MISSION STATEMENT:

B.R.I.D.G.E. aims to empower local ecologies and economies as an alternative to mainstream conservation and development models in the hopes that the insights gained could potentially be incorporated into mainstream models in the future. We will strive to achieve this mission by bringing together students, educators and community members from diverse locations to participate in sustainable development and community-based resource management. Our emphasis will be on the indigenous communities living on the margins of national parks or other protected areas.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To understand and strengthen local resource management systems and environmental knowledge;
2. To identify and support sustainable small-scale economic enterprises based on local resource management systems and environmental knowledge;
3. to facilitate networking and lobbying activities of indigenous organizations and communities, especially with respect to land rights and resource management issues;
4. To provide students with direct learning and service opportunities in the fields of sustainable development and community-based natural resource management.

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SUMMARY

This is a report on the South Unit of Badlands prepared by BRIDGE (Bridge for Indigenous Development and Grassroots Empowerment) for interested parties at Pine Ridge.

BRIDGE's vision is to move away from old approaches to conservation and development in which outside experts tell local people how they should be running their affairs. We recognize that indigenous communities around the world are justifiably fed up with this approach.

Instead of telling local people the best way to manage their natural resources, BRIDGE tries to understand indigenous resource management systems that build on indigenous values. We are especially interested in communities living near national parks, since national parks are a western approach to conservation that displaces and disrupts indigenous approaches. We believe that it is useful to understand the ways in which indigenous communities from Africa to the United States have turned this model around and used it to their advantage. The idea behind this approach is that successful approaches to conservation and development in one community might have something to offer other indigenous communities in similar circumstances.

For the past two years we at BRIDGE have sought to understand the history of the South Unit of Badlands National Park and the historical events that have led to the current situation there. One of the few things that the Tribe and the Park Service agree upon is that the current situation with the South Unit is a poor one. Natural resources are not being effectively conserved, sacred sites are not being protected, and tribal members are seeing very little benefit from the agreement between the Tribe and the Park. It is in response to these conditions that the Keepers of the Stronghold Dream have occupied the South Unit and are demanding that the Park Service withdraw. Each side blames the other for this current state of affairs, and neither trusts the other to help improve the situation.

We have spoken to tribal members, the Badlands administration, and other individuals who recall the negotiations between the Tribe and the Park Service in the 1960s and 1970s. We also examined historical documents in the Badlands archive and the Federal Archives. Our data demonstrates that the grievances of the Oglala Sioux Tribe against the Badlands National Park are legitimate and should be addressed. One option – albeit a very difficult one – would be for the Tribe to take the South Unit back. If this doesn't happen, however, it will be necessary to negotiate a better deal with the Park Service, one that benefits tribal members more and respects tribal sovereignty.

This report outlines some of the opportunities and obstacles for achieving this objective. It begins with an extended explanation of who we are and the types of services we can offer. It then provides a short history of the South Unit and the problems with the current MOA. The following section discusses the importance of the Indigenous Stewardship Model developed by tribal wildlife biologist Richard Sherman. The section after this outlines options for the future of the South Unit **(for a quick overview see chart on pages 13 through 16 of this report)**. Finally the report outlines potential funding sources and other resources, as well as some of the services that BRIDGE might provide in the future if people at Pine Ridge are interested.

I) BRIDGE (Bridge for Indigenous Development and Grassroots Empowerment)

My name is Jim Igoe and I am an assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Colorado at Denver. I am also one of the founders of BRIDGE. Throughout the 1990s I lived in the East African country of Tanzania, working with a group of people called the Maasai. Like the Lakota, and other American Indian groups, the Maasai were colonized and dispossessed by Europeans. Their land was taken away and they were forced onto reservations. Most Maasai now live in poverty, because they are unable to pursue their traditional ways of making a living, and there are few opportunities in other areas. There simply are no jobs.

One of the things that astounded me most about working with the Maasai was the fact that they had been displaced and impoverished by National Parks. As a middle class white American, I was raised to believe that parks were always a good thing. By the time I finished my research, however, I didn't believe this any more. Parks are a Eurocentric approach to nature conservation. As such they reflect the European belief that real nature is always free of human beings and any evidence of their activity – unless these human beings should happen to be tourists, scientists, or park administrators.

This view of course runs counter to the view of most indigenous communities, who see humans as part of nature. Historically these communities have preserved nature because their livelihoods depended on it. It wasn't in the interest of the Sioux, for instance, to destroy the bison and their habitat. White people did that, and then created parks to protect the few remaining herds. This very odd approach to conservation is best summed up by Lakota Holy Man, Black Elk:

> Once we were happy in our own country and we were seldom hungry, for then the two-leggeds and the four-leggeds lived together like relatives, and there was plenty for them and for us. But the Wasichus came, and they have made little islands for us and other little islands for the four-leggeds, and always these islands are becoming smaller, for around them surges the gnawing flood of the Wasichu; and it is dirty with lies and greed.[1]

Black Elk foresaw the central dilemma of conservation today: parks were created without regard for the interconnectedness of nature. Those who created parks believed that it was possible to set aside little corners of the world and leave the rest of it available for commercial exploitation. As they are discovering today, however, such an approach is inadequate. You cannot divide up the world into little boxes and develop some while conserving others. In reality there are no little boxes. Everything is interconnected. Because they understood these interconnections, indigenous communities have not traditionally treated making a living as separate from protecting the environment, although they may have set aside some areas as to be visited only at certain times or for special reasons – especially sacred sites.

BRIDGE was created in response to the shortcoming of parks as a conservation model. We recognized that the same problems I observed in Africa also existed here in the U.S. Parks in this country have also contributed to the displacement and impoverishment of indigenous

[1] From *Black Elk Speaks* p.p. 7-8.

communities. By taking away their land, parks have transformed the ways in which American Indians make a living. To put it simply, you can't hunt bison or gather wild turnips if the only bison and wild turnip left are protected by the National Park Service.

The most tragic thing about this process is that the traditional environmental knowledge of groups like the Oglala is lost in the process. Traditional national parks, which are the kind we have here in the U.S., recognize only one way of understanding the environment and protecting natural resources. Indian ways of protecting the environment are ignored, or at best given lip service. There are no national parks run according to Indian values or Indian ways of seeing the world, although there have been attempts to create them in the past and there are tribal parks.

Recently, international conservation organizations have begun to recognize the importance of indigenous environmental knowledge – and the possibility of creating indigenous conservation models. In fact, this is precisely what Richard Sherman has done with his Indigenous Stewardship model. The good news is that because of the current recognition of the importance of indigenous environmental knowledge there is currently a lot more funding available to promote it. The bad news is that there are many obstacles to putting indigenous conservation models into practice.

Working with students in our department, I created BRIDGE to help promote indigenous approaches to conservation in spite of these obstacles. It is not our intention to tell indigenous people what their conservation models should look like. Rather we offer information that we hope will be useful to people engaged in promoting indigenous environmental knowledge (this report for example). We believe that the success stories of indigenous communities can be valuable to other indigenous communities under similar circumstances. For instance, groups like the Navaho, the Ute Mountain Ute, and the Salish Kootenai have their own tribal parks or wilderness areas. Communities in Alaska, Australia, and Canada have been made partners in the management of national parks. None of these arrangements is perfect, but they may be useful for thinking about the future of the South Unit. This way, the experiences of indigenous communities become resources for other indigenous communities. A much better arrangement, we believe, than western experts telling indigenous people what the best solutions to their problems should be.

One thing that BRIDGE does, therefore, is to document the successes of indigenous conservation in the hopes that they can be replicated. Additionally we keep track of trends within the organizations that fund indigenous conservation and think about ways that some of this money could be directed to places like Pine Ridge. Furthermore, we are trying to build a learning and action network of scholars, students, and indigenous environmental activists. This network would be an alternative to the ideas and policies of mainstream conservation bureaucracies like the National Park Service – a sort of alternative conservation think tank and lobbying group. Finally, BRIDGE offers services – such as research surveys and conflict resolution – which may be useful to improving the management of the South Unit.

II) The South Unit: A Brief Historical Overview

For the past two years we have worked to reconstruct the history of the South Unit. We hope that this history might be useful to the Tribe in renegotiating a more favorable agreement with the Park Service. This section presents the highlights of what we have learned. We are of course happy to provide a more detailed history, and share archival documents, if called upon to do so.

The one thing that everyone seems to agree upon is that the South Unit is not being managed as it should. People interviewed by Kathleen Pickering at Pine Ridge indicated that the creation of the South Unit has brought in outsiders who have desecrated sacred sites. This perception is consistent with the concerns of Cecil Lewis, who was superintendent of Badlands during the 1970s. As people at Pine Ridge are well aware, the South Unit has also attracted off road vehicles that destroy the terrain. It has also attracted fossil poachers, both outsiders and tribal members. Park Service personnel express concerns about the continued existence of cattle ranches in the South Unit, and the failure of the Tribe to install a bison herd. They also complain that the Tribe has not given them the access necessary to do good management.
This brief discussion does not do justice to the current situation in the South Unit. Hopefully, however, it does illustrate that South Unit is a highly contested area, and one that is fraught with political and ecological problems. To a great extent, these problems have their roots in the historical events leading up to the creation of the MOA.

The official history of the South Unit acknowledges that the area was a bombing range during WWII, but focuses on 1976, the year that the MOA was finally ratified. Rarely, however, is the period leading up to the signing of the MOA addressed. This was a period of conflict between the Tribe and several agencies of the Interior Department over the disposition of the area that is now the South Unit. The current problems surrounding the South Unit reflect the historical legacy of the behind the scenes politicking and coercion that occurred during this period. It also reflects the political conflicts that raged at Pine Ridge in the year the MOA was signed.

Since most people at Pine Ridge know something of the history of the bombing range, I won't spend much time on it in this report. I will mention, however, that some of the documents I found in the federal archives clearly document that – in spite of promises to the contrary – Department of the Interior bureaucrats never intended to return the land to the Tribe. It is also important to note that the Park Service had begun to express interest in Sheep Mountain Table as early as 1951. From there it was not a long stretch to wanting to take over the entire bombing range. By the end of the early 1960s it was clear that Department of the Interior bureaucrats intended that the area should be taken over by a Department of the Interior Agency, and not returned to the Tribe. Because of early policies of allotment, the status of land within the South Unit was a legal mess. There was tribal land, individual leaseholds, and federal land, which Interior Department bureaucrats liked to call 'surplus' land.

In 1965 the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation launched a study "to identify the conservation and recreation potential of the Badlands Air Force Gunnery Range." The following year, a meeting was held between "interested" agencies within the Interior Department. Ignoring the protestations of President Holy Rock and the Oglala Sioux Tribal Council, the BIA concluded that "tribal ownership of lands would not prevent the integration of 'appropriate areas' into the

Badlands National Monument." Of course, this would require an MOA and this would mean that the tribal government would need to approve. Apparently, however, this was merely a detail to be hammered out in the process.[2]

As it turned out, the details of the MOA took more than a decade to hammer out. The Interior Department used a 'carrot-and-stick' approach to push the Tribe towards an agreement. On the carrot side, the Park Service all but promised improvements to the economy of Pine Ridge, including hotels, a visitor's center, a museum, campgrounds, restaurants, craft shops, and paved roads. Most of the benefits of the tourist economy actually went north to Wall. On the stick side the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs threatened to dispose of the land in question under surplus property agreements if the Tribe refused to lease it to the South Unit. The take home message, turning the land over to the Park Service was the only way for the Tribe to keep it intact. Oglala traditionalists responded by a protest and occupation of the Sheep Mountain Table.

In the early 1970s, when Cecil Lewis became superintendent of Badlands, these negotiations took an interesting turn. Lewis advocated for the creation of a tribal-cultural park, under which the Park Service would train tribal members in the administration of a national park. He worked with the tribal government to pass a resolution encouraging congress to create a new category of tribal-cultural park. The goal of this initiative was that Badlands would become a tribal-cultural park, and that the Oglala Sioux Tribe would take over its administration. To make a long story short, this vision never materialized. Lewis moved to Dinosaur National Monument, and political conflicts at Pine Ridge overshadowed efforts by the tribal government to promote a tribal-cultural park. Ultimately the Park Service signed an MOA with the Wilson administration, perhaps the most controversial government in the history of Pine Ridge. As the Stronghold occupiers remind us, this controversy is far from dead.

From a strictly legal position, these controversies are seemingly irrelevant. Critics of the MOA point out that it affords the Park Service many loopholes while minimizing legally binding commitments to the Tribe. As Superintendent William Supernaugh has pointed out, the Tribe has "signed a lease subverting their interest to the nation's interest."[3] While this position may be legally correct, it will not make the historical grievances of the Tribe go away. It will not make the Stronghold occupiers go away. And it will not make the South Unit a manageable part of Badlands National Park. By the same token, the Tribe cannot easily make the Park Service go away. In my interviews with Park Service personnel, I frequently heard the slogan, "a park is forever." There are very few cases of a national park being 'unparked' once Congress has created it. In spite of the MOA, the Tribe and the Park Service appear to have reached a standoff.

This situation suggests the following scenarios: 1) things continue as they are; 2) the situation deteriorates from the perspective of the Tribe and/or the Park Service; 3) the Tribe and the Park Service find ways to work together to improve the situation; or 4) the Tribe takes back the South Unit. The rest of this report explores these possibilities, with special attention to traditional resource management.

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[2] *Mako Washte: an ethnographic overview and oral history of the Badlands National Park*. A report prepared for the National Park Service by David White, pp. 270-276.

[3] Quoted in *Indian Country, God's Country* by Phillip Burnham, p. 230.

III) Indigenous Stewardship and the South Unit

The Indigenous Stewardship Model

Probably the biggest problem with the South Unit, as with most conservation efforts targeting indigenous communities around the world, is its almost complete disregard for the traditional values and natural resource management practices of the Oglala – especially the question of sacred sites, hunting, and the gathering of wild plants for food and medicinal purposes.

These issues have been addressed at length by Oglala Wildlife Biologist, Richard Sherman, in his Indigenous Stewardship Model. Richard's Stewardship Model is readily available to the people to whom this report is addressed. Therefore, I shall only highlight the elements of his model that are directly important to the South Unit; these include: 1) its attention to history, 2) its emphasis on traditional environmental knowledge, 3) its call for mentoring as part of natural resource management, 4) its potential for promoting cottage industries through sustainable resource management, and finally 5) its recognition of conservation as a contentious process.

History

As Richard Sherman correctly points out in his Indigenous Stewardship Model, 'scientific' approaches to conservation frequently ignore history. Consequently, they miss the ways in which historical processes have changed the environment and people's relationship to the environment. They also ignore how opportunities for making a living have changed. Since people are part of the environment, this is an important issue for effective conservation.

For instance, administrators at Badlands National Park are concerned about the ecological destructiveness of cattle, and wish to replace cattle with bison in the South Unit. Superficially this makes sense. The Lakota traditionally were a 'bison culture.' Furthermore, there can be no doubt that cattle have reduced biodiversity throughout the Great Plains. What this perspective ignores, however, is the ways in which the Lakota economy has been transformed through the near extermination of the bison by Anglo-Americans, the containment of American Indian communities onto reservations that were too small to serve their livelihood needs, the allotment of land within those reservations, and numerous government programs explicitly designed to move American Indians towards participation in the market economy of white America.

According to the logic of this market economy, it just doesn't make sense to replace cattle with bison. Bison just don't generate the same kind of revenue as cattle. What this simple example illustrates is that it just isn't possible to put things back the way they were. Through my conversations with Richard Sherman, however, I have learned that understanding history will increase the possibility of making informed choices that are consistent with Lakota traditions and are environmentally sustainable. Understanding the importance of micro-enterprise to the economy of the reservation also presents possibilities for thinking about economic opportunities within this model. It may also be possible to attract fairly substantial revenues from organizations and agencies that support this approach to conservation.

Traditional Environmental Knowledge

The Indigenous Stewardship Model envisions a new approach to conservation that blends western science with traditional environmental knowledge. The biggest strength of traditional environmental knowledge is that it is the product of a long-term relationship with a specific place. Western science, by contrast, seeks to apply the same knowledge to every single landscape in the world, regardless of its particular cultural and historical circumstances.

Because of the close relationship of local people to their environment, traditional environmental knowledge is especially important for determining sustainable harvests of certain plant and animals, sometimes more effectively than the game counts of western science. Furthermore, local people are more likely than outside scientists to understand the ways in which the environment has changed over time. Such knowledge will be crucial to environment restoration projects – such as seed banks and tribal wilderness areas.

More importantly, however, people who live in an environment have a feel for the rhythms of the place and the interconnectedness of different parts of the system. This is something that the science of ecology is only beginning to address. Most of the time western science tries to chop up the world into knowable units – ignoring the interconnections. This has been one of the central problems with the national park model – as explained in the Black Elk quote above.

Finally, conservation models based on traditional environmental knowledge are more likely to support traditional cultural values. For instance, indigenous groups in different parts of the world have created tribal parks. While these parks are loosely modeled after mainstream parks, they protect things like the homelands of ancestral spirits, secret medicinal knowledge, and traditional hunting grounds. They also remain home to the indigenous communities who manage them, instead of excluding them as mainstream parks usually do.

Mentoring

Talking about traditional environmental knowledge is all fine and well but, as Lakota elders frequently point out, much traditional environmental knowledge has been (or is being) lost. Conservation and the environment often have little relevance to the lives of young people, especially those who live in towns. Obviously this has much to do with the kinds of historical transformations briefly outlined above. Among other things, it has to do with the disruption of the ways in which knowledge was transmitted from generation to generation in the past.

Mentoring, an important component of the Indigenous Stewardship Model, addresses this particular problem. Mentoring is a much more holistic approach to teaching and learning than the type of instruction normally associated with western science. Specifically, mentoring entails a long-term commitment of people to other people, of people to a specific set of values and environmental knowledge, and of people to a specific place – environment. Furthermore, it provides opportunities for learning things that simply never come up in the classroom. Finally, it treats knowledge as a community resource, instead of the property of mysterious experts.

Micro-Enterprise, Economic Opportunity, and Sustainable Resource Management

The Indigenous Stewardship Model is consistent with the fact that micro-enterprise is such an important part of the economy at Pine Ridge – and indeed for indigenous communities around the world. Studies by Richard Sherman and Kathleen Pickering indicate that micro-enterprise presents more realistic opportunities for most people at Pine Ridge than formal employment.

A variety of micro-enterprises could be enhanced by the Indigenous Stewardship model. The gathering and processing of medicinal plants, for instance, is a potentially lucrative enterprise. Ecotourism may also present opportunities for local entrepreneurs. Another possibility is the creation of a local industry producing fossil molds for sale to colleges and high schools around the country. These types of enterprises would help people to see the connections between sustainable resource management and actual livelihood activities. Through mentoring, future generations could learn to run these enterprises and to understand their connections to the environment. Hopefully, these activities would also give the Tribe more control over sacred sites, fossils, and the interpretation of Lakota culture for tourists and other outsiders.

Micro-enterprise alone is not going to solve every problem. There are other areas in which the Indigenous Stewardship Model could potentially improve people's lives at Pine Ridge. More sustainable harvests of game meat and plant food could translate to improved nutrition for tribal members. Tribal conservation programs could attract funding from conservation organization and government agencies. The model could also enhance resource management curriculum at the Oglala Lakota College and attract funding for programs there. This in turn might create long-term job opportunities for resource management experts on the reservation.

Conflict Resolution

Finally, the Indigenous Stewardship Model recognizes that conservation is a contentious process. The current conflict surrounding the South Unit is an obvious case in point. The South Unit has restricted hunting and gathering by tribal members, while allowing drivers of off road vehicles almost free reign throughout the area. It is important to point out, however, that such conflicts are even present in tribal conservation initiatives. When the Ute Mountain Ute created their tribal park in the 1970s, for instance, the decision created a great deal of conflict within the Tribe. Ute traditionalists argued that the park would bring outsiders to the reservation, who would not respect Ute culture or the archeological sites featured in the park.

Any future conservation initiatives at Pine Ridge are likely to be equally contentious. Potentially contentious issues include: cattle ranching, fossil collecting, and tourism, to name a few. If tourist revenues start going to Pine Ridge, it is likely that the commercial interests of Wall will also become involved. Nevertheless, beginning with the recognition that conservation is inherently contentious opens the door for surprising possibilities to emerge. The very contentiousness of these issues gives them weight, inviting those who take them seriously to participate and discouraging opportunists. By using professional mediators, it may be possible to find solutions that benefit more people, while protecting natural resources and sacred sites more effectively. Such an outcome is never guaranteed. However, ignoring conflicts does not make them go away. Standoffs are expensive, and usually not good for the environment.

IV) Future Options for the South Unit

A viable solution to the South Unit problem will need to: 1) effectively protect natural resources and sacred sites, 2) equitably benefit tribal members, and 3) respect Oglala sovereignty. This ideal situation – or at least something approximating it – can be reached only by a flexible approach that seeks to address the needs and concerns of all the groups with a vested interest in the South Unit. Such an approach will probably require negotiation and mediation. It can also learn a great deal from historical attempts to create a tribal-cultural park.

In my two years of studying the conflicts surrounding the South Unit, I have heard a lot of speculation about the economic opportunities that tourism may or may not bring to Pine Ridge. Unfortunately, it is difficult to do much more than speculate, since much of what the Park Service implicitly (although not legally) promised the Tribe during the negotiations over the MOA has not materialized. There is no paved scenic loop bringing tourists to the South Unit and out towards Rapid City. There is no cultural center or other tourist amenities around the South Unit. To be fair, this is not entirely the fault of the Park Service, since there have been difficulties on the side of the Tribe as well. However, there has been a consistent pattern of developing the tourist economy to the north of the park, without much attention to the south.

In the ideal scenario, the Tribe would be able to gain much more revenue from tourism, while gaining much more control over where tourists go on the reservation. Of course there are tribal members who would prefer to keep tourism off the reservation altogether, and they have valid reasons for this desire. Obviously these types of concerns should be addressed in discussions of whether or not tourism should become a major part of the economy of Pine Ridge.

The pros and cons of tourism are well known at Pine Ridge, and for most indigenous communities for that matter. We at BRIDGE recognize that tourism carries many risks for indigenous communities, not the least of which is that tourists may not respect the cultural traditions of the communities who are their hosts. We further recognize that tourism can contribute to a wide variety of social problems. Finally, we recognize that this is a community decision, which has nothing to do with us. With this in mind, we wish to emphasize that this report is not intended as an endorsement of tourism. It is intended merely to outline the potential risks and benefits of tourism for Pine Ridge.

To begin with, it is important to be clear about what is currently at stake with the South Unit. Although the situation is far from ideal, the tribal government does receive two important sources of revenue under the current arrangement: 1) gate receipts from the Park Service, and 2) ranching leases within the South Unit. Any major changes to this situation risk losing these revenues with no guarantee that they will be recovered through alternative economic activities.

