

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Bandelier National Monument
New Mexico



2024

Annual Report





Bandelier National Monument is the traditional land of many tribal nations, whose cultures, lifestyles, religious beliefs, and traditions have shaped this land and continue to be shaped by their ties to this place. We honor and prioritize the voices and values of these tribal nations to enhance the quality of our shared land stewardship.

We acknowledge the tribal communities on whose ancestral homelands we gather.



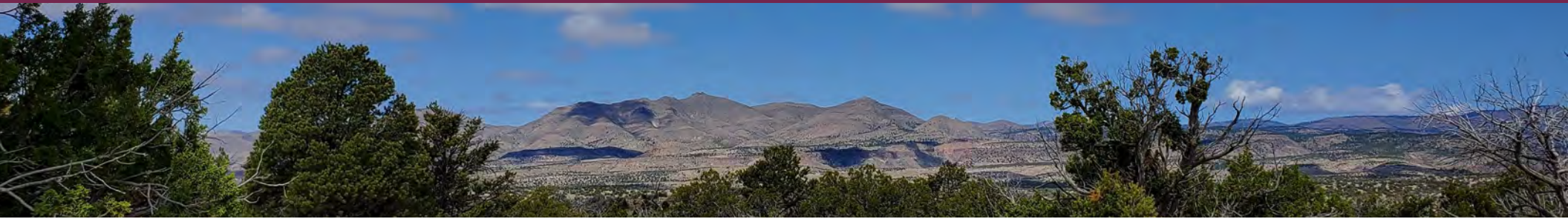


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This report highlights the efforts of the entire Bandelier team of employees, volunteers, and partners. A special thanks to each of you for your hard work, dedication, and passion.

Year in Review



Superintendent's Message

Looking back at 2024 I am very proud of our progress toward achieving our strategic goals identified in our 2022 Strategic Action Plan, and the many other accomplishments by our staff and our partners. I am particularly proud of this given the many challenges and unanticipated events that we were faced with. 2024 brought several snow closures, challenges with operating the park shuttle, and a late season flood that forced the closure of Alcove House and the Frijoles Canyon Trail for 3 months in the fall.

Despite those challenges, 2024 was also a year of substantial progress, special events, and improved service to our visitors. The retooled Fall Fiesta brought record crowds to see over 40 native American craftsmen and performances by dancers from our local Pueblos. On Public Lands Day, we showcased several federal agencies, cooperating organizations, and featured conservation efforts from across the region.

We re-opened the Tsankawi Unit after a year's closure due to construction on NM highway 4, featuring a new parking area, new interpretive signs, and a realigned trail that fulfilled some of the park's goals from the Tsankawi Unit Management Plan. The site was re-opened with a blessing and youth dancers from San Ildefonso Pueblo. The park hosted our first community engagement day with San Ildefonso Pueblo. Pueblo members had the opportunity to engage with their ancestral and traditional lands and sites without interference from other visitors, and generously shared their stories and experiences with the park directly with park staff. In this first year utilizing the national reservation system for the park's campgrounds, reservations and user nights reached record levels.

We continue to strive to be the premier park for showcasing the ancestral and ongoing connections between the outstanding cultural and natural resources contained in Bandelier, and the Pueblos and

Year in Review

with you our 2024 Annual Report, and 2025 Annual Work Plan. I continue to be humbled by the support we have from the community and from our partners. I hope that all our partners and visitors will see their contributions to our accomplishments in this report, and I hope that you will continue to support us as we work to achieve our goals for 2025.

I could not be prouder of our team and our partners. I am excited to see what we can accomplish in 2025 with the support of the park staff, our partners, and our visitors. Onward together!

Patrick Suddath

Superintendent, Bandelier National Monument



Year in Review

In 2022, park employees came together to set a five-year vision for Bandelier.

In 2027, Bandelier National Monument forges a new model for visitation and adaptive resource management built on understanding and honestly reckoning with the impact of humans on the sacred sites, traditions, and natural resources of the Pajarito Plateau.

