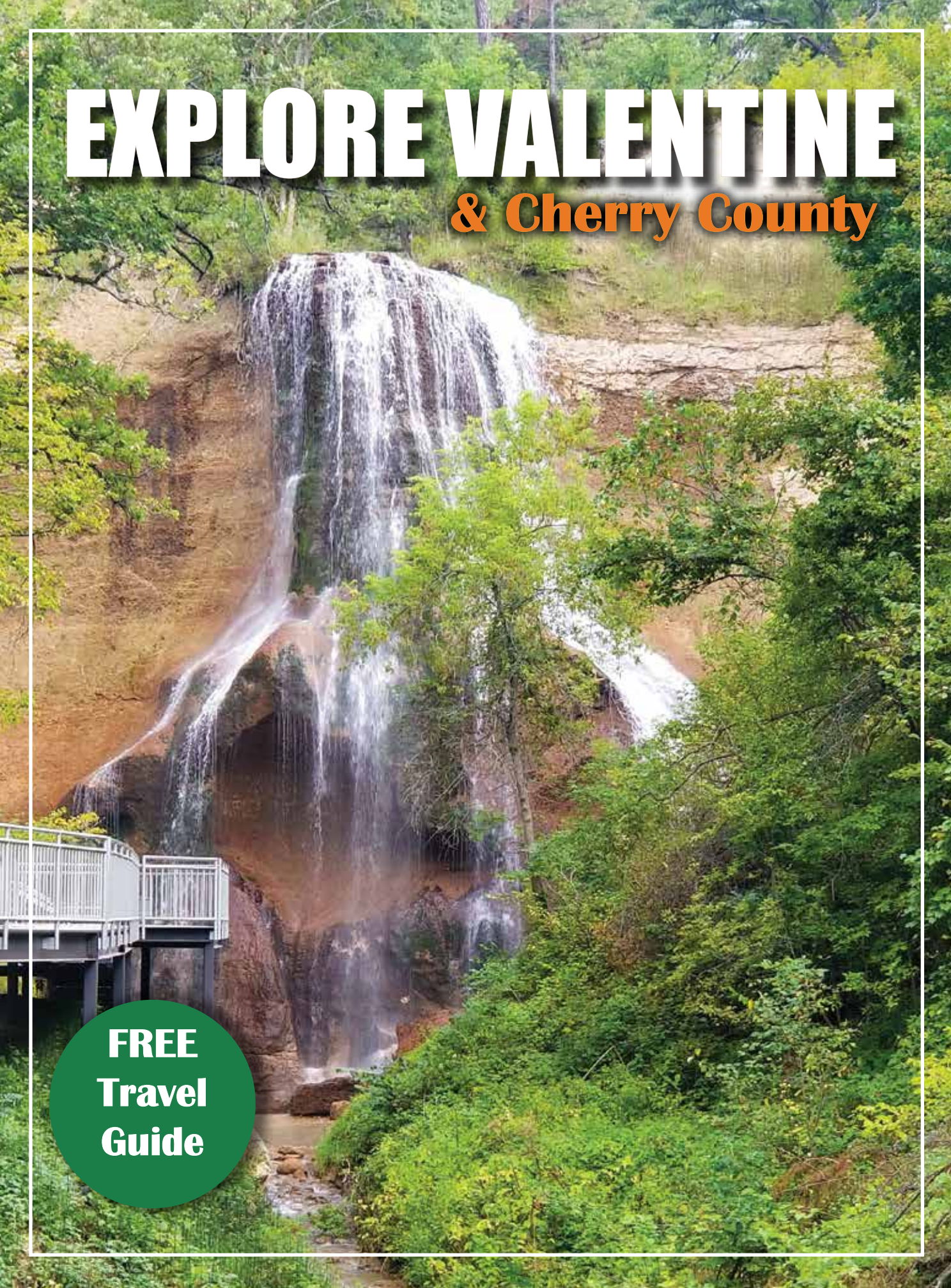


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Pool Lift
in town!

223 East Hwy 20 Valentine, NE 402-376-1250

EXPLORE VALENTINE & Cherry County

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Give us a call or stop in and see us @ the Valentine Visitor Center

Our friendly staff will help you navigate the area and make sure that you are on the right track for a fun filled adventure!



We are located @
239 S. Main in Valentine

402-376-2969
Hours: Mon-Fri 9am - 5pm

Front Cover Photo: Smith Falls Waterfall @ Smith Falls State Park

ONE CHARMING TOWN, THREE COMFY HOTELS



Independently owned and operated in Valentine, Nebraska by Bird Dog Hospitality.



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- VALENTINE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE & THE CCC FIRE TOWER TRAIL WEST OF HACKBERRY LAKE
- NEBRASKA GAME & PARKS - GOVERNMENT CANYON TRAIL AND THE VALENTINE FISH HATCHERY PONDS
- SAMUEL R. MCKELVIE NATIONAL FOREST GRASSLAND & THE SANDY BEACHES AND HILLS OF MERRITT RESERVOIR
- VALENTINE CITY PARK TRAIL & GREEN STREET NATURE TRAIL, & COWBOY TRAIL CONNECTOR SIDEWALK
- NIOBRARA VALLEY PRESERVE / THE NATURE CONCERNANCY AND IT'S LONG 2.5 MILE LOOP TRAIL

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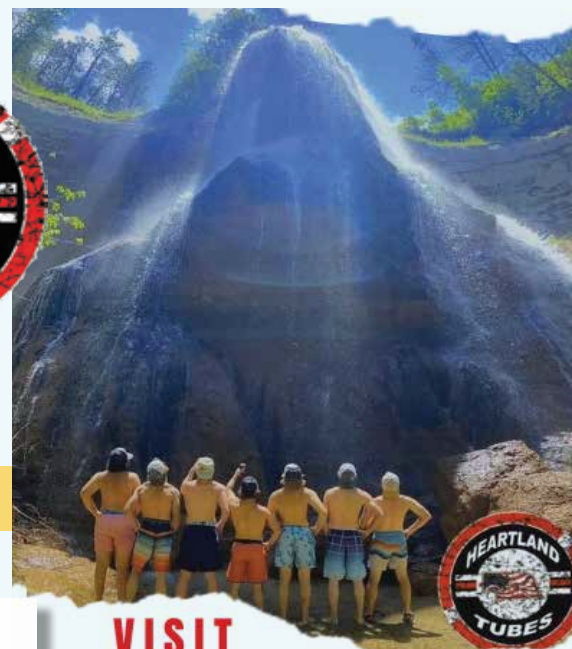
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402.376.8033 | edsonj@mpcc.edu

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**VISIT
SMITH FALLS STATE PARK!**
May - October

