Mesa Verde National Park

Summer/Fall 2013

Visitor Guide

Official park guide
May 24 to November 2, 2013

Long House

Purchase a Tour Ticket... page 12

Take a Hike... page 4

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Visitor Services and Facilities

Visitor Center, Tickets, Store, and ATM

May 24 to September 2	7:30 am to 7:00 pm
September 3 to November 2	8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum

May 24 to October 19	8:00 am to 6:30 pm
October 20 to November 2	8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Morefield Campground Ranger Station

May 24 to September 2	Ask a park employee
September 3	Closed for season

Chief Ranger's Office (First Aid)

May 24 to November 2	8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Wetherill Mesa Information kiosk

May 24 to September 2	10:00 am to 4:00 pm
September 3	Closed for season

Picnic Areas

Chapin Mesa Picnic Area	8:00 am to sunset
Cliff Palace Picnic Area	8:00 am to sunset

Colorado Welcome Center in Cortez

May 24 to May 26	8:00 am to 5:00 pm
May 27 to September 1	8:00 am to 6:00 pm
September 2 to November 2	9:00 am to 4:00 pm

U.S. Postal Service

May 24 to October 31

Monday through Friday	8:30 am to 4:30 pm
Saturdays	10:00 am to 2:00 pm

November 1 to November 2

Monday through Friday	8:30 am to 4:30 pm
Saturdays	Closed

Protect the Park, Protect Yourself

This partial list of regulations and laws is designed to help you have a safe and enjoyable visit, and to protect Mesa Verde's ecosystems and fragile archeological sites.

For more information, questions or additional regulations, please ask a park employee.

How you can protect park resources

Natural and cultural resources at Mesa Verde National Park are protected by federal law. It is illegal to collect plants, animals, natural objects, or artifacts. By leaving them undisturbed, all generations may enjoy and learn from them.

Chasing, capturing, feeding, or teasing wildlife is illegal and dangerous. Keep your food, cooking equipment, and garbage in your vehicle or hard-sided trailer, especially in the campground.

Fire is an important part of Mesa Verde's story. Most fires here were started naturally, by lightning. Help us prevent human-caused fires by being very careful with matches, cigarettes, and campfires.

Archeological sites are fragile. Please do not sit, stand, climb, or lean on these 750-year old fragile structures.

Black bear

Share the Road

Park roads are steep, narrow, and winding. Do not stop on the roadway; use pullouts or overlooks. Watch for wildlife, pay close attention to your speed around curves, and obey all traffic signs. Trailers and towed vehicles are not allowed beyond Morefield Campground. Extra parking is available near the park entrance.

Bicyclists use caution! The road is steep with few shoulders. Ride single file and stay as far to the right as possible. Bicyclists, like vehicle drivers, must comply with traffic regulations. Bicycles are allowed on paved roads only. Wetherill Mesa Road is closed to bicycles.

Mule deer

Rocks fall

The park road is built on unstable soils. As a result, rocks and boulders can break loose and fall on the road, posing a hazard to you and your car. If you see boulders blocking the road, do not attempt to move them. Call 970-529-4461 or contact a park employee.

Visit a cliff dwelling safely

At 7,000 feet (2135 m) elevation, you may feel short of breath, nauseated, or tire easily. Plan ahead and know your own limits.

Trails into cliff dwellings are uneven and steep, with steps and ladders, cliff edges and tight passages, with strenuous elevation changes. Visiting cliff dwellings is not recommended for anyone with heart or respiratory problems or other physical limitations. You can view many cliff dwellings from roadway overlooks.

Water is vital

Dehydration is a common problem in Mesa Verde. Carry water with you everywhere, and drink it. You can fill your reusable water bottle at all park facilities, including Cliff Palace and Wetherill Mesa Information kiosk. Food and other beverages are not allowed in archeological sites.

"Can you hear me?"

Once you drive through the park entrance, cell phone service is limited. You can find telephones and pay phones at park facilities. Wi-Fi service is available at the Morefield Campground Store, Far View Lodge, Far View Terrace, and Spruce Tree Terrace. In case of emergency, contact a park employee or call 911.

Do you need gas?

Gas is available at Morefield Campground only. While in the park, you will probably drive at minimum 50 miles. Plan accordingly.

Camping?

Morefield Campground is located four miles from the park entrance. It has over 250 camp sites and 15 full hook-up RV sites. There are restrooms with flush toilets, showers, a camp store, coin-operated laundry, gasoline, and an RV dumping station. To learn more turn to page 11. Camping is not allowed elsewhere in the park. Other campgrounds are located in Cortez and Mancos, Colorado.

Pets need to be protected too

For your pet's sake, do not leave them in your vehicle without proper ventilation and water, and only when temperatures are not hazardous to their health. Leaving pets alone tied to any object is illegal.

Activities with pets are limited. Leashed pets may accompany you on paved roads and parking lots and in the campground. Even if leashed, pets are not allowed on trails, scenic overlooks, or in buildings. Please, clean up after your pooch.

Firearms

Possession of firearms must comply with federal and state laws. In Mesa Verde hunting and recreational use of firearms is prohibited.

Park Entrance Fees

From May 24 to September 2 the park entry fee is $15.00 per private car or $8.00 per person on foot, on a bicycle, or on a motorcycle. September 3 to November 2 the fee is $10.00 per car or $5.00 per person. For commercial vehicle fees, call 970-529-4465 or visit www.nps.gov/meve. Federal Interagency annual access, military, and senior passes are available at the park entrance gate.

Make the Most of Your Visit

Top Five Mesa Verde Activities

Take a glimpse into an ancient culture
The Mesa Verde Visitor and Research Center and Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum offer glimpses into the culture of Ancestral Pueblo people. In the museum, look for a hafted knife with a quartzite blade; can you imagine a hunter skinning a deer using that knife? For facility hours see page 1.

Knife

Visit a cliff dwelling community
Five cliff dwellings are open to the public. Cliff Palace, Balcony House, and Long House, can only be entered on a ranger-guided tour. Spruce Tree House and Step House can be explored on your own. Whatever your schedule or interests, details for how to visit a cliff dwelling are on page 5 and 12.

Explore from your car
Mesa Top Loop Road on Chapin Mesa is a six-mile drive that offers amazing canyon views and a chance to learn about the Ancestral Pueblo people's occupation and architecture through time. To help plan your drive read more below.

Attend a free ranger program
Hear about Mesa Verde from the park rangers who know it inside and out. Learn the vibrant story of the Ancestral Pueblo people's lifeways on the mesa for over 750 years. Listen to bird song on an early morning walk. Whatever your interest, you will find a program to satisfy your curiosity on page 6.