To help us achieve this vision, we developed the following goal to reach by 2027.

A new Pajarito Plateau Trail Alliance offers a visitor experience centered on understanding human-caused changes to the resource, both natural and traditional, and how to resiliently manage resources in a rapidly changing climate.

Year in Review

Strategic Focus Areas

Staffing

We will prioritize local recruitment and build a supportive work environment.

Visitor Management & Experience

We will proactively and adaptively manage visitor use to protect the integrity of natural, cultural, and traditional resources while enhancing visitor experience.

Partnerships (Non-Tribal)

We will grow and strengthen partnerships towards more cohesive management and expanded interpretation of the Pajarito Plateau.

Adaptive Management

We will take a holistic approach to land stewardship by making decisions based on science and traditional knowledge.

Tribal Collaboration & Engagement

We will strengthen tribal relationships by expanding opportunities for openminded and transparent engagement.

Year in Review

This Is Bandelier



Red Shawl Day



Bird Banding



Archaeology



Santa Fe Pride Parade



International Women's Day

Year in Review

This Is Bandelier



At Yapashi



Volunteer training



Blocking the sun



In the community



Display table

Year in Review

This Is Bandelier



Oak Canyon Dancers



Los Alamos Bear Fest



National Park Week



Frijoles Canyon Flash Flood



Reopened Tsankawi



Promoting trail safety

Staffing



Staffing

Overview

In late 2023 and into 2024, the Pueblo Parks HR liaison staff worked closely with Denver Servicing Human Resources Office (SHRO) on hiring through the Pathways Program. One employee was hired for Bandelier National Monument using the Pathways Student Intern Program, and the Pathways Recent Graduate Program was used for a Valles Caldera National Preserve announcement.

In the summer of 2024, a resume writing and navigating USAJobs workshop was held at Bandelier. Over 30 seasonal and permanent employees attended from both Bandelier and Valles Caldera, as well as Bandelier interns and Rocky Mountain Youth Corps youth. It was a huge success. In coming years, workshops will be held for interns and youth corps separately from current National Park Service (NPS) employees. Different hiring authorities like Public Land Corps, Pathways, and Returned Peace Corps or VISTA Volunteers will be the focus for interns and youth corps attendees. Hiring authorities like the Land Management Workforce Flexibility Act, Schedule A, etc., will be the focus with NPS seasonals and permanent employees.



During the fall of 2024, HR liaison staff prepared job outreach materials for the upcoming seasonal hiring season, and attended several job fair and outreach events. Staff attended the UNM Los Alamos job fair, where staff talked with nearly 60 attendees and made numerous contacts with prospective candidates. HR liaison staff have been in contact with several of the job fair attendees, assisting them through the seasonal application process. HR staff also attended a San Ildefonso community event at Tsankawi and staffed a “Working for the National Park Service” table during Bandelier’s National Public Lands Day event.

Staffing



Highlights from 2024

- **S**igned a shared services agreement with Valles Caldera's Fee Collection program.
- **J**obs were posted on social media and sent out to tribal and local contacts.
- **S**ecured operating fund increase for new Tribal Liaison positions.
- **R**ecruitment from tribal work crews is ongoing.
- **E**stablished several new career seasonal positions in several different divisions.
- **A**ttended local job fairs at the Pueblo of San Ildefonso and the University of New Mexico.
- **H**osted first annual resume writing workshop.
- **H**oused seasonal park employees in the surrounding communities using a pilot housing management program. As in 2023, Bandelier was one of the most successful parks to utilize this program.
- **R**ealigned several positions to assist with recruitment and retention.

Staffing

- **W**ildland Fire successfully used hiring incentives to fill both permanent and seasonal positions.
- **R**econfigured existing buildings to maximize office space.



Staffing

Goals for 2025

- Formalize mentorship and job shadow program for park employees.
 - Continue to seek creative ways to recruit staff across all divisions.
 - Seek additional opportunities to recruit youth and students.
 - Continue resume workshop.
 - Develop and conduct employee training workshops.
 - Expand participation in local job fairs to include local pueblos, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Española.
 - Seek qualified candidates and find ways to hire through reverse engineering.
- Provide recruitment training that focuses on areas of consideration and hiring authorities for supervisors.



