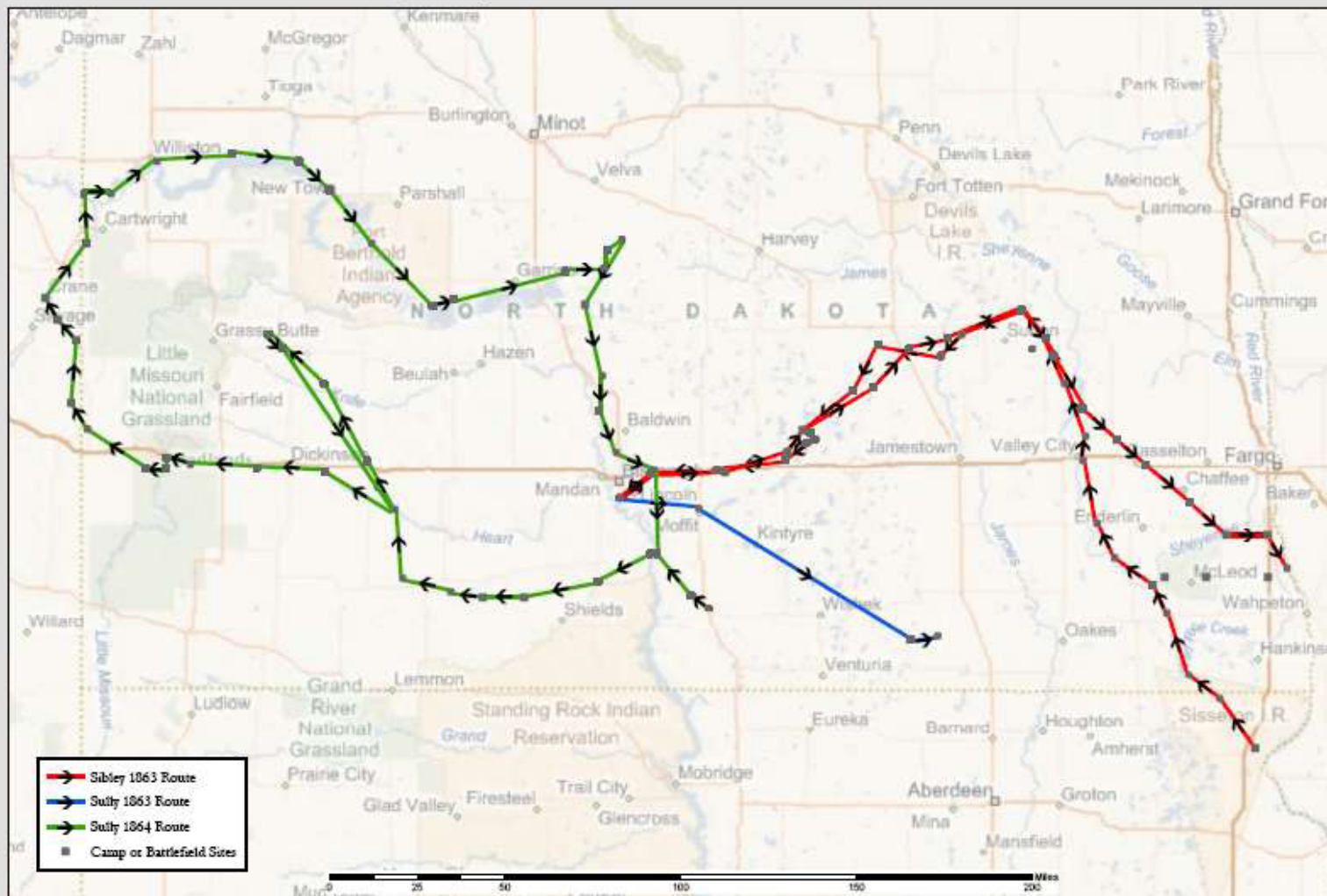


# REPORT ON SENATE

## BILL 2309:

**Review of Potential  
Developments to Sibley and  
Sully Battlefields and Trails into  
a Series of Cultural History and  
Wildlife Recreation Areas.**

Sibley Expedition of 1863  
Sully Expeditions of 1863 and 1864



# The Sibley Trail of 1863:

- ▣ Involved about three infantry and six cavalry companies (~4,000 men).
- ▣ Resulted in a six-day running battle with 5,000 Sioux Indians that extended from the hills north of Tappen to the banks of the Missouri River south of Bismarck; a distance of more than 60 miles.
- ▣ This trail in North Dakota is composed of: three battlefields, 41 campsites , extends 650 miles.



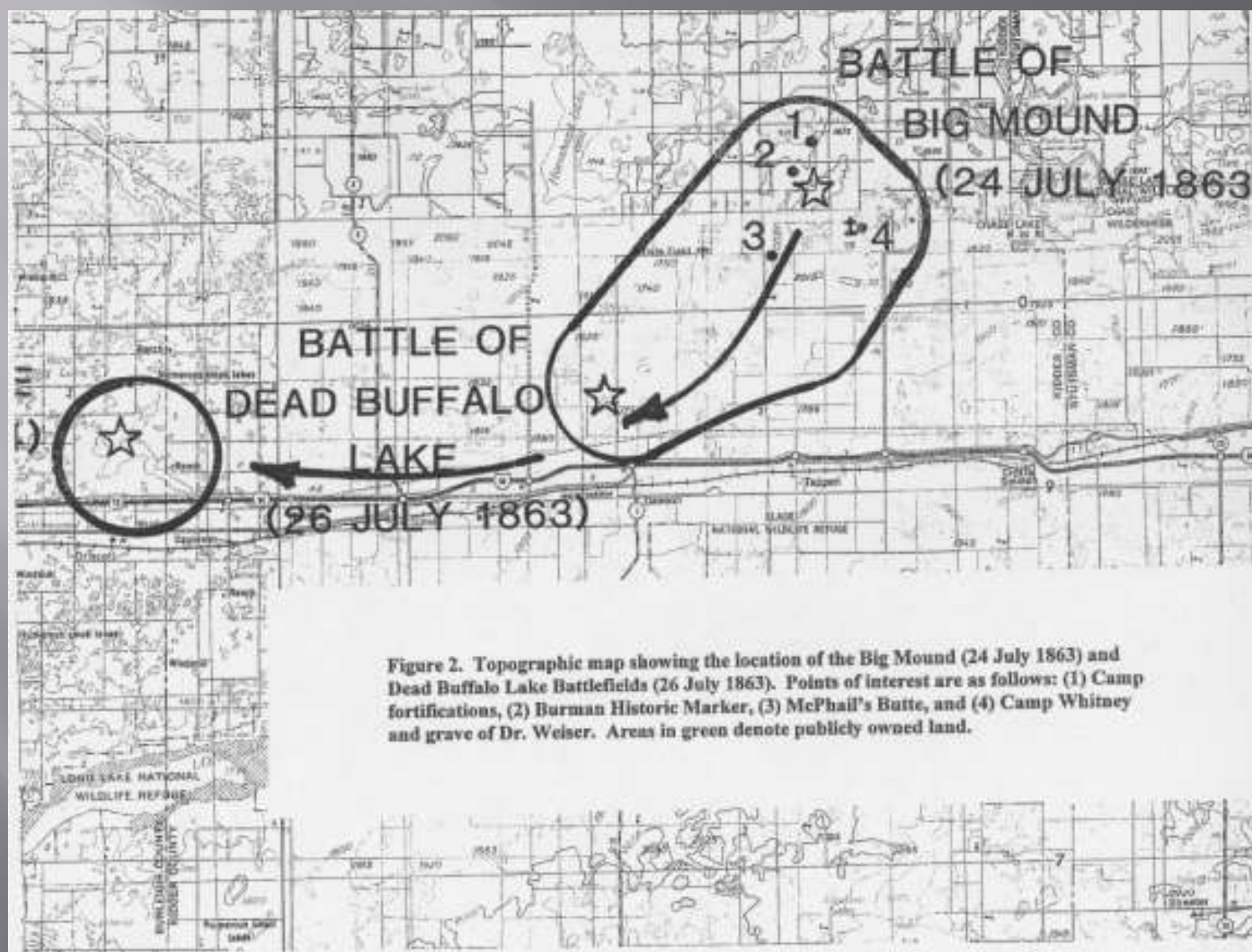
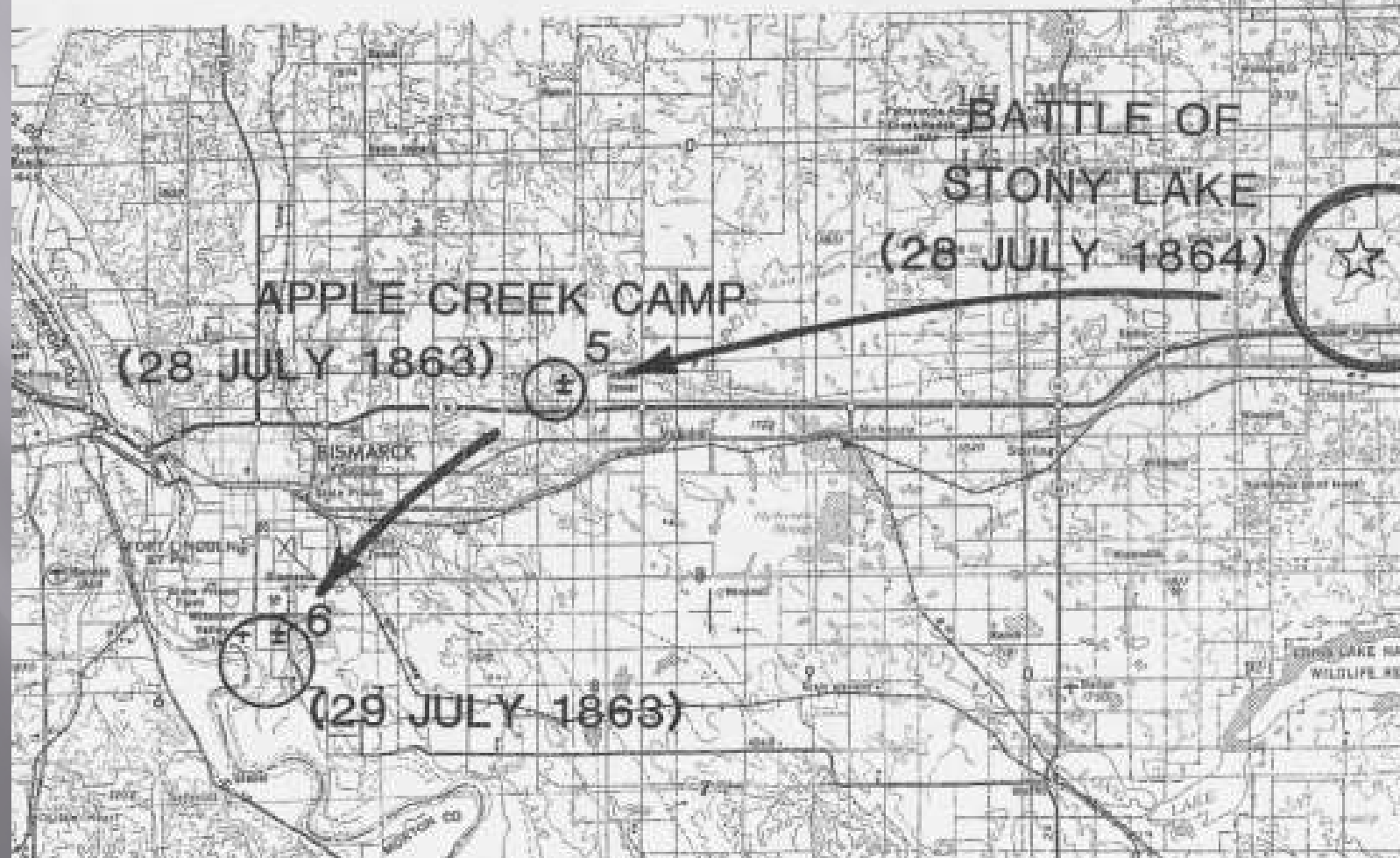


Figure 3. Topographic map showing the location of the Stony Lake Battlefield (28 July 1863) and skirmish points up to the Missouri River. Points of interest are as follows: (5) Apple Creek Camp and grave of Corporal John Platt, and (6) approximate location where Sioux abandon supplies and crossed the Missouri River, and graves of Lieutenant Beaver and Private Miller.

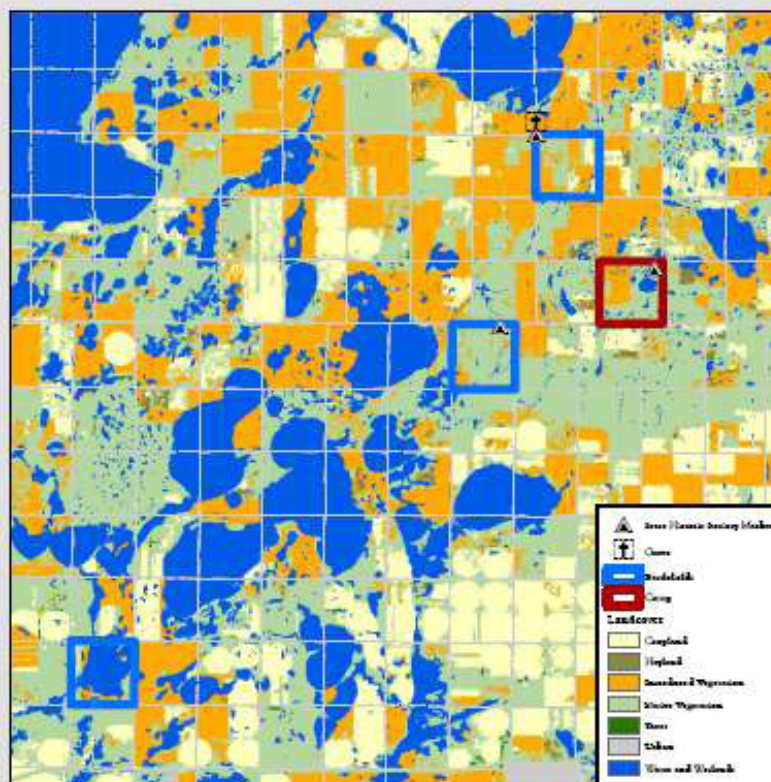
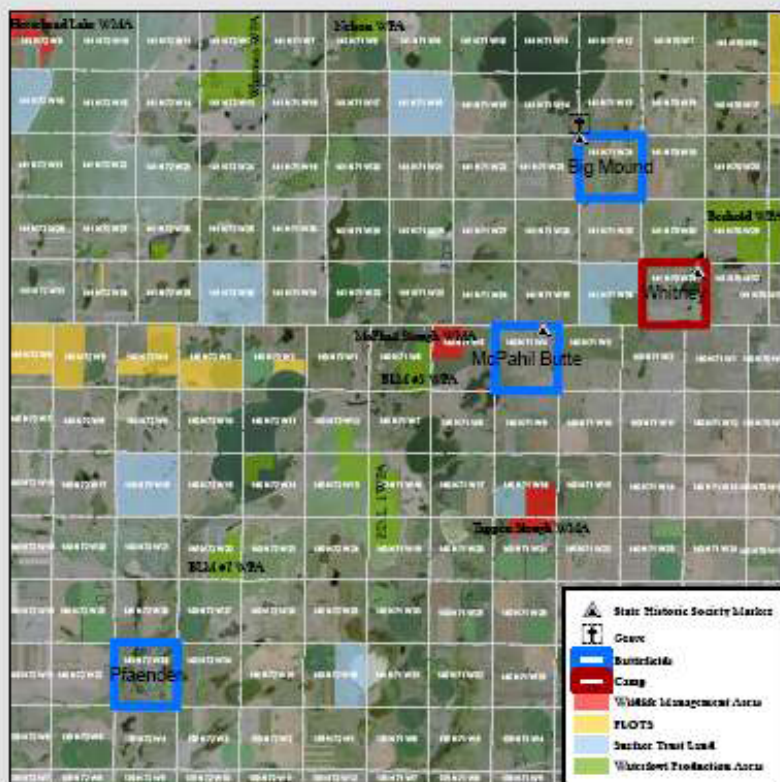
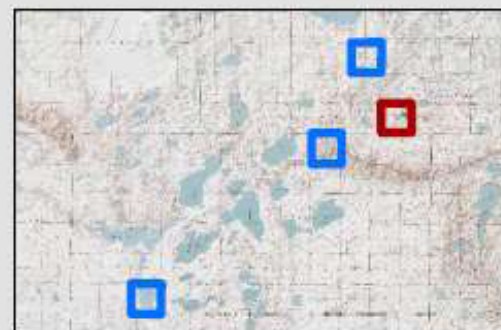






# Sibley's Kidder County Battles

Sibley Expedition  
July 24, 1863 to July 26, 1863  
Kidder County



# Today:

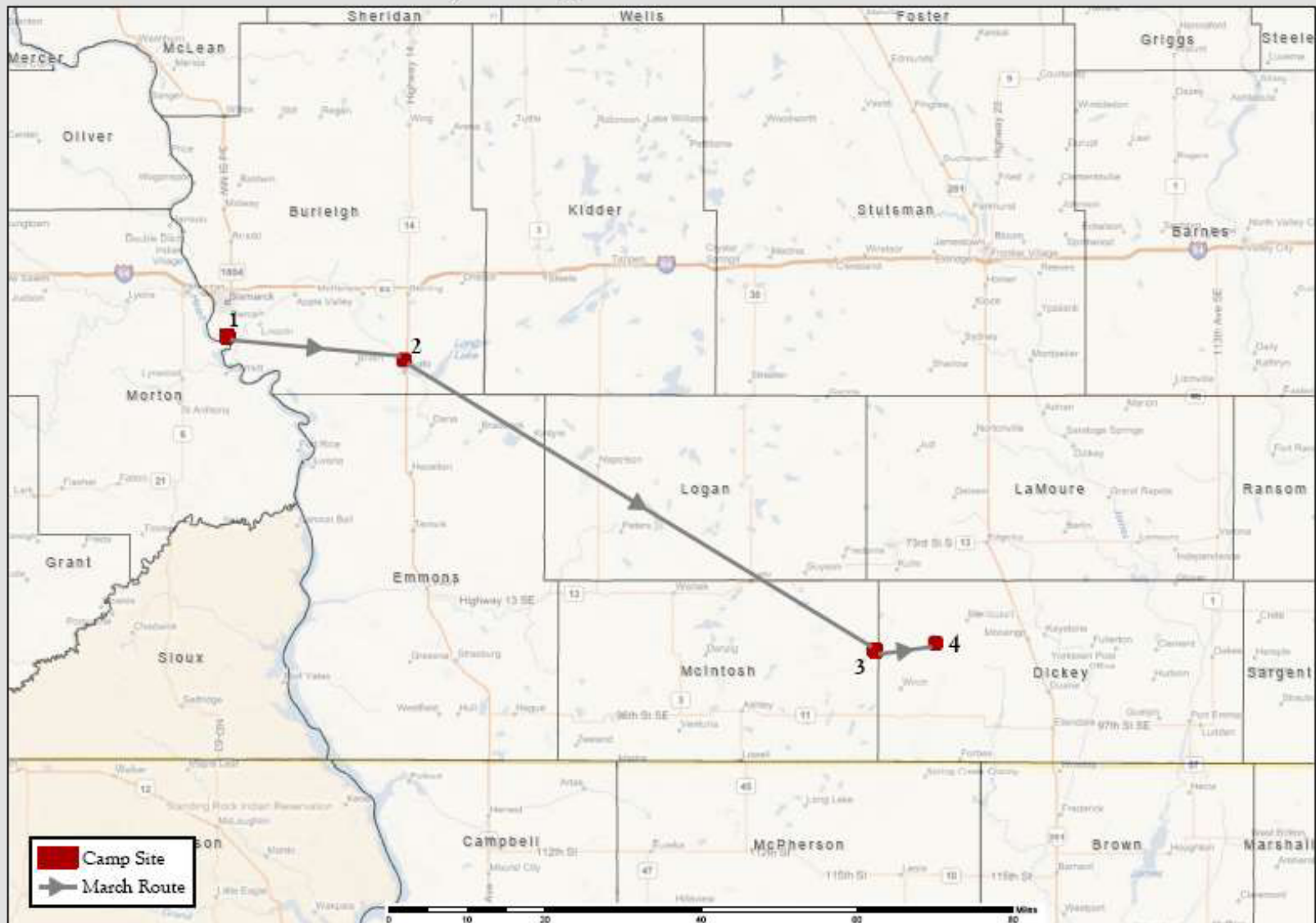
- ▣ Each summer more than 400,000 tourists traveling across North Dakota pass within a few miles of many of these battlefields and camp sites.
- ▣ The history of the battles and trails is largely unknown to residents and tourist like.
- ▣ Many of the campsites and battlefield still support native prairie and wetland complexes desirable for hunting and outdoor recreation.
- ▣ Changes in land use patterns are rapidly converted converting native prairie and access for hunting opportunities.

# The Sully Trail of 1863:

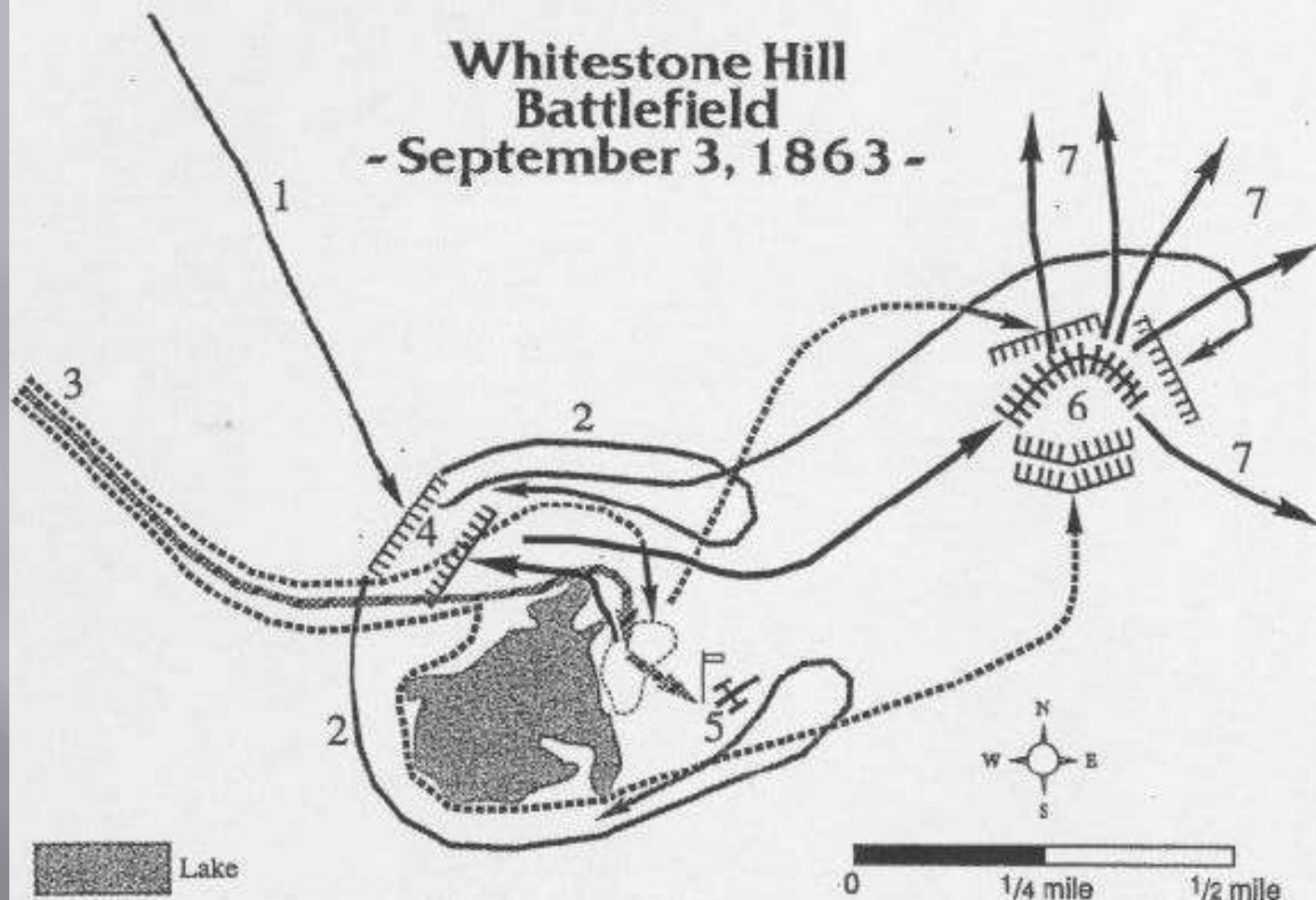
- ▣ Involved several thousand soldiers.
- ▣ Resulted in a battle with perhaps 3,000 (300 to 600 lodges) Yankonai, Hunkpapa and Blackfoot Sioux Indians at Whitestone Hill south of Kulm.
- ▣ 22 soldiers and 100 to perhaps 350 Indians were killed.
- ▣ This trail in North Dakota is composed of: one battlefield, 4 known campsites , extends about 135 miles.



# Sully Expedition of 1863



# Whitestone Hill Battlefield - September 3, 1863 -



Lake

Sioux Camp

Sioux

Major House / 6th Iowa Cavalry

Colonel Wilson / 6th Iowa Cavalry

General Sully / 7th Iowa Cavalry & Battery

Colonel Furnas / 2nd Nebraska Cavalry

1. House's approach

2. Scout movements

3. Sully's approach

4. Confrontation/Negotiation  
(non-combative)

5. Cannon battery

6. Main battle

7. Sioux escape

# Today:

- ▣ The facilities at Whitestone Battlefield were damaged by arson in the spring of 2010.
- ▣ The surrounding area encompasses one of the largest blocks of native prairie and wetlands in southeastern North Dakota.
- ▣ The area is rapidly being impacted by wind energy development.



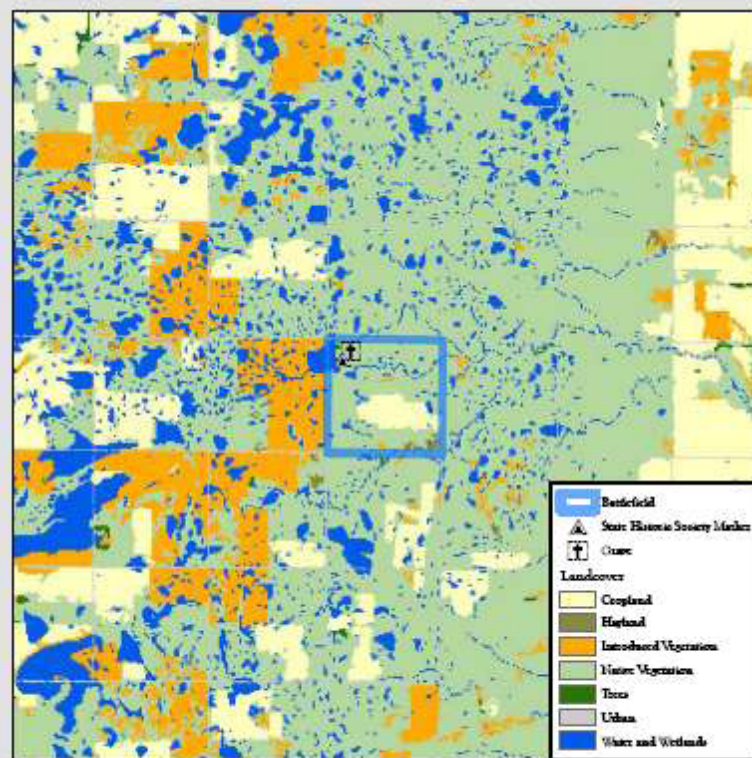


# Whitestone Battlefield

Sully 1863 Expedition  
 September 3, 1863 to September 5, 1863  
 State Historic Site  
 Dickey County  
 Sec.17 T131N R65W



2009 NAIP Imagery



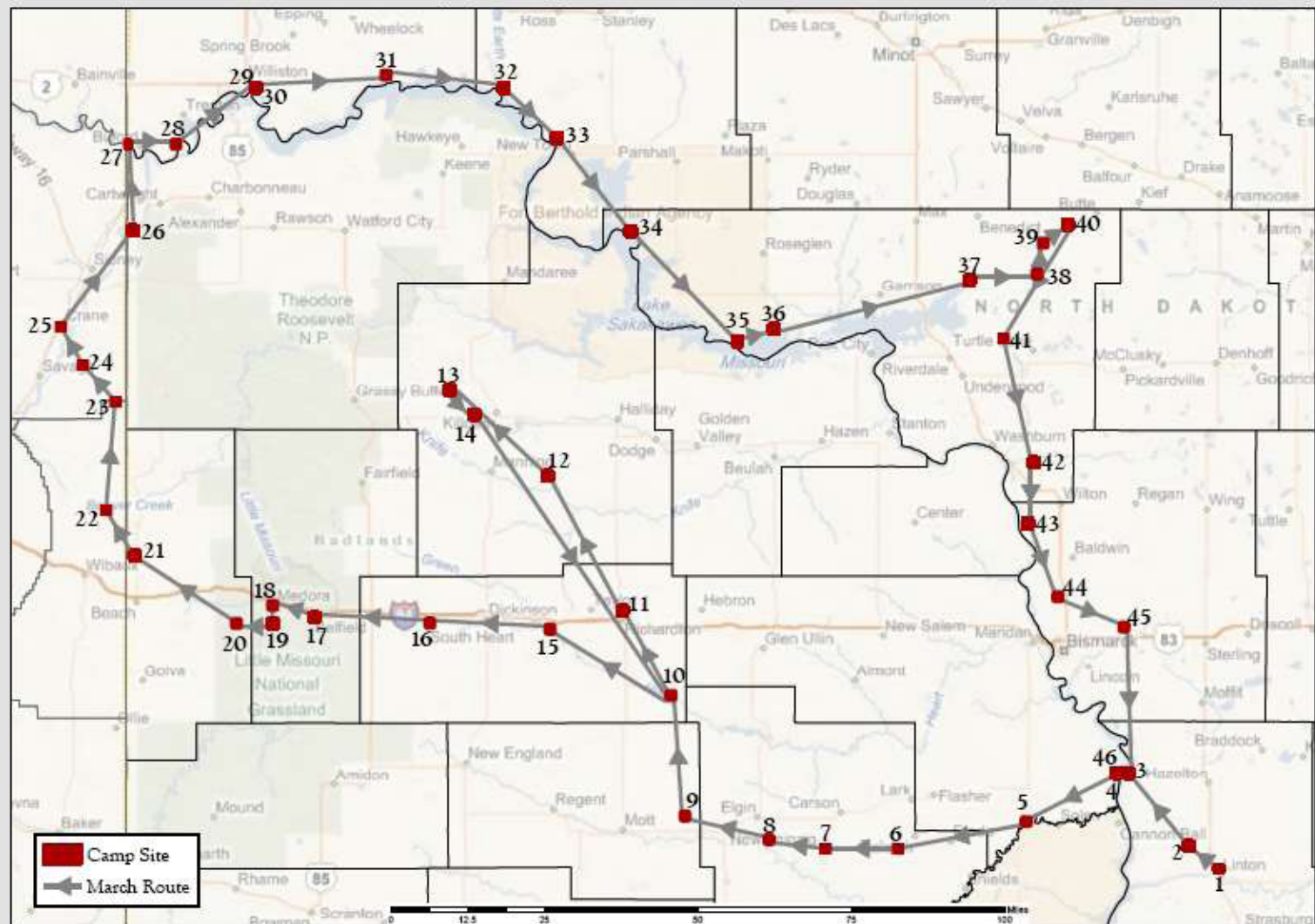
Landcover USFWS 2002

# The Sully Trail of 1864:

- ▣ Involved about 3,000 soldiers, and and immigrant wagon train of 800 people.
- ▣ Resulted in a battle with more than 8,000 (1500 to 1800 lodges) Yankonai, Teton and Dakota Sioux Indians at the Battle of Killdeer Mountain and perhaps 8,000 Sioux in the Battle of the Badlands.
- ▣ 5 soldiers and several hundred Indians were killed.
- ▣ This trail in North Dakota is composed of: two battlefield, 40 known campsites , extends ~900 miles.

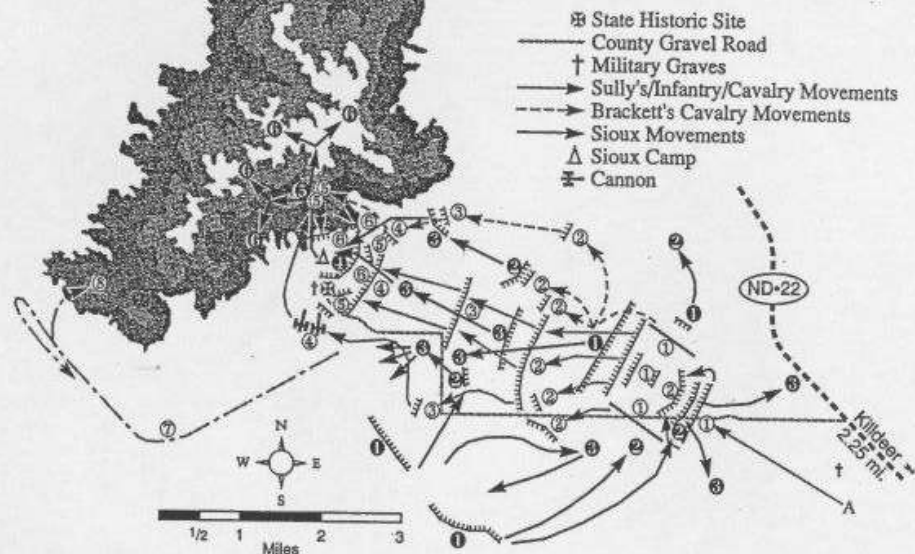


# Sully Expedition of 1864





# Killdeer Mountain Battlefield - July 28, 1864 -



A. Sully approaches from the southeast.

① Sully's forces form a phalanx and advance across a flat plain towards the higher ground to the west.

② Sioux confront the phalanx on the front and flanks.

③ Sioux attack the phalanx from the front and rear, abandon flanks.

④ Rear guard of phalanx confronts Sioux; forward section of phalanx presses Sioux line back; Brackett's Cavalry breaks towards the northwest to flank the Sioux.

⑤ Sioux abandon advance on rear guard, probe south flank; forward line retreats slowly towards village.

⑥ Sully's forces continue a steady advance; Brackett confronts Sioux at eastern foothills.

⑦ Sioux retreat to village.

⑧ Sully's forces begin to encircle the village, artillery flanks the village from the south and begins shelling.

⑨ Sioux begin to abandon the village.

⑩ Sully's forward line continue to envelope the village, Brackett and other forces move around to rear of village to cut off Sioux retreat.

⑪ Sioux retreat into Killdeer Mountain ravines.

⑫ Brackett and outlying forces return to join Sully's encirclement of the village.

⑬ July 29, 1864—Sully skirts the mountain trying to cut off Sioux retreat into the badlands to the west—remaining troops destroy the village.

⑭ Sully's July 29th observation post.

