

2006 National Rally - Hill City, SD



June 26 - July 1

High Plains Drifter

The members and officers of COG's North Central Region are excited to be your hosts for the 2006 National Rally to be held June 26 – July 1 in Hill City, South Dakota. The rally hosts, the dedicated volunteers and the town of Hill City are excited to make this rally a premier COG event.

Hill City was founded in 1876 and was a booming town of miners, merchants, and muleskinners. The town survived the ups and downs of the gold rush era and today is a vibrant and progressive community of about 800 residents. While in Hill City, one can spend a relaxed day on the downtown streets checking out the unusual shops, art galleries, museums, brewpubs, candy stores, and outstanding restaurants. Or, for something off the beaten path, take a vintage train ride or visit the local winery. There is something for every interest!

Of course, the first and foremost reason for this rally is for COG members to explore the hidden beauty of the Black Hills region. There are a variety of landscapes within a short distance from rally headquarters: high rolling plains, the badlands, emerald forests, and granite mountains.

One of the most recognizable icons of American democracy – Mount Rushmore is just minutes from Hill City. Its museum and the Presidential Trail are a must-see. Further down the road is Custer State Park. It is one of the largest state parks in the country and has one of the nation's largest herds of free-roaming bison. Also included within the broad park acreage is Harney Peak, the tallest mountain east of the Rockies, and the park's "crown jewel" Sylvan Lake. Badlands National Park features a stunning panorama and is only an hour east of Rapid City. Wind and erosion have created an eerie moonscape of deep gorges and jagged saw tooth ridges. It is one of the world's richest fossil beds. The Wind and Jewel Caves are home to one of the largest underground passages on the earth. Wind Cave is the world's sixth longest cave, while Jewel Cave is the third longest. Some of the most rare cave specimens in the world are located within these two caves. Further north is Devils Tower National Monument. It is a massive stone pillar that juts into the sky 1,267 feet above the Belle Fourche River Valley. Some other areas to explore outside of the National Parks include towns such as Deadwood, Sturgis, Lead, Rapid City, and Keystone.

When it comes to twisty roads, the Black Hills has a wide variety. Iron Mountain Road is an amazing winding road with wildfire exhibits, pigtail bridges, pull offs with magnificent Black Hills scenery and tunnels framing Mount Rushmore. Needles Highway – which snakes through Custer State Park – is aptly named for the needle-like tall, sharp, granite rock formations that dot the roadside. The Spearfish Canyon-National Scenic Byway twists through the gorge where Spearfish Creek lines the canyon floor and white limestone cliffs rise on every side. Canyon water falls, like Bridal Veil and Roughlock Falls, are popular roadside attractions. The Latchstring Restaurant – which is across the road from the Spearfish Canyon Lodge and Resort – has some of the best food in the area.

This only scratches the surface of things to see and do in the Black Hills. The 2006 Rally Committee has already started preparation on the details for ride routes and rally activities. There will definitely be something for everyone! To truly begin your journey to the rally and celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Concours, consider the Pre-rally event in Lincoln that offers a glimpse of where the motorcycle is made by taking part in the Kawasaki plant tour. There are a limited number of spots available, so make sure to get your entry in early.

COG members planning a trip to Hill City from Lincoln will find the route to be approximately 500 miles. All tools needed to assist in trip planning will be located on the 2006 National Rally website. Information will include suggested routes to and from the rally, list of registrants, accommodation details, rally schedule, and any other pertinent information. The website address is www.concours.org/2006/.

On the High Plains Drifter rally we will celebrate 20 years of the Concours and the wonders of the Black Hills. Hope to see you there in 2006!

Chris Baum and Jerry Layman – 2006 National Rally Hosts
Larry Leranath – North Central Area Director
