

Responses on Newsletter #1 Comment Cards Badlands South Unit General Management Plan

1. What is special to you about the South Unit?

Tribal lands.

Unfulfilled potential to help generate economic benefits to the surrounding lands and people. The South Unit does not get introduced to park visitors in ways that are compatible with the people on PRR nor does it benefit them in any significant way.

Everything! Incredible views of Palmer Creek and Stirk Table. Magnificent sunrises and sunsets, spectacular rainbows. The incredible scenery, wildlife, and other natural resources must be protected from misuse and exploitation. I will argue and fight against any plan that threatens to negatively impact the peace and serenity of my property.

“It is Indian Reservation – leave it like it is.”

The most beautiful spot in Western South Dakota is on the ridge just above Red Shirt where you can look west and see the sacred mountain “Harney Peak” or look east into the wild maze-like land of the South Unit. I have wanted to find a way to drive my 4x4 truck through that area to appreciate its unique land forms, solitude, and Lakota spirits.

The South Unit has better views.

I am especially interested in the invertebrate paleontology in the Pierre Shale in the area. It is a very rich area from a fossil perspective.

It's remote, primitive, unspoiled, spiritual, and incredibly beautiful. Over the past 20+ years, I've hiked/explored all areas within the south unit including the Palmer Creek area (after gaining access permission).

It is land that belongs to the Oyate of the Oglala Sioux Tribe.

My grandparents lived in the Badlands at the time the Gov't took the land away. My family was raised there. There's plenty of Natural Resources in the Badlands that can help the tribal members become self-sufficient, but the tribal people need to be in control of their own resources.

Interesting trails through the moonlike wilderness with the thrill of meeting a buffalo or eagle. I have been there a few times.

It's in South Dakota and need be we can generate money off of it. Future plans are to build and bring in tourism to this part of the country.

Many areas within the South Unit have long been a wakan (sacred) pristine place where our People can stand and hold in their hearts the vast blessings Tunka Shila has blessed us with. It affords unique areas where we can come to walk and talk with Wakan Tanka, and hear the message of Great Spirit, the Great

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Mystery, talk directly to us... to chante ishta. While all of Maka is Wakan, too few places remain where we can see Creator physically, places like Paha Sapa, places like the Badlands. Preserving such precious areas is a duty of all Peoples, regardless of tribe or race.

The South Unit is somewhat remote compared to the north one, at least it is not as developed. The area seems wilder, more mysterious – and I like that.

The White People are making a Hell of a good living on our lands and we're not getting compensated of money of our treated lands.

We live and own land along the end of South Unit so we can enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Badlands and would like to see it kept the way it is, and better patrolled. A Ranger who will do a good job. This will keep the fossil hunters out – monitor them.

Important research area.

Sadness comes when I look back and reflect on how those Lakota families react when told they no longer can live on their own land. Wrongly displaced. What is special about the SU is (Holyness).

Its remoteness. It should be kept as a totally primitive area.

It is holy and belongs to Lakotah.

We have answered tourist questions for 30 years. The tourists are extremely interested in the culture, history, and lifestyle of the Native Americans in South Dakota. The WRVC is an asset to educate the traveling public.

One need only to look with the eyes and heart to know Tunkashila Himself made these lands *wakan*. This South Unit area especially holds the heart of not only the Oglala *Oyate*, but of all *Ikee Wicasa* and, as I see it, is perhaps one of the last (if not "the" last) places we can touch *Wakan Tanka* directly. It is the "Great Mystery" beauty place on *Mak*.

Unique natural area.

The area is a valuable scenic, biological, and natural area.

The paleontological resources unique to the White River Badlands, the Badlands topography, the isolation, the wildlife.

The specialness of the SU is that there is some unknown history about it. The white people know about this, so they want to keep it from the original landowners.

The South Unit of Badlands NP is a very important area because it protects geologic deposits and fossil resources that are not preserved in the North Unit. A complex river system from 37 million years ago is preserved with in the South Unit. These fluvial deposits intern preserve some of the most spectacular *Titanothera* remains found in the country.

Sheep Mountain.

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Badlands National Park is spectacular. They are a national treasure that should be preserved. I love the beauty and uniqueness of the Badlands.

