

Welcome to one of the world's most diverse national parks! Experience the austere, majestic beauty of the tallest dunes in North America, as well as grasslands, wetlands, streams, forests, and tundra. Enjoy your national park and preserve!



During spring and early summer snowmelt, Medano Creek and Sand Creek provide a natural oasis for all ages. *Inset photos:* Lower Sand Creek Lake is part of the snowy alpine watershed of the dunes. Two sand wheelchairs are available for loan; see page 2.



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Getting Started
¡Bienvenidos!
Information you'll need to prepare for your visit. Facilities, camping, programs, and local services. *Información en español, página 2.*



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Exploring Your Park
Trails and routes throughout the park and preserve. Color map, trail and route descriptions, and a chart with distances for each trail are included.



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Natural Wonders
Other San Luis Valley attractions including Zapata Falls, national wildlife refuges, a state park, rock climbing canyon, and wetlands.

For Your Safety

Weather The weather changes rapidly at Great Sand Dunes; be prepared! Storms and cold temperatures can occur any time of year. If you see a thunderstorm approaching, get off the dunes immediately. **Lightning** strikes can be fatal. For general weather information, see page 2.

Hot Sand On summer afternoons, the sand surface can reach 140°F (60° C). **Bring closed shoes**, and be careful with your pets' feet. Hike the dunes in early morning or evening during summer. Although the sand surface can become hot, summer daytime highs are typically in the low 80s F (20s C).

Wildlife Never feed wild animals. It is unhealthy for them, and dangerous to you. **Drive slowly** on park area roads to prevent accidents with crossing animals. **Bears and mountain lions** may be encountered; pick up the "Wild Ways" handout at the Visitor Center to learn more about these animals. In the campground, always store food, toiletries and trash in the bear-proof boxes provided at each site. While there are no poisonous snakes or scorpions in this high elevation park, there are rattlesnakes at lower elevations elsewhere in the San Luis Valley. Wear insect repellent to deter mosquitoes and no-see-ums, especially near water.

Altitude Park elevations range from 7515' to 13,604' (2291m to 4146m) above sea level. The Visitor Center and campground are at approximately 8200' (2499m). Altitude sickness may affect a few. Symptoms include shortness of breath, headaches, and nausea. **Drink plenty of water**, take it slow, and avoid alcoholic drinks. Seek medical attention if your symptoms are severe.



Keep wildlife wild.
Use bear-proof boxes provided.

Emergency Contact a ranger or call 911. Telephones are located at the Visitor Center, Dunes parking lot, and at the campground kiosk.



Facilities

The Visitor Center is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Hours vary the rest of the year; please call for times. Rangers are available to answer questions and provide assistance. The Visitor Center offers an inspiring film presentation, interactive exhibits for all ages, bookstore, first aid assistance, and viewing scope. Phone 719-378-6399.

Interpretive Programs



Your visit can be more rewarding when you better understand the environment around you. Nature walks, short talks, and evening programs are offered most days during the summer months, and many days in spring and fall. See the weekly schedule of events posted at the Visitor Center, campground bulletin boards, and the Dunes parking area.

Free programs for large groups visiting the park and preserve may also be reserved in advance by calling 719-378-6344. Topics include geology, plants, wildlife, and history.

Accessibility

Two sand wheelchairs are available for loan; inquire at the Visitor Center. Accessible restrooms are at the Visitor Center, Dunes parking lot, and campground. The Visitor Center, amphitheater, and ranger programs held at these locations are accessible. Two accessible campsites are located in the campground. For a backcountry experience, Sawmill Canyon Backcountry Site offers a graded trail to a tent pad and accessible privy. Contact the Visitor Center to reserve it.



Weather

Weather is typically sunny, but temperatures are relatively cool all year at this elevation of 8,200 feet (2499 m). Summer highs average in the 80s F (21°C), with lows in the 40s F (4°C). High winds can develop during storms, creating cold wind chill factors. Summer evenings are often cool. Spring can be windy with unpredictable temperatures. Fall is usually pleasant and dry. In winter, sub-zero temperatures are common every night. Bring warm, layered clothing any time of the year.



Camping

Great Sand Dunes offers developed car camping, 4WD backcountry camping, and backpacking. The frontcountry car campground, Pinyon Flats, contains 88 first-come, first-served sites with picnic tables and fire grates. There are no hook-ups; restrooms include flush toilets and sinks. Sites cost \$14.00 per night for a maximum of 6 people, 2 tents, and 2 vehicles.



Campsites vary in size; some sites may not accommodate larger RVs. Four sites for groups of 10 or more may be reserved by calling the Visitor Center at 719-378-6399. Group sites cost \$3.00 per person per night.

Campground Hosts are located in Site 8 (Loop 1) and Site 61B (Loop 2). Hosts can help with your questions or concerns.

Aluminum recycling, trash dumpster, and an air compressor are located at the amphitheater parking lot near the campground.