Green Towhee

Go for a walk or a hike
Wander Prater Ridge Trail, try to decipher the art on Petroglyph Trail, or discover the lushness of Spruce Canyon. Whatever you decide, taking a walk or a hike will give you a chance to see some of the park's hidden gems. See page 4 for trail specifics.

Planning Your Visit

Whether you have a few hours or a few days, we invite you to enjoy the spectacular scenery and share a rare glimpse into the ancient culture that shaped this region for over 750 years. Here are a few suggestions for making the most of your time in the park.

If you have a half-day:
First, stop by the Visitor and Research Center, at the park entrance. Rangers here will help plan your visit. While there, enjoy the exhibits and browse through the store for a selection of books and trail guides.

Twenty-two miles (35.4 km) south of the Visitor and Research Center is Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum. Here exhibits and dioramas trace the lives of the Ancestral Pueblo people. Also available is a 25-minute park video shown every half-hour, and a museum store.

Take a self-guided tour of Spruce Tree House, the park's best-preserved cliff dwelling, located adjacent to the museum. Trail guides are available. Allow one hour for this ½ mile (0.8 km) round-trip paved trail with a 100-foot (30 m) descent and ascent. Rangers are onsite to answer your questions.

Or, take a scenic drive on Mesa Top Loop Road. Stops along the six-mile (10 km), 45-minute drive, with easily accessible, short, paved walking trails, reveal the full range of architecture from earliest pithouses to the cliff dwellings. Highlights include views of Square Tower House and Cliff Palace.

If you have one full day:
You'll have time to do all half-day activities, plus join a one-hour ranger-guided tour of either Cliff Palace or Balcony House. Tickets are required. Tickets can be purchased at the Visitor and Research Center, Morefield Ranger Station, museum store, or Colorado Welcome Center in Cortez. See facilities hours on page 1.

You can also visit Far View Sites, four miles (6.4 km) north of the museum. This self-guided walk includes Far View House and four other villages plus a dry reservoir all linked by a level ¾-mile (1.2 km) dirt path. See page 5.

If you have two full days:
Add a 90-minute ranger-guided tour of Long House on Wetherill Mesa. Tickets are required. Tickets can be purchased at the Visitor and Research Center, Morefield Ranger Station, museum store, or Colorado Welcome Center in Cortez.

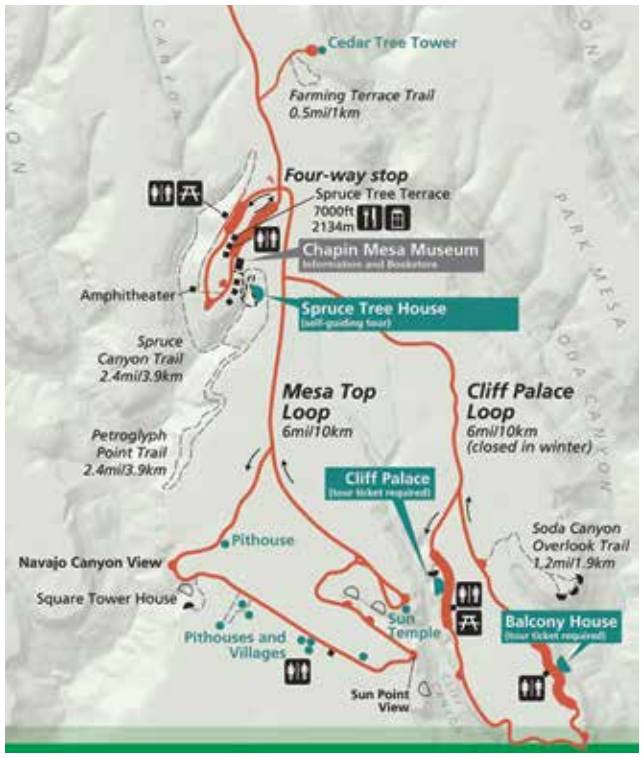
Drive Wetherill Mesa road, walk Badger House Community Trail, and ride the tram to overlooks.

Visit Step House to view Modified Basketmaker (A.D. 550 to A.D. 750) and Classic Pueblo (A.D. 1100 to A.D. 1300) period architecture. The ¾-mile (1.3 km) round-trip trail begins at the Information kiosk, and includes a 100-foot (30 m) descent and ascent on a winding path. Allow 45 to 60 minutes.

If you have more than two full days:
You'll have the opportunity to tour all ticketed cliff dwellings, drive all the park roads, and hike one or more of the park trails. See pages 4 and 12.

Exploring on Foot

Chapin Mesa



Farming Terraces

0.5 miles (0.8 km) round-trip
Beginning and ending on the road to Cedar Tree Tower, this ½-mile loop trail leads to a series of prehistoric check dams built by Ancestral Pueblo people to create farming terraces. The check dams improved crop yields by collecting water and soil from natural run-off.

Spruce Canyon Trail

2.4 miles (3.9 km) round-trip
This hike begins from the Spruce Tree House trail, follows the bottom of Spruce Canyon, and switchbacks up to the mesa top just northeast of the picnic area on the museum loop road. Access is available only when Spruce Tree House is open.

Petroglyph Point Trail

2.4 miles (3.9 km) to complete loop
This hike begins from the Spruce Tree House trail. It follows an ancient path along the canyon wall to the largest petroglyph panel in the park. Access to trail is only available when Spruce Tree House is open.

Soda Canyon Overlook Trail

1.2 miles (1.9 km) round-trip
This easy walk begins a ½-mile north of the Balcony House parking area along Cliff Palace Loop Road. The trail leads to canyon edge views of Balcony House and other archeological sites along Soda Canyon.