My folks had to move out of the Bombing Range down on the east end. After 20 years of using it as a bombing range, my mother had to buy her land back. The Defense Dept. could or should have given the land back free of charge.

Lakota people historical engagement between the natural environment and protection of their people that had such hardships during the time of annihilation of the Indian people. People and spirit are buried out there in the harshest fashion. I believe you should leave it alone until the people can come to terms with themselves.

The Paleontology and Geology of the SU are of particular importance. These must be protected from poaching, and also made available for scientific study and/or interpretive sites. While lands and the ecosystem should be protected, they should also have some access to the public.

The wealth of the natural resources there in terms of their scientific and educational value. The South Unit is a science educator's dream come true, and that needs to be part of the teaching of the children.

The SU has such a diverse group of qualities that it would be unfair to list just a few.

It belonged to us.

The special part about the SU is the richness in minerals. The fact that it can be a camping area, and a place for animals is also special.

I think what is special about it is that SU is still ours and I hope it will stay ours.

I drove through this area with my grandmother. It was sad to hear and see them cry while talking of their memories in the 60s – 70s.

The natural pristine conditions.

I feel that all our land is very sacred.

The thing that's special to me is that it holds some of the region's most valued natural resources, and that it is part of our reservation.

All of this land is special. Even though it was wrongly taken from us, it's still our land. And it needs to be taken care of.

I thought I was the only one trying to get back our lands. I really liked it.

History of the Sioux is still present.

Valued land was illegally taken from Oglala Sioux Tribe.

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Beautiful country. It does need to be preserved.

It can help bring some money back to the reservation so we can use the money to help the people.

That it has really good minerals that nobody else has, and all the unique fossils.

It has historic and cultural importance.

The South Unit issue is finally going to be settled. I hope that every tribal member who has issues with land attended your public meetings. I feel good about the whole thing happening with the South Unit.

My paternal grandmother's side of the family was moved off the land. And the stories of other is very special.

The unique culture, history, formations, and wildlife found in this remote area of SD. It is a beautiful area that needs to be preserved with all its native species intact.

It's a place to walk, explore.

The emphasis on Lakota heritage and the more gradual changes in the landscape than in the North Unit.

2. Another alternative not considered?

NPS and OST work together as under Concept 3, but bring in State Park System as a partner. This might benefit OST by developing a stronger working relationship with the state government and adding a third potential source of revenue to help fund operations.

Leave it alone!!! And get rid of the OST's involvement in the SU!!!

Keep it as it is.

I like Concept B for visitor options based on Concept 2. I hope that the area south-east of Red Shirt will be made slightly more accessible by at least marking the main 4x4 route and connecting over to the area south of Sheep Mt. I love the "island in the sky" at the end of Sheep Mt. Road.

Concept 1 plus a long-term NPS lease of the Palmer Creek Area from the OST to preserve as a Semi-Primitive / Natural area with limited, unpaved road access as it is now. I would suggest considering a scenic overlook of the White River and Palmer Creek Area from BIA 27. This would be an area controlled & maintained by the NPS (not the OST). I recommend designating the eastern half of the Palmer Creek Area as a roadless wilderness (much as it is now), reducing the grazing area size in the western half, and restoring areas within Palmer to a natural prairie state. Hiking and limited overnight backpack camping would be allowed anywhere in the South Unit. Vehicle access would be limited as it is now.

Return the land so our children can continue to find themselves through our culture. The Stronghold is part of our history.

Green energy concept that both the NPS/OSPRA can manage together.

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I have no knowledge of NPS's vision for the SU, but I hope it will be a limited- interest area (like Bear Butte NWR) to help protect its wildlife, fossils, and topography. However, if any of the land was "borrowed" from the Sioux in 1942 for practice bombing runs, I think it should be returned to the Pine Ridge Reservation as verbally promised. The land involved was passed over to the Park Service in 1965 because the War Department said it was surplus land. No land was surplus to the Sioux!

We need to keep it isolated and all white man spies out of there. If, or more correctly, when the war starts this will become a base of operations. So keep all tribal (OST) and other Americans out.