Firewood gathering is not permitted; firewood is sold at the Visitor Center, campground,

or the Oasis store. Please pitch tents within rock walls. Quiet hours are from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.; generators may run from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Backpacking requires a free permit; ask at the Visitor Center. You may camp with a permit on the dunes, in one of six designated sites along Sand Ramp Trail, or off-trail in the national preserve.

Backcountry vehicular camping is permitted along the Medano Pass Primitive Road in the national preserve only. This requires a high-clearance 4WD vehicle, and a minimum 5 mile drive on a soft sand road into the preserve. Camping along the road is limited to designated first-come, first-served campsites. For additional guidelines and seasonal closures for this area, check with a ranger.

Pets

Pets are permitted in the main day use areas and in the national preserve as long as they are on a leash less than 6 feet long. *Pets are not permitted in the national park backcountry; ask for a map of permitted pet areas.* Please clean up after your pet. During summer months, take your pet on the dunes in early morning or evening to avoid hot sand.



¡Bienvenidos!

¡Bienvenidos al Parque Nacional de las Grandes Dunas! Mientras que usted esté visitando, esperamos que aproveche la oportunidad de explorar algunas de las características únicas del parque. Desde las dunas más altas de Norteamérica hasta algunos de los picos más altos de los Rocky Mountains, este rico ecosistema sorprende continuamente a los visitantes con la estupenda diversidad de vida y paisaje.

Cosas populares para hacer:

¡Suba a las dunas! El paseo desde el Centro de Visitantes a la cima de la duna más alta toma como 2 horas para dar la vuelta. La elevación y la arena lo hace algo difícil, pero ¡vale la pena! Esté preparado para la temperatura alta de la arena, y lleve protección para el sol y agua para tomar.

¡Disfrutar el Arroyo del Medano! En primavera y verano, el arroyo corre por la base de las dunas. Los niños de todas las edades gozan en chapalear, jugar, o aunque sea nada más que remojar en el arroyo.

¡Compartir una comida en el campo! El área de comer que esta cerca del Centro de Visitantes tiene mesas, parrillas y baños sanitarios cerca. Se permiten fuegos de carbón en las parrillas; por favor extíngalos totalmente antes de irse. Y por favor: no haga fuego con leña ni alimente a los animales.

Para Seguridad a Las Grandes Dunas de Arena

En el verano, las temperaturas en la superficie de la arena pueden alcanzar hasta los ¡140 grados F (60 grados de C)! Use calcetines y zapatos en vez de sandalias para proteger sus pies contra quemaduras severas. También, recuerde traer protección para el sol, bastante agua, un sombrero, y alimentación adicional.

El Centro de Visitantes está a 8200' (2.470m) de altura sobre el nivel del mar. Usted puede sentir la respiración entrecortada, o sentirse mareado. Vaya despacio, descanse a menudo, y tome bastante agua.

Se permiten las mascotas en las dunas pero deben siempre mantenerse con correas. Camine temprano en la mañana o bien de tarde para proteger los pies de la arena caliente.

Los basureros de basura están situados en el estacionamiento, en las áreas de la comida y de acampar. Nunca deje el alimento donde un oso u otro animal podría encontrarlo. Manténgase alejado de los animales salvajes: alimentar a los animales salvajes es malsano para ellos y peligroso para usted. ¡Usted está en el territorio del oso! No deje alimentos o los refrigeradores desatendidos en ningún momento. Cuando usted no está comiendo, almacene todo el alimento y bebidas en su vehículo con todas las ventanas cerradas.

Esté preparado para el clima fresco, también en el verano. Esperamos que usted disfrute de su visita a las Grandes Dunas de Arena. Pida más información en español en el Centro de Visitantes.

Local Services

The facilities and services listed, unless otherwise noted, are located within 10 miles of the main entrance to Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. The towns of Mosca, Hooper, Blanca, Fort Garland, and Alamosa offer additional facilities and services, including gas stations, restaurants, lodging, and campgrounds, but not all services are available in each town. For a full list of area lodging, visit: www.nps.gov/grsa/planyourvisit/lodging.htm Visit these county websites: www.alamosa.org, www.saguache.org, and www.custercountyco.com

National Park Service

General information (recorded, 24 hours) 719-378-6300
 Visitor Center and bookstore 719-378-6399
 11999 Hwy. 150 Mosca, CO 81146
www.nps.gov/grsa
 email: grsa_interpretation@nps.gov

Lodging

Great Sand Dunes Lodge (April-October) 719-378-2900
www.gsdlodges.com
 Oasis Motel (two rooms) 719-378-2222
www.greatdunes.com/lodging.html
 Zapata Ranch 719-378-2356 x1
www.zranch.org

Campgrounds

Pinyon Flats (within park) 719-378-6399
 Great Sand Dunes Oasis (seasonal) 719-378-2222
 San Luis Lakes State Park (seasonal) 1-800-678-2267
www.coloradostateparks.reserveamerica.com

