



GREAT PLAINS
COMMUNICATIONS

CASE STUDY

“With the fiber connection from Great Plains Communications, we have the speed we need to offer virtual field trips to classrooms all over the world.”

RICK OTTO
SUPERINTENDENT
ASHFALL FOSSIL BEDS STATE
HISTORICAL PARK

COMPANY

Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park

LOCATION

Antelope County, NE

INDUSTRY

Museums, Historical Sites, and Other Institutions

SERVICES

Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park displays fossilized animals, birds, and turtles that perished about 12 million years ago. The park offers educational programs as well as in-person and virtual field trips.

888-343-8014

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Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park got its start around 12 million years ago, when a volcano in Idaho spread ash over many miles and one or two feet covered northeastern Nebraska. This ash preserved animals' skeletons for paleontologists to find and for the public to view.

Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park is located in Antelope County, four miles east and six miles north of Orchard. Because it is located in such a remote location far from any population center, having adequate communications services has been a challenge.

“The satellite Internet service we’ve been using is limited in speed, and its lag time disrupts any interactive transmissions we’re trying to host. In addition, many of our callers have complained about the poor audio quality of the current phone system. Clearly, changes needed to be made since the local provider was simply not able to provide the level of technology we require.”

-RICK OTTO, ASHFALL FOSSIL BEDS STATE PARK

Great Plains Communications developed solutions to these challenges and had been in discussion for several years with the State of Nebraska on a fiber project that eventually brought higher bandwidth to the park. Funding for the fiber optic cable was made possible by a grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust.

The vastly improved speeds have given classrooms around the world access to Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park through virtual field trips. Virtual field trips allow classrooms from all over to experience the park without the travel expenses. These virtual field trips benefit the park by bringing in additional revenue through the fees associated with the field trip.