



## Proposed Redevelopment for Painted Canyon

April 2026

The National Park Service (NPS), at Theodore Roosevelt National Park (the Park), is requesting public input on planning concepts to modernize the Painted Canyon area. The proposed project would update the site to enhance visitor experience and support year-round park operations.

### Project Overview

The Park, in partnership with the National Park Foundation, is exploring options to redevelop the Painted Canyon area and associated facilities. The Park completed a Facility Revitalization Plan in 2022 that identified Painted Canyon as a top priority for improvements due to aging buildings, limited visitor facilities, outdated displays, and safety concerns. To address these needs, the current proposal envisions:

- Building a new visitor center with modern amenities and updated education exhibits;
- A new overlook ;
- Improved trails for hikers and equestrians;
- Reconfigured parking;
- Improved accessibility;
- Habitat restoration; and
- Additional safety features to reduce human-wildlife conflicts.

Photos by NPS unless noted otherwise

### Share Your Thoughts with Us

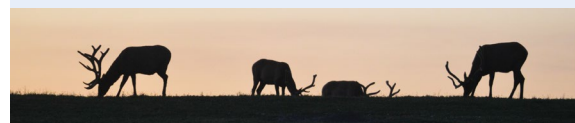
The public scoping period will be open from April 28 to May 12, 2026.

Comments received or post-marked by May 12, 2026, will be considered. Comments can be submitted through the Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website at:

[https://parkplanning.nps.gov/THRO\\_PC\\_Redevelopment](https://parkplanning.nps.gov/THRO_PC_Redevelopment)

Or U.S. mail at:

Superintendent  
Theodore Roosevelt National Park  
P.O. Box 7  
Medora, ND 58645