Convenience Store/Gasoline/Restaurant

Oasis Store/Gas Station (April-October) 719-378-2222
 Oasis Restaurant (May - Sept.) 719-378-2222

Medical Facilities (in Alamosa)

24-hour Emergency Care and by Appointment
 San Luis Valley Regional Medical Center 719-589-2511
 Alamosa Family Medical Clinic 719-589-3658
 Convenient Care Clinic (1-10pm, 7 days/wk) 719-589-2562

Thanks to Our Partners and Neighbors



WNPA is a non-profit organization designed to further educational work in the national parks. Net proceeds from bookstore sales are returned to the National Park Service for education and publications, including annual funding of this newspaper. www.wnpa.org



Friends of the Dunes, Inc. is a non-profit citizens' support group for Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. The Friends provide a forum for citizen involvement in planning, focus public interest on issues, and provide volunteer and financial assistance to the dunes. For more information, call 719-378-6381, or complete the form available at the Visitor Center.



www.fs.fed.us/r2/riogrande



www.fws.gov/alamosa



www.nature.org



www.coloradofieldinstitute.org



www.wildlife.state.co.us



www.parks.state.co.us/parks/sanluis

What Can Kids Do Here?



Become a Junior Ranger (ask at the Visitor Center)



Make a sand sculpture



Jump, roll, and slide

Have fun!



Splash and surf in Medano Creek during spring

Entrance Fees 2009-2010

Per person 16 and older: \$3 for one week
 Children under 16: FREE
 Great Sand Dunes Annual Pass: \$15 per family for one year

America the Beautiful – National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Passes



Annual Pass per family \$80



Lifetime Pass for Seniors: \$10



Lifetime Pass for permanent disability: Free

Your Fees at Work

At Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, your fees directly benefit you. This year's work includes:

- Burying overhead electrical lines in the park. In the next few years there will be several phases in this very large project, which improves the reliability of power, reduces risk in the event of wildfires, and improves the natural viewshed.



- Trail work throughout the park and preserve done by Public Land Corps youth crews.

VIPs

At Great Sand Dunes, volunteers-in-parks (VIPs) work with nearly every division, and become an integral part of the park staff.

To learn more about the VIP program at Great Sand Dunes, contact Volunteer Coordinator Libbie Landreth at 719-378-6342, or email libbie_landreth@nps.gov

Web: www.nps.gov/volunteer

You may also visit the Student Conservation Association website, www.thesca.org, for a list of Great Sand Dunes internships.

Thanks to all the volunteers who make national parks better places!



Exploring



Protecting Your Park

Natural and cultural resources at Great Sand Dunes are protected by federal law. It is illegal to collect plants, animals, natural objects, and historic or prehistoric artifacts. By leaving them undisturbed, all generations may enjoy and learn from them.

Map of Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve

Numbered locations in colored circles are described on the following page.



This map is also available separately as the official park map and guide, distributed at the Entrance Station or Visitor Center. Download it at www.nps.gov/grsa/planyourvisit/maps.htm. Detailed area topographic maps are available for purchase at the Visitor Center.

From desert sands to alpine tundra, explore an unusual combination of landscapes all found at this special place. Below are a few suggested treks.

Check with a ranger for advanced climbing routes and other off-trail hikes in the mountains and grasslands. Also see the hiking chart on the following page.

Dunes Exploration

Explore any part of the 30 square mile dunefield you wish; there are no designated trails in the sand. A dunes-accessible wheelchair is available for free loan at the Visitor Center. In summer months, plan to hike the dunes in morning or evening to avoid hot sand.

1 Medano Creek When there's water in Medano Creek at the base of the dunes, adults and kids alike love to splash in the stream. Watch for waves in the water, a phenomenon called "surge flow."

2 The tallest dunes The High Dune is neither the highest in elevation nor the tallest, but it looks that way from the main parking lot. It is about 650 feet (198m) high. Cross the flats and zigzag up the ridgelines to reach it. The 360 degree view is inspirational. From High Dune, the skyrising dune you see to the west is the spectacular Star Dune, rising 750 feet (229m). It is the tallest dune in North America. To reach it from High Dune, journey another mile and a half up and down across the dunes to its summit.

3 Eastern dune ridge With high clearance 4WD vehicle, drive to Sand Pit or Castle Creek Picnic Areas. Or, with 2WD vehicle, drive to Point of No Return, then hike 2/3 mile (1km) to Sand Pit. Castle Creek offers an impressively tall, steep dune face. Both areas have close access to Medano Creek.

Grasslands/Wetlands

Ask at the Visitor Center for a free information sheet on accessing grasslands and wetlands..



Experience the surprising diversity of natural landscapes at Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, from spacious grasslands to chilly alpine lakes.

