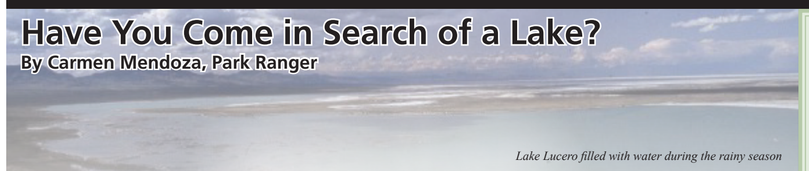
Newsworthy Notes

Have You Come in Search of a Lake?

By Carmen Mendoza, Park Ranger



Lake Lucero filled with water during the rainy season

As park rangers, we are often asked, "How do I get to the lake? Can I put in a boat, or swim or camp there?" Answering this question is always a bit tricky. We do have a lake of sorts—it's called Lake Lucero. It's just not what most people expect.

Lake Lucero is an ephemeral lake or a playa. Because it's dry most of the year, there is no boating, swimming or camping at the lake. It has the potential of filling with water only after several soaking rains during our monsoon season in July and August. Visitors can't access the lake on their own. We offer tours once a month from November through April. So why would you want to venture out on a three-hour tour of a dry lake bed? Lake Lucero is unlike any other playa. To give you an idea, let's walk through a typical tour.

Access to Lake Lucero is through a restricted area of White Sands Missile Range. The tour starts 23 miles south of the monument on Highway 70 at the Small Missile Range Gate. After driving 17.5 miles, we arrive at the trail head. It looks much different than the area by the visitor center. For starters, there is no sand in sight. The San Andres Mountains are not the distant mountains you see from Dunes Drive but are *much* closer. Here, you are surrounded by stocky honey mesquite trees, scrub brush, and grasses.

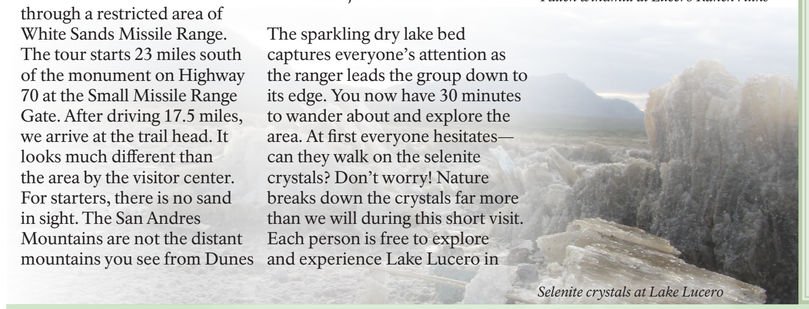
It is a three-quarters of a mile hike over rough desert terrain and arroyos to the lake bed. The terracotta-colored trail is wide at first and narrows as vegetation changes from sparse creosote to thick grasses. Along the trail, a half-standng fence, tangled barb wire, and fallen windmill remind visitors of the tough souls who once eked out a living as ranchers. The Lucero brothers made a living off the land here in the late 19th century—but they were not the first people to live here. There is over 10,000 years of human history in this area.

Moving further along the trail, the ranger explains the unique geology of the area and how the selenite crystals are formed until finally, the first glimpse of the lake comes into view. It appears to be glistening as if it were a jewel-encrusted field!

The sparkling dry lake bed captures everyone's attention as the ranger leads the group down to its edge. You now have 30 minutes to wander about and explore the area. At first everyone hesitates—can they walk on the selenite crystals? Don't worry! Nature breaks down the crystals far more than we will during this short visit. Each person is free to explore and experience Lake Lucero in their own way. Many choose to photograph the crystals, others pick them up and handle them—just remember to leave them at Lake Lucero. At the end of the 30 minutes, the ranger blows the whistle and gathers everyone back-up. It's time to head back to the vehicles.

Sound like fun? If so, visit www.nps.gov/whsa for more information.

Fallen windmill at Lucero Ranch ruins



Selenite crystals at Lake Lucero

From Mountains to Desert

By Mike Doyal, VIP

Mike leading Sunset Stroll

Last summer, I was a volunteer in the Backcountry Office at Rocky Mountain National Park. It meant four months of 32-hour work weeks helping hundreds of park visitors plan trips and complete backcountry camping permits. The office (open 12 hours daily, 7 days a week) needed all of the ten-person staff to answer daily phone inquiries, complete permit requests and assist visitors with planning a backcountry trip or completing a permit. Every day was busy but satisfying.

Working 32 hours each week as a volunteer at White Sands National Monument has been a very different experience yet equally rewarding. The monument has fewer staff, a much smaller land mass, and fewer annual visitors than Rocky Mountain but it has offered a broader range of experiences.

I've had lots of library time learning about the geology, biology, and history of the dunes and monument. I've also staffed the visitor center desk, developed an interpretative programs, and created a Birds of White Sands touchscreen program—all new learning experiences for me!

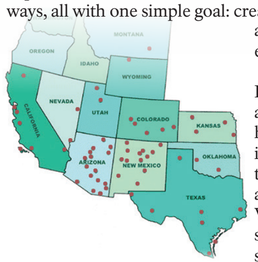
Working at White Sands has provided a unique opportunity to enjoy spectacular sunsets, stunning views of star-filled night skies, and morning visits from finches and loggerhead shrikes while watching hawks soar just above the edges of the dunefield. On my off time, I explore the dunes and nearby mountains and visit numerous historical sites, museums, and recreational areas, all within easy driving distance from the monument.