Partnerships (Non-Tribal)



Partnerships (Non-Tribal)

Overview

Bandelier National Monument relies on long-term partnerships as well as engaging in new and innovative opportunities. These strong partnerships help the park to reach new and diverse audiences. In addition, they allow us to serve the public in a safe and efficient way. The park is able to set and reach new goals with the participation of our local communities and organizations. In short, partnerships help to broaden our capacity to preserve and protect park resources and create a safe and meaningful park experience.

In 2024, Bandelier partnered with youth groups to work on a variety of projects and to provide meaningful experiences for young people. Through these opportunities, several important projects were completed both within the developed areas and in remote sections of the park. Other important work was accomplished in 2024 through partnerships with groups and organizations like the Archaeology Southwest, Los Alamos County, the Pajarito Environmental Education Center (PEEC). The park also partnered with other federal partners and NPS sites like the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Saguaro National Park, Pecos National

Historical Park, and Valles Caldera National Preserve. All of this has helped us to build bridges and build capacity.

In 2024, Western National Parks Association (WNPA) supported many visitor projects, with emphasis on helping to rebuild the Interpretation and Visitor Services program. Among other things, WNPA paid for advanced interpretive training for staff and volunteers. The Friends of Bandelier helped support a robust Cultural Demonstration program. Many of the local tribes were represented as well as a host of Native American artisans.

Ongoing partnerships with the Los Alamos Fire Department (LAFD), DOE and the Los Alamos Public Safety group have been vital. They helped strengthen the park's public safety program.



Partnerships (Non-Tribal)



Highlights from 2024

- **R**esources worked with an Ancestral Lands crew on resource projects over the summer season.
- **T**he park hosted a veteran crew from Conservation Legacy.
- **R**eintroduced fish into Frijoles Creek with New Mexico Game and Fish.
- **T**he park utilized youth crews (like the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps) to help with key projects in the park.
- **P**artnered with Atomic City Transit to provide shuttle service for the 2024 summer season.
- **D**OE requested an expansion of law enforcement patrol areas and provided additional funding to the park.

Partnerships (Non-Tribal)

- **The Friends of Bandelier** provided \$50k to support park programs. Projects included Cultural Demonstration programs and in-park special events. It also helped to pay for summer internships.
- **WNPA** provided \$48k in direct aid funding. This paid for interpretive training for park staff and volunteers, provided program support, purchased camera equipment for use with social media, and items that could be used for community outreach.
- **Continued to seek efficiencies with Valles Caldera National Preserve** through shared services and general cooperation between park programs.



Partnerships (Non-Tribal)



- **W**orked closely with Archaeology Southwest in preparing an archaeology management plan for Frijoles Canyon.
- **P**artnered with the Summit Garden Club to maintain the gardens in the park's Historic District.
- **B**andelier entered into a shared services agreement with Pecos National Historical Park to share law enforcement services between the two parks.

Partnerships (Non-Tribal)

Goals for 2025

- **P**artner with the Pajarito Astronomical society for Night Sky programs.
- **E**stablish education programs targeting local schools, with an emphasis on the Pueblos and 4th grade students.
- **S**eek partners and funding for a new park orientation film.
- **R**edo the park's Junior Ranger book, and create a new book for the park's Tsankawi Unit.
- **E**stablish a cooperative agreement for law enforcement services with Valles Caldera National Preserve and Pecos National Historical Park.
- **E**ngage with the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) on tourism for Native American sites and other partnership opportunities.



Tribal Engagement & Collaboration



Tribal Engagement & Collaboration

Overview

The park's commitment to prioritize the voices of people that hold an ancestral and traditional connection to the area was exemplified in 2024 as tribal involvement with management decisions was at an all time high.

The Tsankawi Unit was reopened following the construction of the Highway 4 interchange and the completion of the new parking lot. Per the desires of the Pueblo of San Ildefonso, the unit was “rested” for over a year during construction, remaining closed to all visitors.

During the closure, the park moved the main trail that used to traverse the ancestral pueblo to the south rim of the mesa, to discourage visitor damage to the pueblo. Through consultation, the park agreed to construct a viewing platform that will further discourage off trail use around the site. The platform will be constructed in the spring of 2025. Interpretation and Education staff have met regularly with the Pueblo's Tribal Historical Preservation Officer (THPO) Advisory Council to ensure that interpretive messages convey the importance of the site to the people of San Ildefonso Pueblo. The site opened in the spring with a special



blessing by youth from San Ildefonso. Governor Moquino of San Ildefonso Pueblo also made remarks at the reopening.

The park expanded the use of the Multi Year Funding Agreement with Santa Clara Pueblo in 2024. Over \$700,000 in contracts for the park were managed by the pueblo.

Restoration efforts started on Cave Kiva, which remains closed after vandalism in 2022. Historic plaster removal has started, and the visitor barrier construction has also begun. The lead for the five park Tribal Liaison Program has been selected and will start work in November 2024.

Tribal Engagement & Collaboration



Highlights from 2024

- **I**ncreased utilization of the Multi Year Funding Agreement with Santa Clara Pueblo.
 - Initiated a task order for fire support for over \$60k for the next few years.
 - Utilized Santa Clara Pueblo to execute six other contracts totaling over \$630k.
- **R**e-imagined the annual Fall Fiesta as a larger cultural event.
- **U**tilized funding from the vacant Tribal Liaison position to secure equipment necessary to support the program including two vehicles, computers, and other supplies.
- **R**econstituted and expanded the park's Cultural Demonstration program.

Tribal Engagement & Collaboration



- The park is working with San Ildefonso Pueblo on a Cooperative Agreement that will cover interpretive services, resource management support, and other services both at the Tsankawi Unit and other areas of the park.
- The Governor and members of San Ildefonso joined staff in a ceremonial reopening of the Tsankawi Unit.
- Completed consultation on a treatment plan and visitor use management strategy for Cave Kiva following the vandalism incident in 2022.
- The Tsankawi trail was rerouted out of the main pueblo site. The park will construct a viewing platform at the site that would not only deter entry into the pueblo, but also provide an opportunity to deliver a strong interpretive message through wayside exhibits on the platform.

Tribal Engagement & Collaboration

Goals for 2025

- **O**nboard the new five-park Tribal Liaison position.
- **I**nitiate recruitment for the two other lower graded support positions once the program lead is oriented to the position.
- **S**olicit input from Tribal partners about roles and functions of the new Tribal Liaison program to ensure we meet their needs.
- **W**ork with San Ildefonso to execute the terms of the Cooperative Agreement.
- **S**eek to establish a Multi Year Funding Agreement with Cochiti Pueblo.



Tribal Engagement & Collaboration



- **Tribal Liaison** will initiate introductions and orientation with Tribal leaders.
- **Establish** an interpretive working group with San Ildefonso for Tsankawi, and with Cochiti and others for Cave Kiva to ensure all materials reflect the tribes' perspective.
- **Complete** a Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) plan of action in advance of the Legacy Restoration Fund (LRF) project that will replace all of the park's utility systems, set to begin in 2026.

Visitor Management & Experience



Visitor Management & Experience

Overview

Bandelier completed the Tsankawi parking and infrastructure improvements which provide safer access and enable the park to better manage access at the unit. The Tsankawi Unit reopened with new area closures on the mesa top as was recommended in the park's Tsankawi Management Plan.

In conjunction with the Tsankawi project, the park completed the Frey parking lot expansion. This project included the construction of a brand new shuttle stop.

The park's transportation program continued to struggle for the third year; it started late and had to end service early due to staffing issues. Atomic City Transit, the park partner for shuttle service, has struggled to hire the staff needed to operate the shuttle for the past three seasons. This has resulted in inconsistent service.