Forest Trails

4 Montville Nature Trail Keep this 1/2 mile (0.7km) hike as an option for afternoon as an escape from the heat of the dunes. Walk along a shady mountain trail named for a late 1800s settlement, comprising 20 houses in its heyday. Rest near the trail's highpoint, where you'll find outstanding views of Mt. Herard, the dunes and the valley.

5 Mosca Pass Trail Hike along Mosca Creek to the summit of a low pass in the Sangre de Cristo mountains, winding through aspen and evergreen forests. Allow 2-3 hours to reach the pass; the trail is 3 1/2 miles (5.7km) one-way. American Indians and early settlers used this route for travel into the Valley.

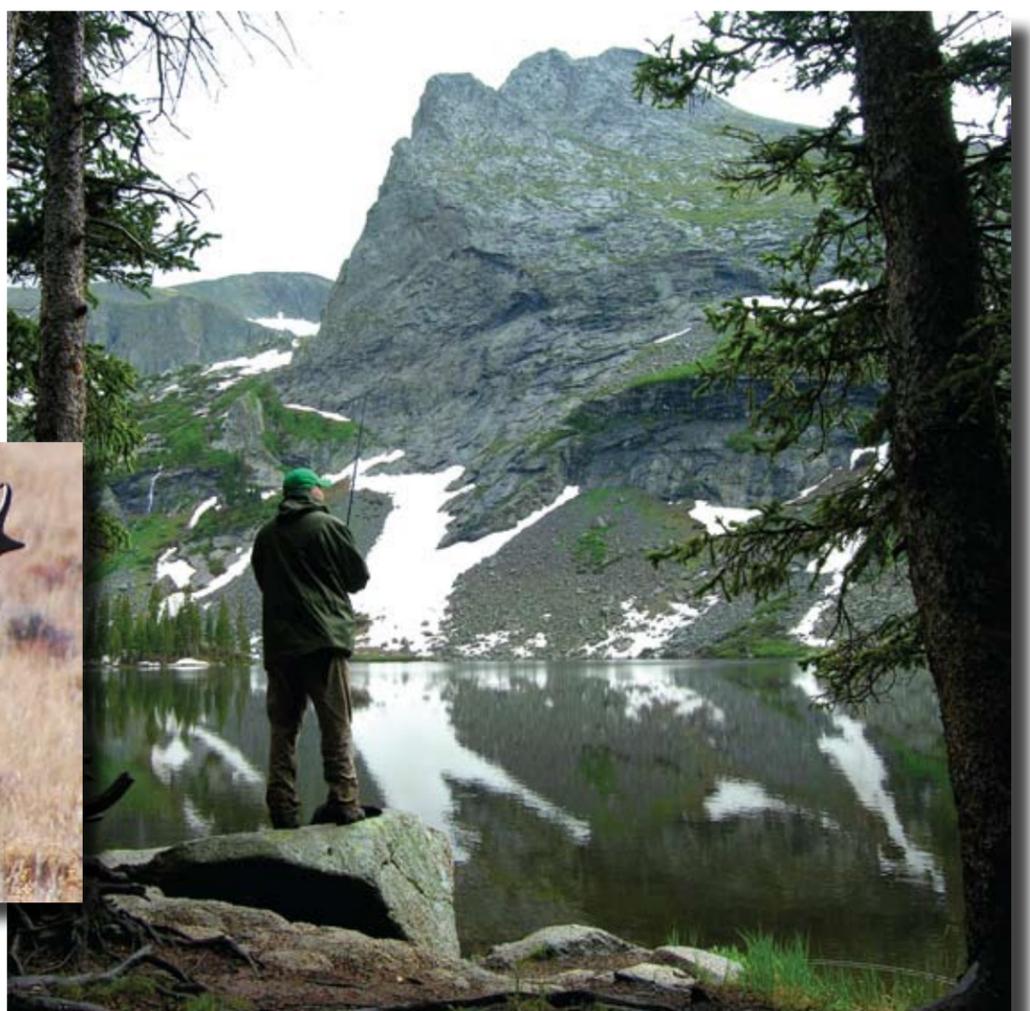
6 Dunes Overlook/Sand Ramp Trail For a view of the dunes from the foothills, begin hiking the Sand Ramp Trail in Loop 2 of the campground. Scenery abounds in all directions. Although only 2 miles (3.2km) round trip to the overlook, this trek can be extended, as the Sand Ramp trail continues for 11 miles (18 km) total around the eastern and northern perimeter of the dunes.

7 Medano Pass 4WD Road Driving this road requires high clearance 4-wheel drive (not recommended for small sport utility vehicles). Soft sand, creek crossings, and a rocky roadbed high on the pass combine for a somewhat challenging drive. However, it is scenic, with views of rock walls, conifers, and 13,297' Mt. Herard. The road may be closed at various locations depending on seasonal conditions, including high creek crossings in spring and deep snow in winter.

