

# 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>

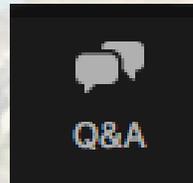
*Microphones and videos of participants will remain off during the meeting*

# Meeting Details

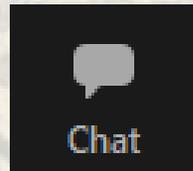


## Tips for Zoom

- 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@emp.si.com](mailto:clayton.mcgee@emp.si.com)

# Welcome



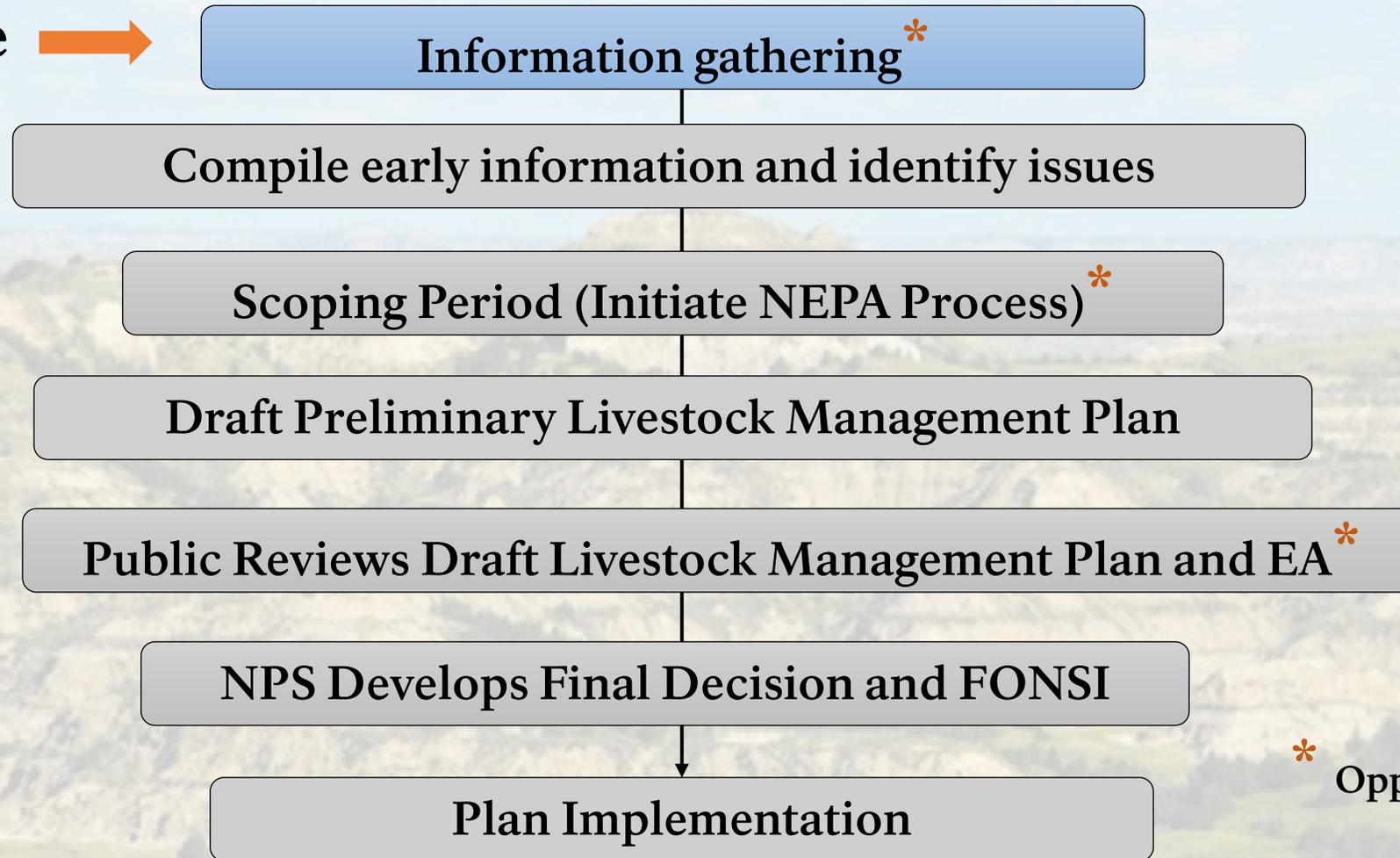
The National Park Service is developing a Livestock Management Plan (LMP) to manage cattle and horse herds at Theodore Roosevelt National Park