With these risks in mind, tourism does have some advantages over the current situation. First, if managed carefully, it is less environmentally harmful than cattle ranching. Second, if controlled by the Tribe, it offers opportunities for the Oglala to do their own cultural interpretation, rather than allowing the Park Service or other outsiders to do it for them. Third, by developing their own tourist economy, tribal members may gain opportunities to benefit economically from their own culture. Finally, it may be possible to gain potentially substantial financial support from

conservation and human rights organizations to support these economic initiatives, thereby recovering some of the revenues currently received from the Park Service and the cattle leases.

Because of its cultural, historical, and natural significance, there is clearly a great deal of potential for tourism at Pine Ridge. In fact, Richard Sherman and others have pointed out that the reservation merits a World Heritage Site designation from the United Nations. From my own work in East Africa, I have seen how entire countries have benefited economically from this designation. Africans have derived maximum benefit from western tourists by charging them top dollar for everything while they are in their countries. While tourists sometimes resent this approach, it also has the effect of making the 'Safari experience' more desirable. Paying a lot of money has the effect of increasing the prestige of the experience. Africans for their part argue that allowing outsiders to experience their culture and their cultures and landscapes merits every penny of the high prices they charge to tourists.

It is no secret that many Europeans are fascinated by Lakota culture, and are willing to pay substantial sums of money to experience it directly. With the right kinds of facilities it may be possible to realize substantial revenues from this kind of high end tourism.

There are a variety of arrangements that might allow the Oglala Sioux Tribe to pursue these types of benefits, and these are outlined in the table that follows this section. One option, however, merits special attention: the option of the tribal park. As previously noted, this is an option that Oglala leaders unsuccessfully pursued in the late 1960s and early 1970s. While this initiative ultimately died, they laid some important groundwork. Most notably, they drafted a concept paper outlining what a tribal park would look like and how it would work. Also, they passed a resolution urging congress to create the category of tribal-cultural park within the National Park Service. Some of these documents may be well worth revisiting.

This historical initiative is also significant because it was so far ahead of its time. Today the idea of the tribal park or indigenous protected area is becoming popular around the world. Probably the most relevant example is the Ute Mountain Tribal Park in Colorado. No outsiders are allowed in the Ute Mountain Park without being accompanied by a specially trained tribal guide. Visitors pay $35 for a one day tour, but would probably be willing to pay much more. The set up allows the Tribe to keep tourists away from sacred places, while benefiting directly from the gate receipts. The Tribe also pursues other economic activities within the tribal park, but under carefully managed conditions. The Ute Mountain Tribal Park is a model that may well worth exploring as an alternative for the current set up with the South Unit.

In the interest of full disclosure, it is important to reemphasize that the risks associated with this type of development would be high. Creating the necessary infrastructure on the reservation would be expensive. Furthermore, tourism is a vulnerable industry. Studies show that vacations are the first thing that most people eliminate from their budgets in the event of economic downturn. Also, there is the possibility that tourism would bring about transformations that many tribal members would be unwilling to accept. It would be essential for the potential costs and benefits of tourism and other alternatives to be carefully weighed against the current costs and benefits of the South Unit. Several options, as well as their potential costs and benefits, are outlined briefly in a table in the following four pages.

OPTIONS	REQUIRED ACTION	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<u>Option #1</u>: Make no Changes	No Action Required	Tribe continues to receive revenues from Park Service Tribe Continues to Receive Revenues from Ranch Leases Tribe may regain management of the lodge at some point in the future OSPRA may gain a greater role in the management of the South Unit Park Service may help to construct a cultural center and other kinds of tourist infrastructure for the Tribe at some point in the future The South Unit remain a 'unit' instead of patches of Federal and Tribal lands	Current stand off between Strongholders and Park Service may continue indefinitely with great expense and few benefits to everyone involved – potential for escalation Park Service may continue to neglect South Unit Activities of tribal members in the South Unit continue to be regulated by the Park Service Few opportunities for Oglala Sioux Tribal College to become involved in the management of the South Unit OSPRA may only have a minor role in the management of the South Unit
<u>Option #2</u>: Negotiate with the Park Service for a better agreement	Tribal government will need to identify the specific aspects of the current MOA that are problematic and propose specific improvements It may also need to employ a lawyer or lawyers for these negotiations	Tribal government may be able to negotiate a greater role for the Tribe in the management of the South Unit, along with better protection of sacred sites Tribal government may also be able to negotiate specific benefits, such as a cultural center, a paved scenic loop through Red Shirt Table and possibly other types of tourist infrastructure. The South Unit remains a 'unit'	There is a good chance that the newly negotiated agreement may be worse than the current one The current agreement is worded in such a way that it actually requires little of the Park Service aside from revenue sharing The Park Service is likely to take a very legalistic approach to protect its interest This process is likely to be expensive