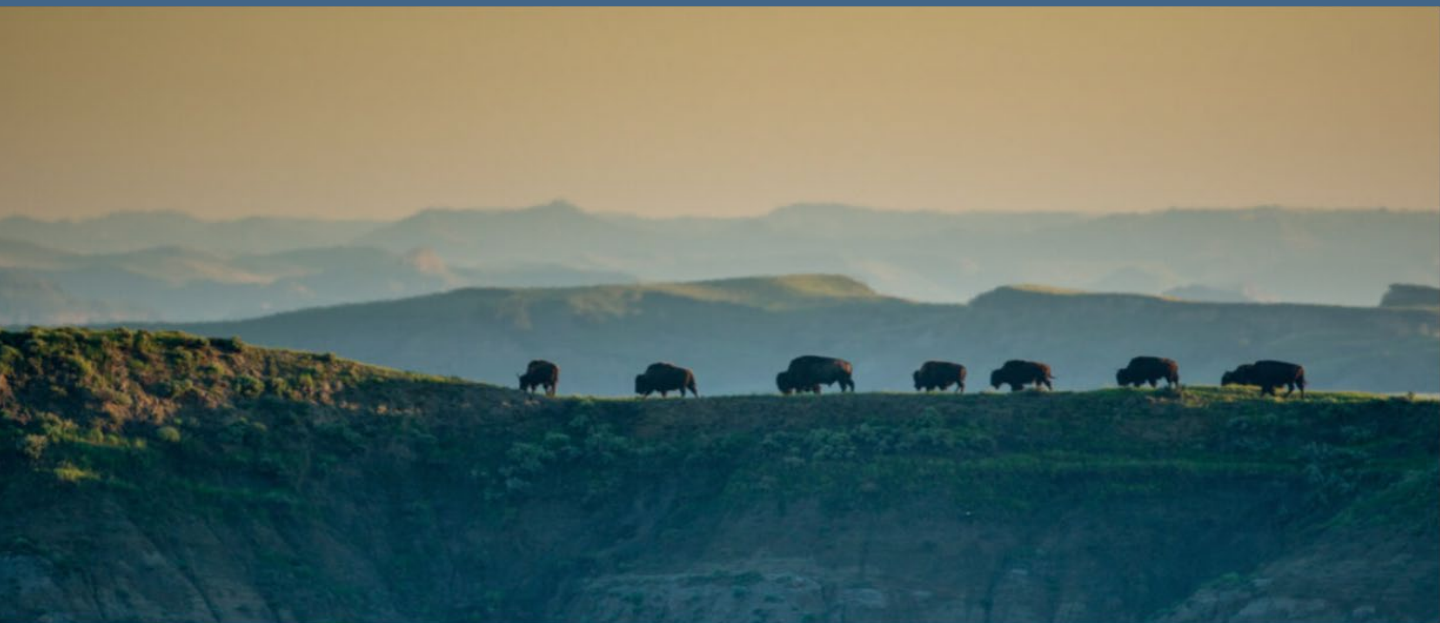


## Provide Comments

If you would like to comment, please consider the following questions:

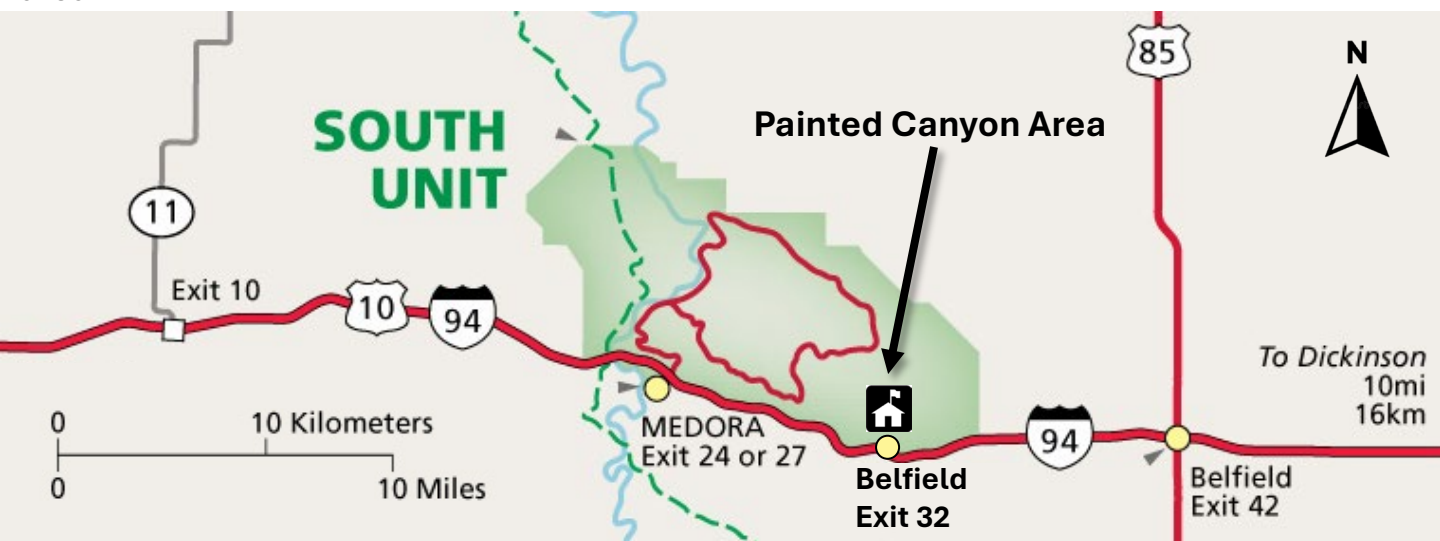
- What part of the current Painted Canyon experience should be improved?
- What amenities or facilities are most important to you?
- What safety or accessibility improvements would you recommend?
- Which elements of the redevelopment concept do you support or have concerns about?
- What is missing from the proposed design?
- What do you value most about Painted Canyon?

Please provide comments by May 12, 2026



## Project Location

The Painted Canyon area is located in the South Unit of the Park off Interstate 94 (I-94) at Belfield Exit 32 in Billings County, North Dakota. In cooperation with the North Dakota Department of Transportation, the site also functions as a state-designated rest area.