# Livestock Management Plan Planning Process



We are here →



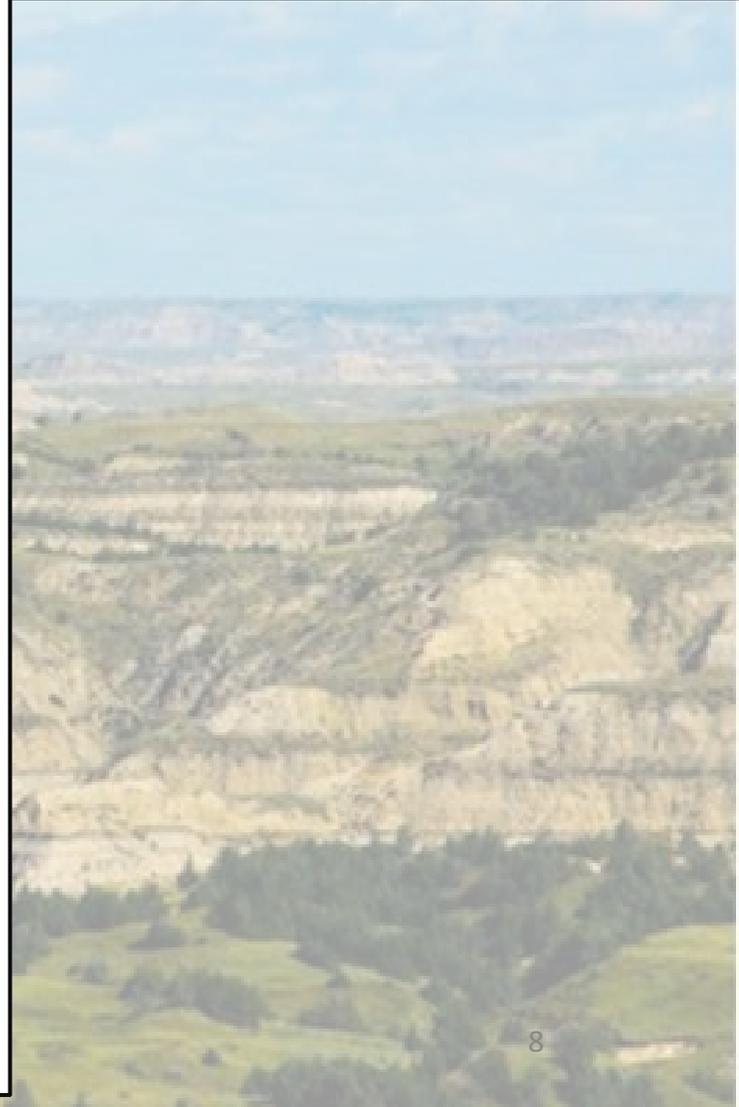
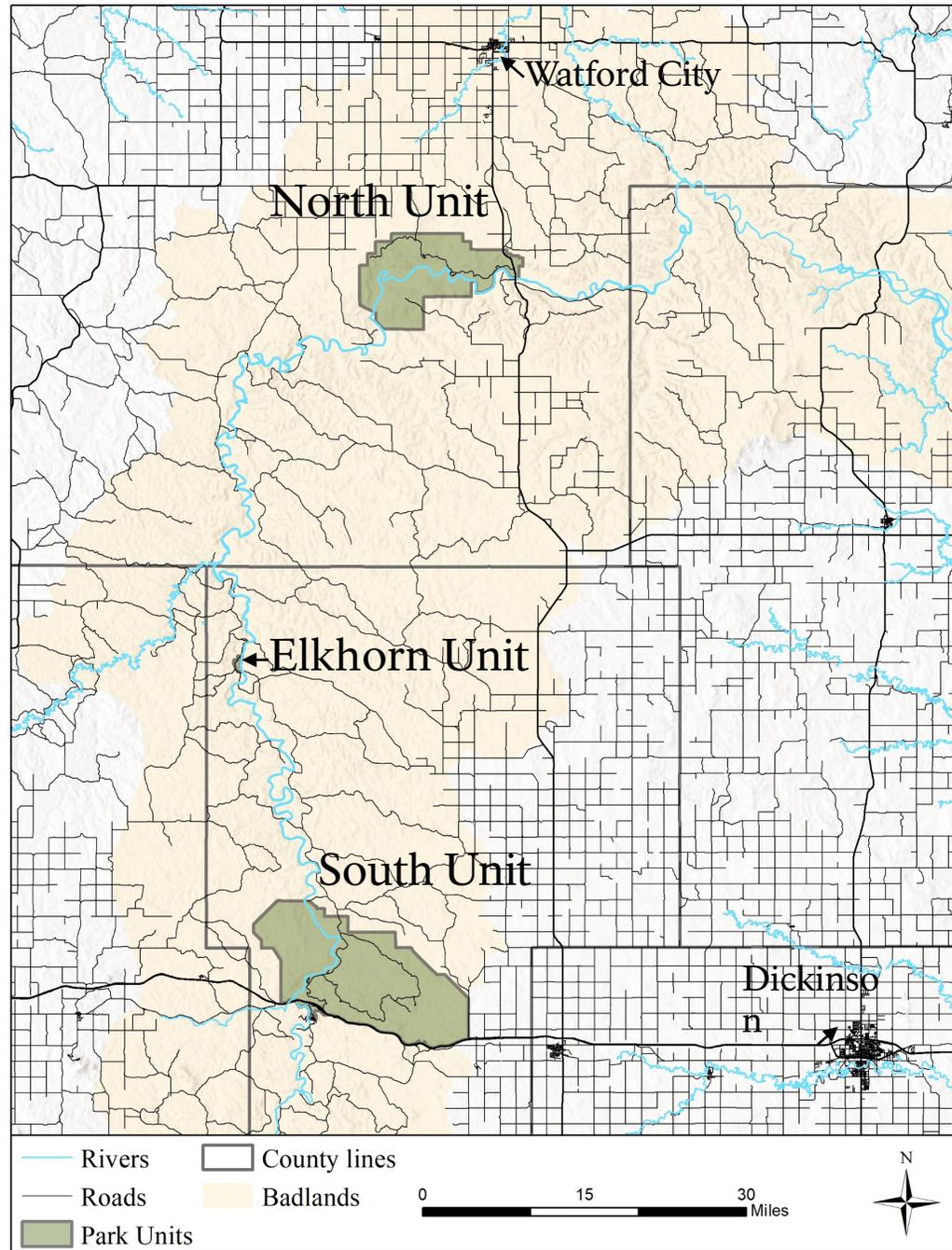
\* Opportunities for Public Input



