

# Friends of Petrified Forest National Park

Working together we can  
make a difference!

Issue 3, March 2013



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## Friends Provide Helping Hands

The Friends of Petrified Forest National Park brought helping hands to fossil excavations and petroglyph surveys. Will your hands help us next?

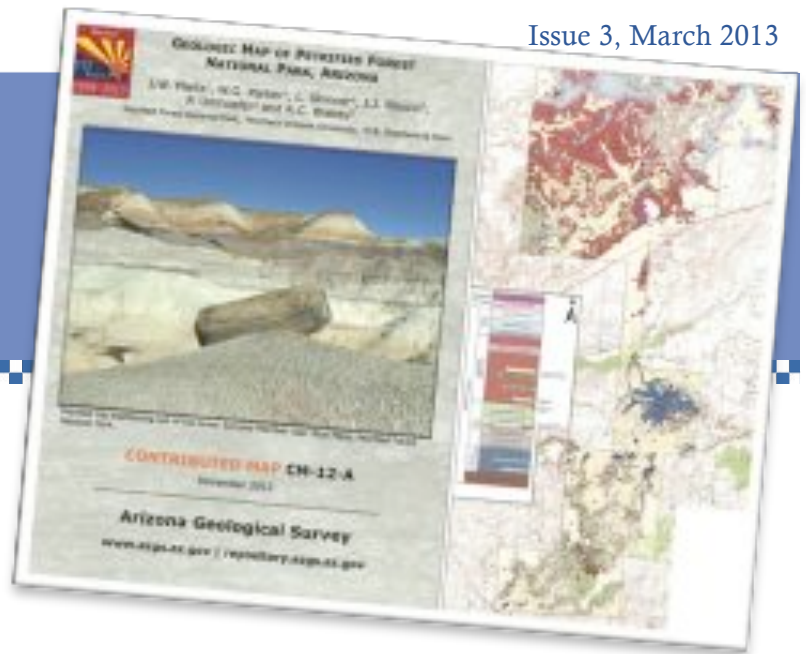
The Friends group is a non-profit, partner organization that supports the mission of the park, particularly in the science and education fields. The group brings expertise to the planning and support of research projects and educational endeavors designed to study, evaluate, and interpret the natural and cultural resources of the park. Friends take an active role in planning, execution, and/or follow-up on projects.

You can join the Friends group today! If you have an expertise or interest in paleontology, archaeology, history, ecology, or just love your national parks, contact [Brad\\_Traver@nps.gov](mailto:Brad_Traver@nps.gov) for information on park projects and needs. Walk the badlands in search of buried treasure, help reconstruct an historic trail, assist in the construction of a new trail, or provide other expertise!

Don't forget to share this newsletter with others who may want to be a friend of the park!



Jeff Martz walking the landscape.



## The First Published Geologic Map of Petrified Forest National Park

After 35 years and several attempts, the geologic map was completed in January 2013.

Work began on a draft geological map of the park 35 years ago. Though completed in the early 1980s, it was never finalized. By the early 2000s the need to update the map was considered, and minor revisions were accomplished. In 2005 the National Park Service contracted with Northern Arizona University (NAU) to complete the map. When it was realized that the stratigraphic schemes used by the park since 2002 and 2003 could not be recreated by the mapping, work stalled again.

In 2008, park geologists Bill Parker and Jeff Martz decided to

tackle both the stratigraphic problems and the map revision. Mapping is a crucial part of solving stratigraphic problems because it involves physically walking the landscape. Parker and Martz walked kilometer after kilometer the first summer, working out the correlations. Martz then took the lead on completing the mapping. After literally wearing his boots down to sandals, he completed this work in 2010. The map was then painstakingly digitized and finalized by Lisa Skinner at NAU. The report also includes some of Jeff's amazing scientific artwork. The cross-section is particularly

useful for individuals to place themselves within the stratigraphy as they progress through the park.

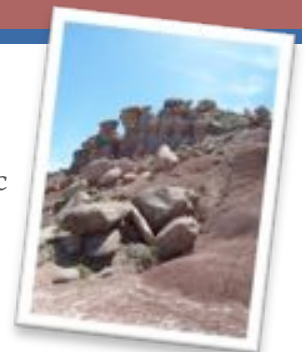
The finished product is now available on-line courtesy of the Arizona Geological Survey as part of their Contributed Map series. Thank you to Arizona State Geologist Lee Allison for allowing the map to be distributed as part of their publication series and to Mike Conway for putting up with all the edits. Future plans include adding the park expansion areas acquired from 2007 to the present.

### On-line Resources

The Petrified Forest Geologic Map is available at the Arizona Geological Survey website: [www.azgs.az.gov/](http://www.azgs.az.gov/).

Park Paleontologist Bill Parker maintains a blog titled "Chinleana: Discussion of Late Triassic paleontology and other assorted topics." It can be found at: [chinleana.fieldofscience.com](http://chinleana.fieldofscience.com).

Take a high definition tour of the Fossil Prep Lab from Finley-Holiday Films: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITF1eLXd20](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITF1eLXd20)



## Changing the Park Message

For many years, the park movie, interpretive signs, and park rangers themselves have emphasized the message “one ton of petrified wood is removed from the park each month.” This well meaning message is based on extrapolation from catching people removing wood, pieces of wood that are occasionally sent back, and wood picked up on the side of the park road where it may have been “returned” from a car window. But there is no way to determine the validity of “one ton a month” and it implies that the National Park Service is failing to protect the resources under its stewardship. This message is about to change.

A re-photography project was started several years

ago. Using historic photographs, a photographer returns to the exact location the picture was taken and snaps a matching photograph. When comparing these pictures, it is becoming quite obvious that a vast majority of the petrified wood is still in place. Over 100 years of protection has worked! The re-photography project also shows the history of the park, some of its famous early visitors, and how things have changed over time.

The park will also emphasize other resources that visitors often overlook, including other fossils, archaeological resources, the natural environment, and historical resources. Visitors need to know that Petrified Forest National Park is better than ever.



Jasper Forest: The historic photo was taken by Ben Wittick, a famous photographer, in 1883. The modern NPS photo was taken in 2007.

Giant Logs: The historic photo was taken by NPS photographer George Grant in October 1934. The modern NPS photo was taken in March 2013.



Albert Einstein and a friend visited the park on March 1, 1931. The modern NPS photo was taken in 2007.



Volunteer in Parks Josh holds an archaeological artifact found in the field.



## Volunteer Opportunities

The Friends Group is important in so many ways, though offering helping hands and expertise during park projects ranks right up at the top.

Join us for the following projects!

### Re-establish the Blue Forest Trail.

This historic 1930's trail runs between the Teepees and Blue Mesa for 1.1 miles. The scenery changes around every corner and over every hill. Severe erosion over the years has left it impassable in many spots. It will be a great trail for the more adventurous visitor. Tentative plans are to re-establish the trail April 20 and 21.

### Clean up at Hatch Ranch.

It appears that the park will take ownership of the Hatch Ranch headquarters buildings sometime in May. From the grounds and within the buildings a lot of stuff will need to be removed, cleaned up, and repaired. The property is a wonderful addition within the park expansion lands and offers many opportunities for future use. Tentative plans are to start cleaning up the Hatch Ranch on June 22 and 23.

### Construct a New Trail.

Create a 1.5 mile trail between the Painted Desert Visitor Center and Tawa Point, where it would join the existing Rim Trail to Painted Desert Inn. This trail will give visitors a way to access a Painted Desert view on foot, or potentially by bicycle. Though the initial trail will be gravel, the park hopes to eventually make this trail ADA compliant.

Construction will begin this summer using labor from the Youth Conservation Corps. Tentative plans are to continue work on the trail with volunteer labor September 28 (Public Lands Day) and 29.

### Park Marathon

The park road is the perfect length for a marathon event. Assistance from the Friends group would be the only way this event could happen this year or in 2014. It takes a lot of coordination to organize and run such an event, and expertise is needed. Contact [Brad\\_Traver@nps.gov](mailto:Brad_Traver@nps.gov) if you can help or if you know of anyone who has helped with similar events.

## Thank You!

Big thanks go out to Friends who braved nasty winter weather on January 26 to help record petroglyph sites: Jean Palumbo, Ann and Paul Anspach, and Darlene Brinkerhoff.

Thank you also to those who donated toward the support of three interns for this summer's paleontology work. The park had a goal of \$4500 for their support and Friends pledged a total of \$5350! Thank you!



# 4,265 Acres Purchased in Petrified Forest National Park

The Conservation Fund and National Parks Conservation Association Protect Significant Land within Park Boundary

On January 31, 2013, The Conservation Fund, in partnership with the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA), purchased 4,265 acres within the Petrified Forest National Park boundary. Known as the McCauley Ranch, the acquired acreage lies east of Puerco Pueblo within the newly expanded area of the park. It will connect lands already protected within the park and preserve the natural viewshed.

The Conservation Fund will temporarily hold and protect the land until it can be purchased and transferred to the National Park Service (NPS) later this year.

A substantial contribution from NPCA, thanks to a generous and anonymous donor, made the purchase possible. This project marks the latest achievement of a decade-old partnership between the NPS, The Conservation Fund and NPCA.

In 2011, The Conservation Fund helped the NPS with the acquisition of the 26,000 acre Hatch Ranch in the eastern expansion lands. This was made possible with Congressionally-approved funds through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), a federal land protection program that receives a percentage of the proceeds from

offshore oil and gas royalties. The NPS plans to use additional LWCF funds to complete the purchase of the McCauley Ranch from The Conservation Fund later this year.



View across McCauley Ranch



Petroglyph panel on McCauley Ranch

## New Exhibits to Open in Park

Rainbow Forest Museum will soon offer a new exhibit area to the public: The Blue Mesa Ecology Room. The heart of the exhibit will be a highly detailed mural representing a day in the Life of a Late Triassic river. The surrounding panels will explore how such a detailed picture can be drawn. They will appeal to all ages and levels of interest, from a discussion of Triassic climate and how it changed over time, to a simulated fossil excavation. Cold cast bronzes of significant fossils will provide a real “feel” for the kinds of fossils that inform us about the events in the lives of extinct Triassic animals.

Watch for more information about this exciting new exhibit!

## Crowdsourcing

The park is looking for help with a new way to raise project funds: crowdsourcing. Crowdsourcing taps into an online community of any interested parties, rather than targeting a specific group, in order to raise funds for a specific project. With “crowds” of people offering small monetary contributions, a significant sum of money can be raised.

If you, or someone you know is interested in assisting with crowdsourcing, please contact [Brad\\_Traver@nps.gov](mailto:Brad_Traver@nps.gov) or Kevin Dahl at [kdahl@npca.org](mailto:kdahl@npca.org).



## Join the Friends Group today!

You can be a member of the Friends of Petrified Forest National Park! Contact Kevin Dahl for more details.

[kdahl@npca.org](mailto:kdahl@npca.org)

For specific information about park projects, contact the park superintendent, Brad Traver.

[Brad\\_Traver@nps.gov](mailto:Brad_Traver@nps.gov)

*Visit the park's official website to learn more about the park and its resources:*

[www.nps.gov/pefo/](http://www.nps.gov/pefo/)

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