If the SU is on the Reservation, why does one need to share the future plans revenue? Being Indian, I feel whatever the plans are should stay within the Reservation. I do know where the money has to come from, but stick to the Reservation side of it!

This White Government and State Government are a bunch of hook and crook bunch of greedy People. We haven't been paid any money ever since these treaties were signed clear back to 1851 and 1868.

Well-trained rangers and a phone number where they can be reached.

I prefer Concept B.

Concept 2 is my pick. I like it because OST can fix or renew efforts to fit our needs.

Stronghold Table and the surrounding area considered sacred should be returned to the Lakota.

Yes, the Constitution of the United States of America, Article VI. Also, the 1851 and 1868 Treaties with the Lakotah as well as the United Nations Charter signatories, whom also agree to the law of Treaties.

I can think of none personally.

I believe that the Oglala Sioux People should not give up, but stand together at all times.

I prefer a gradual transition from Concept 1 into Concept 2. This would take place over a set number of years with a series of benchmarks. The revision of the MOA would be one of the first benchmarks to be achieved. After the MOA was renegotiated, then an organizational chart would be developed, outlining the role of each employee within the two organizations. All hiring goals and general program goals would be set up to accommodate the gradual trend towards the goal of shared management.

Burial sites need to be identified first with laws and protection.

Develop the acreage and incorporate *mni wiconi* projects.

I wouldn't really call it a concept. I would call it a chance. Can try to get back the Black Hills and the South Unit.

Give it back to the land owners.

Concept 3 going into 4 – Concept 5. (2)

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Go with Concept 3 and continue on into Concept 4 to be managed by OST.

The concept of the SU being managed by the Tribe with technical assistance provided by the NPS is a good idea. We need to keep the NPS involved because of the funding. The other concepts aren't workable. I'm glad that the operation of the SU will stay with the Tribe. We need the NPS involvement in order for us to really make it work.

I believe a progression through the concepts. Basically Concept 1 and 2 are being implemented. In 10-15 years, phase into Concept 3 where the Tribe is managing the SU, either as a separate national park or affiliated area. In 15-30 years, the Tribe can review with NPS to see if they would ever deauthorize it as a park.

I was shocked by the bomb warnings. I would like to see exhibits on why the US Armed Forces bombed a national park in WWII, what was done to the environments and ecology of the Badlands as a result, who was affected at the time (and presently), and what is being done to address those affected and the park today.

3. What do you like/dislike about the concepts?

Concept 4.

Any concept would work, but I would like to see more OST involvement in regional development without losing NPS financial and technical support be the one selected.

Not much of anything, but I can (barely) stomach Concept 1. I advocate repealing the MOA.

No change.

I feel that NPS and OST could both learn/benefit from each other. I come to SD just to see the Badlands almost every year. I would like to hike into the most remote areas. My fear is that the NPS might not listen with heart as well as ears to the OST and I fear that the OST may get slow and unorganized, so I may never find my way through the "maze" between Red Shirt and Sheep Mt in the former gunnery area.

I like that there are so many choices. I don't like any ideas that further limit access or only allow access by foot or animals. This is discrimination.

I like the reference to the scientific aspects, especially the paleontology. It would be very important to maintain scientific investigations with the paleontologic community.

I generally like the concept options allowing various levels of access, area protection, and wildlife habitat restoration. I would NOT advocate added governance by the OST. I generally have great respect for the native people and have a number of friends I remain in contact with regularly on the Pine Ridge but I have seen too much disrespect for the land and natural resources over the years.

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Most recently, the takeover of Stronghold Table for over 3 years was an astonishing reminder of the lack of stewardship and authority within the OST. It was also a reminder of how little control the NPS has over a United States National Park. To this day, even with the efforts of the bomb disposal team, Stronghold remains littered with debris including a shack structure. If the BNP provides the vehicles and equipment, my friends and I will clean it up in early May during our next visit. Another unfortunate reminder - take a drive to Red Shirt along the western border of the south unit; it looks like a trash dump in one of the most beautiful sections of the park.