Wetherill Mesa

Nordenskiöld Site No. 16 Trail

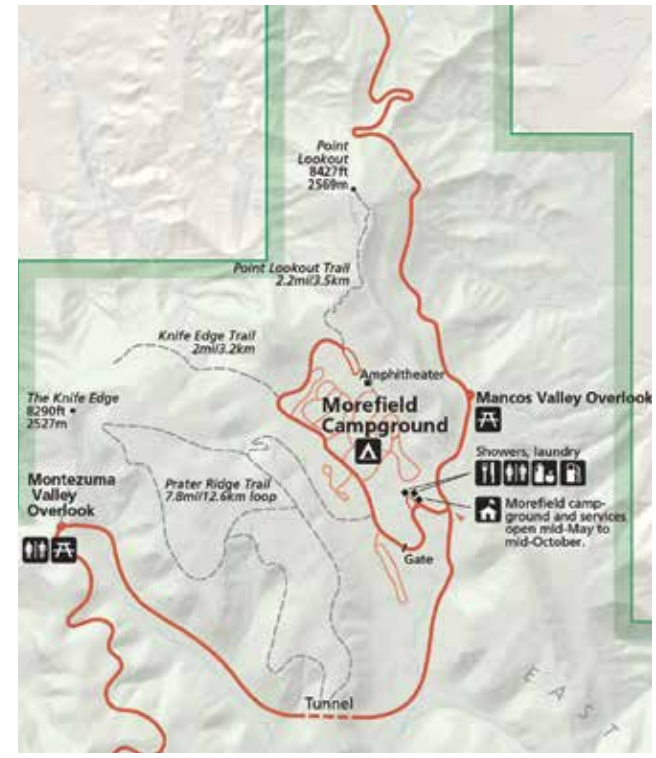
2 miles (3.2 km) round-trip
Named for Gustaf Nordenskiöld, who explored the area in 1891, this trail offers a leisurely walk through recovering fire-scarred vegetation and leads to an overlook of Nordenskiöld Site No. 16. Please note: there is no shade; bring sun protection and water.

Badger House Community Trail

1.2 miles (1.9 km)
This trail begins at the Information kiosk and winds through four mesa top sites, as it gently drops in elevation to the Two Raven House tram stop.

Nordenskiöld Site No. 16 Trail

Morefield Campground



Point Lookout Trail

2.2 miles (3.5 km) round-trip
Follow the switchbacks up Point Lookout and traverse the mesa top. From on top you will see sweeping views of Montezuma and Mancos Valleys and distant mountains.

Knife Edge Trail

2 miles (3.2 km) round-trip
The trail follows the park's historic entrance road from the northwest corner of Morefield Campground towards the Montezuma Valley overlook. This unpaved level trail provides good views of the Montezuma Valley and is an excellent place to watch sunset.

Prater Ridge Trail

7.8 miles (12.6 km) to complete north and south loops
Beginning on the west end of Morefield Campground, the north loop trail ascends Prater Ridge and follows the top of the ridge above the Montezuma Valley. The shorter south loop offers views of Prater Canyon.

Please respect these fragile places by leaving plants, animals, and artifacts undisturbed.

For your safety:
- Hiking is permitted only on designated trails
- Carry and drink plenty of water
- Stay away from cliff edges as undercut overhangs are dangerous
- Trails can be muddy and slippery after summer rains. Proper footwear is recommended
- Pets are not allowed on trails

Exploring on Your Own

Chapin Mesa

Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum

Dioramas and artifacts here shed light on Ancestral Pueblo people's lifeways. A 25-minute orientation film is shown on the hour and half-hour. A museum store, water, restrooms, cafe, gift shop, and post office are located nearby.

Spruce Tree House

Mesa Verde's best-preserved and third largest cliff dwelling was constructed between A.D. 1211 and A.D. 1278. This prehistoric village built into a natural alcove may have housed 60 to 80 people in about 130 rooms and eight kivas.

Allow 45 minutes to one hour for the 100-foot (30 m) elevation descent and ascent on a paved winding path. Trail is ½ mile (0.8 km) round-trip and begins at the museum. Rangers are in the site to answer your questions.

May 24 to September 2
8:30 am to 6:30 pm
September 3 to October 19
9:00 am to 6:30 pm
October 20 to November 2
Open 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Far View Sites

Far View Sites

This mesa top community includes Far View House, four other villages, and a dry reservoir. On this trail you can explore Ancestral Pueblo people's life from A.D. 900 to A.D. 1300. The level unpaved ¾ mile trail (1.2 km) is open 7:30 am to sunset.

Wetherill Mesa

Wetherill Mesa Road

Less crowded than Chapin Mesa with only trails and tram transportation, Wetherill Mesa offers you a quiet setting to appreciate the archeological sites and scenery. If you plan to visit Long House while you are on Wetherill Mesa be sure to purchase at ticket at the Visitor and Research Center.

This 29-mile (46.8 km) drive from the Visitor Center follows the northern and western boundary of the park, offering spectacular views of the surrounding valleys. Allow 1-¼ hours for this drive.

Wetherill Mesa Road is open 9:00 am to 4:15 pm daily. Vehicles are restricted to less than 8,000 lbs GVW and less than 25 feet (7.6 m) in length. Bicycles are not allowed. This road closes for the season on September 3.

Wetherill Mesa Information kiosk and tram

At the end of the Wetherill Mesa Road, you will find an information kiosk, picnic tables, books and mementos, and snack service. Open from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

A tram leaves the kiosk every half-hour beginning at 9:30 am. You can ride the tram to view archeological sites and to access trails. Long House ticket holders are seated first; others are seated on a space-available basis. The last tram to visit overlooks and trails leaves at 3:30 pm.

Wetherill Mesa biodiesel tram

Accessibility

Access to Mesa Verde's premier sites is challenging. Most cliff dwelling trails are steep and uneven, with steps and ladders, cliff edges and tight passages, and include strenuous elevation changes. However many cliff dwellings and mesa top sites are visible from roadway overlooks, short paved trails, and from your vehicle.

For assistance, ask a park employee, or call 970-529-4465 for more information.

Accessible services:

Mesa Verde Visitor and Research Center
Designated parking, restrooms, exhibits, an ATM, a drinking fountain, and a wheel-chair available for loan.

Far View Sites
Designated parking and a restroom, and an unpaved gravel ¾-mile (1.2 km) level trail to six archeological sites.

Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum Area
Designated parking, restrooms, exhibits, a drinking fountain, pay phones and a ramp. Services includes a portable ramp to enter exhibit rooms, a wheelchair available for loan, and a 25-minute orientation film with captions.

Spruce Tree House
There are no ladders or steps on this paved steep ½-mile (0.8 km) round trip trail that descends 100 feet (30 m). Four benches are available for the moderately strenuous return trip. If you prefer, you can view Spruce Tree House from a covered patio behind the Chief Ranger's Office, adjacent to the museum.

Mesa Top and Cliff Palace Loop Roads
Designated parking, restrooms, and paved trails along each six-mile (10 km) loop road. Binoculars are helpful for cross-canyon views of cliff dwellings, including Cliff Palace and Square Tower House.