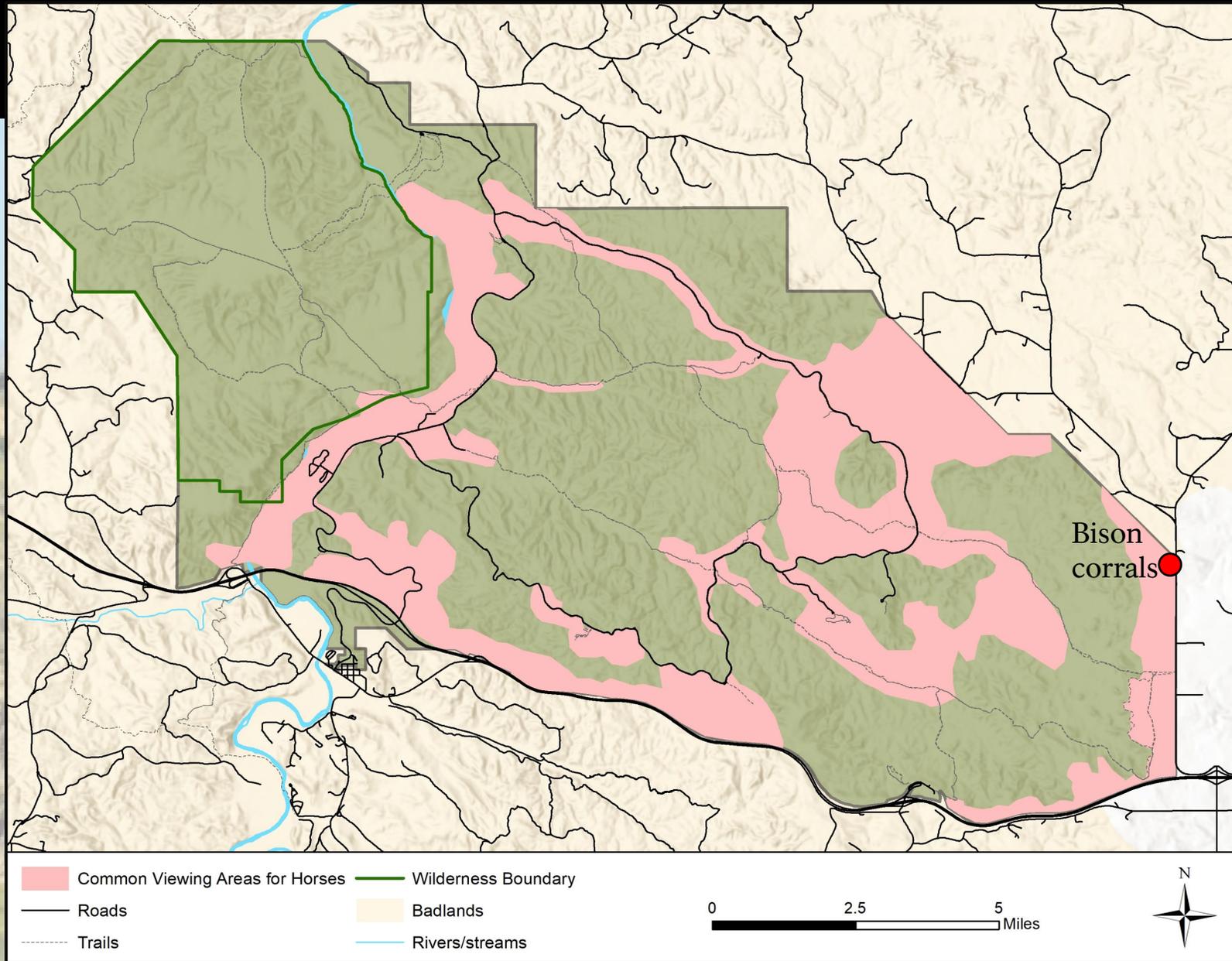
# Meeting Goals and Objectives

- 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

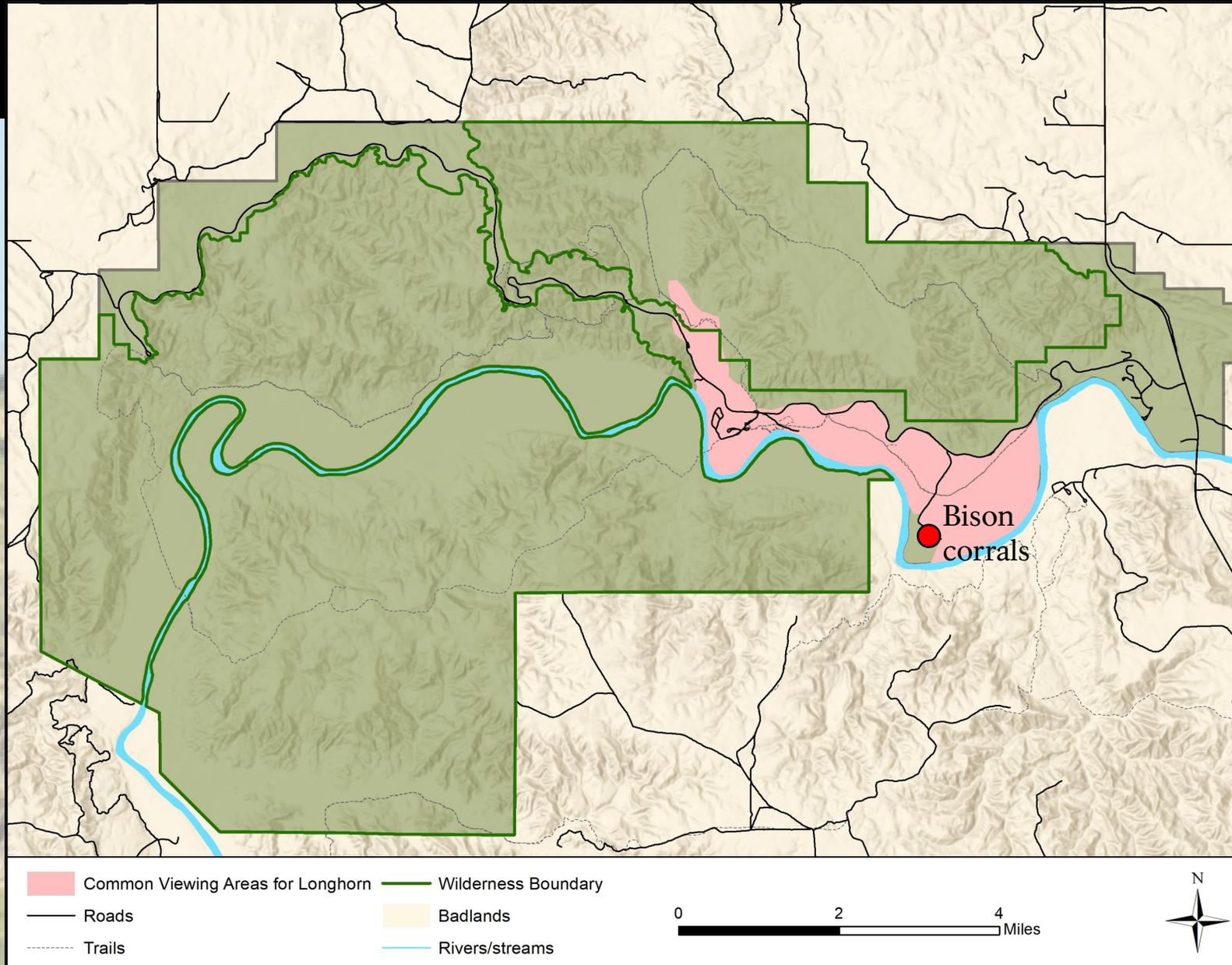
# Geographic Location of Park Units



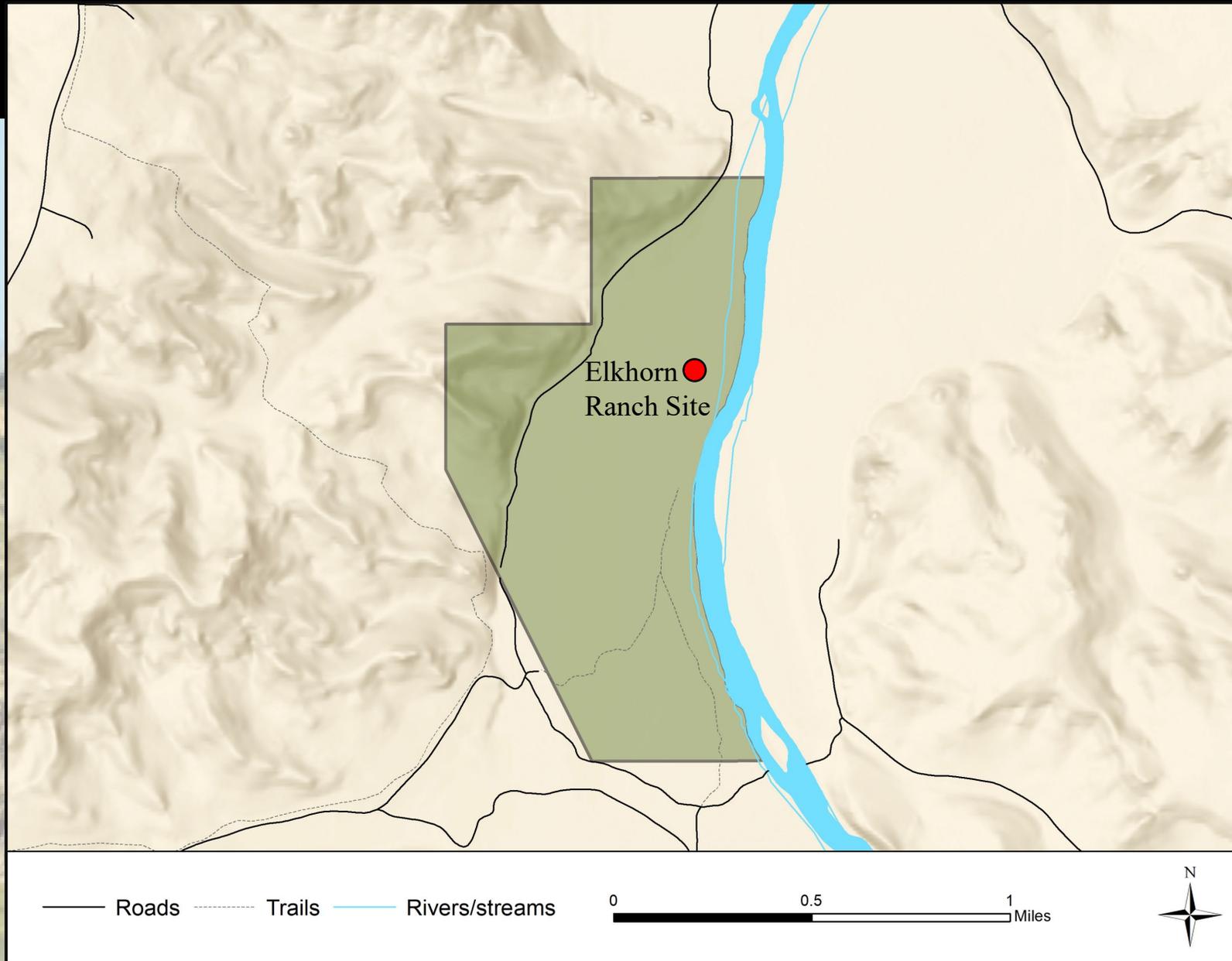
# South Unit



# 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-early1900s 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 ( $\leq 3$  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 ( $\leq 3$  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 ( $\leq 3$  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 ( $\leq 3$  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 ( $\leq 3$  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 ±