# Today:

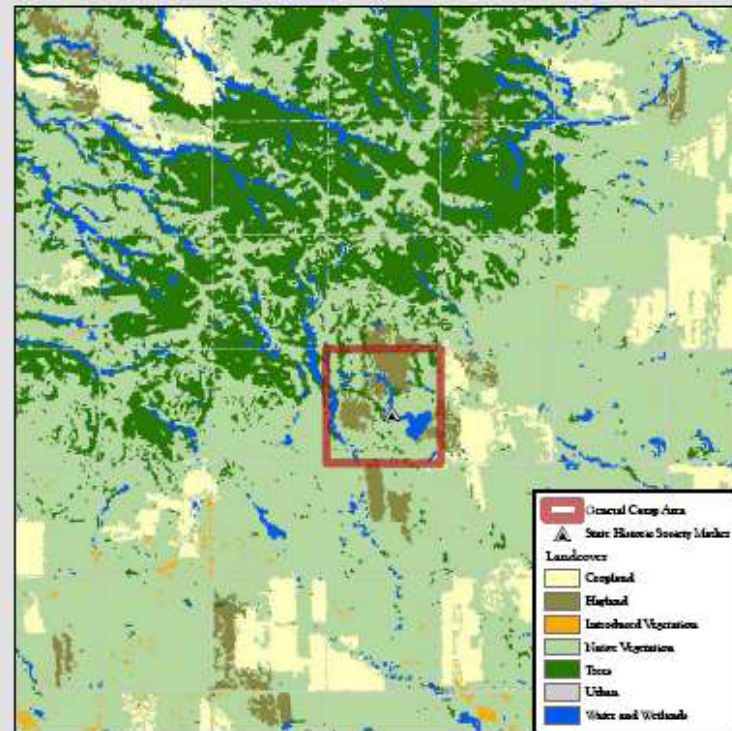
- ▣ The US Forest Service has placed informational signs at the Battle of the Badlands Battlefield. Much of the rest of the trail is unknown to the public.
- ▣ The area is rapidly being impacted by oil development.





## Killdeer Mt. Battlefield

Sully 1864 Expedition  
 July 28, 1864 and July 29, 1864  
 State Historic Site  
 Dunn County  
 T145N R96W and T146N R96W





# The Sibley & Sully Expeditions:

- ▣ Were in response to the 1862 Sioux Uprising in Minnesota.
- ▣ Were very large military operations when compared to other conflicts in the west and involved thousands of combatants.
- ▣ Resulted in the loss of hundreds of lives.
- ▣ Set the stage for US military and Indian relations on the northern Great Plains for the next three decades.

# Today:

- ▣ Each summer more than 400,000 tourists traveling across North Dakota pass within a few miles of many of these battlefields and camp sites.
- ▣ These trails include six battlefields, extend more than 1685 miles, and pass through 25 counties.
- ▣ Native prairie and areas open to public hunting are rapidly being converted and lost for public recreation.

# Proposed Enhancements:

- ▣ Upgrade and improve existing facilities.
- ▣ Sign the trails and develop them into self-guided bicycle and automobile routes.
- ▣ Purchase native prairie and wetlands from willing sellers around battlefields and within a mile of campsites. Avoid cropland.
- ▣ Where deemed appropriate open these areas to hunting and other public uses.



# Estimates of Costs:

- ▣ Road signs at 3 mile intervals: \$20 each
- ▣ Interpretive signs at known campsites: \$5,000 each.
- ▣ Interpretive signs at battlefields: \$15,000 each.
- ▣ Update facilities at Fort Abercrombie, Whitestone Battlefield, Killdeer, and Medora: \$50,000 each.
- ▣ Purchase native prairie and wetland complexes on battlefields and within one mile of campsites from willing sellers: estimate cost \$750 per acre.

# Sibley Trail of 1863:

- ▣ Self-guided Auto and Bicycle Trails, and facility improvements:  
\$250,000 to \$300,000 (650 miles).
- ▣ Land Purchase and Easements:  
\$7.35 to \$11.25 Million (If ALL Landowners were willing sellers) (9,800 to 15,000 acres).
- ▣ Total Cost: \$7.6 to \$11.5 Million

# Sully Trail of 1863:

- ▣ Self-guided Auto and Bicycle Trails and facility improvements: \$71,000 (135 miles).
- ▣ Land Purchase and Easements: \$12.3 Million (If ALL Landowners were willing sellers) (16,400 acres).
- ▣ Total Cost: \$12.4 Million



# Sully Trail of 1864:

- ▣ Self-guided Auto and Bicycle Trails and facility improvements: \$300,000 (900 miles).
- ▣ Land Purchase and Easements: \$11.7 Million (If ALL Landowners were willing sellers) (15,600 acres).
- ▣ Total Cost: \$12 Million

# Maximum Total Cost of Sibley and Sully Trail Improvements:

- ▣ Self-guided Auto and Bicycle Trails and facility improvements: \$621,000 to \$671,000.
- ▣ Land Purchase and Easements: \$30.8 to \$35.2 Million (If ALL Landowners were willing sellers) (41,800 to 47,000 acres).
- ▣ Total Cost: \$32 to 35.9 Million.

# Costly, but:

- ▣ These are maximum estimates, actual land sales from willing sellers probably much lower the 41,800 to 47,000 acres initially identified.
- ▣ Believe a number of NGOs, Grants, mitigation funds, could also contribute to projects.
- ▣ Does not all have to happen in one year.



# Closing Thought:

- ▣ 2013 and 2014 will mark 150-years since these expeditions and battles.
- ▣ North Dakota currently involved in the process of heavily tinkering with our states landscape and natural resources.
- ▣ Aldo Leopold once said: “The first rule of the intelligent tinkerer is to keep all the pieces.”
- ▣ These sites are some of North Dakotas’ most important pieces to her cultural and natural history and an invest in the quality of life for her future citizens.