If you're interested in making a valued contribution to support our nation's treasures, visit http://www.nps.gov/getinvolved/volunteer.htm.

Our Partners

Western National Parks Association

Western National Parks Association (WNPA) has been a charitable non-profit cooperating association of the National Park Service (NPS) since 1938. As a partner of the NPS, WNPA supports parks across the West by developing products, services and programs that help discover, capture and share park stories in order to enrich the visitor's experience. We work to connect new generations to parks in meaningful ways, all with one simple goal: create advocates who want to preserve and protect these special places for everyone, for all time.



In addition to operating NPS stores at 66 locations in 12 states, WNPA hosts and co-sponsors a variety of interpretive and cultural events at these sites. For more information about events and programs, visit WNPA.org or contact an NPS site. Thank you for joining us in supporting the NPS.

White Sands Trading Company 575-479-1629

White Sands Trading Gift Shop is the official concessioner of White Sands National Monument, authorized by the NPS to serve the public. We have proudly joined the NPS in preserving this rich ecosystem for generations to come. We offer meaningful mementos that educate, recall, and pay tribute to the diverse facets of the Tularosa Basin.

You'll find many unique gifts and souvenirs including Native American jewelry, local handcrafts and art, plus T-shirts, mugs, postcards, and New Mexico made food. To enjoy the unique experience of sledding down the dunes, sand disks are available! In keeping with our environmental stewardship, we buy them back for a portion of the original price so other visitors can reuse them. A portion of our sales go directly back to the monument. We appreciate your support of our local economy and park!

White Sands

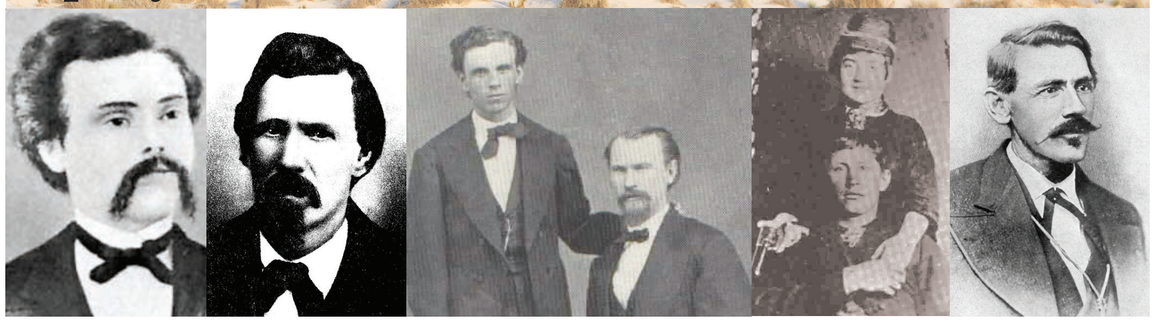
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

White Sands National Monument

Footprints

Fall/Winter 2014-15 Vol. 4, Issue 2

Snapshots from Our Past



Men of the Lincoln County War (left to right): Alexander McSween, William Brady, James Dolan, Lawrence Murphy, Jesse Evans (allegedly) with an unknown woman, and John Chisum. *See pg 6*

The Roads of White Sands

By Allison Harvey, Archaeologist

Did you know that humans have been traveling to White Sands National Monument for over 8,000 years? Have you ever wondered who traveled through the Tularosa Basin in the past, where they were going, and what they were doing? We have as well!

In 2013 and 2014, archaeologists from New Mexico State University and the National Park Service were involved in a collaborative project to gain a better understanding of the roads and trails that pass through the monument. The project was conducted under a cooperative agreement facilitated by the Desert Southwest Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (DSCESU). The purpose of the project was to locate, record, and conduct condition assessments of prehistoric and historic roads, trails, and associated cultural sites and artifacts. The cultural resources encountered were also evaluated for their potential eligibility for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Over 28 miles of roads and trails were surveyed, which included an attempt to locate the Salt Trail along the monument's western boundary. The Salt Trail was established by the Spanish to connect El Paso del Norte to Salina de San Andres for the purpose of salt collection and is associated with the Magoffin Salt War of 1854.

Artifacts found within the monument, including a Mexican cannon ball and a Spanish carreta, or ox cart, suggest the trail passed through or very close to the monument. However, the exact location of the trail is still unknown.

The survey area for this project also included portions of the Tularosa to Mesilla wagon road which branched off the Camino Real and connected the Spanish colonial towns of Tularosa to Mesilla across the Tularosa Basin. This historic road was initially established to transport troops and supplies to Fort Stanton and is still visible today skirting along the southern edge of the dune field. Rumors suggest famous outlaws such as Billy the Kid may have used this route while traveling through the area.

The experimental clay road through the dunefield

Spanish carreta found in the dunes

Analysis of artifacts discarded in the vicinity of the roads and trails support human use of navigational features at White Sands since prehistoric times. The evidence indicates routes were primarily utilized for migration, ranching, salt mining, and military operations. Some roads served different functions over time. For example, dirt ranch roads were commonly repurposed by the military through widening and the addition of gravel after White Sands Missile Range was established in the early 1940s. These alterations preserve the story of changing transportation modes in the twentieth century.