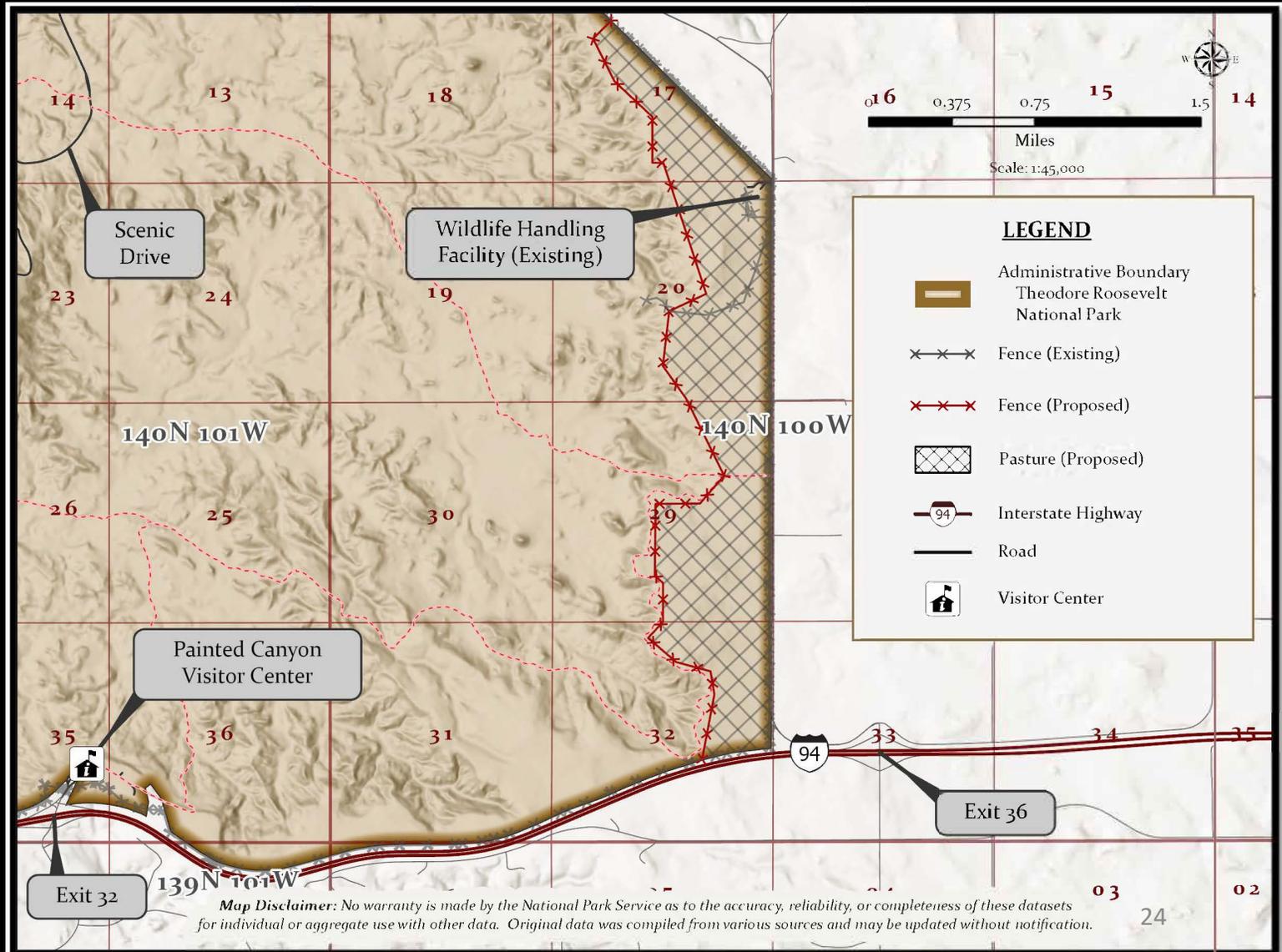
Pasture – 800 acres ±

## 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 ±

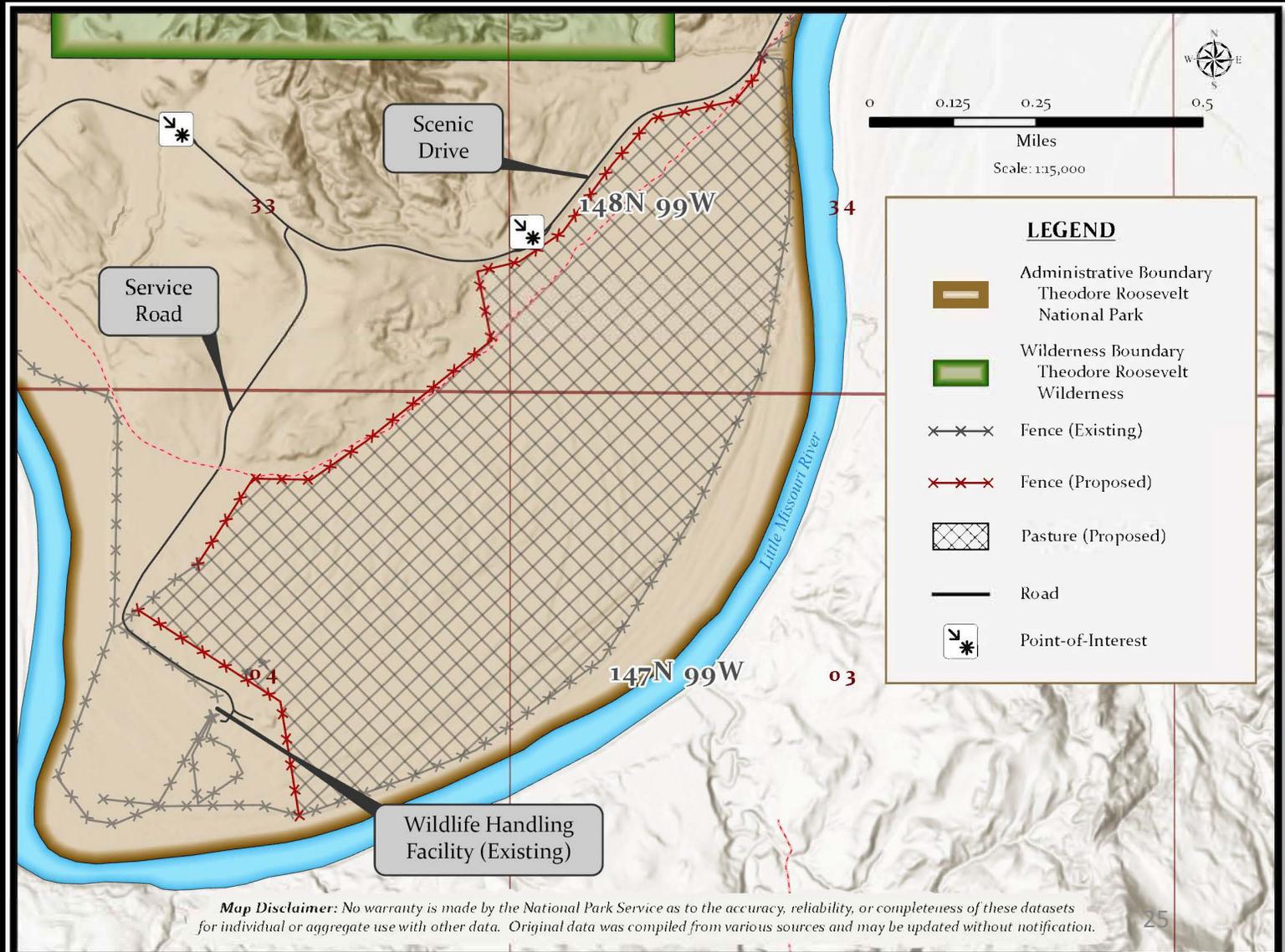
Pasture – 300 acres ±

## 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

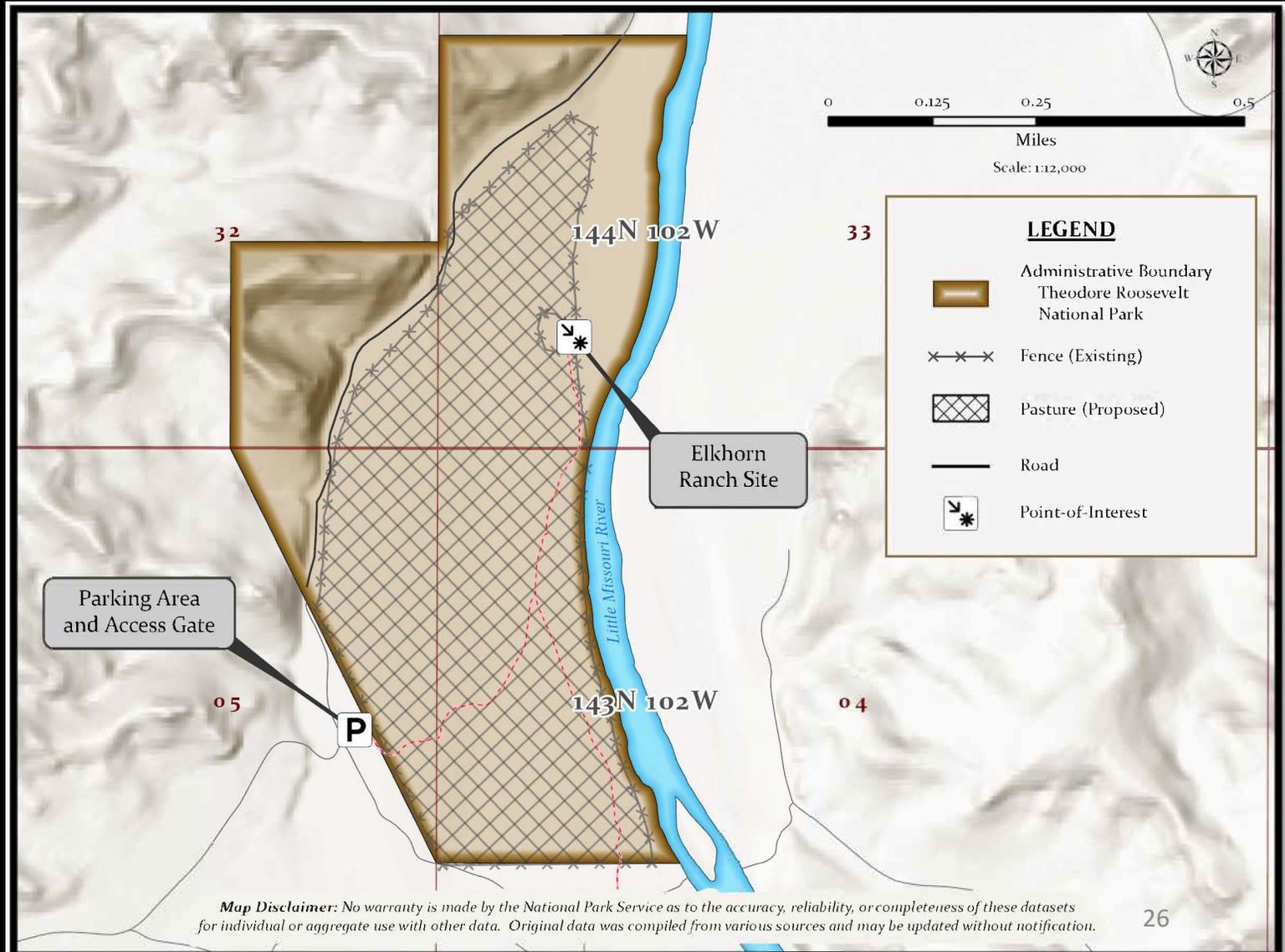
Pasture – 140 acres ±

## Capacity

- Could support 5 – 15 cattle with supplemental feeding

## Infrastructure Needs

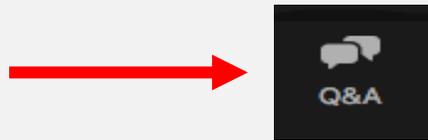
- Watering system development
- Strengthen 4-strand barbed-wire fence
- Possible parking area development, including vault toilet



# 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". The "Send" button is circled in red. A red arrow points from the "Send" button in the screenshot to the "Send" button in the instructions box on the left. At the bottom of the window, there is a link "Who can see your questions?".

## Guidance

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- NPS will answer questions as quickly as possible; however, it may take a moment for them to process the question to provide the answer.
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# Draft Preliminary Alternatives



*We will resume the meeting after this 5-minute break*

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B – Reduction of Herds Over Time to No Livestock

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# Thank You!



## Livestock Management Plan Website

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

### U.S. Mail

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