The park worked with NPS regional and national staff to conduct a transportation study using an outside contractor. The study considered nine different alternatives to disperse visitation to other local and federal tourism opportunities.

The park added two of the three loops in Juniper Campground to Recreation.gov, the NPS' reservation system. Since then, camping revenue has significantly increased. The park continues to implement a strategy to reduce human impacts at Alcove House by limiting visitors to 15 or less at a time.

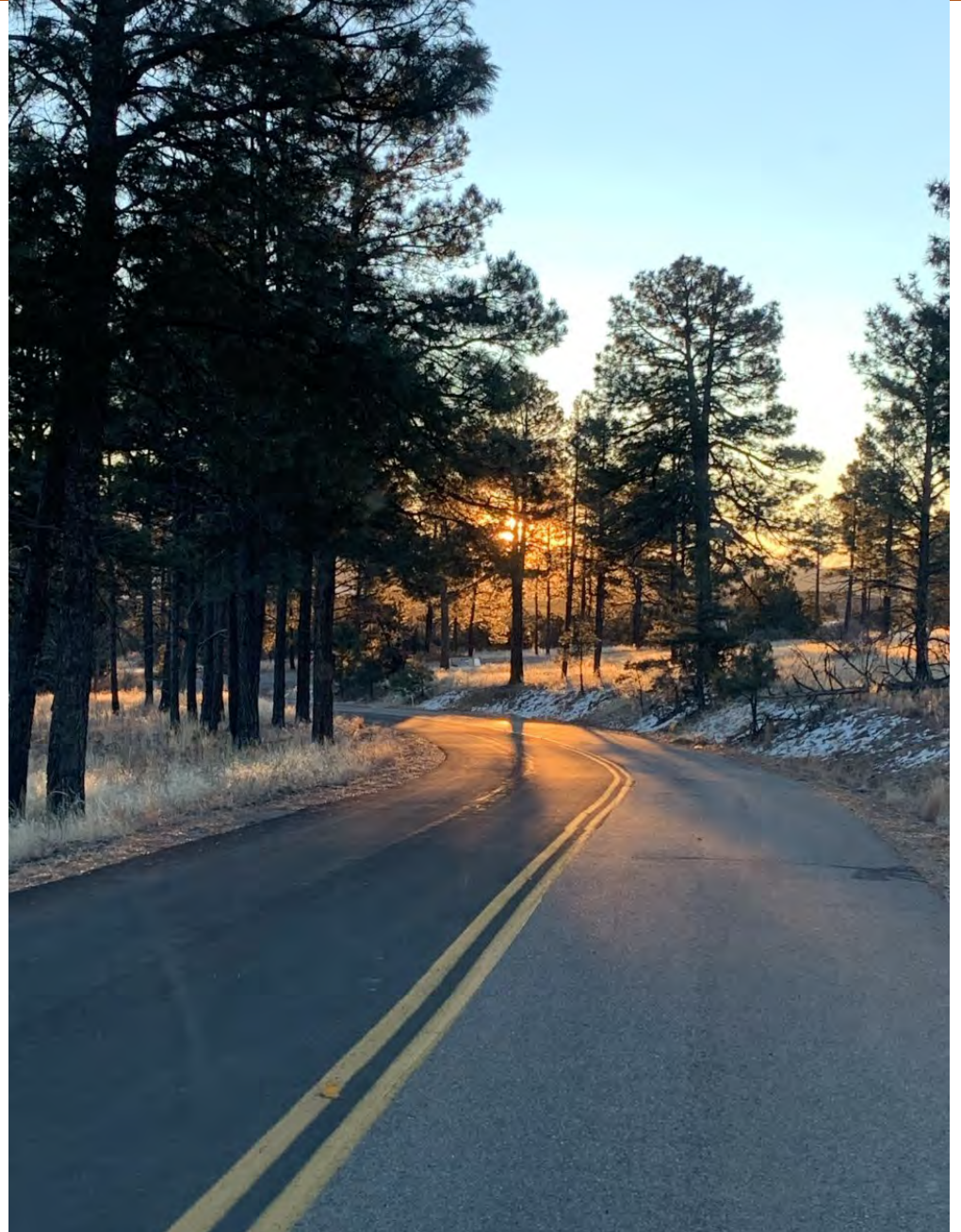
The Visitor Center main lobby was reconfigured to restore the space to its original configuration as designed by the CCC. A new welcome desk was also installed. A Visual Information Specialist was hired to expand the park's social media engagement and web-based presence.