Today, most of the roads and trails crisscrossing the monument are abandoned and are slowing being reclaimed by the gypsum sand. It is important that we gather as much information about these cultural resources before they disappear.

The Superintendent Says...

Welcome to White Sands National Monument!

Our staff, volunteers and partners invite you to explore and discover what makes the monument special and memorable. We are committed to the "… preservation of the white sands and additional features of scenic, scientific, and educational interest…" and to offering YOU opportunities to make new and exciting connections.

Our nation's cultural history creates bridges through time, connecting one generation to another. They teach us about ourselves, our ancestors, and even other cultures. This is what makes preserving these treasures so important.

The human history of the Tularosa Basin goes back over 10,000 years, from the first ancient nomadic hunters to the gunslingers of the Wild West, all the way up to you and me. White Sands National Monument is proud to preserve a portion of that history and to share these stories with you.

I look forward to hearing from you at whsa_superintendent@nps.gov or at the address listed under park information.

Marie Frías Sauter
Superintendent

What's inside...

Park Information..... pg 2
Bienvenido..... pg 3
Trails..... pg 4
Schedule of Events..... pg 4
Park Map..... pg 5
Not Just a Legend..... pg 6
Project Excelsior..... pg 6
SCA: Inspiring Youth..... pg 7
Have You Come in Search of a Lake..... pg 8
From Mountains to Desert..... pg 8

Safety Tips on page 4

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Monument Information

Published By
White Sands National Monument

Superintendent
Marie Frías-Sauter

Editor
Tara Cuvelier
Visual Information Specialist

Park Mailing Address
White Sands National Monument
P.O. Box 1086
Holloman AFB, NM 88330

Phone
(575) 479-6124

Email
whsa_interpretation@nps.gov

Website
www.nps.gov/whsa

Visitor Center GPS Coordinates
32° 46′ North, 106° 10′ West

Guns in Parks
As of February, 2010, a new federal law allows anyone who can legally possess firearms to possess unloaded guns within the park but *not* inside federal buildings.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™
The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

The sand, plants, crystals, and animals of the monument are national treasures.

We know it is tempting to take home a souvenir, but even attempting to remove natural objects from within the monument is not just a matter of taking home a small bag of sand or a really cool selenite crystal. It's also a matter of robbing others of the chance to enjoy those things, too.

And, if that's not bad enough, consider that it is also a violation of federal law (36 CFR 2.1) that carries with it a hefty fine and can result in criminal charges!

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, CALL *911* OR *(575) 437-2210 24-hours a day*

During monument hours, contact a park ranger by calling the visitor center at (575) 479-6124, ext. 236 or the entrance station at ext. 206.

Information and Services

Dunes Drive
Hours for the Dunes Drive vary by season. Due to missile testing or inclement weather, it is sometimes closed. Please call ahead to confirm hours or check the website at www.nps.gov/whsa.

Fees
Monument entrance fees are $3 per person 16 and older; children 15 and under are free. Federal park passes are accepted and are also available for purchase at the entrance station. Credit cards accepted.

Visitor Center & Gift Shop
The visitor center and gift shop are open 364 days a year, closing only on Christmas Day. Hours of operation vary by season. Please call for specific times or for information on missile closures.

Backcountry Camping
Vehicle camping is not allowed in the park, but 10 primitive backcountry sites are available. Ask in the visitor center to obtain a permit. First-come, first-served; no advance reservations; special fees apply.

Pets
Pets are permitted within the monument but must be leashed and under control at all times; you are required to clean up after your pet. Pets are not permitted inside any buildings.

ATVs and Off-Roading
ATVs and other off-road vehicles are not allowed in the monument. Driving on the dunes or interdunal areas is strictly prohibited. Violators will be fined.

Alcohol
Alcohol is prohibited in the park from Feb. 1st through May 31st. It is allowed the remainder of the year.

Accessibility
The visitor center, auditorium, museum, gift shop, restrooms and boardwalk are wheelchair accessible.

Restrooms
Restrooms are located in the small building next to the visitor center. For your convenience, pit toilets are also provided at the picnic areas, Dune Life Nature Trail, Boardwalk, and Evening Program Area gate.

Bicycles
The Dunes Drive is open to visitors who would like to ride their bikes through the monument. For safety reasons, we ask that visitors please be very aware of vehicle traffic and any blind curves on the road.

Picnic Areas
There are three established picnic areas in the monument, complete with canopied tables and grills. These picnic sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Tables cannot be reserved in advance.

Recycling
Containers for aluminum and plastic recyclable items are located in front of the visitor center and near the entrance to the gift shop. Help keep the park clean and place your recyclables in these receptacles.

Sledding
Sledding on the dunes is allowed in the loop portion of the Dunes Drive, where there is little to no vegetation. When choosing a sledding location, make sure you will not be sledding into the road. New and used sleds are available for sale in the gift shop. Visitors who return their sleds with a receipt can sell them back for a portion of the purchase price.

Are horses allowed in the monument?

Visitors are welcome to ride their horses in the monument. We do, however, ask that you do not ride on any established trails or through any of the picnic areas. Visitors with horses are required to check in at the entrance station and receive a horse use permit. Check the map for the horse trailer area.