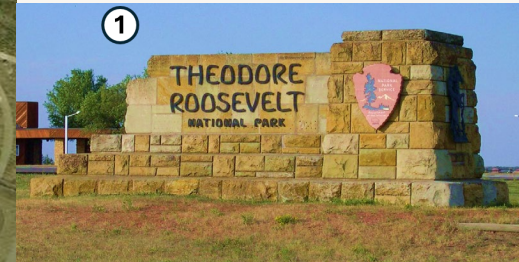
# Painted Canyon Current Conditions



Aerial Imagery by Google Earth

## Legend

1. Entrance Sign
2. Visitor Center
3. Picnic Shelters
4. Public Restroom
5. Large Vehicle Parking
6. Standard Car Parking
7. Waste Water Lagoons
8. Painted Canyon Nature Trail
9. Overlook
10. Bison Fence



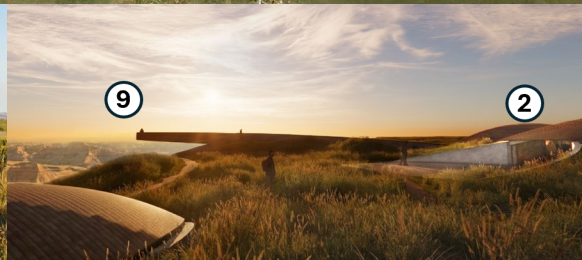
The Painted Canyon area has long served as a popular stop for travelers visiting the North Dakota Badlands. Current facilities include a small bookstore and souvenir shop, parking areas for both passenger vehicles and tractor trailers, restrooms, picnic shelters, multiple trails, and a scenic overlook. Aging utilities, limited accessibility, and circulation challenges, along with frequent bison encounters, create safety concerns for both vehicles and pedestrians. Signs and interpretive displays are outdated, and the setting provides few cues that visitors are entering a national park. The Painted Canyon area is open to the public from May to October.

# Painted Canyon Proposed Redevelopment



## Legend

1. Relocated Entrance Sign
2. Visitor Center and Restrooms
3. Bridle Trailhead
4. Horse Trailer Parking
5. Crescent Garden
6. Vehicle Parking
7. Waste Water Lagoons
8. Painted Canyon Nature Trail (not pictured)
9. Crescent Path with Overlook
10. Bison Exclusion Feature
11. Restored Grassland
12. Proposed New Trail
13. Entry Gate



The proposed redevelopment of the Painted Canyon area would create a modern, year-round destination for visitors. A new visitor center would offer updated exhibits, a bookstore, restrooms, food-and-beverage, and an outdoor interpretive plaza and garden. Site improvements would reorganize the entry drive into a one-lane loop, expand hiking access, add an equestrian trailhead, and redesign the overlook with enhanced canyon views. Exclusion structures would allow bison to continue grazing while maintaining safe separation between wildlife and visitors. The entrance sign would be relocated to improve visibility and welcome travelers to the Park.



Painted Canyon is more than a quick stop along the interstate. It is the gateway between two iconic North American landscapes, where rugged Badlands rise from sweeping grasslands and where layers of geologic and human history meet. This is the terrain that helped Theodore Roosevelt rediscover purpose, and it continues to inspire visitors today.

## The Vision



The renewed vision for Painted Canyon will invite visitors to connect with the landscape and history that defines Theodore Roosevelt National Park. The proposed designs will blend naturally with the land, offering welcoming spaces for learning, reflection, and discovery. Together, these improvements create a meaningful first impression of the Park and the American West and enable a deeper sense of place for all who stop at Painted Canyon.

## Let Us Know

Join us in shaping the future of Painted Canyon! Please share what you think will support meaningful visits.

[https://parkplanning.nps.gov/THRO\\_PC\\_Redevelopment](https://parkplanning.nps.gov/THRO_PC_Redevelopment)



Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts.