

REMEMBERING THE ROSEBUD

150 Years of Courage and Legacy



Wednesday, June 17th, 2026
Rosebud Battlefield State Park

Dear Visitor,

Thank you so much for joining us as we commemorate the Battle of the Rosebud, also known to many as “Where the Girl Saved Her Brother.” This is a place where courage, sacrifice, and history are deeply woven into the landscape itself. 150 years ago, the conflicts of the times escalated to a point of war. Today on the anniversary of that battle, we gather to honor all who fought here—Lakota, Cheyenne, Crow, Shoshone, Arapaho, and the US Army--each carrying their own stories, loyalties, and hopes. We reflect not only on the battle, but also on the humanity of every side, and ponder the enduring strength and resilience of the Native nations and the generations that followed. In our own times, there are some that thrive or even prosper from conflict, but we all must rise above such thoughts. As we stand together in remembrance, may we also look to the future with a shared commitment to understanding, respect, and unity, drawing from the lessons of history a renewed sense of purpose and patriotism that honors truth, fosters healing, and strengthens the bonds that connect us all as one nation.

I do hope you receive much from the ceremonies today. May they help you reflect on the history and the struggles of our past, come to a new appreciation of different cultures, and enjoy the feast that has been prepared for all.

Sincerely,

Raymond Schell
Recreation Manager
Rosebud Battlefield State Park

Event Program

10:00 AM Commemoration Begins

Presentation of Colors — Northern Arapaho Warriors and Cpl. Billy Farris

Blessing — Northern Cheyenne Tribal Spiritual Leaders

Welcome Remarks — Kqyn Kuka, FWP Tribal Liaison and Raymond Schell, FWP Park Manager

Remarks from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks — Christy Clark, FWP Director

Keynote Address — Dr. Leo Killsback, Northern Cheyenne Nation

Wreath Laying Ceremony & Descendant Recognition — Honoring descendants from the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, Crow Nation, Eastern Shoshone Tribe, Northern Arapaho Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribe of Oklahoma, Fort Peck Tribes, United States Army, and Kobold Family

12:15 PM **Interpretive Hike** — Led by Spencer Morris, FWP Park Ranger

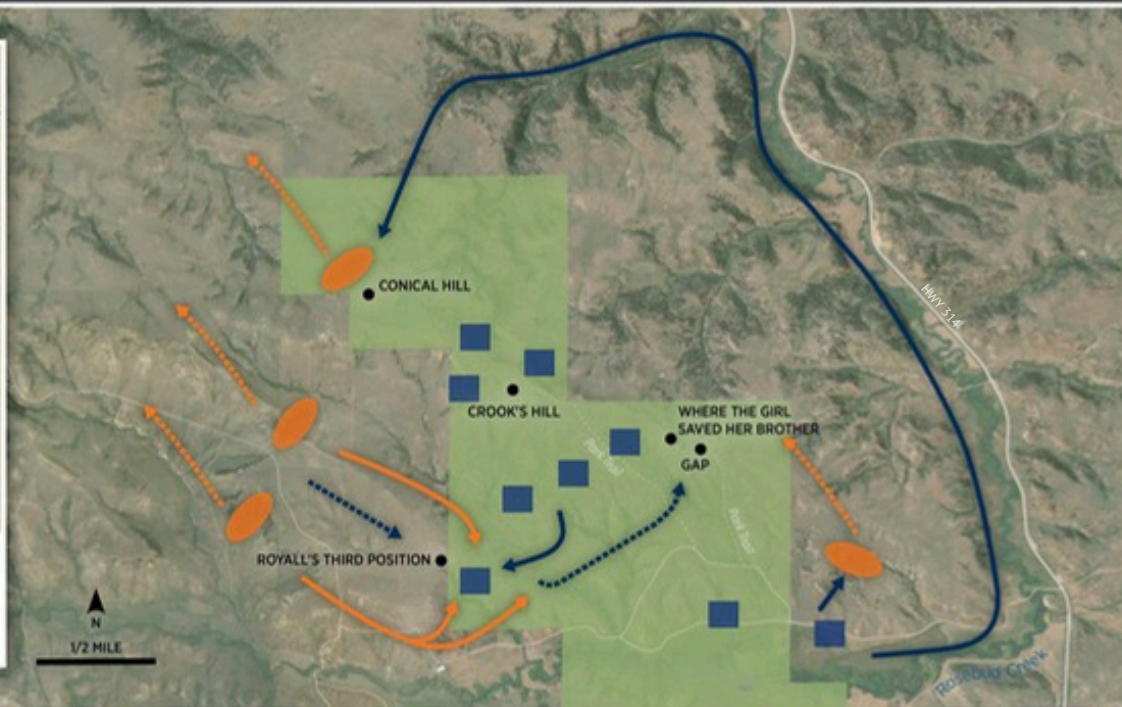
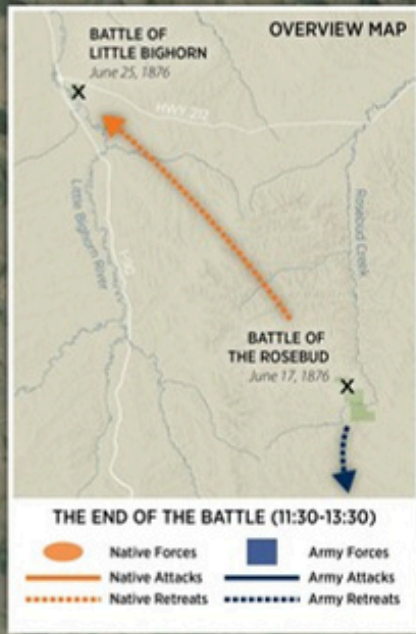
1:00 PM **Horseback Riders Arrive at the Battlefield**

