

Friends of Petrified Forest National Park

Working together we can make a difference!

Board of Directors

Creating a governing body for the Friends of Petrified Forest National Park has been a priority since the group first formed. Dr. Jeanne Swarhout has agreed to be Chair of the Board of Directors. Dr. Robert Breunig will be the Vice-Chair. This is exciting for all of us!

The process of incorporation for the Friends of Petrified Forest National Park has also begun. Watch for more information later in the year.



Blue Forest Trail Now Open!

April winds did not stop work on the re-establishment of the 1930s Blue Forest Trail. On April 20 and 21, a group of hard-working Friends walked from one end of the 1.1 mile trail to the other for the first time in decades!

The primary work was recreating tread in areas where the steep side slopes had filled in the historic walking surface. Today, the trail is safe for adventurous hikers with the proper gear in the proper conditions. The park will add it to

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Working on the Blue Forest Trail.

As Friends, we can help the park not only professionally and financially, but with our own sweat and hard work.

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New Exhibit Opens at Rainbow Forest Museum



Fossil Preparator Cathy Lash works on the exhibit.

Views of the Blue Mesa Room.



The Blue Mesa Room at Rainbow Forest Museum is a new geology and paleontology exhibit. A highly detailed mural representing a day in the life of a Triassic river is the heart of the exhibit. Surrounding panels explore how scientists can draw such a detailed picture. They 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 provide a real “feel” for the kinds of fossils that inform us about the events in the lives of extinct Triassic animals.

Exhibit designers chose one slice of time within the 18 million years of geologic events found within the park. Previous murals and media show animals and plants from the entire Triassic Period in an effort to simplify the story. But ecosystems and animals change over time. Putting everything into the same image is like presenting pictures of modern humans living with creatures like bearded dogs, chalicotheres, and two-foot tall horses from the Miocene Epoch.

In the last 10 years our understanding of the Triassic has grown tremendously. The Blue Mesa Room offers the opportunity to interpret “deep time,” helping answer questions like, “How was this landscape different 223 million years ago?” “When did dinosaurs and pterosaurs first evolve?” “How old are rocks in the park compared to other places like Grand Canyon and Zion National Park?”

Exhibits are never really finished. As scientific study continues, new fossils are found and the story evolves. But the doors to the current picture of the Triassic are now open for the public to enjoy.



Cold cast bronze elements in the new exhibits at Rainbow Forest Museum.

Meet the Summer Interns

Thank you Friends of Petrified Forest National Park for helping to fund Resource Management Interns this summer! Your contribution has allowed the park to hire talented students who will assist with archaeological and paleontological research.

Archaeology

Crystal Simms

I recently graduated from the University of Colorado with a degree in anthropology. My archaeological experience began by researching Paleolithic hunter-gatherers in Italy. My interest in lithics and Paleoindians attracted me to the Petrified Forest National Park.



Emmy Kvamme

I am finishing my bachelor's degree in archaeology at the University of Arkansas. My interests include Southwest archaeology and dendrochronology. I am excited to extend my surveying experience here at the Petrified Forest and further my knowledge on Southwest archaeology.

Stephanie Mack

I graduated from Louisiana State University with a double major of Anthropology and History. I am embarking on a graduate program this fall at the University of New Mexico with a Master's Degree in Public Archaeology. I was lucky enough to work last summer for the National Park Service in Lassen Volcanic National Park, where I learned mostly about historic archaeology. I cannot wait to learn about the rich prehistoric history that is located within the Petrified Forest National Park.





Samantha Linford

I am a recent graduate from the University of California Santa Cruz with a B.A. in Anthropology and a B.A. in History of Art and Visual Culture. My undergraduate research focused on Southwest ceramic analysis, which is a reason I was drawn to the Petrified Forest, considering the ceramic assemblage tied to the Zuni and Hopi Ancestral Pueblos. I have also focused on Mission Period assemblages along the California coast leading me to an interest in historic materials as well.

Paleontology

Sarah Tulga

I am going to be a senior at UC Berkeley, majoring in Integrative Biology. I am currently in Kevin Padian's lab finishing a project using geometric morphometrics and bone histology to look at *Aspidoscelis velox*. We are interested in determining baseline levels of morphological variation within a parthenogenetic species and comparing that to gonochoristic species, investigating the degree of influence size, age, and year collected plays on shape variation. I am interested in pursuing a career in Paleobiology and next year I am excited about potentially conducting a honors research thesis. This summer, I am working with Bill Parker, Resource Management, and I am looking forward to learning the ropes of fossil collection, doing a bone histology research project and gaining experience in fossil preparation.