8 Graduates
from Valentine campus area

VALENTINE CAMPUS



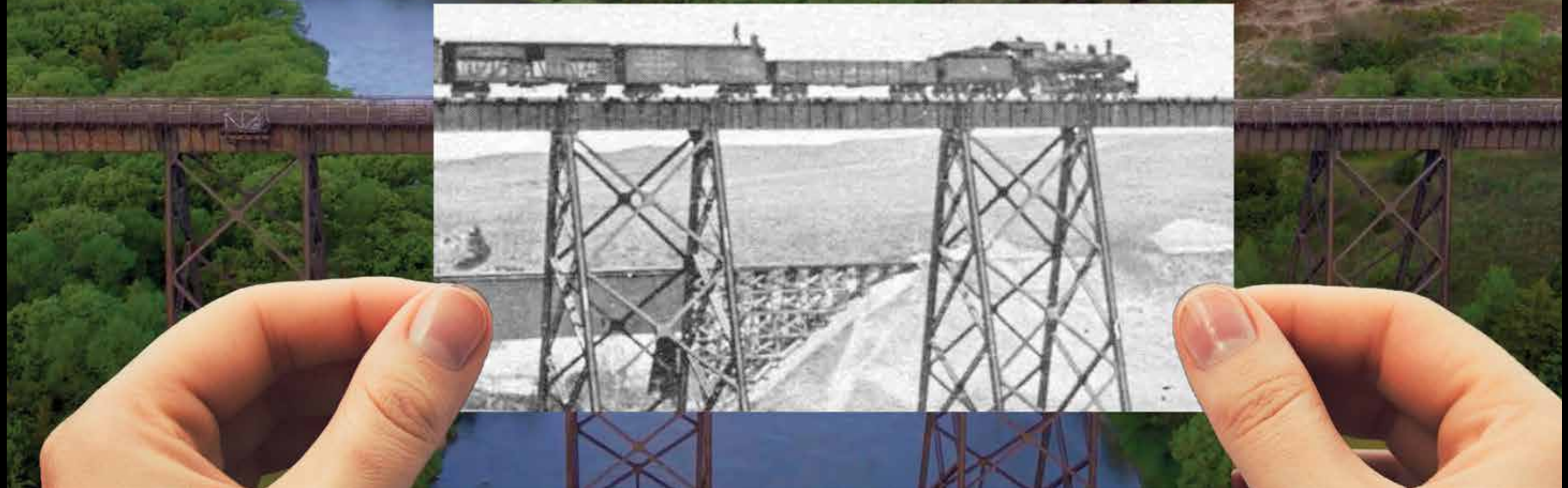
Headcount
131
TOTAL STUDENTS



185 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN DUAL CREDIT CLASSES



Cowboy Trail and Valentine Railroad Bridge



- The Old Chicago and Northwestern Railroad - Converted into a Walking, Hiking and Biking Trail
- Created in conjunction w/ Rails to Trails Conservancy and the Nebraska Game and Parks.
- Walk, Bike or Hike the entire 320 miles of trail completed along the northern edge of Nebraska.

- The Valentine Railroad bridge was converted to a foot bridge 140 feet above the Niobrara
- Access the Cowboy Trail at the trail head in town or by taking a short drive and walk from the "Welcome to Valentine" sign just 4 miles outside of Valentine on Hwy 20.

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402) 376-8034

valentineoldmill.com

*summer hours: Friday 10am-7pm

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Come get your Tube On!

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 SPARKS, NE 69220
 (402) 376-3791

BOOK ONLINE

WWW.FRITZSISLANDCAMPGROUND.COM



Shop Valentine Nebraska's
BRAND NEW Main Street!

They were recently awarded the honor of becoming the Heart City Creative District!

Enjoy the Sculpture Walk, numerous murals and photo ops, an iconic western store, fabric store, antiques, coffee shops, boutiques, salons, furniture stores, ice cream shop, art shop, book store, hardware store, crystal shop, library, cafes, framing shop, barber, Cowboy Trail and even a pub or two. Be sure to peek around the corners for more hidden gems.

Don't forget about the Valentine Visitor Center on South Main Street! 9-5 M-F

There is a lot work going on downtown. Young entrepreneurs are tearing into the old and making it shine again as new businesses will soon emerge from what was once covered up.

Drive, walk, or rent a bike from the Valentine Bike Share! Whatever means of travel you take, be sure to take in our downtown. It is quaint and friendly, and will be that much brighter with you enjoying it!

Thank you for stopping by!

FIRST RATE COWBOY CRAFTSMANSHIP



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Hours: Mon - Sat 9-6 & Sun 1-5
(winter hours may vary on Sunday)

143 N. Main Valentine, NE

(402)376-1281

SHOP ONLINE @



North America's Most Rural Bike Share Valentine Bike Share



- The Valentine Bike Share is one of Valentine's newest addition!
- The Cowboy Trail trail-head at 1st & Main Street will greet you with - All New E-Bikes!!!
- Rent 1 for a couple hours. Follow the Cowboy Trail out East of town to the railroad bridge.
- You can hang a left at green street and cruise along the new pedestrian path that will take you to the far North East end of Valentine.
- Roll downtown to do some shopping or a few blocks over to the local brewery
- Valentine Bike share is the first of it's kind being the most rural bike share in state.
- Payment can be accessed with the BCycle app on your smart phone.
- Locals and frequent visitors can even get a low monthly rental rate w/ unlimited rentals.

Valentine Bike Share

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Single Trip \$10 2 hours of access</p> | <p>\$5 each additional hour after your initial 20 minutes</p> | <p>Monthly Pass \$30 Unlimited 2 hour trips for 30 days</p> |
|---|--|---|



Nebraska's 1st

Merritt Reservoir & the Snake River Campground

Dark Sky Park

- Merritt Reservoir SRA is in north-central Nebraska, known for vast landscapes, prairies, and the Sandhills ecoregion.
- Built post-Civil War for population growth, Merritt Dam supports irrigation, power generation and flood control.
- The 729-acre SRA is part of a 9,785-acre complex managed by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.
- Visitors enjoy hiking, fishing, boating, camping, birding, and hunting and of course, now, Star Gazing
- Sandhills are crucial for migratory birds, labeled the "best grassland bird place in the U.S." by the American Bird Conservancy.
- Night sky surveys reveal exceptional darkness; ongoing monitoring and education programs focus on preserving the quality of the night sky.
- Partnerships with various organizations aim to address threats to the region's night sky quality through workshops, astrotourism benefits, and responsible outdoor lighting initiatives.
- Activities close by include: Samuel McKelvie Forest, Valentine Wildlife Refuge, golf, winery, scenic drives, Niobrara National Scenic River, steak houses, restaurants a brewery & shopping

Enjoy a vacation from fast paced life .. slow down at this quiet piece of paradise.

Fort Robertson



Cabin Rental!

so close to these attractions: 2 bedroom, 1.5 bath cabin located 1 mile from Merritt Dam 

Prairie Club & Cap Rock Golf Course
Merritt Reservoir
Samuel McKelvie National Forest
Snake River Falls

The cabin is unplugged, with no wi-fi or television, to help you stay relaxed.
Possibility of RV hook up is available, contact host for more information.
(308)-464-0060
www.FortRobertson.com

Located on Merritt Dam Road 26 miles south of Valentine, NE

Janine's Flower Exchange

& Emporium

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www.janinesflower.com



Hours: 8-5 M-F / 8-Noon Sat

Snake River Falls

- Among Nebraska's most spectacular waterfalls, Snake River Falls tumbles over a 54 foot wide ledge and flows 12 miles to the Niobrara River. When the Snake River is full, it is the largest waterfall in Nebraska by volume
- The waterfall is located 23 miles southwest of Valentine on Highway 97. Only 3 miles from Merritt Reservoir
- Because access to the falls is on private property, it is not well marked. Your turn will be on the west side of the road about a 1/4 of a mile after the canal crosses the highway. Watch for a large water tank and a few trees. This will be your cue to turn.
- You can view the falls from trails that will take you on both sides of the Snake Falls Sportsman's Club building.
- Admission is only \$1.00, and there is a pay box in front of the Sportsman's Club building

Please be respectful of the property when you visit.
 We are privileged to be able to have this beautiful sight open to public access, and would appreciate every effort to adhere to all posted restrictions.
 Thank you

NIORRARA RIVER TRIPS



LITTLE OUTLAW

1005 East Hwy 20 Valentine, NE
 402-376-1822 **CALL OR TEXT!**

Book Online!

@ OutlawCanoe.com

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Open Wednesday to Saturday
 4pm to 10pm (ish)
 420 East 1st Street, Valentine, Neb.
www.BoloBeer.com



Samuel R. McKelvie National Forest

- Samuel R. McKelvie National Forest sits on over 100,000 acres of land
- The area is more dunes, windmills and small water pockets, than actual “forest”.
- Miles of multi-use trails weave through the Sandhills - hiking, ATV/UTV, mountain biking and horseback riding
- One of the best places in the state for birdwatching, with hundreds of species spotted throughout the year
- Popular game species including white-tailed deer, antelope, and mule deer
- Steer Creek Campground is located on the west side of McKelvie and has over 20 RV sites
- Miles of hiking trails that take you into the surrounding Sandhills
- Dispersed camping throughout much of the forest.
- There are also a number of rivers and lakes in the area
- Merritt Reservoir is the most popular fishing spot in the forest
- You can also canoe and kayak on the Merritt Reservoir and on the near by National Scenic Niobrara River

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- Quilt • Knit • Paint
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Valentine 402-376-3544

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email: countryfab@gmail.com

Hours: Mon-Sat 9:00 - 6:00



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Online

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America's First Quiet Trail Niobrara National Scenic River

QUIET PARKS
INTERNATIONAL

#SAVEQUIET



QPI Awards Niobrara National Scenic River America's First Quiet Trail Award in October 2023
Nebraska is filled with unique, even one-of-a-kind opportunities for the curious and adventurous visitor,
and adding this Quiet Park award to the list is quite an honor!