Perhaps extending the BNP scenic drive to include a paved loop across Coney Table from the South Unit visitors' center, north to Red Shirt, and back to the freeway by way of a route near the Cheyenne River would promote more tourist exposure. A NPS-OST modern campground with hiking trail access to into the western edge of the park could bring more tourist economy to the area as well as increase the exposure of the scenic section of the park.

The Badlands is defined by the solitude and beauty of a fragile landscape. Please do not consider any organized vehicle/ATV tours within the South Unit.

Just want it returned to OST, then deal with concepts afterwards.

Concept 4 is the ideal management for the tribal people to use their own natural resources. Wind turbines, fossils, agate, and natural gems.

Everything, should it ever come about! Everything is taking years in the making, but will we ever see the final making? We have very talented Indians and I feel they could make this work!

I am still waiting to get copies of the General Management Plan, so cannot comment on it, but from what my People have said, they will serve in a good way to help maintain the Badlands for our future generations.

I think that the concepts cover the bases for administration. Whatever concept (or combination) is chosen, I think that the natural area/recreation and semi-primitive zones should be as large as practical.

Concept 2, where the Parks Department and the Tribe will oversee the South Unit.

The concepts to freely open our minds and thoughts to express our own destiny. I dislike even thinking of OST to control SU, because OST is corrupt and not fit to manage their own programs. Maybe some day in the distant future. With the MOA, people in charge can negotiate a good path for our people for years to come. I am very encouraged by this openness of dialogue where negotiators can come up with ideas to reflect common people's needs.

Palmer Creek should be accessible only to those using trained, paid Native American guides.

I dislike the colonial apparatus (offices) of the USA administering Lakotah lands and resources with the colonized lackies of the USA apartheid/colonial governments. I would improve the situation by asking every one of you and your offices to obey and live within the law! After all, don't you all live in a nation of laws?

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The NPS and OST have formed a partnership that should be a win-win for both. Moving forward with the concept of shared work and management should protect both paleontology and sacred areas. The agreement between the NPS and the OST should not be severed. That would be counterproductive, instead of moving into a modern, inclusive world.

I especially like Concept 3 (managed by the Oglala *Tawaki cunze*) in that it opens up technical assistance as needed through the NPS. While in a perfect world I would be more favorable to Concept 4 (total management by OST, I know the resources for such an undertaking respective of the technical element most probably could be facilitated through the NPS. I most dislike concept 1 in that it totally removes management from the Oglala, and this would leave the SU to the mindset and culturally deficient governmental (*wasichu*) management schemes. And we need only look across the BIA management prior to the Self-Determination Act to see what this could lead to.

I like the idea of a dual (NPS/OST) stewardship for the South Unit (Concept 2), but due to the pristine uniqueness of this region, I would opt for the "No Action" policy (Alternative A). Paleontologically, it's too sensitive.

Concept 1. I think NPS has done a great job managing the SU.

I really like Concept 4. I dislike the Concept where the land would be controlled by the NPS. They have not maintained a good faith toward the 1976 Agreement. Our tribal membership is still unemployed (85%). While the *wasichu* is given access to those lands and waters, we suffer. This must change.

I like Concept #1 the best. I think the NPS has the expertise to manage and run and develop the SU. I don't think a combined management would work very well. I am not for shared management.

The concepts are about the same. The Parks System is still going to have their hand in the management.

I think that NPS needs to be the overall protection of the SU, because unity is far from the people of this Tribe. The OST Parks should have had a plan already in play, but has proven nothing in protecting the lands. It is all about who has the money bag.

While OST should be encouraged to participate in planning and management of the SU, OST internal inconsistency demands larger scale oversight by NPS. Otherwise the concepts seem acceptable.

I do not like the deauthorization of the SU because the Oglala Sioux will lose more than they gain.

I like the thought of our people running the park, but I believe that Concept 3 would be better. Concept 3, OST running the park with some assistance. Honestly, I'm sure you noticed but not that many people would be interested.

I like Concept 3, but I would like it to be a Tribal park. I also like Concepts 2 and 3.

Combine Concepts 3 and 4 to make Concept 5.

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It sounds like 3-5 are the best options.

They are all descriptive, but my favorite one is Concept 4.

I really like Concept 3. It will bring in jobs for the people, plus they will get assistance and training.

