses remain in the South Unit and steer remain in the North Unit
- Contraception continues to be implemented to limit reproduction
- Horses will continue to be sold via GSA
- Longhorn steer replenished as animals age and die

Draft Preliminary Alternative B

(Reduction of Herds Over Time to No Livestock)



- Population objective: Most animals allowed to live out their lives in park
- Horses remain in the South Unit and steer remain in the North Unit
- Contraception to be implemented
- Young horses (≤ 3 years old) are captured and transferred out of the Park
- Horses are sold via GSA; Tribes are offered first option to receive horses
- Steer would remain free-roaming, but would not be replaced

Draft Preliminary Alternative C

(Non-Reproductive Herds at South Unit and North Unit)



- Population objective: 15 – 30 horses; 5 – 15 longhorn steer
- Horses are maintained in a portion of the South Unit
- Longhorn steer are maintained in a portion of the North Unit – separated from bison
- Contraception to be implemented
- Young horses (≤ 3 years old) are transferred out of the Park; older animals allowed to live out their lives in the Park

Draft Preliminary Alternative D

(Non-Reproductive Herds at South Unit and Elkhorn Unit)



- Population objective: 15 – 30 horses; 5 – 15 longhorn steer
- Longhorn steer maintained in Elkhorn Unit
- Horses maintained in a portion of the South Unit
- Contraception to be implemented
- Young horses (≤ 3 years old) transferred out of the Park; older animals allowed to live out their lives in the Park

Draft Preliminary Alternative E

(Reproductive Herds of Horses and Cattle)



- Population objective: 30 – 70 horses; 15 – 40 longhorn cattle
- Horses remain in the South Unit
- Longhorn steer maintained in a portion of North Unit
- Contraception to be implemented
- Young horses (≤ 3 years old) transferred out of the Park
- Genetic stewardship strategy developed and horses and cattle introduced

Draft Preliminary Alternative F

(Reproductive Herds of Horses and Removal of Cattle)



- Population objective: 30 – 70 horses; no longhorn cattle
- Horses remain in the South Unit
- Longhorn steer removed from the Park
- Young horses (≤ 3 years old) transferred out of the Park
- As horse herd diminishes, additional non-reproductive animals introduced to maintain population objective