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**208 E 1st St, Valentine, NE
Hours: 8:30-5 M-F / 9-Noon Sat
402-376-1190**

HISTORY - GENEALOGY - HERITAGE - CULTURE - ART



Cherry County Historical Museum
Open May - Labor Day Thurs & Fri 1-5 Sat 9-1
or by appointment



Centennial Hall
Open May- Labor Day Thurs - Sat
or by appointment 402-376-1081



Valentine Public Library
Open Monday- Friday 9 - 6
Located at 324 N Main Valentine, NE 69201
Phone: 402-376-3160



Note:
Museums are seasonal,
so please check ahead!



Valentine City Park, Mill Pond & State Fish Hatchery

- Valentine City Park has a rentable pavilion, picnic tables, water, sand volleyball courts and an entertainment stage
- There are restrooms and showers available (closed in the winter months)

- Primitive camping spots are available with outdoor charcoal grills and picnic tables
- Enjoy a shaded walk among the oak and ponderosa pines trees along the trout filled Minechaduz creek

- Your walk will take you by the Valentine State Fish Hatchery. Spread over 700 acres, the hatchery handles millions of fish eggs annually. In most years, lakes in Cherry County alone are stocked with some 675,000 fish. Enjoy watching the geese as they wander between the numerous ponds on site

- Just to the north is Government Canyon, a 640 acre area, offers prime wildlife habitat and activities including hiking, biking, bird watching, and hunting in specified areas

2 Campgrounds

PENBROOK
CAMPGROUND

RV sites 20/30/50 amp electricity
Tent Camping – Water – Showers

Sparks River Road

River Front Camping
Larger Campsites

BERRY BRIDGE
CAMPGROUND

Berry Bridge Road

Office
Concessions

Book Online! 402-376-3474
off season 402-376-2503

NiobraraCamping.com



FAST & FRIENDLY SERVICE - EVERYDAY

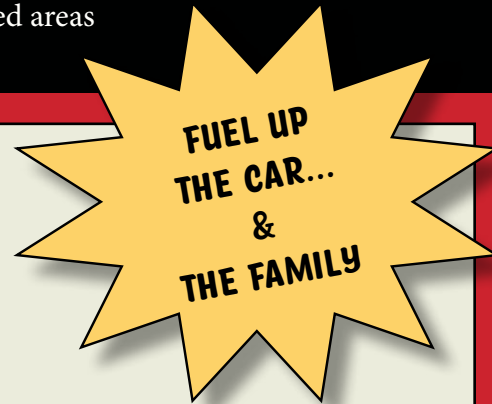
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AG DIESEL**

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**203 EAST HWY 20
402-376-2283**



Niobrara National Scenic River

- Magnificent, easy flowing, family friendly river
- Ranked as one of the nation's best canoeing rivers
- Designated as a National Scenic River in 1991
- Spring fed tributaries provide reliable water levels year round
- Tens of thousands of annual floaters
- Want a quiet float? Try to come mid week
- Book a trip for earlier in the week...Wednesday or Thursday, perhaps
- Great campgrounds along the river - Tent, RV, Cabins
- Designated as the Northern America's 1st Quiet Trail in 2023



- 76 miles of free flowing water
- Endless recreational activities on and off
- Over 200 waterfalls
- Extraordinary paleontological deposits
- Geologic formations
- Diverse animals and plants inhabit the area!
- Hybrid Aspen trees which are remnants of the Ice Age!
- 6 different ecosystems meet at the banks



NIOBRARA NATIONAL SCENIC RIVER



Step inside the NPS Visitor Center to learn more about the Niobrara River Valley, it's ecosystems, habitat, and the history of the community surrounding the river!

- Enjoy an Award Winning Short Film
- See the Exhibits
- Shop their store full of One of a Kind Items
- Experience Fun and Educational Junior Ranger Activities

Get your National Park Stamp

Visitor Center Hours:

8:30-4:30 DAILY after Memorial Day
(Mon-Fri only Labor Day - Memorial Day)

www.nps.gov/niob

214 W US Highway 20
402-376-1901

Plan Your Trip Today!

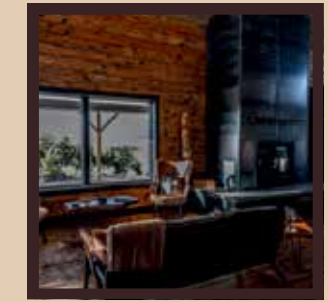
Niobrara National Scenic River Float Times



STAY AT MERRITT RESERVOIR

26 MILES SW OF VALENTINE, NEBRASKA

| From Cornell Bridge to: | MILES | CANOES | TUBES |
|----------------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| Fort Falls | 1 mi. | 15 min. | 30 min. |
| Buffalo Bridge | 3 mi. | 45 min. | 1.5 hr. |
| Berry Bridge | 9 mi. | 2 hr. | 4 hr. |
| Smith Falls State Park | 12 mi. | 3 hr. | 6 hr. |
| Brewer Bridge-Sharp's Camp | 15 mi. | 4 hr. | 8 hr. |
| Stan's Landing | 19 mi. | 5 hr. | 10 hr. |
| Sunnybrook | 23 mi. | 6 hr. | 12 hr. |
| Rocky Ford | 25 mi. | 6.5 hr. | 13 hr. |
| Rock Barn | 28 mi. | 8 hr. | 16 hr. |



- 3 Queen Beds & 2 Twin Beds
- Full Kitchen & Laundry
- Fireplace & Heated Garage
- Pets Welcome
- Lake Views
- ¼ mile to Merritt Reservoir
- ½ mile to McKelvie Natl Forest

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Email: MerrittDamRoadHillHouse@Gmail.com



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9:00 am - 6 pm Sunday
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1007 E. Hwy 20, Valentine, NE