Wetherill Mesa
Designated parking, restrooms, and picnic tables. You can ride the accessible tram to paved overlooks of Kodak House and Long House. Badger House Community trail is paved, with a slight descent from the tram stop to mesa top sites.

Park Ranger Programs- No fee

Discover Mesa Verde with these free programs given by park rangers. Stop in at the Visitor and Research Center and Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum for details. Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times. Programs may be cancelled during inclement weather. For information on touring a cliff dwelling, see page 12.

Programs	Days	Time	Duration	Notes
Morefield Campground Evening Program Enjoy a National Park Service tradition by joining a ranger to learn about Mesa Verde's fascinating natural and cultural history.	Nightly May 26 to July 27 July 28 to August 24 August 25 to September 2	 9:00 pm 8:30 pm 8:15 pm	45 minutes	There is no fee. Bring a flashlight.
Far View Lodge Evening Program The park joins ARAMARK to offer these presentations that cover topics from pottery styles and wildlife to perspectives on the Ancestral Puebloan landscape.	Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays May 26 to September 6	7:00 pm	45 minutes	There is no fee. Lodge downstairs library.
Bird Hike Knife Edge Trail is an excellent place to see birds and wildlife. Watch for golden eagles and peregrine falcons.	Mondays May 27 to September 2	7:00 am	2 hours	There is no fee. Bring binoculars.
Wetherill Mesa Bike and Hike This is a special time of year to visit as the more relaxing fall season replaces the busy days of summer. You are invited to ride your bike or hike to Long House and Step House cliff dwellings. Rangers are available to answer your questions.	September 14 and 28	9:00 am to 4:00 pm	All day event	Wetherill Tram is not running so you are invited to ride your bike or hike the tram road.

Park Fun For Kids

Junior Ranger Program

Hey, kids! Become a Junior Ranger and have a great time learning about Mesa Verde National Park. Becoming a Junior Ranger is a great way to explore your national parks and help take care of them for the future.

Activity Booklet

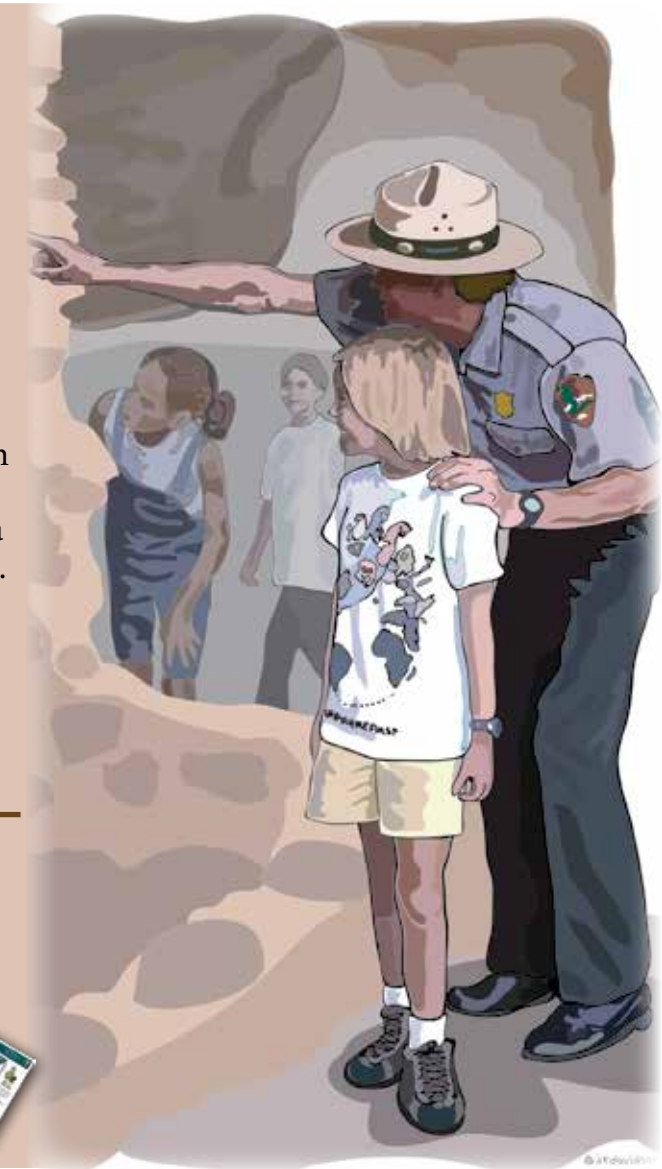
Children from age 4 to 12 can become a Junior Ranger. Just pick up a free activity booklet at the Visitor and Research Center or Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum, explore the park and complete the activities. When done, take the booklet to any park information center for review.

A special Mesa Verde Junior Ranger badge is awarded for a job well done.

Junior Ranger Station

Visit the Mesa Verde Junior Ranger Station at the Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum for some extra Junior Ranger fun. Learn more about the Ancestral Pueblo people with kid-friendly exhibits or hands-on activities. This is a great place to be sworn in as a Mesa Verde Junior Ranger and receive your badge.

Located Inside Museum Courtyard
June 10 to August 10
3:00 pm* to 6:00 pm
*Open earlier when staffing allows



Fun at Morefield Campground

Camping is a wonderful time to discover the natural side of Mesa Verde. For a fun, family-oriented way to explore your natural surroundings, pick up a Junior Naturalist Activity Booklet and check out a Discovery Pack.

Morefield Campground Ranger Station
May 24 to September 2
See a park employee for hours

Junior Ranger Station (in museum)
June 10 to August 10
3:00 pm to 6:00 pm

Park Ranger Programs- Fee

Mesa Verde offers visitors opportunities to explore the backcountry of the park. Tickets for these special hikes can be purchased at online at www.recreation.gov. Tickets are non-refundable. For a ranger-guided tour of Cliff Palace, Balcony House, or Long House, see page 12.

Oak Tree House

This 60-room site built on two ledges is one of the largest cliff dwellings in the park.

This 2-hour, 1-mile (1.6 km) round-trip hike is moderately strenuous. Expect a narrow, unpaved, uneven trail, with steps carved into the sandstone, steep drop-offs, two ladders (4-feet and 15-feet) (1.2 m and 4.6 m), and a total elevation change of 200 feet (61 m).

- May 28 to September 7
- Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays
- Meet ranger at Sun Temple on the Mesa Top Loop Road at 8:00 am
- Tour is limited to 10 people
- Price: $25.00 per person, all ages

Upper Navajo Canyon

On this hike you will view several small alcove sites, and experience two different natural ecosystems as you descend from the pinyon-juniper woodlands to the mountain chaparral in the canyon bottom.

