

2021 End-to-End Hike of the South Dakota Centennial Trail

Posted November 2, 2020

Subject to change				
	Thursday, May 13			<p>12 pm pick-up at the Rapid City Regional Airport in Rapid City, South Dakota. Group travel to Wind Cave National Park and our campsite for the evening. Approximately 61-miles/2 hours. Set-up camp, review 10 Essentials, day packs, discuss route for Saturday and plan for the end-to-end hike.</p> <p>Meal provided D. Lunch on own, with stop en route to park.</p>
		Day Mile	Cum Mile	Trail Notes - LEG 1 - 55.8-miles
1	Friday, May 14	6.2	6.2	<p>Travel to southern terminus. Approximately 10 minute drive.</p> <p>Hike is in gentle rolling hills with riparian features, open grasslands and trail amid old fire burn. Prairie dog towns and roaming buffalo will be observed for most of the day.</p> <p>Meals provided B/L/D.</p>
2	Saturday, May 15	10.3	16.5	<p>Little more up and down today, first one is 400-foot gain just as the hike begins. Following, the trail ambles and meanders through open fields and wooded landscape and is constantly changing. Buffalo will be observed for most of the day.</p> <p>Meals provided B/L/D.</p>
3	Sunday, May 16	11.5	28	<p>Today begins with rocky walls and views obscured behind cattail flower and flowing creek waters. As the trail changes throughout the day it meanders and crawls with greenery – even tosses in a rocky climb that is not recommended for horses, as a bonus. Second half of the day follows jeep road from recent thinning and cutting infected ponderosa pine forest.</p> <p>Meals provided B/L/D.</p>
4	Monday, May 17		37.2	<p>To be determined based upon group discussion.</p> <p>Meals provided B/L/D - as long as in the field.</p>
5	Tuesday, May 18	9.8	47	<p>First segment of the day is fast hiking along old dirt road with long meadow corridors of green. Trail opens to fields along rolling landscape before reaching switchbacks and descending.</p> <p>Meals provided B/L/D</p>
6	Wednesday, May 19	8.8	55.8	<p>The trail can be initially confusing but is well marked - be attentive. The trail has been relocated and may differ from the map. Later in the day the trail begins a most assertive up and similar down that can be exposed and hot. Watch for cattle and mini holes from abandoned mining claims. Expect old dirt roads.</p> <p>From the trailhead, group travel to lodging in Hill City. Approximately 20 minute drive.</p> <p>Meals provided B/L - dinner on own. Town stop - two nights.</p>
		Day Mile	Cum Mile	Trail Notes - LEG 2 - 66.4-miles
7	Thursday, May 20			<p>Town stop in Hill City with options to visit local tourist interests. Town stop days are a way to rest, regroup with laundry, a shower and town food.</p> <p>Breakfast provided by lodging. L/D on own.</p>
8	Friday, May 21	10	65.8	<p>Short segment of assertive up and down like our last full day of hiking before meandering, crossing an earthen dam and accessing old jeep roads as a connector to the next segment of changing trail. Hiking today is relatively fast.</p> <p>Breakfast provided by lodging. Meals provided L/D.</p>
9	Saturday, May 22	11.4	77.2	<p>Moderate segment distance today filled with plenty of ups and downs. Though you might be weary of two track, the landscape is beautiful and the middle is filled with open fields. There has been lots of conversation – is this segment of the trail overmarked?</p> <p>Meals provided B/L/D.</p>
10	Sunday, May 23	6.7	83.9	<p>A shift in the schedule to shorten several long days in a row allows for a short day of hiking. Don't miss the Nemo Mercantile if you want some extra snacks. Don't underestimate the route that was recently rerouted that climbs high then descends.</p> <p>Meals provided B/L/D.</p>
11	Monday, May 24	12.8	96.7	<p>Beautiful segment of secluded and lonely trail that meanders above cliffs before descending into gulches and drainages. Trail feels to travel back and forth on itself with its sinuous route.</p> <p>Meals provided B/L/D.</p>
12	Tuesday, May 25	11.5	108.2	<p>Ridgetops and rolling little bumps that eventually lead to the flatness of open hills. The early part of the day feels more closed in though tree mitigation has happened in the past few years.</p> <p>Meals provided B/L/D.</p>
13	Wednesday, May 26	10	118.2	<p>A laughable, why did the trail do that moment. Open grasslands, historical markers, bunkers and an old firing range note the history of this place. Soon, more grasslands. Plan to be exposed most of the day.</p> <p>Meals provided B/L/D.</p>
14	Thursday, May 27	4	122.2	<p>Final day – up and back hike with 900-foot of elevation gain. Trail is almost entirely exposed with history that stretch 4,000-years. This is a solemn location and should be treated with the respect it deserved.</p> <p>Travel to lodging in Rapid City. Approximately 52-miles/1 hour.</p> <p>Meal provided B. L/D on own (we like dinner to be a group debrief).</p>
	Friday, May 28			<p>12 pm drop off at the Rapid City Airport in Rapid City, South Dakota. Approximately 13-miles/20 minutes.</p> <p>Breakfast provided by lodging.</p>