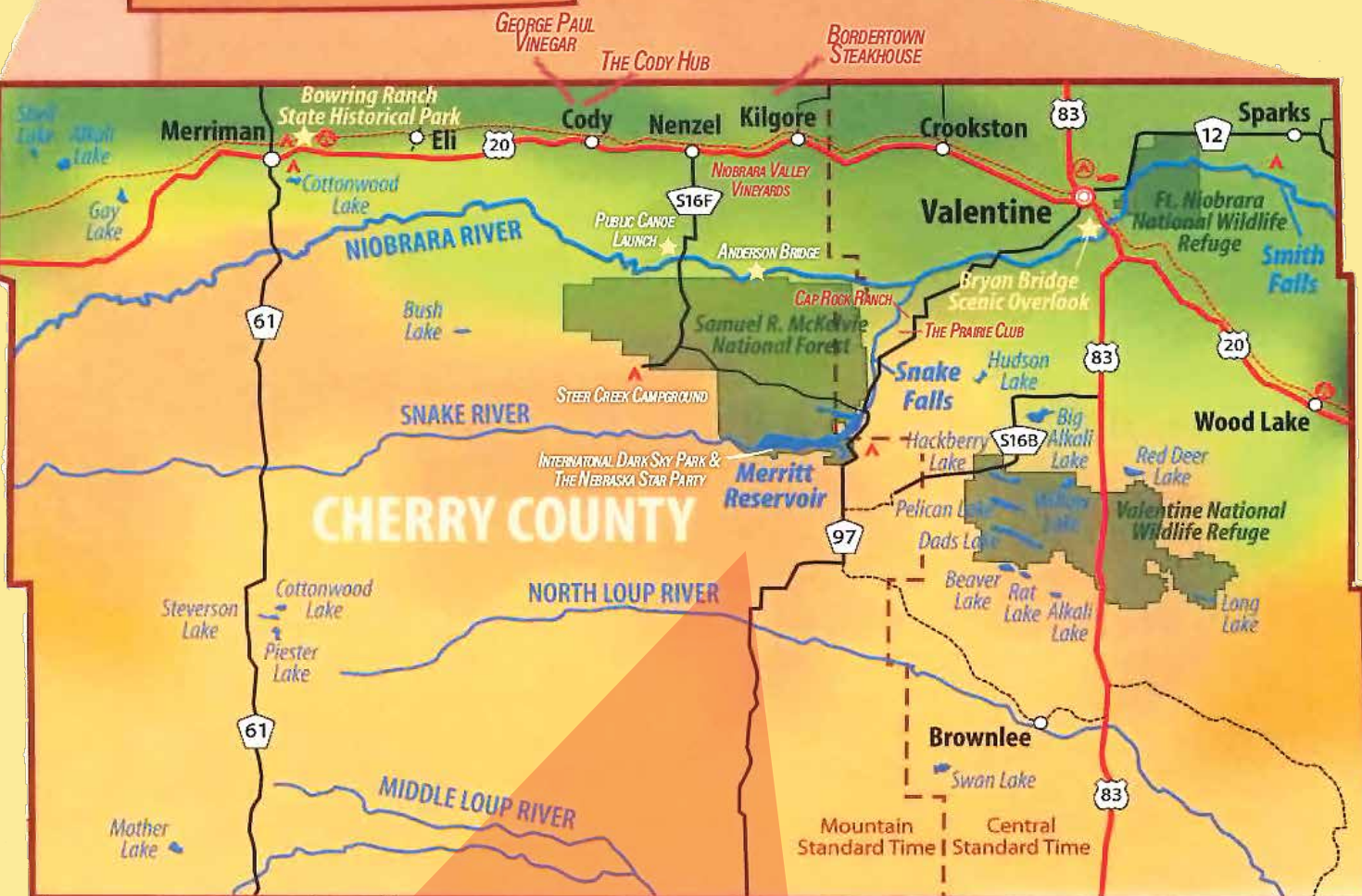


Find them on Facebook!

They Have it ALL!
 @ The Gun Cabinet

Hours: 8 am-6 pm M-F
8 am-5 pm Sat 1 pm-4 pm Sun
 Located on the South Edge of Valentine

Nebraska



Scenic Drive suggestions on Page 48-49

Expore Valentine & all of Cherry County!
 Enjoy scenic drives, waterfalls, birding, hunting, fishing, wildlife, dark skies and quiet trails, golf, wineries, breweries, tubing, canoeing, kayaking, even tanking.
 ALL of this is within the boundries of Nebraska's LARGEST County! Cherry County!

Niobrara River Outfitters

- SHARP'S OUTFITTERS & CAMPGROUND**
 90048 Sparks River Road, Sparks, NE 69220
 (402) 376-2506 (See ad pg 35)
- BREWER'S CANOERS AND TUBERS**
 433 E. Hwy 20, Valentine, NE 69201
 (402) 376-2046 (See ad pg 51)
- DRYLAND AQUATICS**
 101 Main St., Sparks, NE 69220
 (402) 376-3119 (See ad pg 19)
- FRITZ'S ISLAND TUBING & CAMPGROUND**
 89927 River Road, Sparks, NE 69220
 (402) 376-3791 (See ad pg 11)
- GRAHAM CANOE OUTFITTERS**
 90173 Hatchery Road, Valentine, NE 69201
 (402) 376-3708 off season (402) 376-3576
 (See ad pg 48)
- HEARTLAND ELK RANCH**
 90236 Sparks River Road, Valentine, NE 69201
 (402) 376-2553 (See ad pg 40)
- LITTLE OUTLAW TUBE & CANOE**
 1005 E. Hwy 20, Valentine, NE 69201
 (402) 376-1822 (See ad pg 16)
- NIOBARRA RIVER RANCH**
 90427 Timber Ridge Road
 (402) 890-1245
- HEARTLAND TUBES**
 525 N. VALENTINE STREET
 402-389-1964 (See ad pg 8)

A Full List of Niobrara River Outfitters is on our Website

visitvalentine.org



Valentine NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

- Refuge Boundary
- Public Use Trail
- Natural Areas - closed to all entry
- Closed to Hunting
- Waterfowl Hunt Area
- Lakes Open to Fishing
- Fire Tower
- Refuge Headquarters
- Refuge Subheadquarters
- Wheelchair-accessible site

Know Before You Go:

Outfitter Provided:
 If you are a first timer or returning floater an outfitter can make your trip a seamless adventure!
 • Prices are competitive. Our Outfitters will provide you with your choice of vessel (tubes, canoes, or kayaks), necessary equipment (paddles and lifejackets), and assist with your shuttle.
 • Depending on the outfitter they will either arrange your shuttle from a landing, a location in town, or your campsite.
 • All you will need to do is make sure you have your cooler, sunscreen, and your group ready to go!
 • Plus, most Outfitters have small stores where you can pick up needed items before you head out on the river.

Self Guided:
 The majority of land along the Niobrara National Scenic River is privately owned by outfitters and ranchers. However, there are options for bringing your own gear!
 • Outfitters charge various fees for parking, shuttling, and accessing landings on their property.
 • Fees for parking average around \$10, landing and launching varies from \$5 to \$25 depending on the outfitter. Shuttling fees vary on location, time of day/week, and other factors.
 • Public Access points are available at Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge (\$1 per person launch fee), Smith Falls State Park (Nebraska Game and Parks Commission Pass required), and Brewer Bridge Landing (Free).



Don't Forget to Snag your Swag!

Valentine / Cherry County / Nebraska Swag

- Janine's Flower Exchange - post cards and other Valentine treats
- Outback Screenprinting - cups, mugs, magnets, shot glasses, hats, hoodies t-shirts, coozies, custom made to order items
- Broken Spoke Boutique - stickers, patches, post cards, key chains, cards, pins, magnets, signs, shot glasses, shirts, hats, mugs, golf balls.
- Speedee Mart - postcards, t-shirts, shot glasses, spoons
- Sandhill Art & Metal Gallery - sandhills photography and local artwork, customizable items of all kinds! (Valentine, Windmills, Hearts, Sandhills)
- Flower Land - Valentine and Nebraska items mugs, cutting boards & unique finds
 - Niobrara River Swag + Floating & Lake Essentials
- hats, t-shirts, water shoes, sunscreen, bug spray, waterproof bags, snacks, ice
- Brewers Canoers
- Little Outlaw
- Graham Canoe Outfitters
- Dryland Aquatics
- Sharps Outfitters
- Merritt Trading Post



Welcome to Valentine



Valentine

- Restaurant/Cafe /Lounge**
 Bunkhouse Cafe & Saloon (402)376-1609
 Coachlight Cafe.....(402)376-3145
 Draw Bar.....Main St. (Coming Soon)
 Mi Toro Supremo.....(531)257-5900
 Sale Barn Cafe / sale days only.....
 (Thursdays & some Mondays)
 Hoebe's Smoke N' Meats
 (serving @ Bolo Beer Co).... Fridays
- Fast Food**
 201 Main Street
 McDonald's.....(402)376-1714
 Subway.....(402)376-2112
 Pizza Hut.....(402)376-3303
 Bull MarketHwy 20
- Deli/Grocery**
 Old Mill Deli /Pizza & Bakery
(402)376-8034
 Henderson's IGA...(402)376-1144
 Scotty's Ranchland. Foods.(402)376-3114

Ice Cream Sandhills Art & Metal Gallery & Ice Cream (402)-376-1839

Dining

- Coffee Shop/Gift**
 Janine's Emporium.(402)376-2392
 Gritty Coffee Co.....(402)376-2000
 Be Filled Coffee.. (Located in Old Mill)
 ..(also serve breakfast burritos) (402)389-2377
- Seasonal Dining**
 The Prairie Club....(402)-376-1101
- Convenience Store**
 Conoco-Godfather's.(402)376-2283
 Casey's Pizza.....(402)376-2818
 Sinclair.....(402)376-1302
 Speedee Mart/ Phillips 66 (402)376-2280
- Brewery/Bar/Pub**
 Bolo Beer Co.....East 1st Street
 Corner Pub.....(402)376-1297
 Vet's Club..(public)..(402)376-3603
 Bunkhouse Saloon.(402)376-1609
 Skylight Bar.....(402)322-1013
 Draw Bar....Main St. (Coming Soon)

