



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

Jewel Cave  
National Monument

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## **Jewel Cave National Monument News Release**

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For Immediate Release

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### **Jewel Cave Takes Reservations for Cub Scout Belt Loopalooza**

Custer –Jewel Cave National Monument is gearing up for its Cub Scout Belt Loopalooza event, scheduled for Saturday, July 16 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Monument was one of 24 national park areas to receive special funding for 2011 through an Impact Grant with the National Parks Foundation. This non-profit organization is the official charity of America’s national parks, and the Impact Grant Program is designed to assist with special events and unique public activities.

The Monument is using the awarded grant funds toward a special event entitled Belt Loopalooza for Cub Scouts. Through an all day festival of sorts, participating scouts interact with resource professionals toward the successful completion of belt loop awards and related patches that complement the protection, preservation, and conservation of public lands. Superintendent Larry Johnson comments, “This event showcases an educational partnership between many local agencies, such as Devils Tower National Monument, Mount Rushmore National Memorial, Wind Cave National Park, Black Hills National Forest, Custer State Park, Custer YMCA, and the Black Hills Parks and Forests Association. Participating scouts, ages 7-13, will take part in an assortment of engaging experiences and hands-on learning opportunities related to environmental education and site interpretation.”

The event offers ten belt loop topics, which include the following: Astronomy, Geography, Geology, Heritages, Hiking, Maps and Compass, Physical Fitness, Science, Weather, and Wildlife Conservation. Participating Cub Scouts can select five of the ten belt loops and accomplish the requirements through individual stations. Park rangers, naturalists, game officers, and related public servants are the leaders of the stations. Reservations are required and are currently being taken through the Jewel Cave Visitor Center.

The Impact Grant is funding \$9558 toward this event, which allows for the purchase of the awards, supplies, and publicity materials. Recognizing that sometimes the smallest grants can make the largest difference, the Black Hills Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America is hopeful that this unique opportunity becomes an annual event. Mike McGinnis, Scout Executive/CEO of BHAC states, “The BSA has a wonderful relationship with the National Park Service. We hope this special event causes participating Cub Scouts to become even more aware of these rich natural and cultural resources in the Black Hills, as well as open their eyes to other heritage sites of our country.”

To make a reservation or to learn more about the Monument, call the visitor center at 605-673-8300 and select Option 2. Visitors are also welcome to check out the Monument online at [www.nps.gov/jeca](http://www.nps.gov/jeca). The visitor center is currently open during the summer season from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

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