OPTIONS	REQUIRED ACTION	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<u>Option #3</u>: Enter a co-management arrangement with the Park Service	Tribal government will need to get a congress person to sponsor a bill making co-management legally possible in the continental United States If the bill is enacted into law, tribal government will then need to get the Badlands administration to agree to enter into a co-management arrangement with the Tribe	In theory, co-management would give the Tribe a say in the management of the entire park, not just the South Unit A co-management arrangement would create a greater role for the Oglala Sioux Tribal College in the management of the park Co-management would give OSPRA a greater role in the management of the park The resources and expertise of the Park Service could be used to protect sacred sites more effectively Tribal members may receive training and employment from the Park Service Tribe would have greater say over outsider access to the South Unit A 'good' co-management arrangement would enhance the sovereignty of the Oglala Sioux Tribe The South Unit remains a 'unit'	In the parts of North America where co-management is currently practiced (Alaska and Canada) it does not have a particularly good track record from the perspective of tribal communities. In other words, it rarely delivers the benefits outlined in the neighboring column. Quite often tribal members are put onto a management board but given no actual decision making power over the management of the park. Quite often, co-management arrangements do nothing to improve the training offered to tribal members by the Parks Service and Parks Canada. Quite often, co-management arrangements do nothing to improve the employment of tribal members by the Park Service and Parks Canada. As such, co-management arrangements may well have the effect of eroding tribal sovereignty rather than enhancing it.

OPTIONS	REQUIRED ACTION	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<u>Option #4</u>: Transform the South Unit into a tribal park	Tribal government will need to get a congress person to sponsor a bill for the return of the South Unit to the Tribe <u>or</u> Tribal government will need to prove that the Park Service has not upheld their side of the agreement <u>or</u> Tribal government will need to prove that the current MOA is a violation of their treaty rights <u>or</u> Tribal members can begin running the South Unit as though it is a tribal park without legal authority from the Federal Government and see what happens	Of all the options, this one does the most to enhance tribal sovereignty Tribe can charge whatever it wants for entry to the tribal park, and receives all the financial benefits from the South Unit instead of sharing with the Park Service All of the jobs associated with the tribal park would go to tribal members Tribe controls access of outsiders to the South Unit, especially to sacred sites Tribe controls the visitor's experience The creation of a tribal park enhances the possibility of the creation of other types of tourist infrastructure under tribal control The creation of a tribal park enhances the possibility of tapping into the 'high' end tourist market, especially with tourists from western Europe A tribal park may attract outside funding for OSPRA and the Oglala Sioux Tribal College	If the Tribe succeeds in taking the South Unit back from the Park Service, it will then be necessary to resolve the patchwork of tribal land, federal land, and individual leaseholds that make up the South Unit before the area can be converted to a tribal park The tribal park and associated infrastructure will be expensive to create The economy may continue to be bad and the tourists might not come It will no longer be possible for the Tribe to draw on the expertise and resources of the park service to run the tribal park The Tribe will lose the revenues from the Park Service The Tribe will lose revenues from the ranch leases The creation of a tribal park will probably lead to community-level conflicts, which will need to be resolved or at least addressed

OPTIONS	REQUIRED ACTION	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<u>Option #5</u>: Remove the South Unit from the control of the National Park Service, but without a management plan of any sort	Tribal government will need to get a congress person to sponsor a bill for the return of the South Unit to the Tribe <u>or</u> Tribal government will need to prove that the Park Service has not upheld their side of the agreement <u>or</u> Tribal government will need to prove that the current MOA is a violation of their treaty rights <u>or</u> Tribal members can continue to occupy the South Unit until the Park Service gets tired and leaves	This arrangement would enhance the sovereignty of the Oglala Sioux Tribe Tribe may be able to generate revenues through fossil prospecting and the production of fossil casts	If the Tribe succeeds in taking the South Unit back from the Park Service, it will then be necessary to resolve the patchwork of tribal land, federal land, and individual leaseholds that make up the South Unit The federal government would probably condemn federal land within the South Unit Tribe would lose revenues from the Park Service Without a management plan the area would be open to unsustainable practices by both tribal members and outsiders

V) Potential Services, Resources, and Funding

Services BRIDGE is prepared to offer with respect to the South Unit

This report is offered in the spirit of BRIDGE – returning research data back to the communities where it originated – rather than keeping it in universities and conservation bureaucracies. We recognize that perhaps this report may highlight problems that are not a priority for the Oglala Sioux Tribal Government. This is frequently a problem with academic research.

If, however, there is some interest in pursuing any of the options outlined in the previous section, we are willing and available to provide a variety of services if called upon to do so. Some of the services we are qualified and prepared to provide include:

1) Reconstructing the history of the MOA;
2) Identifying potential funding sources;
3) Assisting with grant proposal writing;
4) Assisting with relevant research surveys;
5) Providing research training for students at Oglala Sioux College;
6) Assisting with networking to other indigenous communities involved in tribal parks, co-management programs, and other types of community-based conservation;
7) Assisting with mediated conflict resolution.