Missile Tests and Road Closures

From time to time, White Sands Missile Range performs missile tests that may close Highway 70 to traffic. Depending on the nature of the testing, they may also require us to close the Dunes Drive for a few hours. During these times, the visitor center remains open. Visitors are invited to view the museum exhibits or peruse the bookstore and gift shop while they wait for everything to reopen. If you are planning on traveling to White Sands National Monument and would like to know if either the highway or monument are closed, call us at (575) 479-6124, ext. 236.

Junior Rangers

Explore. Learn. Protect.

That's the Junior Ranger motto. Why? Because while exploring, you'll discover amazing new places and things.

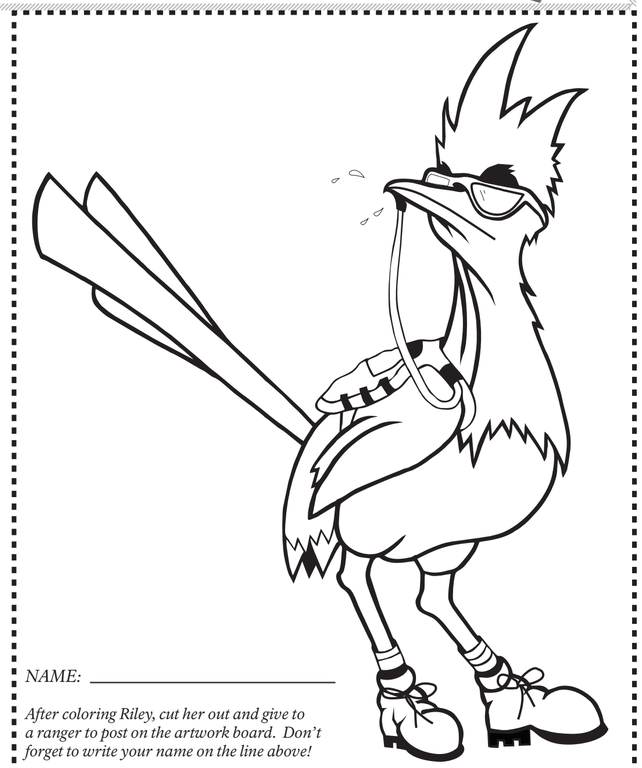
So, how do you become a Junior Dunes Ranger at White Sands? Just stop by the information desk in the visitor center and ask for a free activity book. Then, once you've finished it, bring it back to the desk to be sworn in and receive your certificate and choice of a badge or patch!

Give Riley the Roadrunner a Helping Hand!

Riley, our Junior Ranger mascot, has spent a little too much time out in the dunefield. The sun's gone and bleached all her lovely feathers! Can you help Riley by once again giving her a little color?

Did You Know: *Fun Facts About Roadrunners*

- The roadrunner, a member of the cuckoo family, can be seen all over New Mexico. It's even our state bird!
- They are also very quick. A roadrunner can run up to 17 miles per hour. That's one fast bird!
- Most birds prefer small insects and seeds to eat. Not the roadrunner! They are hunters and they don't shy away from taking on some pretty mean critters for a meal. Scorpions, rodents, spiders, and even rattlesnakes are all on a roadrunner's dinner menu.
- Roadrunners use their wings to distract dangerous prey like rattlesnakes. When the snake lunges for a wing, the roadrunner dodges and grabs the snake's tail. It then beats the snake on the ground until it's dead and safe to eat.
- They have been seen jumping straight up into the air to catch both insects and small birds (like hummingbirds) flying overhead!
- Contrary to popular belief, roadrunners can fly. Although they prefer to keep their feet on the ground, they can fly for short distances when they feel threatened.



NAME: _____

After coloring Riley, cut her out and give to a ranger to post on the artwork board. Don't forget to write your name on the line above!

SCA: Inspiring Youth

By Leiloni Begaye, SCA Intern

SCA Intern Leiloni Begaye

Hello! My name is Leiloni Begaye and I am from the Navajo Nation in Arizona. As a Dine' woman, I identify myself with four clans. They are: Má'déésh giizhnii (Coyote Pass), To' aheedlíínií (Water Flow Together), Táchíí'nií (Red Running Into Water), and Tl'áásh chí'í (Red Bottom People).

I am a National Park Service Academy Alumni with the Student Conservation Association (SCA). The NPS Academy was created to recruit and prepare students from underrepresented populations for a potential career in the National Park Service. The SCA's mission is to build the next generation of conservation leaders and inspire stewardship of our environment and communities by engaging young people in hands-on service to the land.

During my time with the SCA, I attended a Spring Break Orientation at Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming. Next, I did a summer internship at White Sands National Monument with the Natural Resource Division. After that, I peer-mentored 19 Alaskan Native students at Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska. I was also a two-year Academy Ambassador at New Mexico State University. Currently, I'm back at White Sands National Monument as an interpretative ranger for the summer.

The SCA has given me awesome opportunities to expand my knowledge and gain new skills within the NPS. This summer, I have developed and presented original interpretative programs, such as the Patio Talk, Skins & Skulls program, and nightly Sunset Stroll to the general public and special audiences. I've enjoyed working alongside the interpretive team and interacting with the public.