Alpine Trails

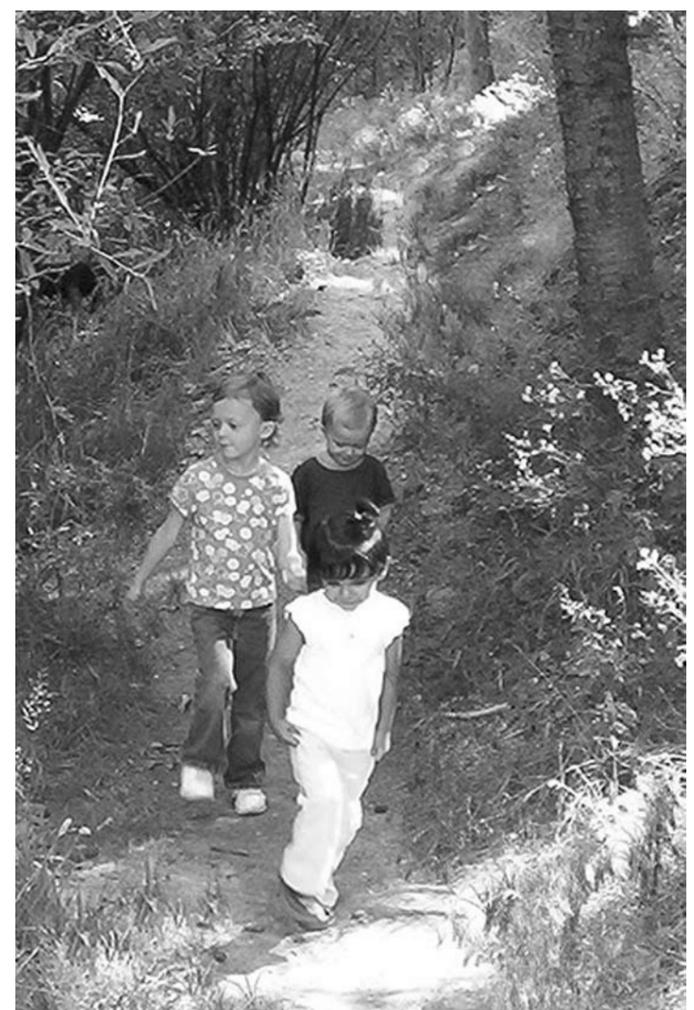
8 Medano Lake/Mount Herard Access this trailhead from the Medano Pass 4WD road. Beginning at 10,000' (3048m) above sea level, the trail climbs 2000' (610m) through meadows and forests, ending at an alpine lake. For advanced hikers, continue on to the summit of 13,297' (4053m) Mount Herard for a spectacular aerial view of the dunes.

9 Music Pass/Sand Creek Lakes/other alpine peaks The alpine scenery here is stunning, but requires a long drive and/or a long hike. Check with a ranger for conditions before travel. The eastern trailhead for Music Pass is accessed from Highway 69, 4.5 miles south of Westcliffe. Turn off Highway 69 to the west at the sign for Music Pass and South Colony Lakes Trailhead. At the "T" junction, turn left onto South Colony Road. At the end of the ranch fence on the right, you'll see another sign for Music Pass. 2WD drivers should park where the Rainbow Trail crosses Music Pass Road. From here, walk 3.5 miles (5.6km) to the pass. 4WD drivers may drive another 2.5 miles to the end of the road. From here, it is just a steep one mile (1.5km) hike to the pass. Music Pass is at treeline, with a great view of the Upper Sand Creek basin. From the pass, hike farther to two alpine lakes, or to any one of the 13,000' peaks above the basin. *The Essential Guide to Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve* has climbing information for the peaks. Check at the bookstore for a copy. You may also access these lakes and peaks via the Sand Ramp Trail, connecting with the Sand Creek Trail from the west. Check with a ranger for details on this multi-day hike.



