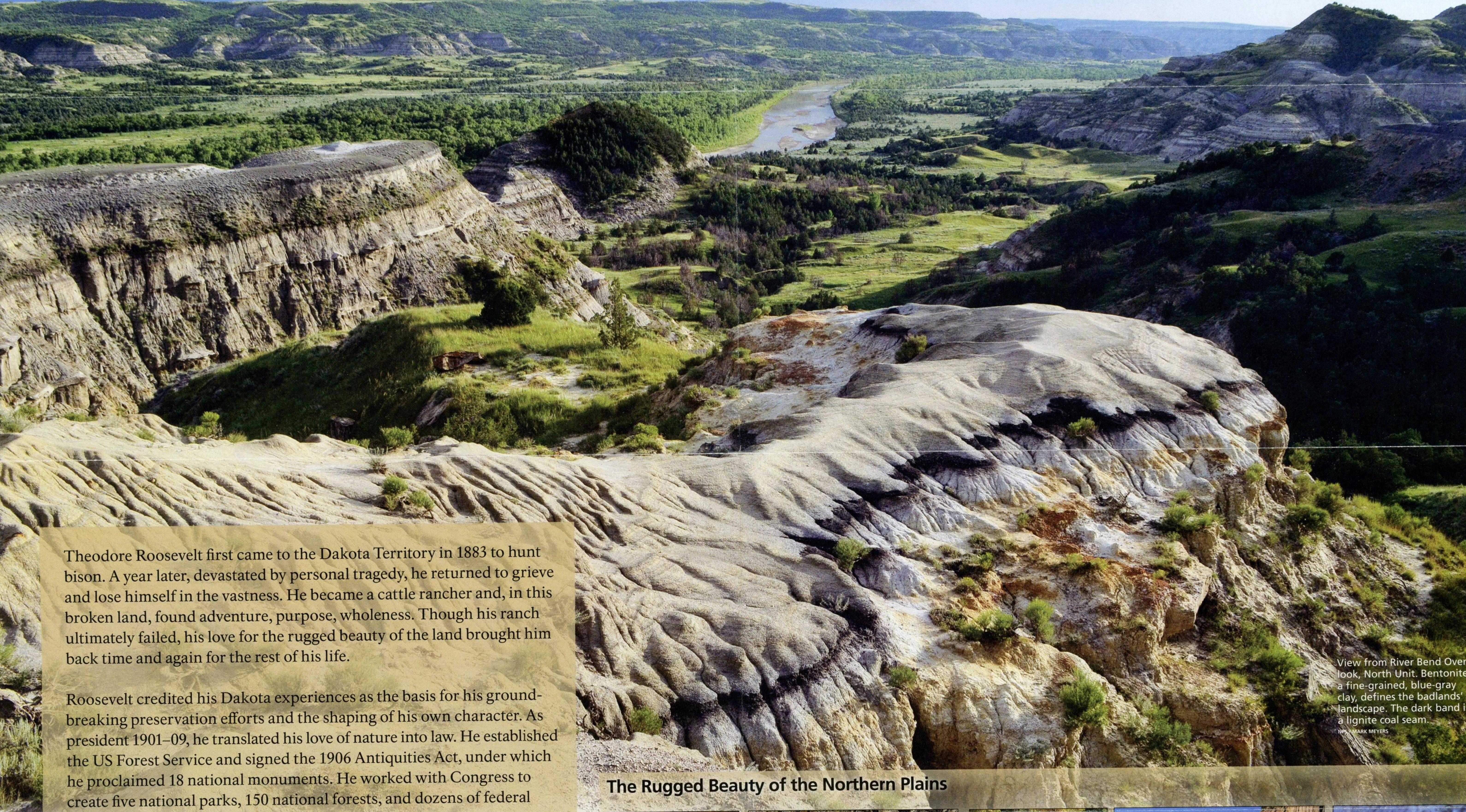


I have always said I never would have been President if it had not been for my experiences in North Dakota.