My appreciation of preservation grows because White Sands National Monument has a very dynamic ecosystem. It is very intriguing how everything from the largest mammals to the tiniest of cyanobacteria survives.

You too can become an NPS Academy student and experience a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity like this at various National Parks! For more information, please visit www.thesca.org.

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In the Heart of the Dunes

Billy the Kid: Not Just a Legend

By Sandra Flickinger, Student Intern

The history of the American Southwest is chock full of legends and stories that truly live up to the epithet of the Wild West. The embellishment of these stories has allowed for the development of numerous movies and books but the true facts of these accounts are more interesting than any tall tale. Yes, the West really was wild! William Henry McCarty, otherwise known as Billy the Kid, is a perfect example of how untamed the now tranquil towns of New Mexico used to be.

John Tunstall

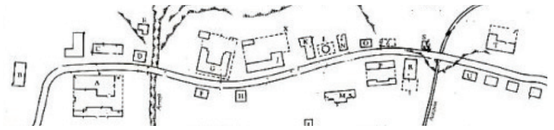
It was no secret that Billy had had a rough past. His mother died of tuberculosis while he was just a young boy and he had a history of working odd jobs in combination with commiting a few crimes. The real beginning of Billy's career as an infamous gunman, however, began in 1878 after he met a young Englishman named John Tunstall. That year saw the beginning of the Lincoln County War—a series of violent confrontations resulting from conflict between two groups of businessmen: L.G. Murphy and James Dolan versus the newcomer Tunstall, attorney Alexander McSween, and cattle baron John Chisum.

Like most monopolized towns, L.G. Murphy & Company had the law in its pocket—Sheriff William Brady. Murphy also had the infamous Jesse Evans gang to take care of any "problems" that might arise. In this case, that problem was Tunstall and McSween, who wanted to establish their own business in Lincoln County. Billy was hired by Tunstall as a ranch hand and became one of the Regulators, a posse formed to support Tunstall and McSween.

As tensions escalated, Murphy had Jesse Evans and his men go after Tunstall. According to most accounts, he was shot unarmed which was against "the code of the West." After Tunstall's murder, Billy and the Regulators swore vengeance on Jesse Evans and his crew. As a result of one of the many skirmishes, Sheriff William Brady was killed, marking Billy as a murderer and setting him on the run.

After many daring escapades, the new sheriff, Pat Garrett, was finally successful in arresting Billy. Not to be outdone, Billy made a grand escape from the second floor of the Lincoln County courthouse, killing Deputies J.W. Bell and Bob Olinger as he fled. Many speculate as to how he accomplished such a feat but it is fair to say that the Kid seemed to have more than his share of luck. That luck ran out on July 14, 1881 when Garrett caught up to the legendary outlaw at the home of Pete Maxwell and killed him.

Sheriff Pat Garrett



Map of the town of Lincoln 1872-1881

William H. McCarty, a.k.a. Billy the Kid

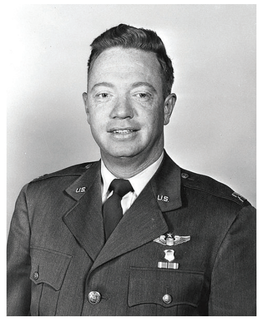
With so many versions of what really happened during the Lincoln County War, it is hard to tell fact from fiction. Historians and fans still debate the details of a man whose legend continues to live on in our imaginations. There's no telling just how far Billy wandered—did he hide between the white dunes of the Tularosa Basin? We know his travels took him as far north as Santa Fe and west to Old Mesilla. There is no doubt he and other renowned characters of the time passed by the white sands as they traveled. Who knows what evidence of their passage might be concealed beneath this ever-shifting landscape.

Project Excelsior

By Mark Garnes, Student Intern

The word excelsior means "ever upward" in English and is a Latin adjective for higher. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Capt. Joseph Kittinger epitomized those definitions. On August 16, 1960 he travelled into Earth's stratosphere and reached heights that few had been to.

Project Excelsior was a series of three high altitude bailout experiments. After World War II, the world entered the jet age. Pilots were able to fly higher and the fantasy of travel in outer space was becoming a reality. Pilots attempting to bailout at the new altitudes we were able to achieve through technology faced two perils if they ejected: hypothermia and flat spin.



Capt. Joseph Kittinger

Kittenger and the Excelsior gondola

If a pilot in the upper atmosphere deployed their chute too soon, they could be exposed to low temperatures for an extended period of time causing hypothermia. If they free fell to a lower height to deploy their chute, they ran the risk of going into a flat spin. A flat spin is when a para-jumper loses control of their free fall and spins out of control. During this spin, the jumper's blood would rush to their head and feet which could be fatal. Project Excelsior aimed at alleviating the problems of high altitude bailout by developing a multi-stage parachute. The Beaupre multi-stage parachute had a small drogue chute which deployed to help stabilize the jumper.

On the first test at 76,400 feet, the drogue chute opened prematurely and wrapped around Kittinger's neck sending him into a flat spin.

The jump from Excelsior III, August 16, 1960

He blacked out and was jerked awake by his emergency chute at 10,000 ft. Kittinger believed in the chute so he decided to do a second jump at 74,700 ft. and the second jump was successful.

