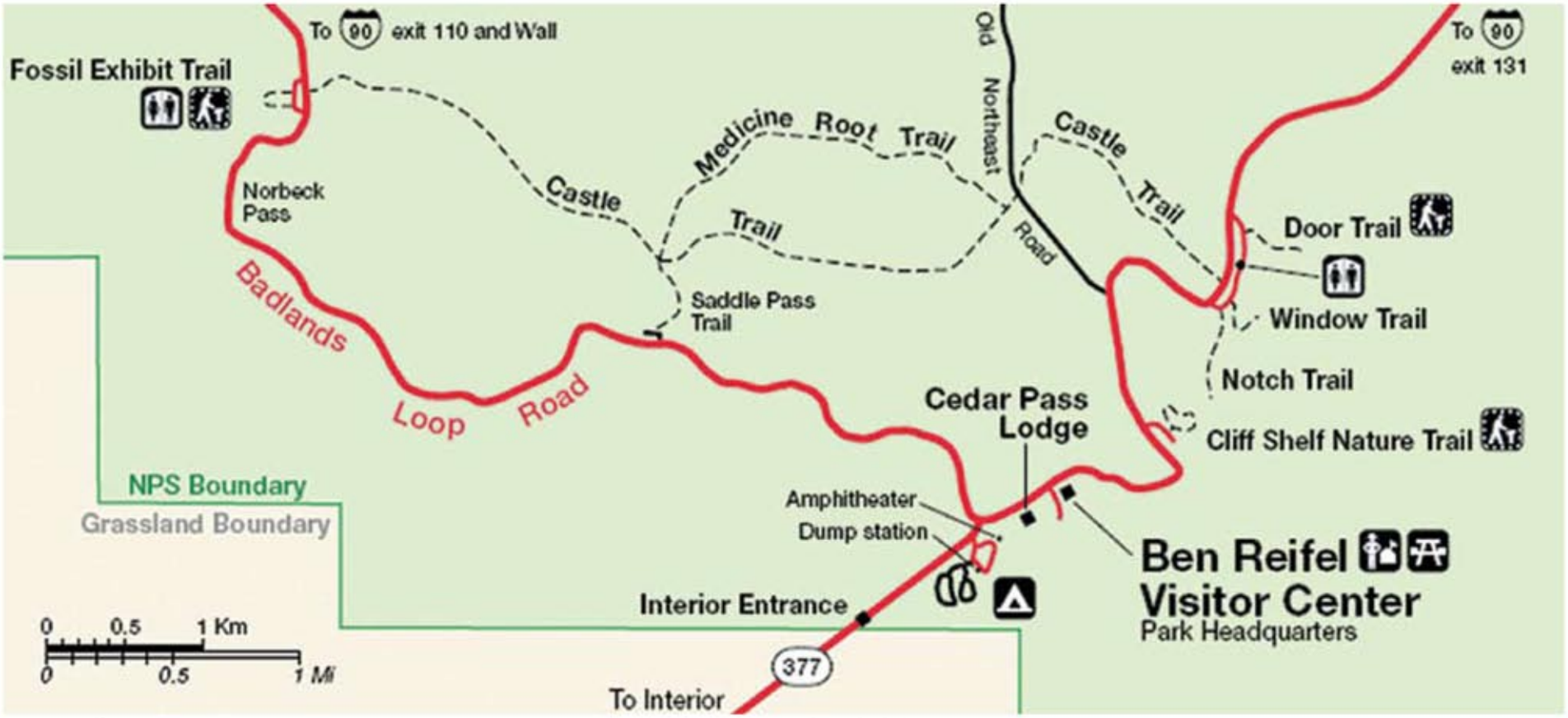
Hiking in the Park



Door Trail
.75 miles/1.2 km (round trip)
20 minutes
Easy. An accessible ¼ mile boardwalk leads through a break in the Badlands Wall known as "the Door" and to a view of the Badlands. From there, the maintained trail ends. Travel beyond this point is at your own risk. Watch for drop offs.

Window Trail
.25 miles/.40 km (round trip)
20 minutes
Easy. This short trail leads to a natural window in the Badlands Wall with a view of an intricately eroded canyon. Please stay on the trail.

Notch Trail
1.5 miles/2.4 km (round trip)
1 1/2 - 2 hours
Moderate to strenuous. After meandering through a canyon, this trail climbs a log ladder and follows a ledge to "the Notch" for a dramatic view of the White River Valley. Trail begins at the south end of the Door and Window parking area. Watch for drop offs. Not recommended for anyone with a fear of heights. Treacherous during or after heavy rains.

Castle Trail
10 miles/16 km (round trip)
5 hours
Moderate. The longest trail in the park begins at the Door and Window parking area and travels five miles one way to the Fossil Exhibit Trail. Relatively level, the path passes along some Badlands formations.

Cliff Shelf
.5 miles/.8 km (round trip)
1/2 hour
Moderate. This loop trail follows boardwalks and climbs stairs through a juniper forest perched along the Badlands Wall. A small pond occasionally exists in the area and draws wildlife, such as deer or bighorn sheep. Climbs approximately 200 feet in elevation. Please stay on the trail.

Saddle Pass
.25 miles/.40 km (round trip)
1/2 - 1 hour
Strenuous. This short trail climbs up the Badlands Wall to a view over the White River Valley. The trail ends where it connects with the Castle and Medicine Root Loop Trails.

Medicine Root Loop
4 miles/6.4 km (round trip)
2 hours
Moderate. This generally rolling spur trail connects with the Castle Trail near the Old Northeast Road or at the intersection of the Castle and Saddle Pass Trails. Trail users are provided the opportunity to explore the mixed grass prairie while enjoying views of the Badlands in the distance. Watch for cactus.

Fossil Exhibit Trail
.25 miles/.40 km (round trip)
20 minutes
Easy. Fully accessible trail features fossil replicas and exhibits of now extinct creatures that once roamed the area.