Kilgore

Bordertown Steakhouse & Saloon (402)966-3881

Nenzel

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 Food Daily (closed Mon, Tue)
 Seasonal - check website
 (402)823-4131

Cody

The Cody Hub
 (402)-823-4066
 Circle C Market
 (student run grocery store)
 (402)-823-4099

Merriman

Cafe (See website below if open)
Woodlake
 Woodlake Cafe (402)967-3027

links to all listed establishments @
www.VisitValentine.com
 "Eat & Drink"

Lodging

| Hotel/Motels | Phone # | # of rooms | # of Suites | Cont. Breakfast | Restaurant | Indoor Pool | Pet Friendly | Fitness Room | Laundry |
|---------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------|
| Comfort Inn..... | (402)376-3300 | 50 | 6 | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Harmony Inn & Suites..... | (402)376-3131 | 71 | 20 | ● | -- | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Niobrara Lodge..... | (402)376-3000 | 62 | 20 | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Raine Motel..... | (402)376-2030 | 33 | ● | -- | ● | -- | ● | ● | ● |
| Super 8 Motel..... | (402)376-1250 | 59 | 1 | ● | ● | -- | ● | ● | ● |
| Tradewinds Motel..... | (402)376-1600 | 32 | ● | -- | ● | -- | ● | ● | ● |

Resorts & Hunting

- Cottonwood House(402)376-1109 1 Cabin
- Heartland Elk Ranch.....(402)376-2553 5 Cabins
- Lord Ranch Resort.....(402)376-5984 5 Cabins
- Merritt Trading Post.....(402)376-3437 15 Cabins
- Niobrara River Ranch.....(402)890-1245 7 Cabins
- Niobrara Riverview Retreat.....(402)322-0640 Lg Bunkhouse
- Rock Creek Hunting.....(605)378-1538 1 Cabin
- Sandhills Double RR Guest Ranch..(308)546-2314 2 Cabins

airbnb options online - Valentine, Cody, Crookston, Woodlake

Camping

Niobrara River Campgrounds

- Berry Bridge Camp.....(402)376-3474 ● 18 ● ● ● f/p ●
- Dryland Aquatics.....(402)376-3119 ● ● ● ● ● ● ● f/p ● ●
- Fritz's Island Campground..(402)376-3791 ● 60 ● ● ● ● pp ●
- Prairie River Outfitters & Sunny Brook Camp.....(402)376-1887 ● ● ● ● ●
- Penbrook Campground.....(402)376-3474 ● 60 ● ● ● pp
- Sharp's Outfitters.....(402)376-2506 ● 140 ● ● ● ● f/p ●
- Smith Falls State Park.....Book online..... 40 ● ● ● f/p

Valentine Area Campgrounds

- Fishberry Campground.....(402) 376-1662 ● 10 ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
- Wacky West(402)376-1771 ● 10 ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
- City Park..... (402)-376-2323 ● 40 ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
- Cherry Co. Fairgrounds..... ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
- Golden Prairie Bison.....www.hipcamp.com ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
- River Hideout Campground..(402)389-0069 ● ● ● ● ● f/p

Surrounding Area Campgrounds

- Merritt Reservoir.....(402)471-1414 ● 140 ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
- Merritt Trading Post.....(402) 376-3437 15 ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
- Steer Creek Campground - south of Nenzel @ McKelvie Nat. Forest.....(308)533-2257 23 23 ● ● ● ● ● p
- Big Alkali Fish Camp..... ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Nenzel Area

..... NVV Dark Sky RV Park @ Niobrara Valley Vineyards ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Cody Area

.....City Park..... ● ● ● ● ● ● ● pp ●

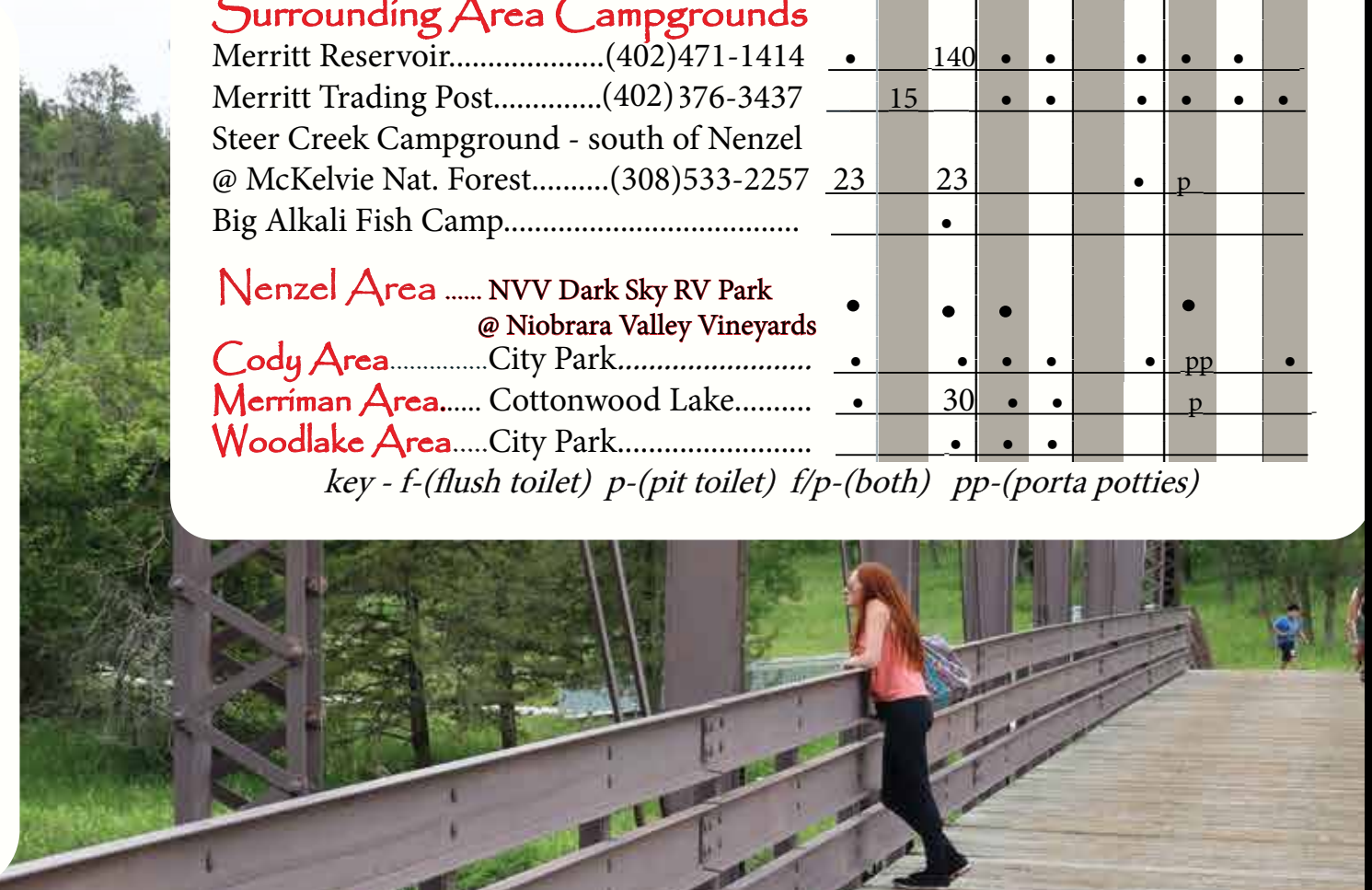
Merriman Area

..... Cottonwood Lake..... ● 30 ● ● ● ● ● ● ● p

Woodlake Area

.....City Park..... ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

key - f-(flush toilet) p-(pit toilet) f/p-(both) pp-(porta potties)