—Theodore Roosevelt, 1918



Theodore Roosevelt National Park was not the great man's own creation. It was established in 1947 as a national memorial park to honor President Roosevelt and to provide a place for us to experience his beloved Badlands in our own ways.

My home ranch lies on both sides of the Little Missouri, the nearest ranch man above me being about twelve, and the nearest below me about ten, miles distant. —Theodore Roosevelt, 1887

reserves—over 230 million acres of protected land.



Theodore Roosevelt, 1885





Badger

Over thousands of years, the Little Missouri River and its tributaries have cut through the soft sedimentary layers of the northern Great Plains. Flowing water—along with wind, ice, and plants—continue their erosive action. You can see land in transition throughout the park.

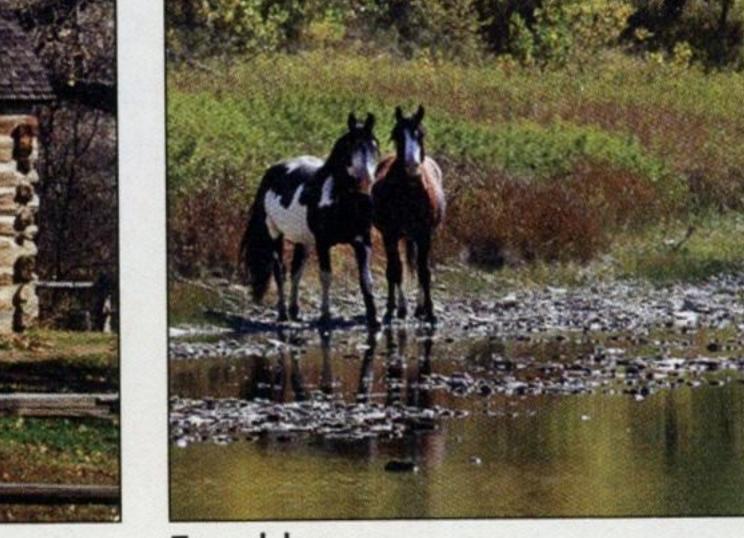
Are the Badlands really bad? For human travel-



Maltese Cross Cabin

ers and farmers, perhaps. But bison and elk thrive with a choice of edible grasses—blue grama, western wheatgrass, buffalo grass, little bluestem, and needle-andthread. Spring rains renew the grasslands and bring wildflowers' bright profusion. Prickly pear cactus delights hikers who might not think its habitat extends this far

north.

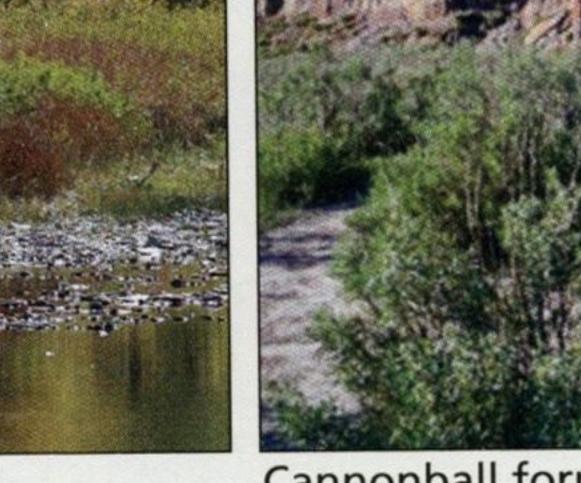


Feral horses

Woody draws have stands of Rocky Mountain junipers, while the Little Missouri floodplain supports dense growths of cottonwoods and other shrubs.