Hiking Chart

Easy to Moderate Hikes			
Name	One-way Distance Miles (km)	Comments	Location of Trailhead
Medano Creek (or dry creekbed)	variable	Stroll up or down stream, relatively flat	Dunes Parking Lot
Sand Pit	.5 (.8)	Medano Creek usually found year-round here	Point of No Return
Montville Nature Trail	.5 (.8) loop	Trail guide may be purchased at Visitor Center	Top of hill just north of Visitor Center
Campground Trail	.5 (.8)	Trail from campground to dunes	Campground, near Site 32
Escape Dunes and Ghost Forest	.75 (1.2)	Follow Medano Creek upstream to low dunes	Dunes Parking Lot
Medano Wetlands (seasonal)	1.3 (2)	Downstream to end of trees (ask ranger for locations and status)	Dunes Parking Lot
Castle Creek	2.5 (4)	Follow creek upstream	Dunes Parking Lot (or Point of No Return TH)
Dunes Overlook	1 (1.6)	Views from foothills	Sand Ramp Trailhead - Campground Loop 2
Wellington Ditch Trail	1 (1.6)	Relatively flat with views from foothills	Montville Parking Lot or Loop 3 of the campground
High Dune	1.15 (1.9)	Follow the ridgelines until you reach the top	Dunes Parking Lot
Mosca Pass	3.5 (5.6)	Forests, small stream	Montville Parking Lot
Sand Ramp Trail	variable, up to 11 (17.8)	Eastern and northern perimeter of dunes	Sand Ramp Trailhead - Campground Loop 2
Star Dune	3.8 (6.1)	Hike down Medano Creekbed to its base, then ascend ridge	Dunes Parking Lot
Difficult Hikes - Check with rangers first!			
Medano Lake	3.5 (5.6)	1,900-foot (579 m) elevation gain	Medano Lake TH (high-clearance 4WD needed)
Music Pass	4-6 (6.4-9.7)	Beautiful high alpine environment	2WD parking on Music Pass Road (4WD required to go further)
Carbonate Peak	3 miles (4.8 km) south of Mosca Pass	Bushwhack along crest in heavy timber	Mosca Pass
Sand Creek Lakes	Lower - 3.0 (5.2) Upper - 3.5 (6.0)	Alpine lakes and majestic mountains	Music Pass 4WD TH
Mount Herard	5.2 (8.8)	Hike to 12,500' (3,810 m) saddle to west, then on to summit	Medano Lake TH - (high-clearance 4WD needed)



Top: Backpacking into Upper Sand Creek Basin in the national preserve offers a wilderness experience dramatically different from the park's frontcountry.

Middle: Horseback riding is permitted in most parts of the park and preserve. Please obtain "Horse Use Guidelines" from the Visitor Center before riding.

Bottom: Montville Nature Trail provides a short exploration of the foothills for hikers of all ages.

Introducing the San Luis Valley Heritage Tourism Program

The San Luis Valley Heritage Tourism Program offers a series of travel itineraries designed to help travelers make the most of their time in southern Colorado. We invite you to use this sample itinerary to explore our area. Ask for more information at the Visitor Center. You can find this and other suggested travel itineraries on line at www.sanluisvalleyheritage.com

Itinerary Number 2: Natural Wonders Flanked by 14,000 foot peaks and towering sand dunes, bisected by the Rio Grande, graced by the seasonal migration of sandhill cranes, and containing unparalleled opportunities for wilderness exploration, the San Luis Valley has incredible natural wonders.



Monte Vista NWR

1 Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge The Monte Vista NWR combines with the Alamosa NWR and Baca NWR to form the 118,000 acre Alamosa/Monte Vista/Baca National Wildlife Refuge Complex. These create the largest and most diverse collection of wetlands in Colorado. The 14,804-acre Monte Vista Refuge is home to mallards, pintail, teal, American avocets, killdeer, white-faced ibis, egrets, and herons. The annual Monte Vista Crane Festival in March marks the migration of thousands of Sandhill cranes and is an event not to be missed. The refuge is open during daylight hours, 7 days a week. www.fws.gov/alamosa

2 Wheeler Geologic Area The landscape of spires and hoodoos found at the Wheeler Geologic Area is mysterious and wonderful. Located within the La Garita Wilderness Area, this attraction may be accessed by a rugged 4-wheel drive road or by a 7-mile long hike. Directions are available at Creede museums and attractions.



Wheeler Geologic Area

3 Creede Caldera/Fossil Formations Provides the opportunity to explore fossil remains just outside Creede along SH 149. Here, imprints of ancient plants and insects are trapped within the sedimentary shore of the lake that once filled the Creede caldera. A brochure found at local museums and attractions interprets this interesting formation of the Upper Rio Grande Valley.



Creede Caldera/Fossil Formations

4 Cumbres Pass Cumbres Pass is the southern gateway to the Valley and to *Los Caminos Antiguos* Scenic and Historic Byway. Cumbres and nearby La Manga Pass provide access to the southwestern part of Rio Grande National Forest.

5 Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge Alamosa NWR contains thousands of acres of wetlands within the floodplain of the Rio Grande. Meadows, river oxbows, and riparian corridors support high species diversity and create ideal conditions for viewing waterfowl, songbirds, and other wildlife. Visitor Center is open March-November. 719-589-4021 www.fws.gov/alamosa



Alamosa NWR

6 Blanca Wetlands Wildlife Habitat Area This area offers ideal habitat for waterfowl and shorebirds not found elsewhere in the San Luis Valley or Colorado. Trails weaving between the shallow ponds provide excellent wildlife observation opportunities. Ask at Great Sand Dunes Visitor Center for detailed directions, as this is a little difficult to find. Most of the area is closed for nesting season February 15 to July 15.