Welcome to the Sandhills of Cherry County

- The county is named after Lt. Samuel A. Cherry
- The land is blanketed in vast, rolling sand dunes and grass-covered hills.
- Unique mix of prairie plants, including sand prairie and mixed-grass prairie; home to diverse wildlife such as pronghorn, mule deer, coyotes, and numerous bird species.
- Encompasses about one-fourth of the state of Nebraska, making it the largest sand dune formation in the Western Hemisphere.
- The Ogallala Aquifer lies beneath the Sandhills, providing crucial groundwater for agriculture and communities.
- Predominantly used for cattle ranching, with ranches often practicing sustainable grazing techniques. It is rapidly becoming a favorite adventure spot.
- Considered a fragile ecosystem with a delicate balance, the Sandhills play a vital role in water filtration, flood control, and habitat preservation. • It is the largest county in the state w/over 6,000 sq. miles

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90048 Sparks River Road
5 miles South of Sparks, NE
on the Scenic Niobrara River

Merritt Reservoir

- Merritt Reservoir located in a picturesque valley of the Snake River 26 miles southwest of Valentine
- It has Nebraska's best fishing, boating and camping areas and is open year round
- Walleye, crappie and white bass have long been the favorites, but there are numerous other species - catfish, perch, bluegill, northern pike, large & small mouth bass, and even monster muske
- Merritt Trading Post is located at the North end of the main lake at the dam. Stop in for all fishing and hunting information, bait, ice, refreshments, fuel and anything else you may need or have forgotten. They also have several options for lodging and small boat and equipment rentals
- The area also has become recognized as having some of the darkest night skies in the region and is a perfect for star gazing. Merritt Reservoir has recently been named as an International Dark Sky Park.
- The Nebraska Star Party calls Merritt home for it's annual star party each summer. You will find that much of Cherry County is perfect for star gazing, but there is something to be said for witnessing the milky way from atop the Snake River Campground area, in the still of a moonless night!




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Bill & Vicky Cumbow
402-376-3082
 415 N. Cherry Street
 Valentine Ne

Do your research. Cherry County has to offer to have exclusive grounds of the

Learn about all of the public land Cherry for hunting and fishing or find an outfitter access to some of the prime hunting region.



When you stay in Cherry County, you are only a few miles from the South Dakota border and additional hunting opportunities. Plan to stay a while - We will keep you busy!

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NEW! - BISON MEAT SHOP - STORE LOCATED 5 MILES EAST ON HWY 12

Located just outside of Valentine, Nebraska, Golden Prairie Bison is run by Carl and Vicki Simmons, with help from their family. The Simmons family has lived and worked on this land since Carl's grandmother homesteaded in the area in 1914.

Carl introduced bison to the ranch in the mid-1990s because he wanted to try his hand at something new. Since then, they have been in awe of these majestic animals and how efficiently and sustainably they live on the land. The Simmons love working on the Great Plains and hope they can share a little bit of this unique and incredibly important place with you.

WWW.GOLDENPRAIRIEBISON.COM (402) 606-1127 VALENTINE, NE



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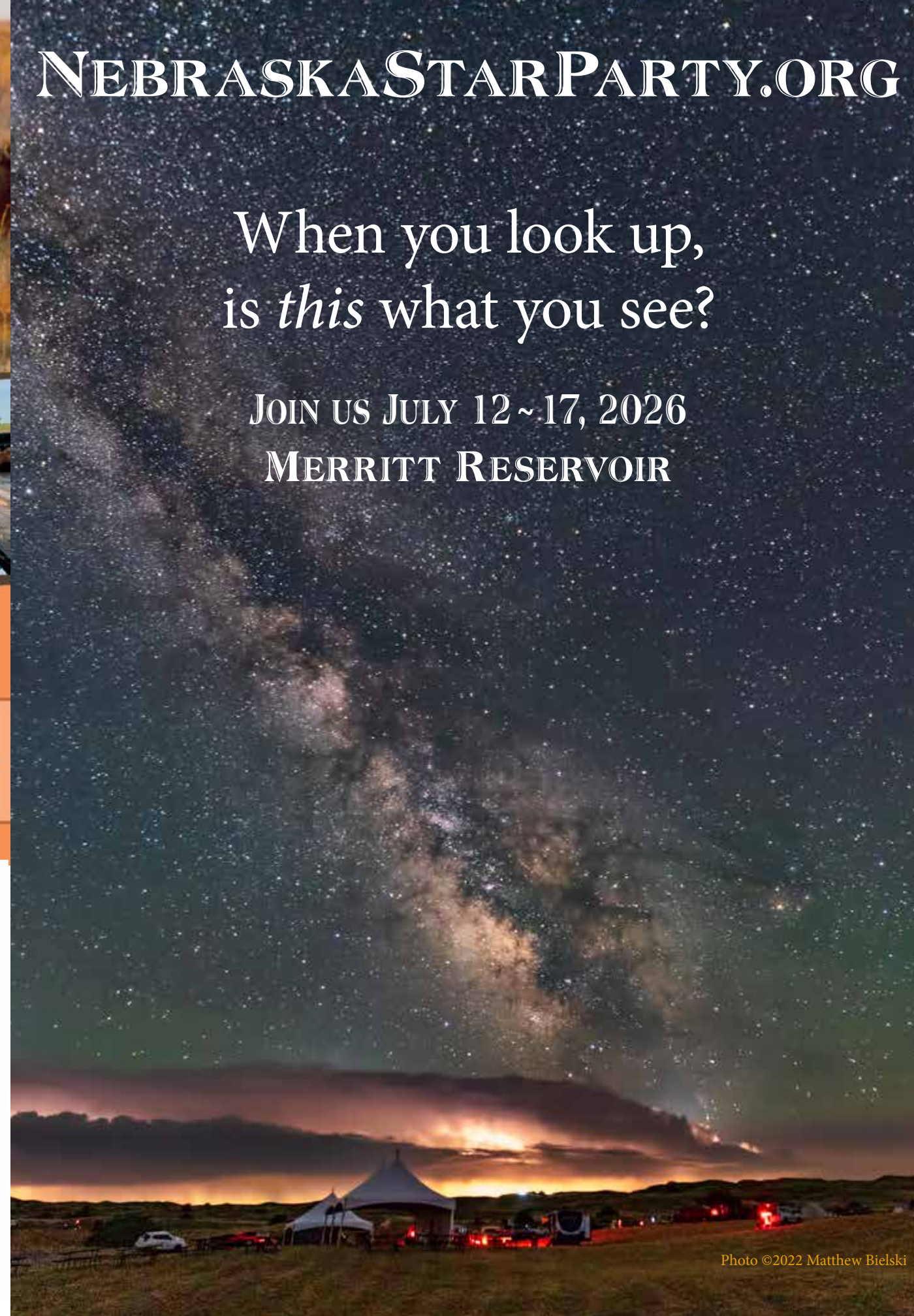


Photo ©2022 Matthew Bielski

Valentine National Wildlife Refuge

The refuge covers an extensive area, totaling over 71,000 acres. It was established in 1935 as a sanctuary for migratory birds and other wildlife.

The refuge comprises a diverse range of habitats, including sandhills, prairies, wetlands, and woodlands. It is one of the Great Plains Top 50 Ecotourism sites.

Valentine Wildlife Refuge is home to a rich variety of wildlife, including migratory birds, waterfowl, deer, prairie dogs, and various species of plants and insects.

The refuge serves as an important stopover point for migratory birds along the Central Flyway, making it a crucial habitat for bird watching enthusiasts. It is home to over 270 species of birds. Observation blinds open in the spring for prairie chicken and sharp tail grouse viewing

Visitors can engage in activities such as bird watching, hiking, photography, and wildlife observation. Hunting - deer, coyote, pheasant, dove, sharp tail grouse, prairie chicken, waterfowl.

The primary goal of the refuge is the conservation and preservation of natural ecosystems and the species that inhabit them.

You will find several shallow finger lakes within the Valentine Wildlife Refuge. These are spring fed, crystal clear waters that are perfect for fishing perch, blue gill, bass and northern pike. Enjoy fishing year-round in open water or ice fishing.