This moderate 5-hour, almost 6-mile (9.6 km) round-trip hike follows an unpaved, uneven trail that descends 760 feet (232 m), includes steep drop-offs, and switchbacks.

- September 5 to October 5
- Thursdays and Saturdays at 8:00 am
- Meet ranger at Far View Terrace parking lot
- Tour is limited to 14 people
- Price: $18.00 per person, all ages

Spring House

As you hike to Spring House, you will be rewarded with views of alcove sites. Spring House is extremely fragile. You will not enter the site but will get excellent views from a platform built at the south end of the village.

This 8-hour, 8-mile (12.9 km) round-trip hike is very strenuous. Expect an unpaved, uneven trail with an elevation change of 1,500 feet, steep drop-offs, one short ladder, and switchbacks.

- May 26 to June 5 and September 1 to October 6
- Sundays and Wednesdays at 8:00 am
- Meet ranger at museum
- Tour is limited to 10 people
- Price: $40.00 per person, all ages

Wetherill Mesa Experience

Spectacular views of canyons and alcove sites and Wetherill Mesa in the autumn reward hikers on this hike.

This moderate 4-hour, 4-mile (6.4 km) round-trip hike follows an old fire road and an unpaved trail across Wetherill Mesa.

- September 6 to October 4
- Tuesdays and Fridays
- Meet ranger at Far View Terrace parking lot by 9:00 am to caravan through a locked gate. Drive time from gate to trailhead is 45 minutes.
- Tour is limited to 14 people
- Price: $18.00 per person, all ages

Know Before You Go

Your safety depends on your good judgment, adequate preparation, and constant attention. Wear sturdy shoes or boots, and bring plenty of water. Shade is limited, so bring a hat and sunscreen. Evaluate your physical condition when choosing a hike.

Elevations range between 7,000 and 7,500 feet (2134 m and 2286 m) above sea level. You should plan for all weather possibilities because weather conditions are quite variable. It's possible to begin your hike in full sun and end with a thunderstorm or a snowstorm.

What To Bring

Bring a minimum of ½ gallon (2 liters) of water per person. You will also need a daypack large enough to carry water, sunscreen, hat, rainwear, binoculars, and camera. Wear sturdy hiking shoes. Please, do not bring any type of snack or food, or drinks other than water into a cliff dwelling.

Restrictions

Due to overhanging branches, uneven terrain, and footing obscured by vegetation, children must be able to keep pace with the group and walk the extent of the trail on their own without difficulty. Children in backpacks are not permitted.

Please understand that once you begin these hikes, neither you nor your children may "turn around" as there will be no ranger to escort you back to the trailhead. Carefully consider the distance and difficulty of this hike before purchasing a ticket.

Be On Time

Please be at your hike departure location, ready to go, at least 15 minutes early. The park road is narrow and winding, and can take 45 to 60 minutes to drive from the park entrance to departure locations. To be fair to others, the tour may leave without you if you are late. Please plan accordingly.

A Vibrant Culture

Contemporary Pueblo people from Hopi, Zuni, and Rio Grande Pueblos are descendants of Ancestral Pueblo people of Mesa Verde. This summer the park will host Pueblo artisans and dancers as they share their vibrant culture. These special events will be held at the Visitor and Research Center, located near the park entrance just off U.S. Highway 160.

May 25 and 26: At the 12th annual Indian Arts and Cultural Festival, artisans' work is judged and presented for public viewing and sale.

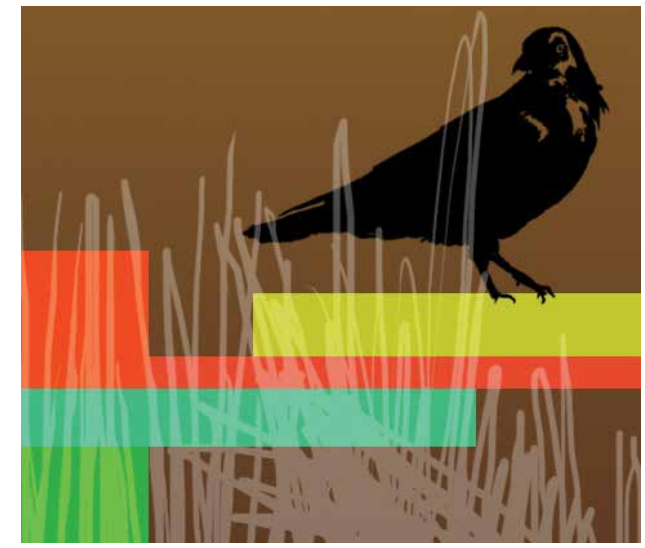
June 29 and 30: Flora Lomayestewa has been bringing her Hopi dance group from Shungopavi village on Second Mesa to Mesa Verde for the last twenty-five years. The Lomayestewa family invites you to view traditional Hopi dances scheduled both days at 11:00 am, 12:00 pm, 2:00 pm, and 4:00 pm.

September 21: Starr Tafoya from Santa Clara Pueblo has given pottery demonstrations at Mesa Verde for over fifteen years. She is an award winner at the Santa Fe Indian Market. Join her at 3:00 pm for a demonstration, firing, and sale of her black and redware pottery.

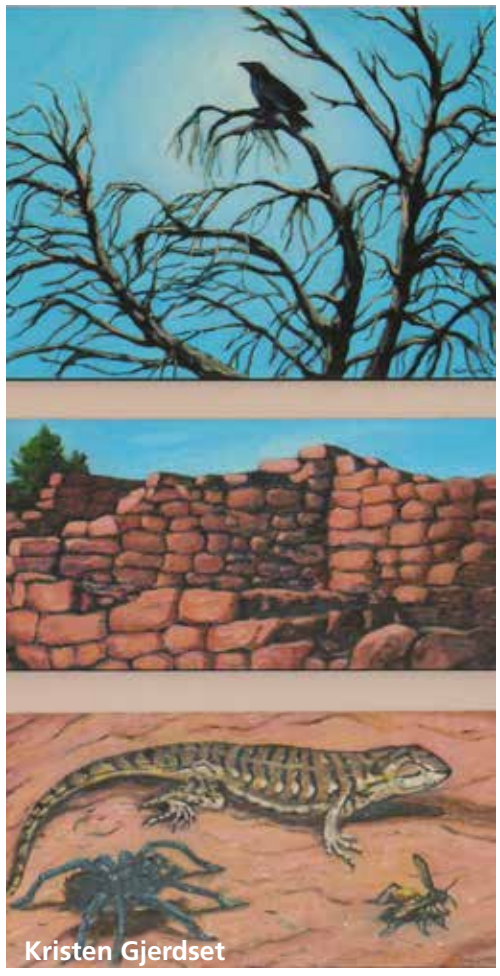
Four Corners Lecture Series

The Four Corners Lecture Series is sponsored by nine local entities, including Fort Lewis College, Anasazi Heritage Center, and Mesa Verde National Park. The 2013 lecture series theme centers around ***Knowing the Greater Southwest***. Each hosting organization will sponsor speakers that have expertise in a subject relating to that theme.

