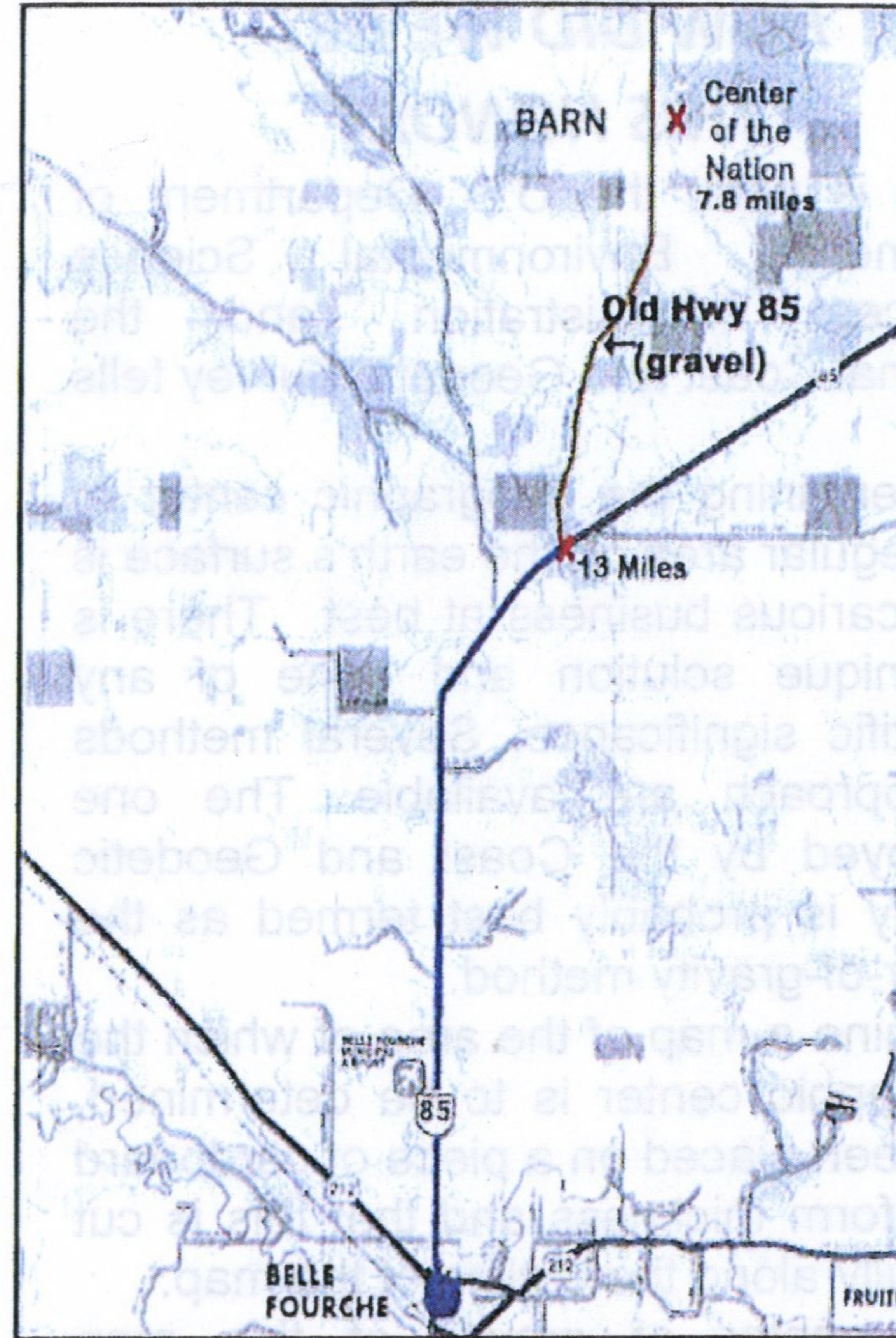


Visit the "Center of the Nation"

The City of Belle Fourche invites you to visit the new "Center of the Nation" monument in Belle Fourche, South Dakota. The compass rose shaped monument measures 21 feet across and is constructed of South Dakota granite. It is located at the Center of the Nation Visitor Center Information Center and Tri-State Museum in Belle Fourche at 415 Fifth Avenue for all to enjoy. For more information please check our websites bellefourche.org or www.thetristatemuseum.com



Old Glory flying freely at the Geographic Center of the Nation.



To drive to the actual geographic center of the nation (50 States):

- Drive 13 miles on Hwy 85 north from the intersection of Hwy 85 and 212.
- Turn left onto Old Hwy 85 and drive 7.8 miles until you see a barn on your left side.

On the right side of the road you will see a US Flag flying freely in the pasture. At this location you will see the survey marker in the ground marking the "Center of the Nation."

WANT TO DRIVE TO THE ACTUAL



GEOGRAPHIC CENTER OF THE NATION?



GEOGRAPHIC CENTER OF THE NATION

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HOW DID WE GET THIS HONOR?

This is what the U.S. Department of Commerce, Environmental Science Services Administration, and the National Coast and Geodetic Survey tells us:

"Determining the geographic center of an irregular area on the earth's surface is a precarious business at best. There is no unique solution and none of any scientific significance. Several methods of approach are available. The one employed by the Coast and Geodetic Survey is probably best termed as the center-of-gravity method.

Imagine a map of the area of which the geographic center is to be determined, has been placed on a piece of cardboard of uniform thickness and that this is cut carefully along the outline of the map.

The center of gravity of this map outline, or what might be called the geographic center, is that point at which the map will balance.

The geographic center of the 48 conterminous states was determined by the Coast and Geodetic Survey in 1918 by the method described. This geographic center is approximately at latitude 39 degrees 50'N, longitude 98 degrees 35'W, near Lebanon, Kansas.

When Alaska was admitted to the Union, the geographic center of the 49 states shifted about 439 miles northwest to a point approximately latitude 44 degrees 59'N, longitude 103 degrees 38'W, about eleven miles west of Castle Rock, Butte County, South Dakota.

In arriving at this determination the geographic center of Alaska was determined by the method described and was determined to be at latitude 63 degrees 50'N, longitude 152 degrees 00'W, with an uncertainty of about 15 or 20 miles in any direction.

The geographic center of the combination of Alaska and the 48 conterminous states is considered to be on the great circle connecting their geographic centers at a point where the two areas would "balance;" i.e., considering each having a weight, proportional to its area, concentrated at the corresponding geographic center.

Later when Hawaii was admitted to the Union, its geographic center of the 50 states was determined to be the latitude 20 degrees 15'N, longitude 156 degrees 20'W, with an uncertainty set at about 3 or 4 miles in any direction.

The geographic center of the 50 states was then determined as being the circle connecting the geographic centers of the 49 states and Hawaii at a point where the areas would "balance."

The effect of including Hawaii was rather small since its area is only about 1/560 of that of the 49 states. The geographic center of the 50 states, thus determined, then shifted about six miles west-southwest to latitude 44 degrees, 58'N, longitude 103 degrees 46'W, which is approximately 20 miles north of Belle Fourche, Butte County, South Dakota. The uncertainty of this determination is set at about 10 miles in any direction.