

Dickinson 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: We will be concentrating our efforts at a 30-35 million year old locality, chock full of mammals like *Mesohippus* (three-toed horse), *Dinictus* (cat-like nimravid), *Subhyracodon* (hornless rhino), etc. There is also the chance of finding tortoise and crocodile remains as well.

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. We work with prehistoric roadkill. After scavengers eat their fill, and Mother Nature does her thing, we try and find whatever is left over.

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.

Q: So the fee I'm paying will be reimbursed?

A: Yes - the fees we are charging are simply to hold your spot. If you attend the dig, or the dig is cancelled, you will be refunded at the end of the season. If you cancel at least a week in advance of the start of the dig (not your actual dig day, since we will be unavailable during the dig), you will be refunded. If you do not show up to dig, or cancel with shorter than a weeks notice of the start of the dig, you will not be refunded.