Visit www.nps.gov/meve or ask a park employee for the schedule, list of speakers, and subject for each free presentation.



Artist-in-Residence Program



Mesa Verde National Park's Artist-in-Residence (AIR) program provides professional writers, composers, and visual and performing artists the opportunity to pursue their particular art form while being surrounded by the park's inspiring ancient architecture and natural landscape.

Mesa Verde's AIR program is managed by the Mesa Verde Museum Association (MVMA), a nonprofit partner to the National Park Service. The works completed under this program contribute to the public understanding and appreciation of our national parks, create a legacy preserved for future generations, and offer park visitors and the public an opportunity to see our heritage through the eyes and ears of contributing artists.

Five artists are selected annually to live in the park for two weeks during the spring or fall pursuing their craft. They will each present a free public demonstration, performance or talk during their residency.

Public presentations will be offered on:
May 16, May 30, September 12, September 26, and October 10.

Ask a park employee or contact MVMA at 970-529-4445 for specific time, location, and subject for these presentations. For more AIR program information, please visit www.nps.gov/meve/supportyourpark/artists_in_residence.htm

Trespass horses

Horse and Cattle in Mesa Verde

As you drive around the park, you may see a horse or a band of horses. Although picturesque, these horses and cattle are unclaimed trespass livestock that damage archeological sites, destroy native vegetation, and outcompete native wildlife, like deer and elk, at water sources.

These horses and cattle are neither wild nor protected by the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act. These trespassers have been coming into Mesa Verde National Park since it was created in 1906. In 1908, the superintendent declared that livestock was "not permitted" in the park. Then in 1912, the Assistant Secretary of Interior in the Rules and Regulations of the Mesa Verde National Park stated they were "strictly forbidden" within park boundaries.

The park has been trying to reduce the numbers of trespass horses and cattle ever since. Today, management actions to reduce these impacts have included rounding up livestock and returning them to their owners, and improving the boundary fence to reduce movement of livestock into the park. Once the livestock in the park is removed, we expect to see a decrease in impacts to cultural and natural resources.

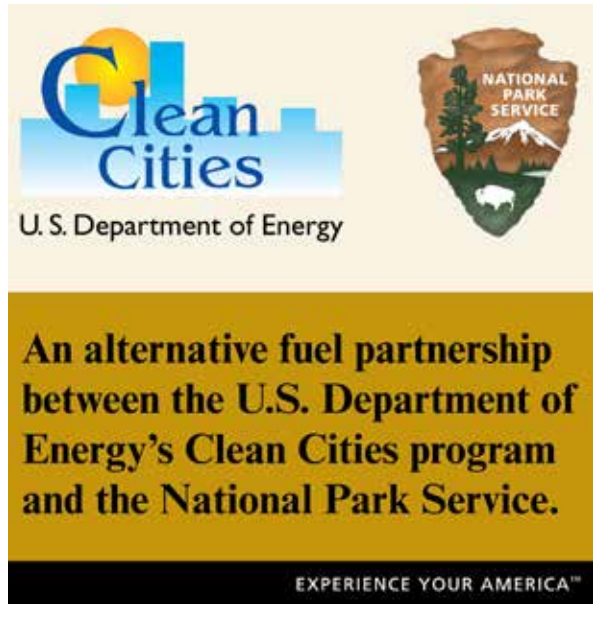
Horses and cattle in the park may seem tame and approachable, but they are not. If approached, these feral animals may become aggressive. They could bite and kick, which may result in injury to you and them. Animals that become aggressive to humans may have to be killed. It is illegal to feed trespass livestock or wildlife in national parks. Help us keep you safe and wildlife wild.

Mule deer

Colorado Clean Cities Coalition

Mesa Verde National Park in partnership with Southern Colorado Clean Cities Coalition, and ARAMARK Parks & Destinations was awarded project funding to deploy alternative fuels and vehicles in the park. This project includes a new liquid propane gas (LPG) refueling station for public and park use along with a LPG pickup truck, LPG bus, and LPG-fueled lawnmower. An idle reduction campaign will also be integrated into the park's education and outreach program in an effort to reduce emissions from unnecessary idling of park, concession, and visitors' vehicles. Each project component will help reduce environmental impact of park's operations while simultaneously educating visitors about the importance of conserving resources and reducing waste. The project is expected to be fully implemented in 2014.

In 2010, the Department of Energy through the Clean Cities Initiative signed a five-year interagency agreement with the National Park Service (NPS). The Clean Cities National Park Initiative supports projects that deploy alternative fuels, vehicles, and refueling infrastructure and help educate park visitors on the benefits of reducing dependence on petroleum, cutting greenhouse gases, and helping the NPS ease traffic congestion. This agreement complements the NPS Climate Friendly Parks program, and enables the partnership to support transportation-related projects that use renewable and alternative fuels, electric drive and advanced vehicles, and fuel-saving measures. The initiative also works to support "Greening our Rides" efforts outlined in the NPS Green Parks Plan.



Mesa Verde Museum Association

Providing Memories, Inspiring Stewardship

Mesa Verde Museum Association (MVMA) is the innovative educational nonprofit partner that inspires life-long stewardship of Mesa Verde's cultural and natural heritage. Since 1930, MVMA has supported education and research in the park through an active publishing program, membership program, in-depth learning opportunities, and retail stores. Proceeds from all our programs generated over $600,000 in park support in 2012.

You Can Make a Difference!

You can help preserve and protect the park for future generations by becoming a Mesa Verde Association member today!

Your tax-deductible membership dues will support the work of both MVMA and the Mesa Verde Foundation, the park's capital fundraising partner. Members receive a 20% discount in MVMA stores and online, periodic e-newsletters, a year-end gift, and discounts at most cooperating association bookstores in national parks and other public lands across the country. Ask about membership at MVMA stores, call us 970-529-4445 or 800-305-6053, or visit www.mesaverde.org/membership.