Proposed South Unit Pasture



Park Unit – 46,000 acres ±

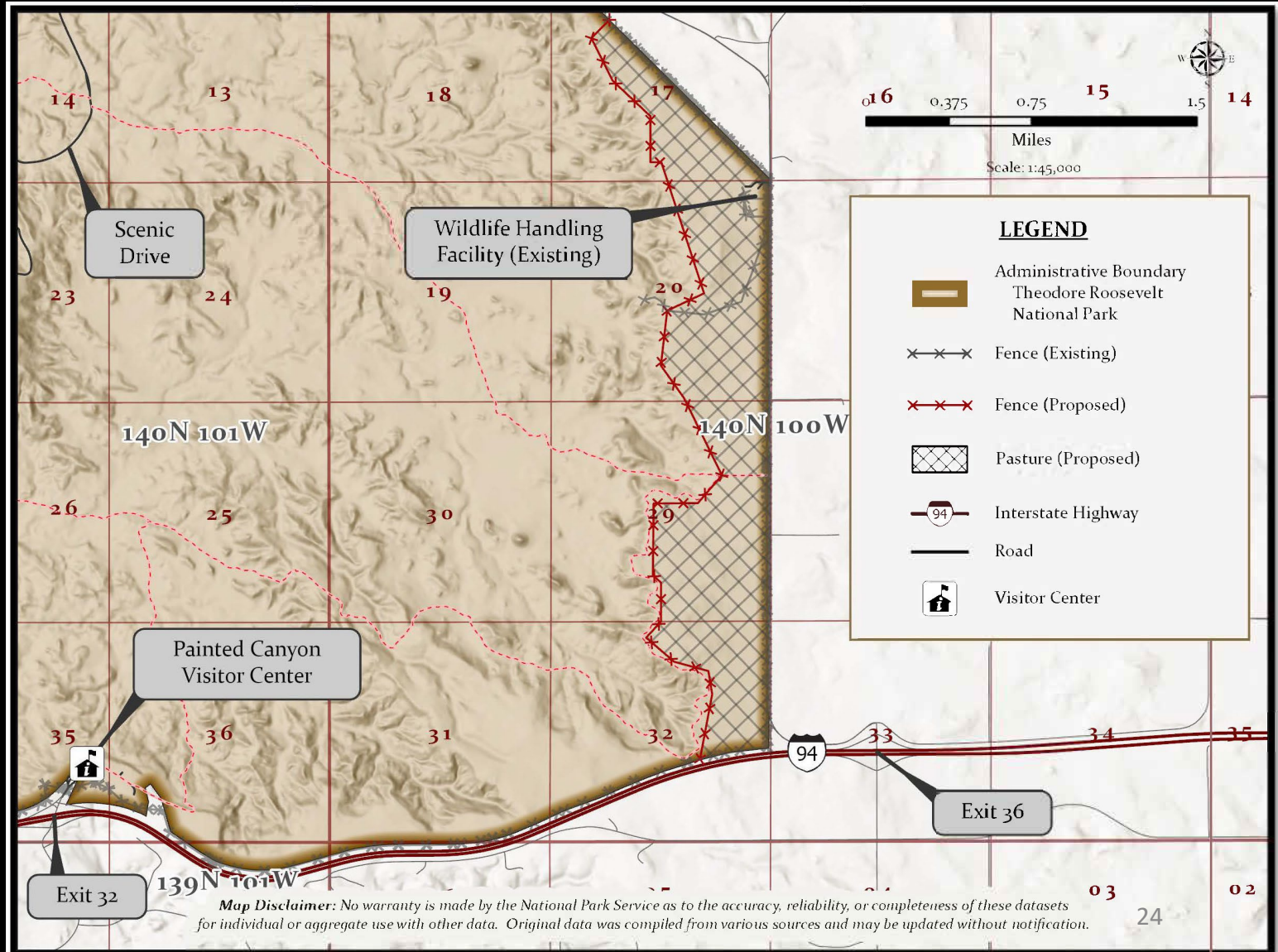
Pasture – 800 acres ±

Capacity

- Could support 15 - 30 horses with supplemental feeding

Infrastructure Needs

- Parking area development
- Vault toilet installation
- Watering system modification
- 4.2 miles of new fencing