Finally, on August 16, 1960, Joseph Kittinger rode an open gondola balloon to a height of 102,800 ft. (roughly 20 miles) and jumped out. He free fell for more than four minutes until he opened his chute at a safe altitude. Almost fourteen minutes later, he landed on the shores of Lake Lucero. By the time he had landed, he had set four USAF records: highest ascent in a balloon, longest jump, longest free fall, and the fastest speed reached by a human in the atmosphere unassisted. Almost all of these records held for more than 50 years until they were broken by Felix Baumgartner near Roswell, NM in 2012.

Información del Monumento

EN CASO DE EMERGENCIA, LLAME *911 o (575) 437-2210*
24-horas al dia

Durante este horario, póngase en contacto con un guardaparque llamando al centro de visitantes en (575) 479-6124, ext. 236 o la estación de entrada en ext. 206.

Información y Servicios

Centro de Visitantes

Cuando entras en White Sands National Monument va a ver el hermoso centro de visitantes de adobe a su izquierda. El centro de visitantes es histórico y fue construido a partir de 1936 a 1938. Los ladrillos de adobe están hechos de arena, paja y agua todas fácilmente disponibles en el área. En el centro de visitantes, se puede obtener información sobre los programas dirigidos por guardaparques del día, ir de compra en la librería; explorar el museo y quedarse hipnotizado por las vistas de White Sands National Monument en nuestra película de orientación de alta definición en el teatro. En la zona del centro de visitantes también se conecta a la tienda de regalos. La tienda de regalos vende refrescos, recuerdos y trineos. Sólo se puede obtener agua en la zona del centro de visitantes. No hay agua disponible en las zonas de dunas.

Comience su exploración de White Sands National Monument en el museo. Las exhibiciones le ayudarán a entender la geología de las dunas de yeso, como las plantas y animales sobreviven en este ambiente hostil, pero bella y la vida de los habitantes humanos por diez mil años. El teatro está localizado al lado del museo. La película, "A Land in Motion" ("una tierra en movimiento") dura 17 minutos y empieza cada hora y media hora. Las exhibiciones y la película se presentan en inglés y español.

Taquilla de entrada

El costo para entrar al monumento es 3 dólares por adulto de 16 años de edad o más. Los niños de 15 años o menos entran gratis. Guarde su recibo, sirve para entrar al parque por 6 días adicionales. Se aceptan y se pueden adquirir pases de parques federales. La taquilla de entrada acepta dinero en efectivo, cheques o cheques de viajero, y tarjetas de crédito o débito.

La carretera del parque

Dunes Drive es un camino de 8 millas (13 km) por el corazón de la zona de dunas de yeso. Se trata de unas 16 millas (26 km) en coche de ida y vuelta volviendo al centro de visitantes en 45 minutos sin contar las paradas. Las primeras 5 millas (8 km) de Dunes Drive están pavimentadas y las últimas 3 millas (5 km) del camino son de yeso compacto. El camino es apropiado para automóviles, motocicletas, vehículos de recreo y autobuses. A lo largo del camino se encuentran las paradas de información, senderos, áreas de picnic y áreas de estacionamiento para parar y caminar por las dunas.

Caminata

Tómese unos minutos para explorar el parque a pie. Los senderos le permiten explorar las maravillas del monumento de cerca. Puede disfrutarse de cinco senderos diferentes en el monumento. Tenemos senderos fáciles y senderos más difíciles para los caminantes con experiencia.

Baños Públicos

Baños públicos principal está situado en un edificio al lado del centro de visitantes. También hay aseos primitivos localizados en las áreas de picnic, de sendero Dune Life y sendero tablado elevado.

Picnic

Las áreas de picnic se encuentran en la porción del recodo de Dunes Drive. Hay tres áreas de picnic "Primrose", "Roadrunner" y "Yucca". Las áreas de picnic están disponibles por orden de llegada. No se pueden reservar de antemano. Cada sitio tiene una mesa de picnic con techo y parrilla.

Trineo

Bajar las dunas en trineo es muy divertido. Los trineos se pueden comprar en la tienda de regalos. Trineo se permite en la parte del recodo de Dunes Drive alrededor de milla 6 (9,7 km) de Dunes Drive. Seleccione un lugar para trineo que está lejos de las áreas de estacionamiento de carretera, y la vegetación.

La arena, plantas, cristales de selenita, y los animales del monumento son tesoros nacionales.

Los Parques Nacional están obligados a proteger y preservar todos los recursos del parque para las generaciones actuales y futuras. Necesitamos su ayuda. Le pedimos que no quite ninguna planta, anímale, arena o cualquier otro objeto natural o cultural. Si cada visitante llevó algo con ellos, esto tendría un gran impacto sobre lo que las generaciones futuras podrían encontrar aquí, en White Sands National Monument. También es una violación de la ley federal (36 CFR 2.1) que lleva una multa grande y puede resultar en cargos criminales.

Las pruebas de misiles y cierres de carreteras

White Sands Missile Range conduce pruebas de misiles y tecnología especial, a vez en cuando esto requiere que cierren la carretera 70 al tráfico. Según el tipo de prueba, también nos obligan a cerrar Dunes Drive por unas horas. Durante los cierres de carreteras, el centro de visitantes está abierto. Pueden explorar las exhibiciones del museo; visitar la librería o tienda de regalos, mientras esperan a que todo vuelva a abrir. Si usted está planeando visitar a White Sands National Monument y le gustaría saber si la carretera o el monumento está cerrado, llámenos al (575) 479-6124, ext. 236 o visita el sito web:www.nps.gov/whsa.