Adam Marsh

I'm from South Bend, Indiana and received a Bachelor of Science from the University of Notre Dame, majoring in Biological Sciences and minoring in Environmental Geosciences. I've worked at a natural history museum and actinide mineralogy synthesis lab, and have spent months in the field near Osage, WY, and Rudyard, MT. There, I excavated the remains of *Camarasaurus* and *Gryposaurus*, respectively. I recently finished my Master of Science in vertebrate paleontology at the University of Texas at Austin, where I described the osteology of the sauropodomorph dinosaur *Saraksaurus aurifontanalis* and investigated the age of the Kayenta Formation using in-situ U-Pb laser-ablation ICP-MS. I will continue with my PhD in Austin in the fall, and am I'm looking forward to getting to know the terrestrial vertebrate biota of the Late Triassic in North America from Petrified Forest National Park.

Zachary Morris

I am a second year Master's student at The University of Texas at Austin, and I will be working for Bill Parker in Resource Management this summer. I have been interested in paleontology and evolution, particularly the evolution of development, for much of my life and have spent two previous summers collecting fossils near Ghost Ranch, New Mexico. I love extinct organisms and attempting to understand how these animals and plants used to live. I am excited to spend this summer in collections and out in the field collecting fossils here at Petrified Forest.



Kelsey Hornung

I just graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with my undergraduate degree in geology. I have never lived outside of Texas and am looking forward to the Arizona heat. In about a year I plan on going to graduate school for Museum Studies and would like to one day work in a museum.

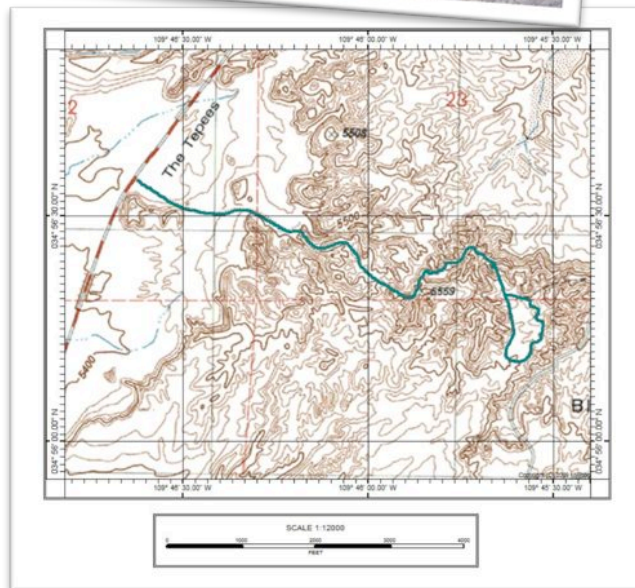
Blue Forest Trail

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the “off the beaten path” series of excursions on its official website sometime this fall.

The Blue Forest Trail was first established by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1937. It is not known when it stopped being maintained and used. It’s a beautiful and intimate look at the very colorful badlands in the Blue Mesa area. The trail includes petrified logs and a spur to a lovely overlook with a 360 degree view.

Thanks to the following Friends who pitched in that weekend: Thomas Williams, Liz Wise, Jerry Good, Janis Newton, Jack and Barbara Foree, Ginny Dotson, Eric and Amy Henderson, Thomas Poscharsky, Margaret Kanoy, Cathy Lash, and Denise Traver. You were all a fantastic crew!





Youth Conservation Corps Helps Establish New Trail

Summer is a busy time at Petrified Forest National Park. The Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) is hard at work on a variety of projects, including the construction of a new trail at the north end of the park.

The YCC is an 8-week, non-residential program offered to youths between the ages of 15 and 18 years of age who live within the local commuting area. Projects they work on include trail construction and maintenance, riparian improvements, general maintenance work, exotic plant eradication, and re-vegetation.

The largest project for the crew this summer is the construction of a 1.5 mile trail connecting the Painted Desert Visitor Center

to Tawa Point, where it would join the existing Rim Trail to Painted Desert Inn. This initial trail will be gravel but the park hopes to eventually make it ADA compliant and accessible to all visitors.



2013 YCC group.



Public Lands Day Event

September 28 and 29, 2013

The next volunteer opportunity for the Friends group will be Public Lands Day, Saturday, September 28, with work extended into Sunday if needed. The park would like to re-establish an access route to the Devil's Playground area in the Petrified Forest Wilderness. This project was proposed in the recent Wilderness Management Plan and would offer visitors a new part of the park to explore.

More information will be distributed by email as the date gets closer. Contact Brad_Traver@nps.gov if you are interested in helping.

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

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

Brad_Traver@nps.gov

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

www.nps.gov/pefo/



Working on the Blue Forest Trail.

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