Proposed North Unit Pasture



Park Unit – 24,000 acres ±

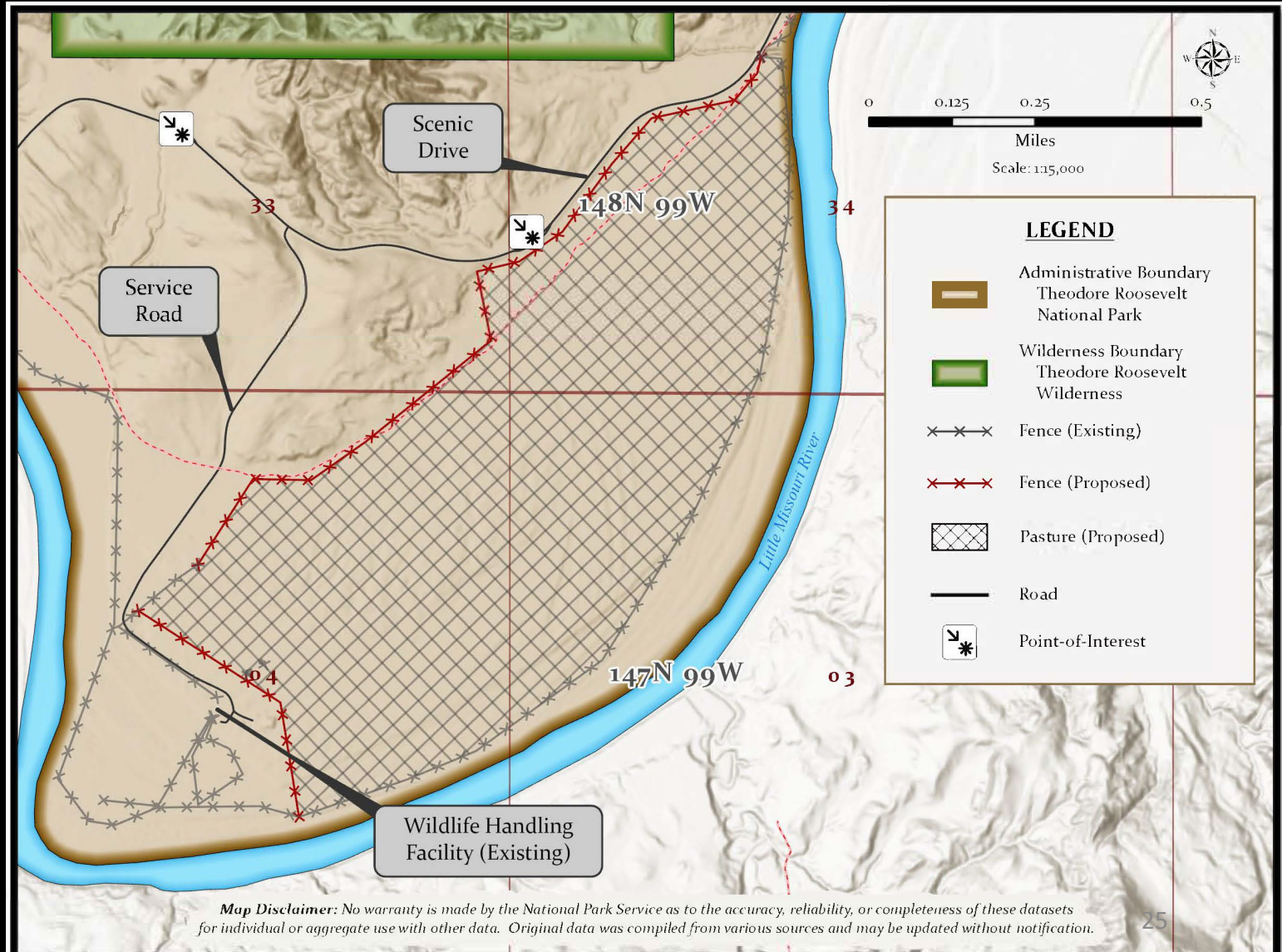
Pasture – 300 acres ±

Capacity

- Could support 10 cattle
- Could support 15 - 40 cattle with supplemental feeding