Cómo Mantenerse Seguro

- **¡Bebe mucha agua!**
  Es posible que no se dé cuenta que se está deshidratado porque no está sudando. Le recomendamos un galón de agua por persona al día.
- **¡Manténganse abrigado!**
  Agotamiento por calor puede ocurrir rápidamente. Tome descansos frecuentes fuera del sol. Todas las mesas de picnic están sombreadas. Mientras toma un descanso, asegúrese de beber agua para ayudar a su cuerpo recuperarse del calor.
- **¡Siempre sepa dónde está!**
  El GPS puede ser poco fiable. Utilice senderos marcados del parque, lleve una brújula y mantenga puntos de referencia a la vista. Nunca vaya a explorar solo.
- **¡Estarte preparado!**
  Use un sombrero y gafas de sol. Aplique protector solar en todas las partes del cuerpo expuestas porque la arena refleja el sol, incluso en invierno.
- **¡Cavar es peligroso!**
  Cavando hoyos en las dunas es divertido, pero tenga en mente que las dunas se mueven y la arena es pesada. Los agujeros pueden derrumbarse sobre usted, y lo pueden asfixiar.
- **¡Tenga cuidado con los caminos helados!**
  Capas finas de hielo en la carretera y sobre las dunas son muy difíciles de detectar. Por razones de seguriadad, disminuya su velocidad y frene suavemente para evitar derrapes. Las dunas se congelan en el invierno, esto crea una superficie mucho más dura que durante el verano. El trineo va más rápido, pero también hace que las caídas duelan más e incluso puede resultar en huesos rotos.

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Things to Do

Sunset Strolls
Take a leisurely one-hour, ranger-guided walk through the sand dunes and learn about the geology, plants, and animals of this unique area. Offered daily one hour before sunset.

Skins and Skulls
Join a ranger and learn how to identify many of the animals at White Sands National Monument. Offered on weekends at 3 pm from November through April.

Patio Talks
Offered on weekends the rest of the year from November through April. Begins at 1:30 pm at the visitor center.

Full Moon Hikes
Enjoy an hike under the full moon with a ranger once a month from May through October 2015. Reservations required. Special fees apply. For more information and to register, visit ww.nps.gov/whsa.

Sunrise Photography
March 14, 2015 at 6:15 am. Join a ranger for an early morning program on amateur sunrise photography. Reservations required. Register at www.nps.gov/whsa.

Lake Lucero Tours
Hike with a ranger to the dried lake bed that makes up a part of the source of the sands. Offered November through April. Reservations required and accepted one month in advance of tour date. Special fees apply. Visit www.nps.gov/whsa for dates and reservations.

Full Moon Bike Ride
Saturday, April 4, 2015 at 8 p.m. Take a leisurely bike ride through the monument. No cars are allowed during the event. Reservations required and accepted one month in advance. Special fees apply. Visit www.nps.gov/whsa for more information.

Step into the Past
Join us for a one-hour interpretive program on the history of the Tularosa Basin. Presented every other month. Topics vary. Visit our website at www.nps.gov/whsa for dates and details.

Staying Safe

Visiting White Sands National Monument is an exciting experience but it is very important to safely enjoy the park. Please take a moment to read through the safety tips below.

- **Drink plenty of water!**

You may not realize you are dehydrated because you are not sweating. We recommend one gallon of water per person per day. Eat plenty of high energy snacks to keep you going.

- **Stay Warm!**

Temperatures drop drastically after sunset—anywhere from 20 to 30 degrees. Wear clothing that is appropriate for the day's weather and carry warmer clothing after sunset.

- **Know where you are!**

Wind moves dunes and erases your tracks. GPS can be unreliable. Use park trail markers, carry a compass, and keep landmarks in sight. Never hike alone.

- **Be prepared!**

Wear a hat and sunglasses. The white sand reflects the sun so apply sunscreen to all exposed areas even in winter!

- **Dangerous digging!**

Digging holes in the dunes is fun but keep in mind that the dunes move and the sand is heavy. Holes can collapse on you and which can lead to suffocation.

- **Beware of icy roads and frozen dunes!**

It may be harder to spot frozen water on the dunes. For safety reasons, decrease your speed and brake gently to avoid skidding. The dunes freeze in winter so they are much harder than in the summer. This makes sledding faster but it also makes falls hurt more and can even break bones.

Hiking White Sands

Venturing out onto any of our five established trails provides you with an opportunity to experience the timeless majesty and wonder of the dunes. We invite you to take a trek into the heart of dunefield and explore this magnificent place.

Playa Trail
Length: 0.5 miles (0.8 m) round-trip
Average Completion Time: 30 minutes
Difficulty: Easy
The Playa Trail is a short, level hike leading to a small playa. Playas are shallow depressions or low-lying areas that temporarily fill with rainwater from storms.