Replica pottery

Enhance Your Visit

You'll find an outstanding selection of Mesa Verde publications and products at our stores that will help you further explore and appreciate this park's incomparable cultural and natural resources. MVMA stores are located in the Visitor and Research Center, Morefield Ranger Station, Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum, Wetherill Mesa Information kiosk, and Colorado Welcome Center at 928 East Main Street in Cortez, and online at www.mesaverde.org.

Mesa Verde Museum Association

10% off your purchase

Present this coupon at the register.

Redeemable at MVMA stores in the Visitor and Research Center, Chapin Mesa Archeological Museum, and the Colorado Welcome Center in Cortez.

Coupon is good on all regularly priced items.
Not valid with other discounts.

Expiration date: 12/31/2013

Visitor and Research Center Store

Just for Mesa Verde Junior Rangers!

We've designed a special colorful logo to recognize Mesa Verde Junior Rangers! It features the tower from Square Tower House cliff dwelling (which you can see from the Mesa Top Loop), a brightly-colored collared lizard, an Ancestral Puebloan black-on-white pottery design found in the Mesa Verde region, and the iconic "flat hat" that park rangers wear. We offer a variety of educational products and apparel for every Junior Ranger that features this distinctive logo. Come see our selection today.

Kids who present their completed Mesa Verde Junior Ranger booklet and their badge at any MVMA store will receive a 15% discount on their entire purchase!

ARAMARK Concessioner Services

Experience Mesa Verde

Food, Shopping, Guided Tours, and Lodging

Concessions at Mesa Verde National Park are managed by ARAMARK–Mesa Verde Company. We provide lodging, retail shops, food services, campground, and guided bus tours. (800) 449-2288, 970-529-4422 locally, or visit and book on-line at www.visitmesaverde.com

Fine dining at the Metate Room at Far View Lodge

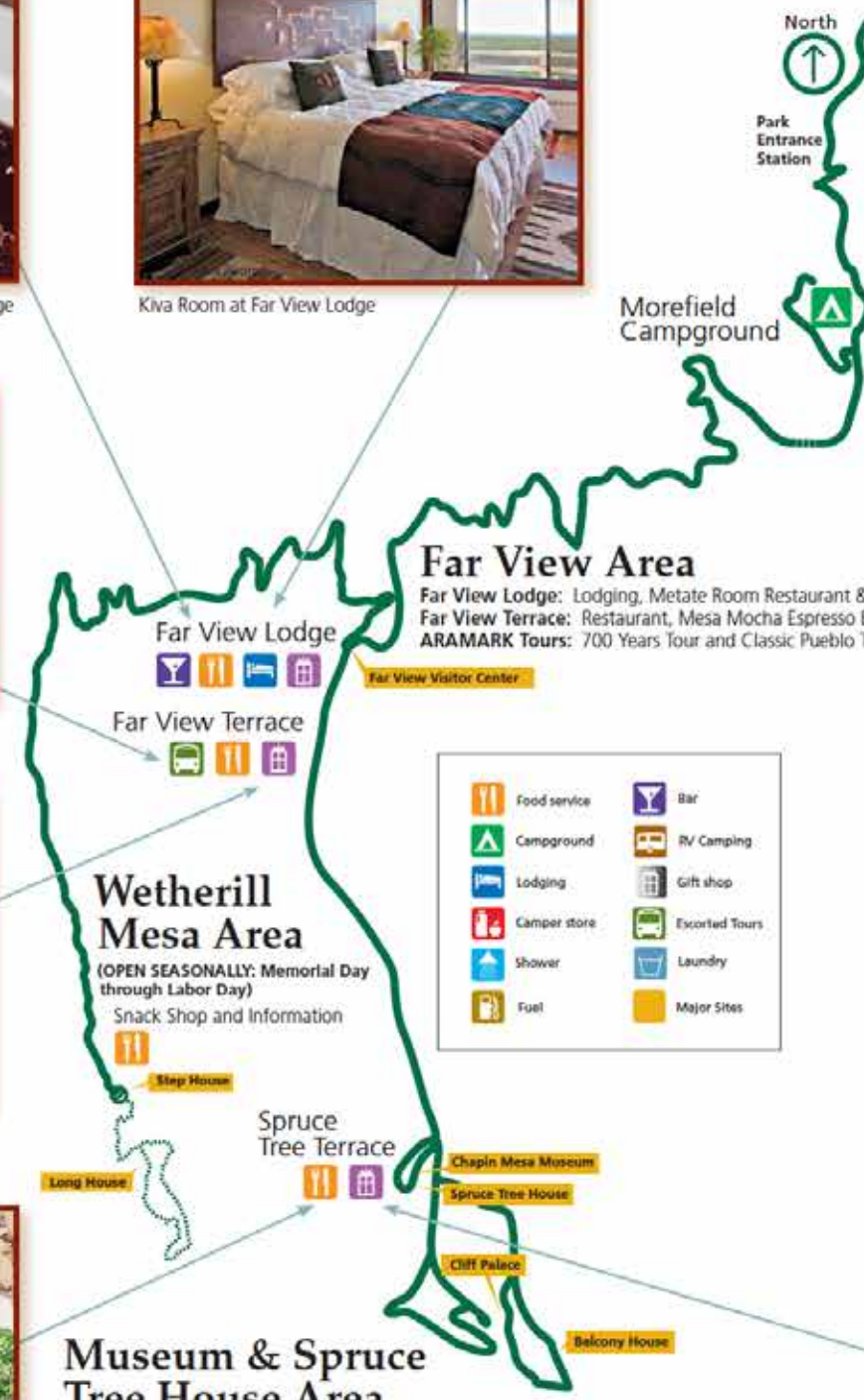
Kiva Room at Far View Lodge

Cliff Palace Guided Tour

Native Handcrafts at Far View and Spruce Tree

Cafeteria-style Dining and Gifts

Morefield Campground at Mesa Verde



Morefield Campground Area

Morefield Campground:
Camp Store, RV & Tent Camping, Showers, Laundry, and Fuel. Knife Edge Cafe

Far View Area

Far View Lodge: Lodging, Metate Room Restaurant & Far View Lounge, and Gift Shop.
Far View Terrace: Restaurant, Mesa Mocha Espresso Bar, and Gift Shop.
ARAMARK Tours: 700 Years Tour and Classic Pueblo Tour

Museum & Spruce Tree House Area

Spruce Tree Terrace: (OPEN: Year-around)
Spruce Tree Terrace Café and Gift Shop

Wildlife is abundant within Mesa Verde

Native Handcrafts

Guided Tours travel by air conditioned bus

ARAMARK Parks and Destinations

Concessions at Mesa Verde National Park are managed by ARAMARK and authorized by the National Park Service.