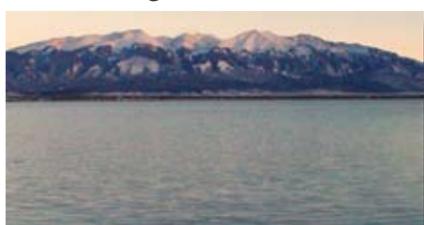


Blanca Wetlands Wildlife Habitat

7 Zapata Falls Recreation Area This 30 foot (9 m) high waterfall cascades within a narrow chasm about 10 miles south of the dunes. It is especially refreshing on a summer afternoon. Drive south on Highway 150 to the Zapata Falls Recreation Area sign. Drive 3 miles (4.8km) up the gravel road, then hike 1/2 mile (0.8 km) to the creek. Wade upstream into the narrow cave to see the falls. Watch for falling rocks. Water is swift and deep in early summer. Bureau of Land Management, 719-589-5941.



Zapata Falls



San Luis Lakes State Park

8 Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve

9 San Luis Lakes State Park and Wildlife Area Features diverse shore birds. State park is open year round; wildlife area closed February 15 - July 15 for nesting season. <http://parks.state.co.us/Parks/SanLuis> 719-378-2020

10 Orient Mine, Valley View Hot Springs This historic iron mine is home to the largest known colony of bats in Colorado. On the same property, a resort and campground has emerged around a series of natural hot springs. 719-256-5436, www.olt.org Note: Valley View Hot Springs is clothing optional. Ask at the Great Sand Dunes Visitor Center for an information sheet about all hot springs in the San Luis Valley.

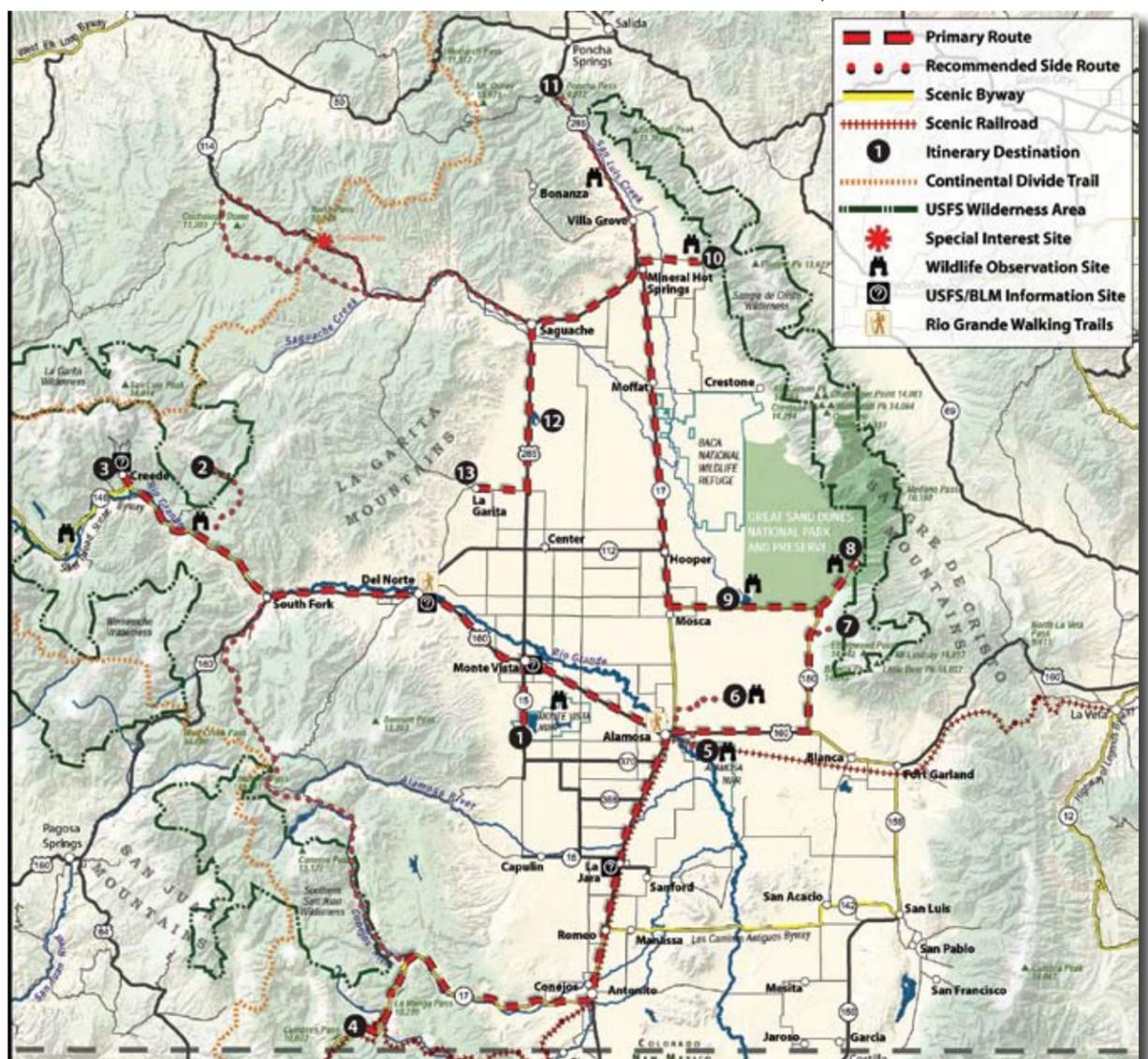
11 Poncha Pass At 9,012 feet, Poncha Pass is the San Luis Valley's scenic northern entrance.