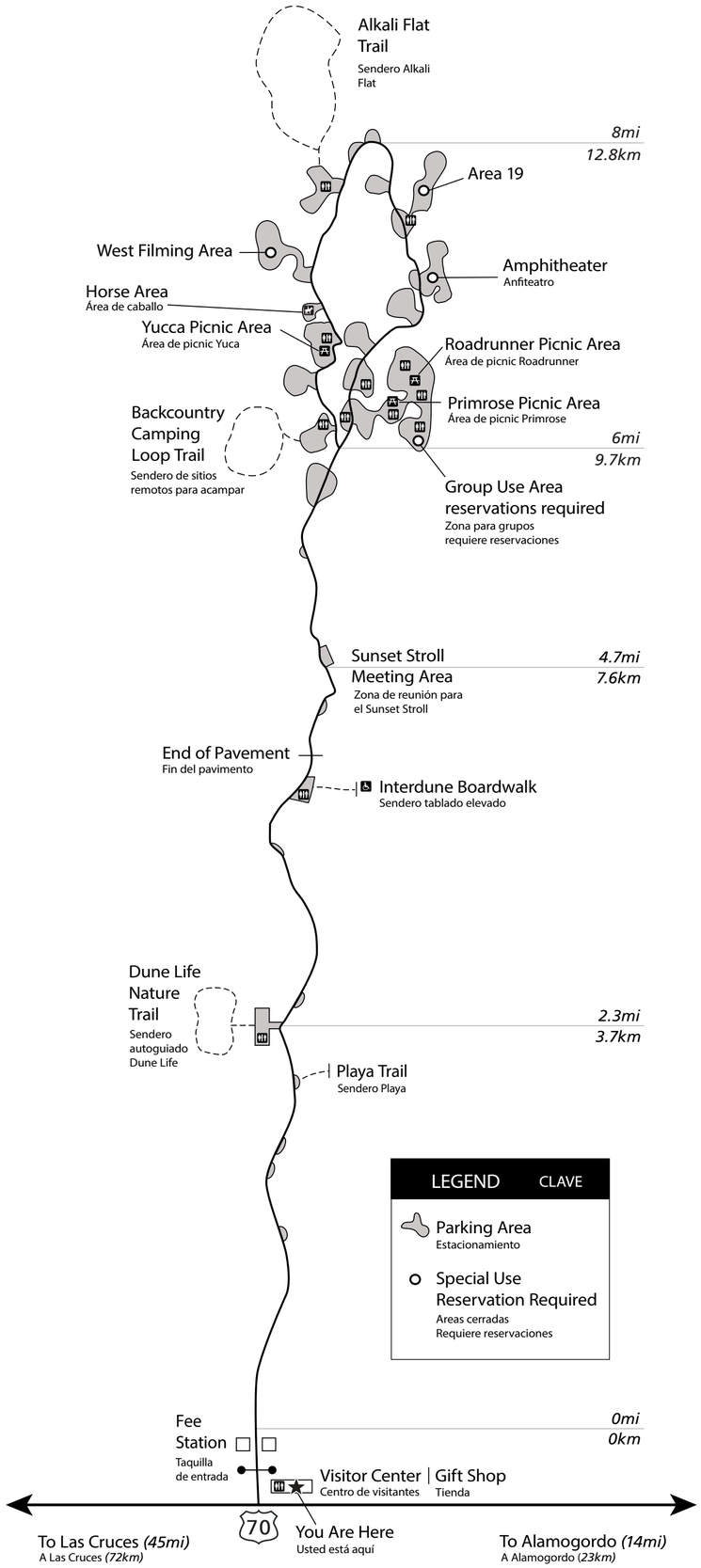
Dune Life Nature Trail
Length: One mile (1.6 km) loop
Average Completion Time: 1 hour
Difficulty: Moderate
Meet Katy the Kit Fox on this family-oriented trail and learn about the plants and animals common to the dunes.

Interdune Boardwalk
Length: 650 yards (585 m)
Average Completion Time: 20 minutes
Difficulty: Easy
Fully accessible for people using wheelchairs and strollers, the boardwalk leads you through a fragile interdune area.

Alkali Flat Trail
Length: 5 miles (8 km) round-trip
Average Completion Time: 3 hours
Difficulty: Strenuous
Leading you through the heart of the dunes, the Alkali Flat Trail skirts the edge of what is now the final remnant of Lake Otero, once a 1,600-square-mile lake. *Take plenty of water!*

Backcountry Camping Trail
Length: 2.2 miles (3.5 km) round-trip
Average Completion Time: 1.5 hours
Difficulty: Moderate
Hiked most frequently by backpackers, this trail is also open to visitors that want a shorter hike through the heart of the dunes.

Dunes Drive Map



Orientation Landmarks

Sacramento Mountains - 30 miles east of visitor center towards Alamogordo

San Andres Mountains - 20 miles west of visitor center towards Las Cruces

Sierra Blanca - 67 miles northeast of visitor center

White Water Tower - 1 mile southeast of visitor center

Tres Hermanos - 6 miles southeast of visitor center

A Special Map For Safety!

Our georeferenced map will show you where you are in real time.

Step 1:
Download *Avenza PDF Maps* app from Google Play or Apple Store to your mobile device.

Step 2:
Scan the QR code below to download the georeferenced map from our website.

Step 3:
Open the georeferenced map inside *Avenza PDF Maps*.

The little blue dot will show you where you are in the monument!

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