

# Public Fossil Dig - Bismarck Area

-We say "area" because we will be starting and ending the day in Bismarck, but traveling to a surrounding location. Depending on the weather, and the concentration of fossils at different locations, our destinations may shift. Places we have visited in the past include a 65-million year old dinosaur site, a 50 million-year old crocodile site, a 30-40 million-year old mammal site, a fossil leaf site, and more. If the weather doesn't cooperate, we will have spaces for people to work in our paleontology lab here in Bismarck.

-When: June 22nd - 26th, 2015.

-Where: Bismarck and Dickinson areas. We will meet at the Heritage Center in Bismarck. Daily trips to the fossil sites will originate from Bismarck. If we are unable to dig due to poor weather conditions, we will work in the Paleontology Lab.

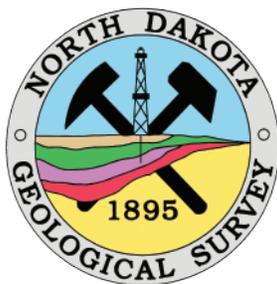
-Cost: \$10 per person, maximum cost of \$25 per family. Participants must be at least 12 years old. Individuals under 18 years of age must have an accompanying adult. Lodging, meals, and transportation to the fossil sites are the responsibility of the participants.

-Registration:

For more information contact:

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## **Bismarck Area Frequently Asked Questions:**

### **Q: Where do we meet?**

A: This can change, but in the past we meet outside the Bismarck Heritage Center. Exact time and location will be sent out closer to the dig date.

### **Q: Can I take pictures?**

A: Please do! We would love if you would be willing to share them with us as well.

### **Q: How strenuous is this dig?**

A: This can vary, depending on the location we go to for the day. Be prepared for a lot of prospecting (hiking), and not a lot of sitting. We tend to be fairly exposed to the elements on all of our locations.

### **Q: If I get too hot, is there any shade?**

A: Most likely not, unless you get lucky and find a random tree or rock outcrop. Your best bet is to stay hydrated and wear a good hat.

### **Q: What should I bring?**

A: Please bring more water than you think you will need – it tends to get hot, and we don't want people becoming dehydrated. You will also need to pack your own lunch. Hat, sunglasses, and of course a camera. We will provide all the tools you will be using throughout the day. We ask that you not bring a giant cooler along, since you would need to haul it all the way to the site and back. We pack out what we pack in, so please take all garbage back with you. No littering!

### **Q: What types of fossils are we finding?**

A: Once again, this depends on what location we go to for the day, which in turn depends on the weather. One site has a plethora of fossil leaves. Another has numerous crocodile remains. One site is known for 30 million year old mammals (*Mesohippus* (three-toed horse), *Dinictus* (cat-like nimravid), *Subhyracodon* (hornless rhino), etc.). Yet another area has the occasional dinosaur bone.

### **Q: Wow! We can find a whole crocodile?!**

A: While it's possible to find a whole animal, most of what we are finding are parts and pieces. Imagine creatures dying in a swamp, sinking down, being eaten, walked by, disturbed - we find lots of single elements. A crocodile tooth here. A *Mesohippus* leg there. A rib from a turtle.

### **Q: Can we keep the fossils we find?**

A: No – all fossils found will return to the State Fossil Collection in Bismarck, ND. Most of the land we search on is State, Federal, or Foundation land (US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Teddy Roosevelt Medora Foundation, etc.), and the NDGS curates whatever is found. Feel free to take photos of whatever you find however!

### **Q: Is there a restroom?**

A: No – we will be removed from any modern conveniences. Our standard is to hike a distance away from others, and find a comfortable spot.

### **Q: Will my cell phone work?**

A: Maybe – the signal varies in the area, but we ask that as courtesy to the other diggers, if you are going to use your phone to chat, please head off site. It tends to get very distracting.

### **Q: Can I smoke?**

A: Yes, but just like the cell phone use, as courtesy to the other diggers, we ask that you smoke off site. Please take your cigarette butts with you as well – we want to make sure we keep the area clean.

### **Q: I'm from out of town – where's a good place to stay?**

A: Bismarck offers a plethora of hotels, motels, and the like – too many to list.

### **Q: Where can I find some grub around here?**

A: Bismarck itself has exploded with food options. Anything from salad to steak, Japanese, Italian, Thai, fast food, etc. Just make sure to pack a lunch for the dig itself, since we will be out of range for pizza delivery.