Infrastructure Needs

- Watering system modification
- 1.7 miles of new fencing



Proposed Elkhorn Ranch Pasture



Park Unit – 218 acres

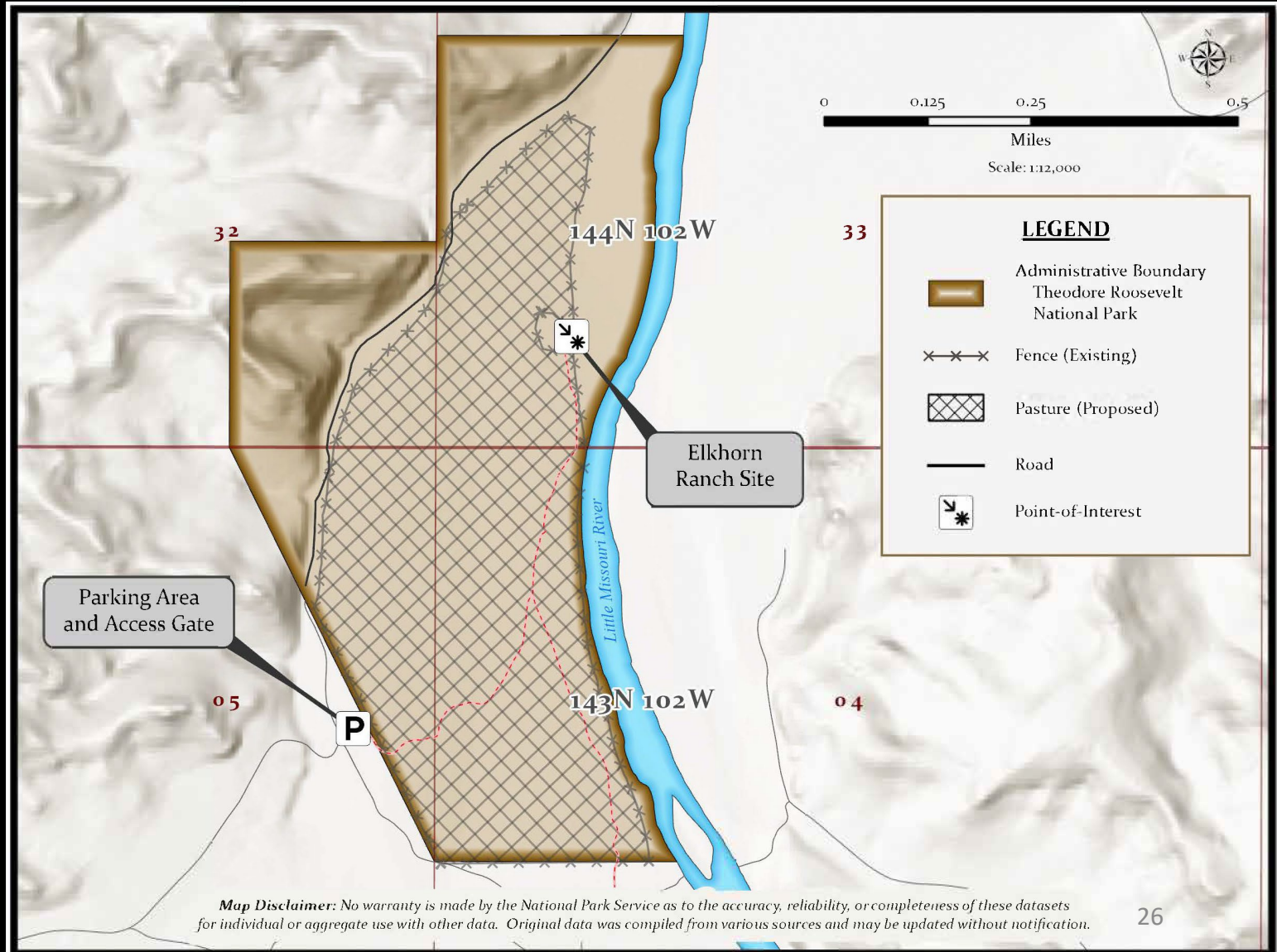
Pasture – 140 acres ±

Capacity

- Could support 5 – 15 cattle with supplemental feeding

Infrastructure Needs

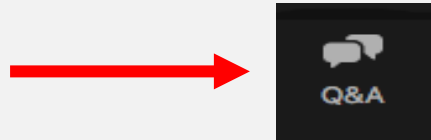
- Watering system development
- Strengthen 4-strand barbed-wire fence
- Possible parking area development, including vault toilet



Question-and-Answer Session Instructions



- Step 1: Click on the “Q&A” icon at the bottom of your Zoom screen to write and send your question



- Step 2: Type your question and press the send button
- Step 3: The moderator will read questions aloud for all participants to hear and a NPS staff member will respond to questions aloud.

A screenshot of the Zoom "Question and Answer" interface. The window title is "Question and Answer". The main text says "Welcome to Q&A" and "Questions you ask will show up here. Only host and panelists will be able to see all questions." Below this is a text input field with the placeholder "Type your question here...". At the bottom left is a checkbox labeled "Send anonymously". At the bottom right are two buttons: "Cancel" and "Send". A red arrow points from the "Send" button in the instructions to the "Send" button in the interface. Another red arrow points from the "Step 2" instruction to the text input field.

Guidance

- Only submit your question once.
- NPS will answer questions as quickly as possible; however, it may take a moment for them to process the question to provide the answer.
- Do not use the Chat button to submit a question, only use the Q&A icon.

Draft Preliminary Alternatives



We will resume the meeting after this 5-minute break

A – No Action

B – Reduction of Herds Over Time to No Livestock

C – Non-Reproductive Herds at South Unit and North Unit

D – Non-Reproductive Herds at South Unit and Elkhorn Unit

E – Reproductive Herds of Horses and Cattle

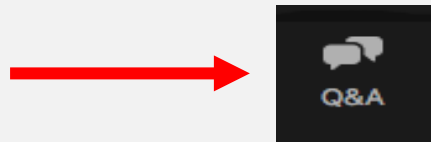
F – Non-Reproductive Herd of Horses and Removal of Cattle

Question-and-Answer Session Instructions



We will resume the meeting after this 5-minute break

- Step 1: Click on the “Q&A” icon at the bottom of your Zoom screen to write and send your question



- Step 2: Type your question and press the send button
- Step 3: The moderator will read questions aloud for all participants to hear and a NPS staff member will respond to questions aloud.

A screenshot of the Zoom "Question and Answer" interface. The window title is "Question and Answer". The main text says "Welcome to Q&A" and "Questions you ask will show up here. Only host and panelists will be able to see all questions." Below this is a text input field with the placeholder "Type your question here...". At the bottom left is a checkbox labeled "Send anonymously". At the bottom right are two buttons: "Cancel" and "Send". A red arrow from the text in Step 2 points to the "Send" button. Another red arrow from the text in Step 1 points to the "Q&A" icon in the previous block.

Question and Answer

Welcome to Q&A

Questions you ask will show up here. Only host and panelists will be able to see all questions.

Type your question here...

☐ Send anonymously

Cancel Send

Who can see your questions?

Guidance

- Only submit your question once.
- NPS will answer questions as quickly as possible; however, it may take a moment for them to process the question to provide the answer.
- Do not use the Chat button to submit a question, only use the Q&A icon.

Thank You!



Livestock Management Plan Website

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/LMP>

U.S. Mail

US Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Theodore Roosevelt National Park
PO Box 7
Medora, ND 58645

THRO_Education@NPS.gov