No live bait, please, and only use your trolling motor

No overnight camping or open fires. Daylight use only

• See website for more info, maps, all rules and regulations or call 402-376-3789



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Arthur Bowring Ranch State Historical Park

Working Cattle Ranch • Museum • Sod House • Picnics • Tours

In 1985, the Nebraska Game & Parks Foundation accepted the gift of the 7,202-acre Bar 99 Ranch from the estate of former U.S. Senator Eve Bowring.

Located near Merriman, NE - 1.5 miles North on Hwy 61

www.outdoornebraska.gov/bowringranch

9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m Memorial Day - Labor Day
(closed dates subject to change) see website before traveling

Note: A Nebraska State Park Vehicle Entry Permit is required and available on site.

(308)-684-3428

The Visitor Center contain displays devoted to the extraordinary lives and careers of Arthur and Eve Bowring, as well as the history and geology of the Sandhills and the Nebraska cattle ranching business.



Working Cattle Ranch



Sod House



Cottonwood Lake Recreation Area

Eve Bowring stipulated that the land was to remain a working ranch, maintaining the ranch's prize herd of Herefords.

Cottonwood Lake campground is located nearby and offers many camping amenities along with power boating, fishing, bird watching and picnicking. Its remote location makes it an excellent place to see the stars and get away from it all.



Scenic Cherry County Drives

Browse pages 28 - 31 of our maps, and plot your course!

East on Hwy 12:

Take a loop and a dip or 2 around the Niobrara National Scenic River. Head East on Hwy 12. Drop in to the Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge. Cross Berry Bridge. Dip in to Smith Falls State Park. Jump back out to Hwy 12 and keek heading East and turn at Sparks to wind your way along the river and into KeyaPaha County to See the Niobrara Valley Preserve and the Norden Chute. There will be buffalo, waterfalls, wildlife and fresh air to greet you the whole way.

South on Hwy 97 or West on Hwy 20:

Head South on Hwy 97. You will pass 2 world class golf courses nestled in the rolling sandhills. Snake River Falls and Merritt Reservoir are great stops before you decide if you will continue on 97 and see more sandhills and large Ranches like the Spike Box Ranch, or turn West on the Merritt Dam Road through the Samuel McKelvie National Forest grassland to the 16 F Spur. This will bring you back to Hwy 20, just past Niobrara Valley Vineyards. At Nenzel it is a left to Cody to George Paul Vinegar or the Arthur Bowring Ranch at Merriman..... A right, however, will lead you back to Valentine of a few dips and turns through more countryside, Chat Canyon, Anderson Bridge, Amish Country and more sandhills.

East on Hwy 20 & South on Hwy 83:

Just outside of Valentine you will be greeted by the Niobrara River and 3 bridges. The Hwy 20/83 Bridge - the Cowboy Trail Bridge and the historical Bryan Bridge (hwy Loop). These are great stops before you decide if you will continue on 83 south to great birding and hunting opportunities at the Valentine National Wildlife Refuge. A right at 16B Spur will take you through the refuge lakes and Big Alkali fish camp over to Hwy 97 and Merritt Reservoir, or continue on for (you guessed it) more sandhills and the Brown Lee Road.. This area is a Historical site for the DeWitty, later known as Audacious, was the largest and longest-lasting African American settlement in rural Nebraska. The historical marker is along the highway, but not much to see there except beautiful countryside. The narrow milled road will lead you down by the North Loup River and back up over to Hwy 97.

North on Hwy 83: Well....that takes you to South Dakota....

The Most Scenic route by far.... is in a kayak, tube or canoe down the Niobrara National Scenic River!

Photo by Kelly Keogh

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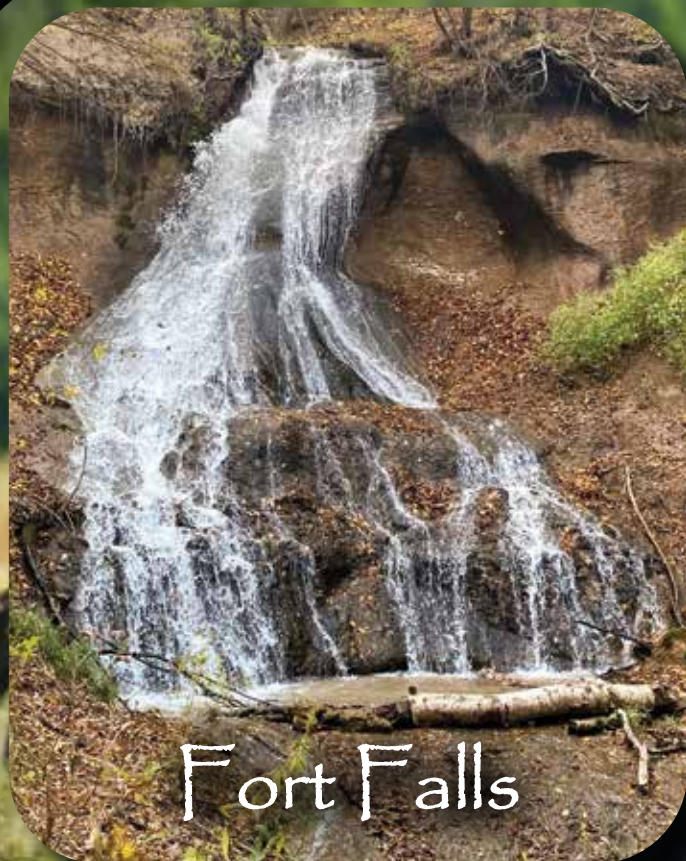
710 E. Hwy 20

Valentine NE 402-376-1144

www.hendersonsiga.com

Open Daily 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Ft. Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge



Fort Falls

- Located five miles east of Valentine on Highway 12.
- Fort Niobrara was active from 1879 to 1906 and was used as a cavalry remount station until 1911.
- It is now home to a herd of bison.
- A self guided driving tour will allow you to see these and much more.
- A beautiful three-quarter-mile hiking trail will take you by Fort Falls, one of the area's prettier waterfalls, and wind down along the scenic river.
- Cornell Dam is located at the entrance of the refuge on the Niobrara River.
- Built around 1915, Cornell Dam and its hydroelectric plant once provided electricity to Valentine.



- Below the dam is a public launch site for visitors who want to float the National Scenic Niobrara River.
- Stop by the visitor center on the grounds for maps. Inside are photos and a full history of the fort and a wide array of fossils and other information on the vast ecosystem of the area