These are some suggestions of services BRIDGE might provide. We are of course prepared to discuss other areas in which our expertise may be of value to the Tribe. We are prepared to provide services free of charge, until such time that their value to the Tribe is clearly established.

Resources

Although indigenous conservation initiatives have gained a great deal of recognition in other parts of the world, the U.S. has been slow to follow suit. For the most part, our conservation agendas (or increasing lack thereof) are being set by agencies in the Department of the Interior. Obviously these agencies are a major source of funding for tribal conservation initiatives, and they frequently define the conservation models to be followed if they are to provide funding.

Based on research undertaken by BRIDGE, we have determined that there are two other important resources for tribal governments in the U.S. seeking to define their own conservation agendas: 1) the experience of other indigenous groups in defining their own conservation agendas, and 2) funding from international conservation organizations.

The experiences of other indigenous communities

One of the central philosophies of BRIDGE is that the knowledge of western experts is frequently inappropriate to the conservation needs of indigenous communities, which may be defined by different values and different understandings of the place of humans in the natural world. Indigenous leaders who have already gone through the process of creating a tribal park

or defining a co-management agreement may well be instructive to indigenous communities at the beginning of similar projects – to save other indigenous leaders from reinventing the wheel. These indigenous experts know a great deal about the potential pitfalls involved in such initiatives, as well as the types of measures that may improve chances for success.

As mentioned above, the most relevant example for the problems of the South Unit is probably the Ute Mountain Tribal Park, as well as the tribal wilderness area of the Salish Koutenai. For co-management agreements it is necessary to go further a field, since it is legally impossible in the continental U.S. However, several groups in Alaska and Canada have extensive experience that would be invaluable to creating co-management here. Of course there are groups in other parts of the world with relevant experience. However they are operating under significantly different legal systems. Therefore their experiences would be less directly relevant to the problems with the South Unit.

International conservation organizations

Within the field of cultural anthropology, there is something known as 'U.S. exceptionalism.' In a nutshell this is the idea that there is no underdevelopment to speak of in the United States. Another way of putting it is that the experience of indigenous communities in the U.S. are in no way comparable to the experiences of indigenous communities in other parts of the world. One Park Service anthropologist put it this way: "Parks in other countries make people poor. Parks in the U.S. create job opportunities. This means that there is no need for community-based conservation in this country."

For anyone familiar with the history of the South Unit, or any number of parks impinging on indigenous communities in this country, this statement rings hollow. Parks in this country have impoverished indigenous communities, just as they've impoverished indigenous communities from Canada to Zimbabwe. Perhaps the biggest difference is that almost every country but the U.S. has recognized this problem and is actively addressing it some way.

Just as importantly, international conservation organizations have recognized this problem and are providing substantial funding to programs that seek to improve conditions for indigenous communities that have been impoverished by conservation. Organizations like the World Wildlife Fund and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources have huge programs geared towards community-based conservation. The African Wildlife Foundation spends millions of dollars every year in one part of Tanzania alone.

Thus far very little of this money has reached indigenous communities in the U.S. Part of the reason for this neglect, I suspect, is that international conservation organizations are unaware of the problems that exist in this country. I believe, therefore, that it may be possible to convince some of these organizations to provide funding to indigenous conservation initiatives in the U.S. If so, this would provide tribal governments and indigenous NGOs with a significant alternative to the Department of the Interior. This in turn may enhance tribal self determination in defining local conservation agendas.

Funding

What follows is a partial list of organizations that may provide funding for tribal conservation initiatives in the U.S.

1) International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
2) World Wildlife Fund
3) Liz Clairborne-Art Ortenberg Foundation
4) BP Conservation Programs Grants
5) National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
6) National Parks Conservation Association
7) Sierra Club
8) Draper Richards Foundation
9) Ringing Rocks Foundation
10) Echoing Green
11) Alston/Bannerman Fellowship Program

Obviously this is a short list, and there are many other organizations that may also provide funding and other kinds of support.

VI) Conclusion

We hope that the information contained in this report is of value to the Oglala Sioux Tribal Government and other interested parties at Pine Ridge. We have tried to keep it short, while simultaneously emphasizing the complexity of the problems with the South Unit.

We would not be honest if we promised to perform miracles, or to deliver any tangible benefit at all for that matter. We don't have any answers. The best we can offer is some educated insight into the types of activities that have the most potential for improving the current stand off over the South Unit. These we offer in the spirit of cooperation. We are happy to discuss any of the information or ideas contained in this report. We are also happy to address any questions concerning this report or the philosophy of BRIDGE. Finally, we are happy to provide any of the services outlined above if called upon to do so.

Respectfully Submitted by

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