12 Russell Lakes State Wildlife Area These wetlands are legendary among Colorado birders. Closed February 15 to July 15 to protect nesting birds, but the Johnson Lake Nature Trail is open here year-round. Colorado Wildlife Stamp required for entry. <http://wildlife.state.co.us/LandWater/StateWildlifeAreas>

13 Penitente Canyon Recreation Area Today Penitente Canyon is one of Colorado's premier rock climbing destinations. An attractive campground as well as mountain bike and hiking trails are also located in and around this scenic canyon. <http://crestonevisit.com/04/pages/13.html>



Penitente Canyon

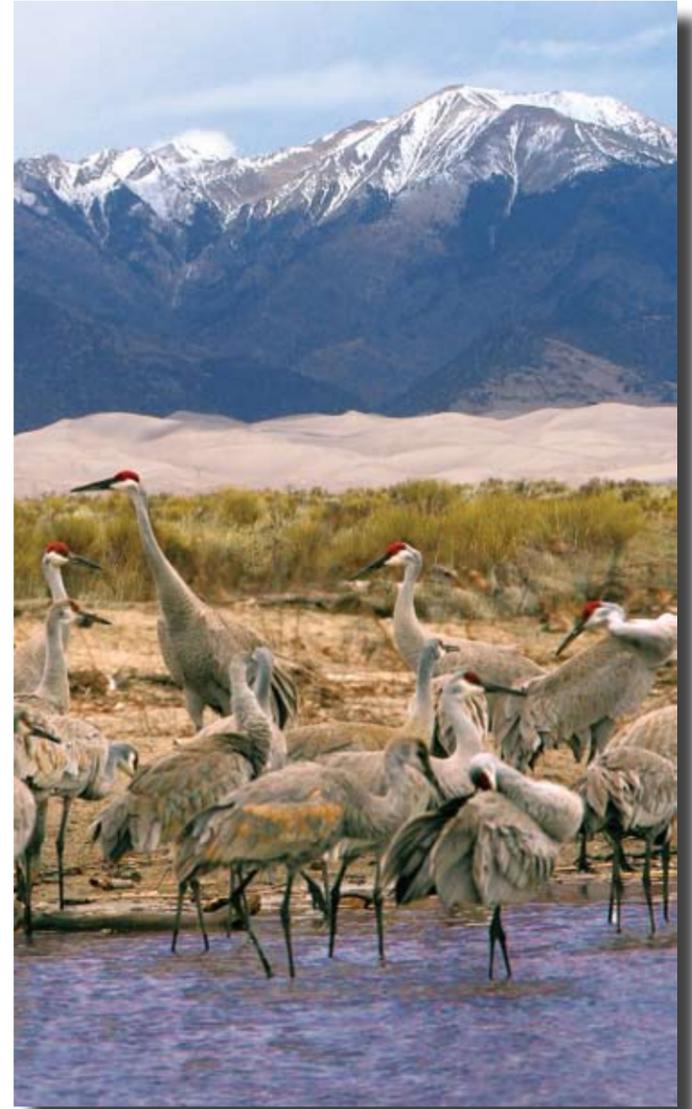




National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Great Sand Dunes
National Park and Preserve
11999 Highway 150
Mosca, Colorado 81146

www.nps.gov/grsa



Tens of thousands of majestic sandhill cranes spend their spring and fall each year in the San Luis Valley. They make a soft chortling call that reverberates through the valley's wetlands.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

K-12 Learning Opportunities

If you are a teacher or trip leader, consider scheduling an education program with Great Sand Dunes staff. Education programs are age-appropriate, correlated with Colorado Content Standards, and incorporate active learning in the park's magnificent outdoor classroom. Hands-on field and classroom learning experiences can bring wildlife, plants, history, geology, and other subjects alive for learners of all styles.



- Reserve use of the Discovery Room at the Visitor Center
- Schedule a ranger to visit San Luis Valley classrooms or educational events
- Bring your group to the park for a ranger-led education program (reserve in advance)



“Out of the Blue” is an online curriculum for K-12 teachers and students:
www.nps.gov/grsa/resources/curriculum/intro.htm



- Online resources provide students who live far away with an engaging opportunity to learn about geology, hydrology, ecology, and cultural history.

“The entire website is very user friendly. With the range of activities you have it is easy to find an activity suitable for the learning style and ability of any student.”

- a 5th grade teacher

To learn more about educational opportunities at the Dunes or schedule a program, please contact Education Specialist Melanie Rawlins at 719-378-6344, or email melanie_rawlins@nps.gov