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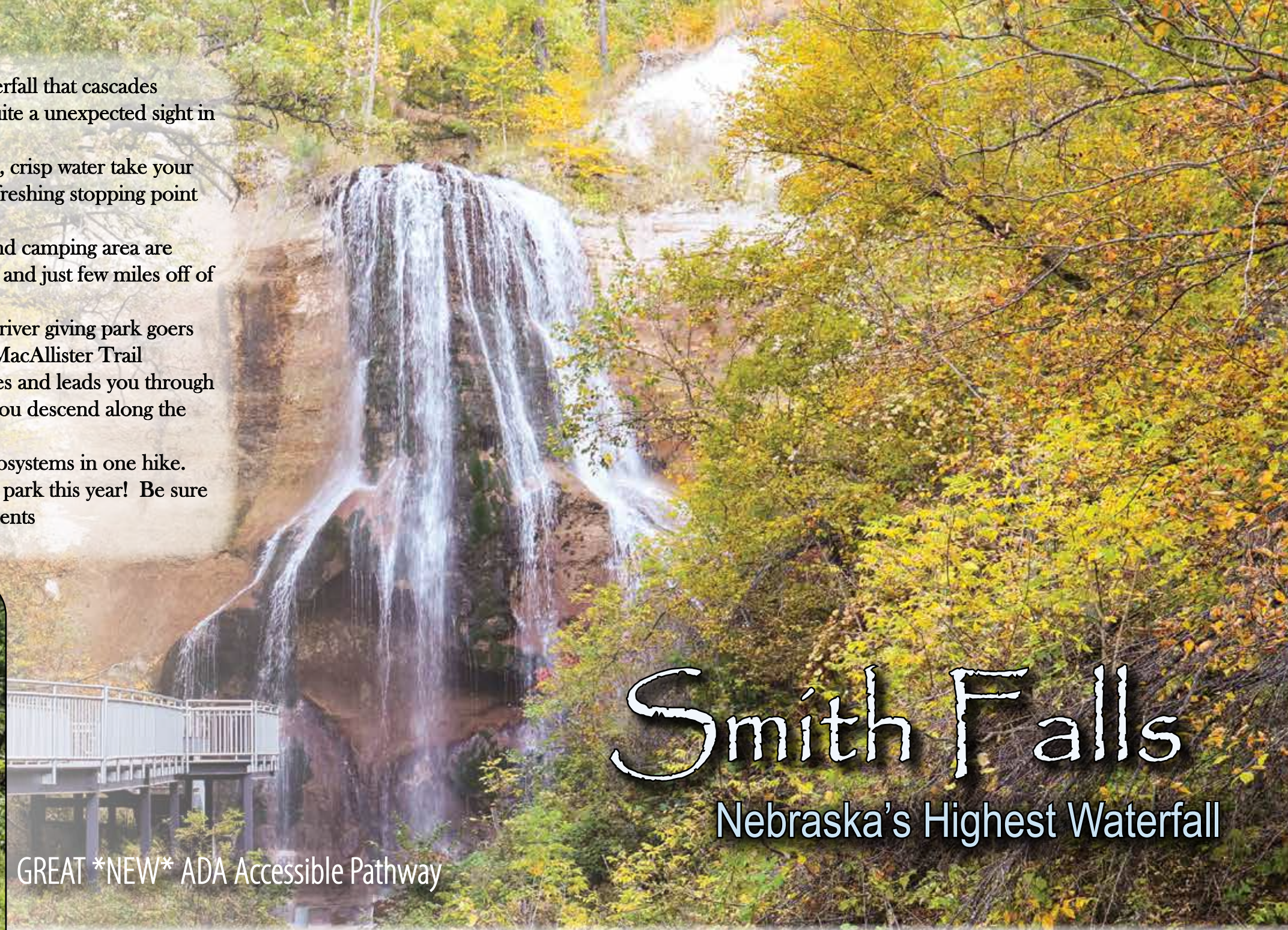


402-376-2046

Office Location:
433 East Hwy 20, Valentine

BrewersCanoers.com

- Smith Falls is a natural, spring fed waterfall that cascades down a rock face almost 70 ft high. Quite a unexpected sight in the middle of the sandhills.
- Step under its splendor and let the cold, crisp water take your breath away. This is a welcome, and refreshing stopping point for those floating the river.
- Smith Falls State Park's visitor center and camping area are on the other side of the Niobrara River and just few miles off of Highway 12.
- A large walking trestle bridge spans the river giving park goers easy access to Smith Falls and the Jim MacAllister Trail
- The trails offer you many more surprises and leads you through the canyon up, to open prairie before you descend along the Niobrara River edge
- You will get an up-close view of all 6 ecosystems in one hike.
- Lots of new things are happening at the park this year! Be sure to stop by and see all the new developments



Smith Falls

Nebraska's Highest Waterfall

GREAT *NEW* ADA Accessible Pathway



SMITH FALLS STATE PARK



Note: A Nebraska State Park Vehicle Entry Permit is required and available on site.

90159 Smith Falls Rd
 Center Hours: 9-4:30 / Falls - Daylight Hours
 402-376-1306



Basic tent camping available on north side of the river only.
 May 1st to September 30th - Book online!
 Picnic tables - Restrooms - Pay Showers - Reservable Shelter

www.outdoornebraska.gov/smithfalls



253 N Main St | Valentine
402-376-2470
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Drive Thru ATM Located Here

Stroll Valentine's **Heart City Creative District** Main Street.
Enjoy the Sculpture Walk art pieces on display. New art will rotate annually.
Enjoy numerous Murals like this one, on the face of Security First Bank!



Photo Op - Wall North of Security First Bank
The Iconic - Valentine "The Heart City" Sign



Heart City

CREATIVE DISTRICT



SCULPTURE WALK
across NEBRASKA



Sculpture Walk Across Nebraska (SWAN) is a cooperative effort between participating communities to provide a revolving art experience in walkable districts.

The goal is to add art that will inspire, entertain and educate, while providing additional attractions for visitors and community members.

The Cherry County Ag Society
invites you out to these
CHERRY COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
2026 EVENTS!



The Fairgrounds are located @ 120 S. Green Street in Valentine

June 11th -14th - Hosting Nebraska High School Rodeo Finals

Valentine is proud to be the Host for the Nebraska High School Rodeo Finals for a second year. Mark your calendar and plan to cheer on the bright young talent of our future!



July 4th - Demo Derby & Fireworks

The Smashing GOOD TIME starts @ 6:00 PM and the Fireworks Show kicks off at Dusk!



August 4th - 9th - Cherry County Fair & Rodeo

Fun For the Whole Family all week long! Trade Show, Live Entertainment, Exhibits, Rodeo, Parade, Sand Volleyball, Cornhole, Livestock Judging, Turtle Races, Food, Funnel Cakes, Bounce Houses, Games, Beer Garden, Dance and so much more!

These, and many more events, are held out at the Cherry County Fairgrounds ALL YEAR LONG! Check out the website for more info, events or fill out an application to rent a space for your next event!



Bring you Horse Trailer, Living Quarters, Camper, RV or tent! There is room to board your horses too! Electrical hook-ups have been expanded. Showers, water and sewer are coming soon!

More information on booking a campsite or to rent a stall
Check here www.cherrycountyfairgrounds.com



2026 CALENDER OF EVENTS

- January 23-24th..... Cork Thornton Memorial Ice Fishing Tournament - Merritt Reservoir
 - February 1st..... Valentine High School Coronation
 - February 14th..... Bull Bash - Main Street Valentine | Valentine's Day Chili Cook-Off and Ball Drop
 - April 18th..... Spring Fling Craft & Vendor Fair - St. Nicholas Catholic Church Parish Hall
 - April 23-26th..... 1884 Days / 35th Annual Old West Days & Nebraska Cowboy Poetry Gathering
 - March 14th..... Valentine Coffee Crawl & Pub Crawl (pending Chamber business participation)
 - May 10th..... Mother's Day
 - May 23rd..... Circle C Day - Cody, NE | Free Fishing Derby
 - May 25th..... Memorial Day
 - June 6th..... Sandhills Marathon - Brownlee Road
 - June 11-13th..... Nebraska High School Rodeo Finals - Cherry County Fairgrounds
 - June 13th..... Valentine Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament
 - June 27th..... Valentine Alumni Weekend
 - July 4th..... Demo Derby - Cherry County Fairgrounds, Fireworks Display at Dusk
 - July 18th..... Valentine City Wide Garage Sale
 - July 12-17th..... Nebraska Star Party - Merritt Reservoir
 - August 1st..... Crazy Days – Downtown Valentine | 2nd Annual Valentine Marathon
 - August 4-9th..... Cherry County Fair in Valentine - Cherry County Fairgrounds
 - August 8th..... Watermelon Feed - Cherry County Fairgrounds
 - August 29th..... 139th Old Settlers Reunion - Sparks, NE
 - TBD..... Sandhills Catfish Classic Fishing Tournament - Merritt Reservoir
 - September 18-20th.. Sparks & Spurs Cowboy Fast Draw - Cherry County Fairgrounds
 - September 19th..... Wild West Days – Kilgore Bordertown Arena
 - TBD..... Bison Roundup - Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge
 - October 11th..... Pumpkin Patch Craft and Vendor Fair - St. Nicholas Church Parish Hall
 - TBD..... Moonlight Madness - Downtown Valentine
 - October 30th..... Kiddie Halloween Costume Parade and Scare in the Square
 - November 21st... Heart of Christmas Celebration, Holiday Parade of Lights & Holiday Preview
 - November 28th..... Small Business Saturday - Downtown Valentine
 - December 5th..... Winterfest Craft and Gift Show & Bake Sale - Cherry County Fairgrounds
- See our website – www.VisitValentine.org/Events for more specific info or date changes.

Local. Community. Sandhills.

132 N Main Street, Valentine, NE 69201 | sandhills.bank | 402.376.2211 | Member FDIC

**Cherry County Tourism
& Valentine Visitor Center**
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Phone: 402-376-2969
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