MESA VERDE —COLORADO—

Touring a Cliff Dwelling

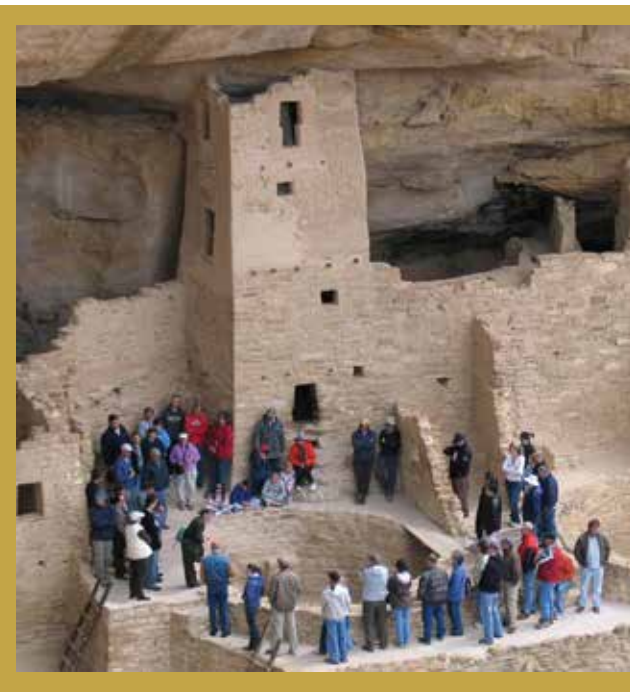
Cliff Palace and Balcony House are popular ranger-guided cliff dwelling tours. During periods of high demand, you may be asked to choose only one of these tours per day.

A tour of Long House, located on Wetherill Mesa, can be taken on the same day as the Cliff Palace OR Balcony House tours.

Tour tickets are $3.00 per tour, per person, regardless of age.

Purchase tour tickets at:
- Visitor and Research Center
- Morefield Ranger Station
- Colorado Welcome Center, Cortez

See Visitor Services section on page 1.



Twilight in the Palace

Join historical figures from Mesa Verde's past for a 90-minute tour of the park's most popular cliff dwelling, Cliff Palace. These characters, locked in their own time period, will give you a fascinating perspective on their Mesa Verde experience. Tour begins at Cliff Palace, a 23-mile (37 km) drive from the Visitor and Research Center.

- Tour is limited to 20 people
- Price: $10.00 per person
- **Tickets are ONLY sold at the Visitor and Research Center Store**
- May 26 to July 27: 7:15 pm nightly
  July 28 to August 17: 7:00 pm nightly
  August 18 to September 2: 6:45 pm nightly
  September 3 to 7: 6:30 pm nightly

Cliff Palace

Mesa Verde's Largest Cliff Dwelling
On this one-hour tour you will descend uneven stone steps and climb three ladders, with an elevation change of 100-foot (30 m). Total walking distance is ¼-mile (0.4 km). Tour begins at the Cliff Palace, a 23-mile (37 km) one hour drive from the Visitor and Research Center.

May 24 to September 2
Every half-hour: 9:00 am to 6:00 pm
September 3 to October 19
Every half-hour: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
October 20 to November 2
Every hour: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
November 3: Closed for season

Cliff Palace entrance trail (left) and exit trail (right)

Balcony House

Most Adventurous Cliff Dwelling Tour
On this one-hour tour you will climb a 32-foot (9.8 m) ladder, crawl through an 18-inch wide (45 cm) and 12-foot (3.7 m) long tunnel, and climb up a 60-foot (20 m) open cliff face with stone steps and two 10-foot (3 m) ladders to exit. The tour begins at the north end of the Balcony House parking lot, a 25-mile (40.2 km), 1¼ hours drive from the Visitor and Research Center.

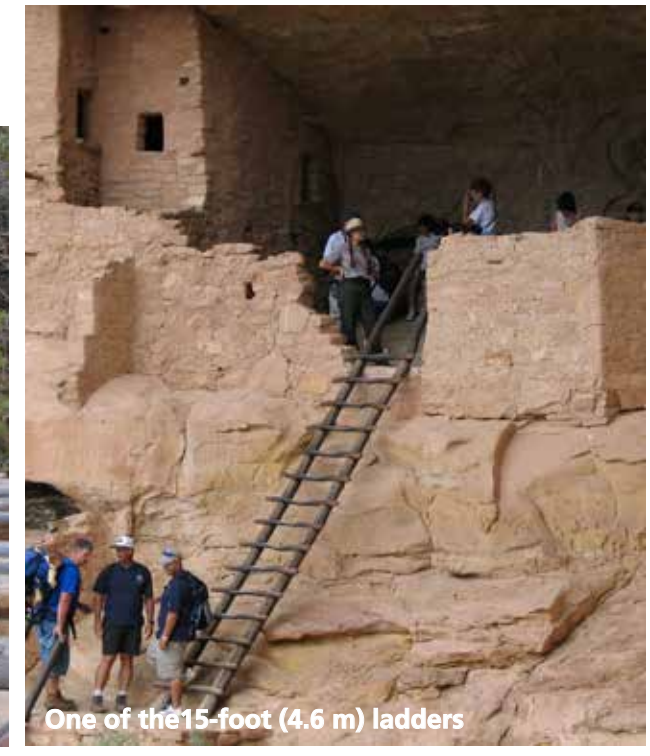
May 24 to August 17
Every half-hour: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
August 18 to August 30
Every hour: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
August 31 to September 2
Every half-hour: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
September 3 to October 19
Every hour: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
October 20: Closed for season

Balcony House entrance ladder

Long House

Most In-Depth Tour
On this 90-minute tour you will ride a tram to and from the trailhead. In the site you will climb two 15-foot (4.6 m) ladders and experience a 130-foot (40 m) elevation change to exit. The round-trip hike is ¾-mile (1.2 km). Tour begins at the Wetherill Mesa Information kiosk, a 29-mile (46.8 km) drive from the Visitor and Research Center. Allow 1¼ hours for this drive. Vehicles over 25 feet (8 m) long are not allowed on the Wetherill Mesa road.

May 24 to September 2
10:00 am, 10:30 am, 11:30 am, 1:00 pm, 2:00 pm, 3:00 pm, and 4:00 pm
September 3: Closed for season



One of the15-foot (4.6 m) ladders

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