The park began replacing and installing signs at the Bandelier Wilderness entry points. The bridges in Frijoles Canyon were all rebuilt. The park continues to plan for the replacement of utilities funded by the Great American Outdoors Act. The design was completed in 2024 and construction is slated to begin in 2026. Park staff have also started the design and planning for the rehabilitation of the fire tower to create a climate change interpretive site. The water line at Ponderosa was rehabbed to retain water for campers in the Ponderosa Campground.

Visitor Management & Experience

Highlights from 2024

- **R**eopened the Tsankawi Unit following parking improvements and access control.
- **L**imited visitation at Alcove House for resource protection purposes.
- **I**ncreased the number of daily guided ranger programs to two per day.
- **W**orked with national, regional, and local staff on a transportation study to identify various transit opportunities for visitors to the Pajarito Plateau.
- **T**he park website was overhauled to improve accessibility.



Visitor Management & Experience



- **The Juniper Campground Overflow** parking lot was expanded. The shuttle service stop was moved away from the Frey Trail.
- **Rehabilitated** water lines at Ponderosa Campground.
- **Installed** a new desk at the visitor center to restore the original aesthetic of the historic building.
- **The historic Fire Tower** roof was replaced in preparation of future stabilization projects.
- **Initiated** designs for a new exhibit space in the park's historic Fire Tower.

Visitor Management & Experience

Goals for 2025

- **R**ehabilitate the visitor contact station at the Tsankawi Unit.
- **E**valuate the shuttle operation and the findings of the transportation study to ensure the shuttle operation better meets the needs of the park, partners, affiliated tribes, and visitors.
- **C**onduct Physical Security assessments on all park facilities.
- **E**valuate separating the Ponderosa Campground from the Ponderosa trailhead parking lot.
- **I**nstall a permanent National Park Service sign at the Tsankawi Unit.
- **U**ppdate the park's sign plan.



Visitor Management & Experience



- **Create permanent interpretive signage** at the Tsankawi Unit.
- **Implement a visitor management plan** for Cave Kiva.
- **Continue to update and improve the** park website.
- **Seek funding for a visitor use study.**
- **Develop a plan to replace and correct** the backcountry signs to be consistent with 2019 trail name changes.
- **Continue to experiment with group size** limitations and other visitor use management strategies at Alcove House.

Adaptive Management



Adaptive Management

Overview

Successful adaptive resource management at the park requires the coordination and collaboration of many disciplines across several divisions. Accomplishments in 2024 demonstrate our commitment to interdisciplinary and collaborative work towards supporting the health and resiliency of resources on the Pajarito Plateau.

Through a partnership with USGS, NPS Inventory and Monitoring Program, and a research scientist, we began monitoring the effectiveness of the Pinon Juniper Restoration Project. Between 2007 and 2010, this project resulted in a restoration treatment of over 4,000 acres and had been based on over two decades of preceding scientific research into treatment options.

The current monitoring study will evaluate the long-term effectiveness of the treatments to provide lessons learned and updated treatment prescriptions for the



pinon-juniper woodlands that will benefit federal and tribal land managers on the Pajarito Plateau and beyond.

Archeologists removed hazardous woody fuels from nearly 200 archeological sites between 2023 and 2024, continuing a long-established treatment program based on 40 years of experience and research on wildland fire effects to archeological sites and materials. This important treatment protects ancestral sites and architectural stone from unwanted wildfire effects and helps to stabilize and protect the site ground surface from erosion impacts.

