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Comments: Use of public lands is a fundamental right for all. Overuse and/or abuse of those lands is a tragedy, and everyone, whether a user or not, pays the price. I understand that people want to have solitude and enjoy the privacy and reflection that undeveloped public lands provide. But everyone that uses these lands needs to understand the impacts they create.

How is this best achieved? Education - telling the stories of the land in ways the public can consume and will respond to in a positive way. That is a daunting task and requires finding a few stories that will resonate, then repeating these stories over and over again - multiple times in multiple ways. It also means partnering to distribute the story - no one person or entity can do it on their own. Every marketing message that has resonated with a significant number of people follows the same formula -

*Tell the stories over and over again - the more it is heard, the more likely it is believed, remembered, and honored

*Use multiple formats and outlets - In person, print, digital, video

*Broaden your reach - encourage others to share your stories

When it comes to the Pinnacle Buttes area, I would support protecting and telling the story of the land in these ways -

*Leave No Trace (LNT) - provide literature and information in multiple places where people look for information and are congregating.

*Conduct LNT workshops for locals so they can understand the value of what is in their backyard and share their knowledge/stories with visitors

*Block visitor access to grazing and areas that need restoration or are paleontologically/ archaeologically sensitive - be sure to have an explanation of why the area is not usable or accessible with supporting documentation (photos, testimonials, etc.).

*Daily monitoring of the area by the US Forest Service. Either take license information or develop a check-in system so the user understands there is accountability.

*Assessing weight limits on existing roads & posting that information in multiple places

*Limiting the amount of time for dispersed camping

*Establishing a campground would be a great asset to the Buffalo Gap Grasslands. It may satisfy a portion of the use issues, but not all. And it certainly would take time to develop and build.

No solution will satisfy all the varied public land users. Hopefully, employing some solutions will slow the current rate of land degradation long enough for users to learn the stories and understand the importance of responsible and sustainable recreation.

Employees of the US Forest Service - and especially those I have encountered on the Nebraska National Forests & Grasslands are passionate about the land they care for. A huge thank you to them for the work they do.