1:30 PM **Living History Reenactment of "Where the Girl Saved Her Brother"**

2:00 PM **Victory Song** — Northern Cheyenne Drum Group

3:00 PM **Community Feast and Gathering**

BATTLE OF THE ROSEBUD



Historical Overview

On the morning of June 17, 1876, Brigadier General George Crook led a column of approximately 1,300 U.S. soldiers and Crow and Shoshone scouts south along Rosebud Creek in present-day Montana. Their mission: to find and engage the encampments of Lakota and Northern Cheyenne people who had refused to report to reservation agencies by a federal deadline that winter.

What Crook did not know was that Sitting Bull's Sun Dance vision — in which enemy soldiers fell headlong into the Lakota camp — had inspired a massive force of warriors to ride out to meet him. Led by Crazy Horse and other war leaders, an estimated 1,000 to 1,500 Lakota and Northern Cheyenne warriors launched a surprise attack that halted Crook's advance and forced his column to withdraw.

The battle lasted nearly six hours across rough, broken terrain. It was fierce, fluid, and inconclusive by conventional military standards, yet its consequences were profound. Crook's retreat removed one-third of the U.S. Army's striking power from the field. Eight days later, at the Little Bighorn, the Lakota and Northern Cheyenne would deliver the most decisive victory of the war.

The Battle of the Rosebud is also remembered for an extraordinary act of courage. A young Northern Cheyenne woman, Buffalo Calf Road Woman, rode into the thick of the fighting to rescue her brother, Chief Comes In Sight, after his horse was shot from beneath him. The Cheyenne name for the battle, "Where the Girl Saved Her Brother," honors her bravery and has endured for 150 years.

Today, Rosebud Battlefield State Park preserves approximately 3,000 acres of this historic ground, virtually unchanged from the day of the battle. It stands as a place of memory, of learning, and of respect for all whose lives were shaped by what happened here.

Keynote Speaker — Dr. Leo K. Killsback



Dr. Leo K. Killsback is a citizen of the Northern Cheyenne Nation and an award-winning historian, author, and former Professor of Practice at James E. Rogers College of Law at the University of Arizona. Dr. Killsback, known as Hese'eveesehe (Dusty Nose), was raised in Busby, Montana on the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation where he was fortunate to have an upbringing learning about this history, culture, and ceremonies from relatives, elders, and friends in the community. Dr. Killsback's monumental 2-volume work earned him national and international recognition as scholar—*A Sacred People: Indigenous Governance, Traditional Leadership, and the Warriors of the Cheyenne Nation* and *A Sovereign*

People: Indigenous Nationhood, Traditional Law, and the Covenants of the Cheyenne Nation were awarded the Stubbendieck Great Plains Distinguished Book and the Donald Fixico Book awards. Dr. Killsback was also commissioned to design the commemorative panels at Rosebud Battlefield State Park and the Cheyenne portions of the Indian Memorial at the Little Bighorn National Monument. Dr. Killsback also produced, filmed, and edited *The Chiefs' Prophecy: Survival of the Cheyenne Nation*, which is a historical documentary highlighting the significance of traditional concepts of Cheyenne leadership. He is currently an up-and-coming attorney-in-training specializing in environmental law, Indigenous rights, and international human rights. Dr. Killsback is grateful for the support from Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, and everyone who has a shared interest and appreciation in Montana's history, culture, and beautiful lands and environment.

With Gratitude

This commemoration was made possible through the dedication of many. We are deeply grateful to the tribal nations, cultural communities, historians, and descendants of all those present on June 17, 1876, whose guidance and participation made this event possible. We also thank the employees of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks from across the state who contributed their time and expertise to the planning and execution of this day.

Our Sponsors

We gratefully acknowledge the generous financial support of the following:

Mike Meloy and the Lee and Donna Metcalf Charitable Trust
Talen Energy
Montana State Parks Foundation

Advisory Committee Members

This event would not have been possible without the vision and volunteer service of the following individuals:

Bailey Dann	Patrice O'Loughlin	Tim Bernardis
Mardell Hogan	Robyn Rofkar	Trina Lone Hill
Michael Spears	Royal Lost His Blanket Stone	Wallace Bearchum
Mike Meloy	Sara Scott	
Nolan Brown	Sonny R.T. White Hat	



Rosebud Battlefield State Park

Rosebud Battlefield State Park is managed by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and is open to the public year-round. Preserving approximately 3,000 acres of the 1876 battlefield, the park offers trails, interpretive signage, and one of the best-preserved battlefield landscapes in the American West — a place where the history and legacy of this ground can be experienced long after today. The commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Battle of the Rosebud extends beyond this gathering. Throughout the summer, the park will host a series of speakers and interpretive opportunities continuing that conversation. To stay up to date on upcoming events, visit the Rosebud Battlefield State Park webpage.

Plan Your Next Visit



fwp.mt.gov/stateparks/rosebud-battlefield