I thought that the concepts were good. They really made me see the importance of the land. Did a very good job of explaining the concepts.

I think this program is good because it manages the SU. I like that they are managing the SU both NPS and OST because this is our land and it should be managed this way. I dislike that it can become an affiliated area.

Combine 3 and 4.

Return all land to the Tribe, Concept 4.

I don't know, it's kind of confusing, but I don't think the land should be split up so different people have control over it. It would be the best choice to do what would be best for the land. I like Concept 2 because the funds would be used together, and 3 because it's like backup.

I like them how they are.

Like: they offer a variety of solutions. Improve: combine some of them for more concepts.

Tribal park.

I like Concept 3 because the Oglala Sioux Tribe would be running it with the help of the NPS.

It acknowledges that we might not be fully capable of taking over all responsibilities, but with some technical assistance and training, we are more than capable of doing so in the future.

I am voting for Concept 3. We, the Oglala Sioux Tribe, need to take back 100% ownership of the land and plan to manage it for the future. We need to do a plan – to do the Heritage Center as a historical event- to heal the people and manage this as a business for OST.

I dislike Concept 1. Currently the OST and Badlands NP are co-managing the SU. I like Concept 2 as it is allowing the Tribe to have co-management. However, other than gate receipts for administration, no infrastructure has been developed for the SU. Concept 3 is ideal, but the Tribe lacks resources and knowledge to do it now.

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They take our land and they should help us.

I like the concepts of increasing access to more remote areas. I like concept 3 best in which the OST manages the unit with technical assistance provided by the NPS.

4. Any other ideas or comments?

Return management to the tribe who can use it for economic strength.

Could the SU staff and OST find a way to make not only Junior Rangers but Junior Tribal Rangers, too? Perhaps there is a Lakota set of names that could be given to Jr. Rangers who demonstrate an interest in exploring Lakota culture inside and outside the SU on the PRR when they visit the SU.

The tribe will never give the SU the care and protection it deserves.

Let the Indians handle it.

The land should belong to the Lakota, but I love our nation of National Parks. I hope the NPS and OST can work well together so that I may walk into more remote/sacred areas. I hope the NPS nor the OST will cave in to pressure from the Off-Road vehicles, ATVs that could destroy pristine prairie lands.

I don't like Concept 4 because I feel the OST is not capable of management on their own. I would also like to see more motorized access as most of the park is wasted due to isolation, after all there have been years of study already, if they haven't been able to figure something out by now, they never will.

I do believe in Concept 2. I feel that should work well.

Please give our land back. U.S. Govt has already taken too much from us. We too are part of *Unci Maka* like the Badlands.

These meetings in the area are a great way to gather info from all the people. There are many great minds with great ideas.

I feel that once this is brought about, the Indians are talented enough to make it work. We have artists, dancers, quilt makers, beaders, jewelers, and Lakota speakers to carry out anything to make money and keep it going!

Wachin ksapa yo! Maka kile wakan yelo wayankin yelo. Maka tikiya, taku wakan wan oo uelo. Taku waken wanici. Whatever we must do to preserve all our few remaining natural areas, it is our sacred duty. Hoyeya yo ikce wicasa Tachanupi kin. Unci maka naweci cena. Please stand with us. Help us. Pilamaya yelo.

Most wilderness in the lower 48 states is located in high-elevation forested and alpine tundra areas. Prairie wilderness is much less common. Wilderness values where possible should be emphasized in the South Unit. Where possible, the NPS should coordinate with Buffalo Gap NG to maintain larger tracts of undeveloped, unroaded land.

Corruption got to go. Equality.

What bothers me is the road and trails along the South Unit here at Red Shirt Table into privately owned land – pick-ups and so on -- to get to the edge. I would hate to have the Tribe fully take charge of SU, because it will end up worse than this. Seems they can't manage anything yet. But I am for the 2nd concept. Could work out good together.

I would like to see better trained game law wardens do more patrolling in SU even on horseback controlling fossil hunters.

Please do not develop it.

It is my understanding, when one continues to violate the laws and constitution of the United States of America, those violations are called TREASON!

