



MAMMOTH CRYSTAL CAVE NATURE PRESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN

1. A Preserve Management Team will administer this plan on behalf of the NSS, which can be contacted via email at MammothCrystalPreserve@caves.org for initial inquiries concerning Preserve access. In all cases, access will require a dated permit plus execution of a liability release.
2. Permits for Preserve visitor groups will be issued only in the name of the trip leader, who sponsors the other members on the trip. All parties on the permit must execute liability releases, also such permits will be valid only for the date(s) specified. The permit holder must accompany the group upon the property and within all caves at the Preserve; this person is also responsible for the permitted group and must ensure that all group members abide by the permit terms and this management plan. The permit holder must carry a paper or electronic copy of the permit upon arrival to be shown on request. Paper copies of the permit should be printed in advance of the visit then placed upon each vehicle dashboard that utilizes the Preserve parking area(s).
3. Staff - Members of the preserve management team and staff completing management tasks can be made exempt from the need of formal permits for entry, under the consent of the preserve management team. Each should however still have a liability release on file.
4. Preserve locations or access to caves may not always be available on every date, due to coordination requirements with the owner's private activities. Preserve visitation may also be subject to seasonal closures for access road repairs or due to other pertinent factors such as weather conditions. Those parties entering the Preserve under NSS permit are prohibited from any commercial use activities and must not charge any fees in relation to permitted visits, under provisions of South Dakota Recreational Use statutes.
5. Maximum size for permitted groups will be limited to eight persons for recreational trips; other trip categories will have group capacity determined on a case-by-case basis. Post-trip reports and comments are strongly encouraged from recreational participants. The Preserve Management Team will make permit determinations based on their knowledge of this property with priority given to management-related caving such as survey and mapping, resource inventory, advanced photography, route maintenance, monitoring and research in disciplines such as speleobiology, paleontology, hydrology, etc. Management-related participants will also coordinate with the Preserve Management Team for post-trip reporting

and sharing of collected data; scientific publication is encouraged and should acknowledge this NSS Preserve as facilitator for the given studies.

6. Trips - Bethlehem Cave and certain auxiliary caves on the Preserve property will require a "trip leader" recognized by the Preserve Management Team. The Preserve Management Team will maintain a list of these leaders. The leader will assist the group in negotiating cave routes and wayfinding, will ensure that sensitive areas are preserved, and will be responsible for unlocking/relocking cave gates as applicable. The permit holder is not necessarily the leader; on request the Preserve Management Team will coordinate with the permit applicant to arrange leader availability. Each leader serves as a volunteer and is familiar with the cave route or system portion to be traveled. The Paha Sapa Grotto has agreed to serve as a resource for this purpose and assist Karst Canyons to nominate folks for initial leadership status, and evaluate others as needed. Over the course of time, a cadre of leaders recognized by the Preserve Management Team can be built up for efficient trip permitting while also promoting conservation goals for the cave resources under stewardship.
7. Features or areas within Preserve caves that are flagged off or barricaded to prevent entry or damage must be strictly observed. Absolutely no marking or carving upon cave surfaces is allowed; survey stations will be documented according to best use practices. Any type of vandalism to caves or surface features of the Preserve will be prosecuted and perpetrators will be banned from all NSS Preserves. Cave formations, cave deposits of all types, and cave biota must never be harmed, damaged, disturbed, or removed. The cave is home to many historical artifacts and newspapers, these can be viewed but should be left in place. Scientific collection for research purposes will be strictly limited according to permit stipulations. Buildings on the property will not be entered without express invite.
8. Rigging and fixtures found installed for cave must be left intact; deterioration of these fixtures should be reported to the Preserve Management Team, who must authorize the placement of any additional bolts, hardware, etc. micro-shaving, passage modification, excavation, or digging within caves or on surface areas of the Preserve is strictly prohibited without authorization of the Preserve Management Team.
9. Surface features and resources of the Preserve must likewise not be damaged or abused; Preserve visitors are required to pack out their own litter from caves and surface areas. Wildlife must not be harassed or disturbed on the Preserve. Plants of all types, wildflowers, ferns, shrubs, and all flora must never be dug, picked, collected, or removed from the Preserve. Unauthorized trails, brush cutting, or other similar modifications are prohibited. Collection of rock and mineral specimens or cultural artifacts is also prohibited at the Preserve, likewise its prehistoric and historic sites must remain undisturbed.
10. Preserve parking areas will be utilized with an attempt to minimize the number of vehicles at any given time. Do not block access roadways or other vehicles utilizing authorized parking areas.

11. Camping will be available at the preserve only through special permission from the Preserve Management Team.

Finally, let's **work together** to conserve and enjoy these many wonderful resources! Welcome to the Mammoth Crystal Cave Nature Preserve of the NSS!