White-tailed deer forage in the river woodlands, while mule deer prefer broken country and uplands. Horses descended from ranch stock roam in the South Unit, as in

ABOVE AND RIGHT—NPS



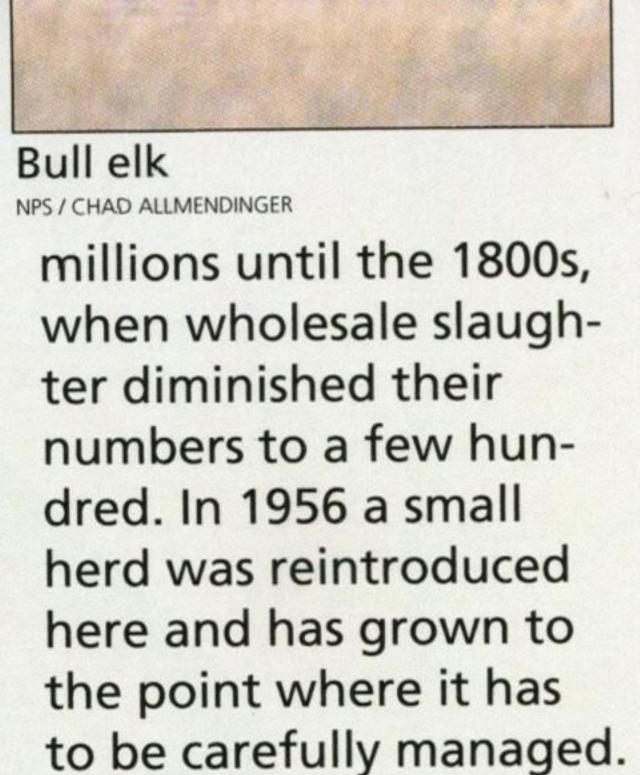
Cannonball formation

Roosevelt's time. Prairie dogs, long a staple food source for many predators, live in "towns" in the grasslands. At home here, too, are nearly 200 bird species, many of them songbirds.

In the 1880s, Roosevelt witnessed overhunting, overgrazing, and other threats to the natural world. Conservation increasingly became

one of his major concerns. He would surely be gratified to know that through careful management, many animals that nearly became extinct are once again living here.

The bison is one such success story. They roamed the plains by the



Elk, bighorn sheep, and

been reintroduced with

pronghorn have also

success.

Working the Badlands

The Badlands saw human activity going back thousands of years, but because through-travel was difficult, there is little evidence of permanent settlement. In historic times Northern Plains tribes hunted the great bison herds.

When the railroad came to the Dakota Territory



Elkhorn Ranch, 1880s

in the 1880s, people moved from the East and Midwest to try their hand at ranching. In 1883 Theodore Roosevelt invested in a local cattle operation known as the Maltese Cross Ranch, south of Medora.

The next summer, after both his wife and his mother died on February 14, he returned in search

of healing and solitude. He started a second ranch, the Elkhorn. Roosevelt considered the Elkhorn his "home ranch" and spent most of his time here when in the Dakotas.

Roosevelt became a respected member of the ranching community. To- make a living. How will day, this regional culture we meet today's chalcontinues along with an- lenge of balancing naother commercial boom. ture and human needs?

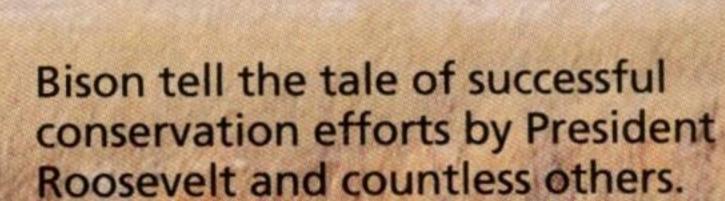
Energy development surrounds the park. Roundthe-clock drilling, pumping, and hauling oil and natural gas from the Bakken Shale formation takes place outside the park boundary.

The Badlands have never been an easy place to



Conservation Corps. These young men built the park's roads, culverts, trails, and structures in the 1930s. Right: Blue penstemon, prairie wild rose, sunflower, and crested beardtongue.





Sully Creek State Park

2 Kilometers

2 Miles

LITTLE MISSOURI

NATIONAL GRASSLAND



开(清法

(summer only)

Painted Canyon

Painted Canyon