The park has also continued with our robust fire effects monitoring program, collecting data at 37 plots in the park, completing repeat photography at sites relating to the 2011 Las Conchas Fire, and collecting high resolution terrestrial lidar data in order to build fuel models to support prescribed burn planning.

Planning efforts and on-the-ground treatments were completed for park wildland fire management activities throughout the park, including individual burn plans and drafting a comprehensive park fire manage-

Adaptive Management



plan. More than ever before, fire management goals prioritize adaptive management principles to address changing climatic and environmental variables that impact all aspects of fire and resource management.

The park continues to recover from the severe impacts of the 2011 Las Conchas Fire. Beaver reintroductions into Frijoles Creek have been successful. Work continued this year to understand the changing hydrology and watershed conditions in the park and to plan for future watershed restoration treatments. In 2024, we began planning for several restoration projects for Frijoles Canyon and Capulin Canyon, utilizing input from tribal partners. These efforts will continue to grow in 2025 and will prioritize the integration of indigenous knowledge into all aspects of project planning and implementation.

In response to a changing climate and the need to reduce fossil fuel emissions, the park began to replace gas-powered vehicles with electric vehicles and infrastructure in 2024. Two large-scale, upcoming utility replacement projects include electrification as a primary goal and design driver. Recycling efforts have

Adaptive Management

increased, as have the ongoing replacement of low-efficiency appliances and bulbs with higher efficiency products.

Towards the goal of establishing a fully functioning Jemez Mountains Research Learning Center, we have assisted Valles Caldera National Preserve to hire key advisory positions and have supported the acquisition of physical space to house the Center. Additions to the Center's website were built with the addition of several articles about wildfire and archeology, drought and archeology, and several of the ongoing restoration projects at the park. We look forward to growing the capacity of the Center in 2025 through additional planning and personnel hires.



Adaptive Management



Highlights from 2024

- Continued to monitor the introduced beaver population in Frijoles Canyon.
- Working with New Mexico Game & Fish, monitored reintroduced Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout and native chub and sucker fish populations.
- Began lead abatement treatment of six historic Civilian Conservation Corps benches.
- Completed, transcribed, and archived over 30 oral histories of park staff and associates.
- Treated 45 archaeological sites in the Tsankawi Unit for hazardous fuels.

Adaptive Management

- **B**egan the process of updating the park's Fire Management Plan.
- **R**ecycled more than 9,000 pounds of scrap metal.
- **R**eplaced three gas powered UTVs and one SUV with electric vehicles.
- **S**ecured project funding for three electric vehicle charging stations.
- **R**ecruited and hired two new biology positions to lead an invasive tree eradication project.
- **C**ontinued to implement thinning and piling treatments along Forest Road 289.
- **P**ueblo Parks Fire Management group supported national firefighting efforts.



Adaptive Management



Goals for 2025

- **Reconvene** Jemez Mountains Research Learning Center steering group.
- **Finalize** the Fire Management Plan.
- **Update** Hazardous Tree Management Plan.
- **Complete** Forest Road 289 thin and pile treatment.
- **Assist** Valles Caldera National Preserve to develop a position management strategy for the research learning center.
- **Implement** invasive tree treatments in Lummis and Alamo Canyons.
- **Install** beaver dam analogues in Frijoles and/or Capulin Creek.

Adaptive Management

- **Onboard and orient Museum Curator** to address museum management tasks and contribute to public interpretation and education initiatives.
- **Develop a comprehensive Incident Management Team briefing package** for Wildland Fire and emergency management incidents.
- **Conduct baseline remote sensing at Alcove House.** Determine a draft protection plan and resubmit funding request.
- **Update fuels program of work for 2026-2028.**
- **Complete defensible space treatments around the CCC District and developed areas on the mesa top.**





Bandelier National Monument protects, preserves, and interprets an outstanding portion of the Pajarito Plateau, including one of the largest concentrations of Ancestral Pueblo archaeological sites in the American Southwest. The park provides opportunities for people to connect with and enjoy a diversity of cultural and natural resources, striking scenery, wildlife habitats, remnants of a volcanic landscape, and wilderness.