This land is *Wakan*. Whatever concept allows it to remain pristine, in the condition the Creator intended for it to be originally, whichever way preserves the holy essence of this area, this would be *waste* (good)... or so it would seem to me.

To turn over the SU to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation would be a disaster of great proportion. The PRR has virtually no government, and no control over its own people. What government is in place is riddled with theft, embezzlement, corruption, and lawless disorder. The Tribe is totally incapable of managing its own people, government, and infrastructure, let alone a National Park with the magnitude of the South Unit. If turned over to the Tribe, the SU will become their prostitute. It will be bilked and robbed from. It will be abused and degraded. The wildlife and fauna will be in jeopardy. Once turned over to the Tribe, the Park Service will never get it back, and future generations of citizenry will be deprived of its beauty and natural resources forever. PLEASE consider retaining the management of the South Unit to the Federal government and NPS.

NPS should continue management.

I do not understand the need for change. The NPS represents the finest program of the US government for management of resources. Why would we want anyone but the best manager to manage these lands?

Good job! Keep up the good work.

I don't like Concepts 3 & 4 because I don't think the Oglala Sioux Tribe has the funding, staff, or infrastructure to manage a park on their own. Their present staff also doesn't have a broad enough background in terms of education and experience. I prefer a variation of Concept 2 because it includes the involvement of NPS employees, funding, and infrastructure. The resources preserved within the South Unit are so unique that they need to be protected by a national park. It would be a tragedy to let this area deteriorate into non-park status.

The SU should be given back to the Oglala Tribe with no strings attached. Period!

NPS needs to implement a plan. Technical assistance for 100% Lakota workers and not give it to the Tribe until it can be proven by work ethic and policy that are enforced and ordinance and resolution as well.

You're wonderful people, thinking about the future. Not only yours, but of the future generations.

If it does get taken from us, will we still be able to go on the land or no?

Return the land and compensation back to the Oglalas. They deserve it.

I like the Lakota language. It promotes our history and culture.

I feel that the history of the land and the tribal government should be taught in schools, so that the younger generation could know what is going on, because this is very interesting and important for our future.

Concepts 3 and 4 – Concept 5.

This gives us and our reservation hope to still have our lands 20-40 years from now and your program keeps our hearts high. Thank you.

Give the land back. Concept 4.

It might be better to summarize what you're talking about instead of just naming a bunch of dates and events. You should use more emotion to explain what exactly happened.

If the NPS and the Tribe work together can we get back the Black Hills? Can we get back our natural resources and fossils?

Keep it clean and history will persevere.

Good luck. Keep your spirit strong for the best interest of the Indian people!

I would like to see those people and their descendants be given the opportunity to gain back their land or at least compensated for the land taken.

Turn it into a wildlife preserve and return the native animals that were there first.

I like the combination of Concept 3 and 4 = 5.

We need to start acting like a sovereign nation and this is a start by managing our own park. Next we need to start looking at other entities of the Tribe for us to be really sovereign. Like the court system and police department. The group with the presentations are doing good work – hang in there.

Clean up the chemicals affecting our people today – the health disparities we all suffer today. Water concern, ordinance not cleaned up, and raw sewage dumped out there.

Because some of the SU was part of the Bombing Range, if the SU is to remain a national park, compensation should be made to the descendents of those who were forced to move out of what is now the SU in 1942. The NPS, the military, and the Tribe should make sure this happens. I would like to see it preserved in its natural state with only building on the edges. Needs less cattle grazing, more wildlife emphasis placed on it. Protection of fossils and wildlife.

Save the animals on the rez and push the people that poison the animals on the rez to jail.

I was shocked to read that the NPS may transfer management of the southern portion of the park to the tribe. I live near a reservation and I see how poorly it is taken care of. There is no pride of ownership, no sense of responsibility and no will to make it a better place. Instead all you see is grassland that is overgrazed, homes and buildings that are in disrepair, and a land that has been severely over-hunted. A prime example is Glacier Park in Montana. The difference between the east side which borders a reservation and the west side is striking. The towns on the east side look abandoned and shabby while on the west side they are very quaint AND thriving! The Flathead tribe should be ashamed. I'd be very careful before I give the tribe any more say-so in the management of your park. History says it will not work. Think about it.