



\*Once you're familiar with the variety and richness of National Park System areas, you'll no longer be satisfied with armchair traveling. These natural, historic, and recreational sites comprise part of an astounding system that began in 1872, when a group of forward-looking men saw the need to preserve unique features of our nation, without impairment, for the future. We still enjoy the fruits of their idea, the first system of national parks in the world, and so—with your help—will generations to come.

This sampler will help you choose those areas you'd most like to visit. Some of the more popular activities in each area are listed, but don't hesitate to inquire if others you may have in mind are appropriate. Most parks are open year-round, a few winter holidays excepted. Write or call the areas for more detailed information to help you fully plan your trip and for specifics on activities, regulations, and weather conditions. And never hesitate to ask a ranger for help or advice once you've arrived.

Planning ahead will likely make the difference between an enjoyable trip and a less gratifying one. An off-season visit to a major park or a stop at a lesser-known one along your route can be particularly rewarding. If you asked for information more appropriately supplied by some other agency, we have forwarded the request. For National Park Service-operated sites, the following general information should get you started on the right track in planning your vacation!

- Entrance fees vary, can be up to \$2 per car or .50 per person not traveling by car. A Golden Eagle Passport (\$10 annually) provides entry to all parks, but does not apply to other fees. A free Golden Age Passport covers entry for those 62 and over, and their passengers, and provides a 50% discount on camp fees. Get them at NPS offices or parks.

- Auto camping is allowed only in designated campgrounds, all of them operated on a first-come, first-served basis, most with cold-water restrooms and no hookups or showers (occasionally concessioners offer these services). Winter operation often limited or curtailed, with no water available. Fees up to \$4 per site. In large park areas, group campsites can be reserved by organizations.

- Almost all parks require free permits for overnight backcountry use, numbers usually limited. Write or call for local regulations.

- In-park lodging available only where noted.
- Pets must be leashed at all times. They cannot be taken on trails or in the backcountry in most parks.
- Special regulations often apply to the use of horses or mules.
- State fishing licenses required at all parks.
- Motor boats must meet State/Coast Guard regulations on reservoirs, lakes, and rivers.
- Off-road vehicle use is never allowed; some few parks have designated four-wheel drive roads.
- Some major park roads are not plowed during winter.
- Snowmobiles are allowed in some areas; always check local rules.

- Hunting allowed only in National Recreation Areas and then is regulated; firearms must be broken down in other areas.
- Every park has at least one visitor center and a variety of interpretive activities; be sure to take advantage of them!
- Keep peak-season travel plans flexible, since campgrounds, tours, or popular backcountry areas may be full when you arrive.
- Special safety precautions are necessary in parks because of dangers like wild animals, steep cliffs, or thermal areas — stay alert and don't take chances.

Most important, remember to have a good time! The parks are yours to preserve, use, and enjoy.

### 1 BENT'S OLD FORT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

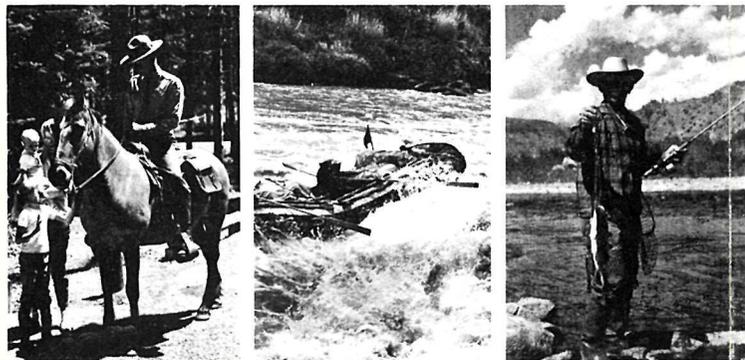
Here on the banks of the Arkansas River stands Bent's Old Fort — reconstructed and refurbished adobe fur-trading post, Indian rendezvous, way station, and military staging base on the Santa Fe Trail. In the heart of Indian country and at the crossroads of key overland routes between 1833 and 1849, few outposts were so instrumental in shaping the destiny of the southwest. Summertime visitors will find characters in period dress role-playing fort inhabitants and activities during its heyday. Day use only; services nearby. **P. O. Box 581, La Junta, CO 81050; (303) 384-2596.**

### 2 BLACK CANYON OF THE GUNNISON NATIONAL MONUMENT

The 12 spectacular miles of the gorge of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison don't form the grandest of the Western canyons, but no other canyon in North America combines its depth, narrowness, sheerness and somber countenance. Depths in the canyon range from 1730 to 2425 feet, and width at the river is as narrow as 40 feet. Auto roads trace the rims, but the river is reached only by steep and primitive trails. Camping, hiking, technical rock climbing, fishing at river, cross-country skiing. All tourist facilities nearby. Rim elevations 7500 to 8500'. **P. O. Box 1648, Montrose, CO 81401; (303) 249-9661.**

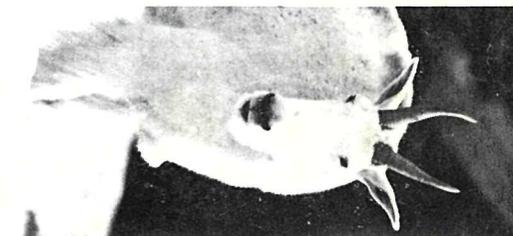
### 3 COLORADO NATIONAL MONUMENT

Nature's forces of uplift and erosion have sculpted this land of sandstone-walled canyons with sheer cliffs, towering monoliths, and weird rock formations. Geology is the major theme, history and natural history secondary ones in this park area, where history's marks include hundred-million year old dinosaur bones. A rim drive provides peeks into the fantastic canyon landscapes. A hike opens up the quiet, shimmering world of the high pinyon-juniper desert; carry water and be prepared for intense summer heat. Campgrounds on-site; tourist services nearby. Elevation 4700-7000'. **Fruita, CO 81521; (303) 858-3617.**



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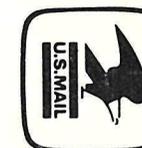


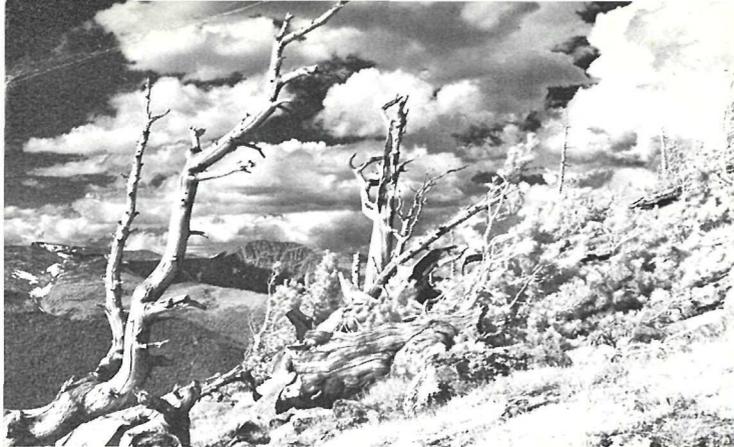
NATIONAL PARK AREAS IN

# colorado

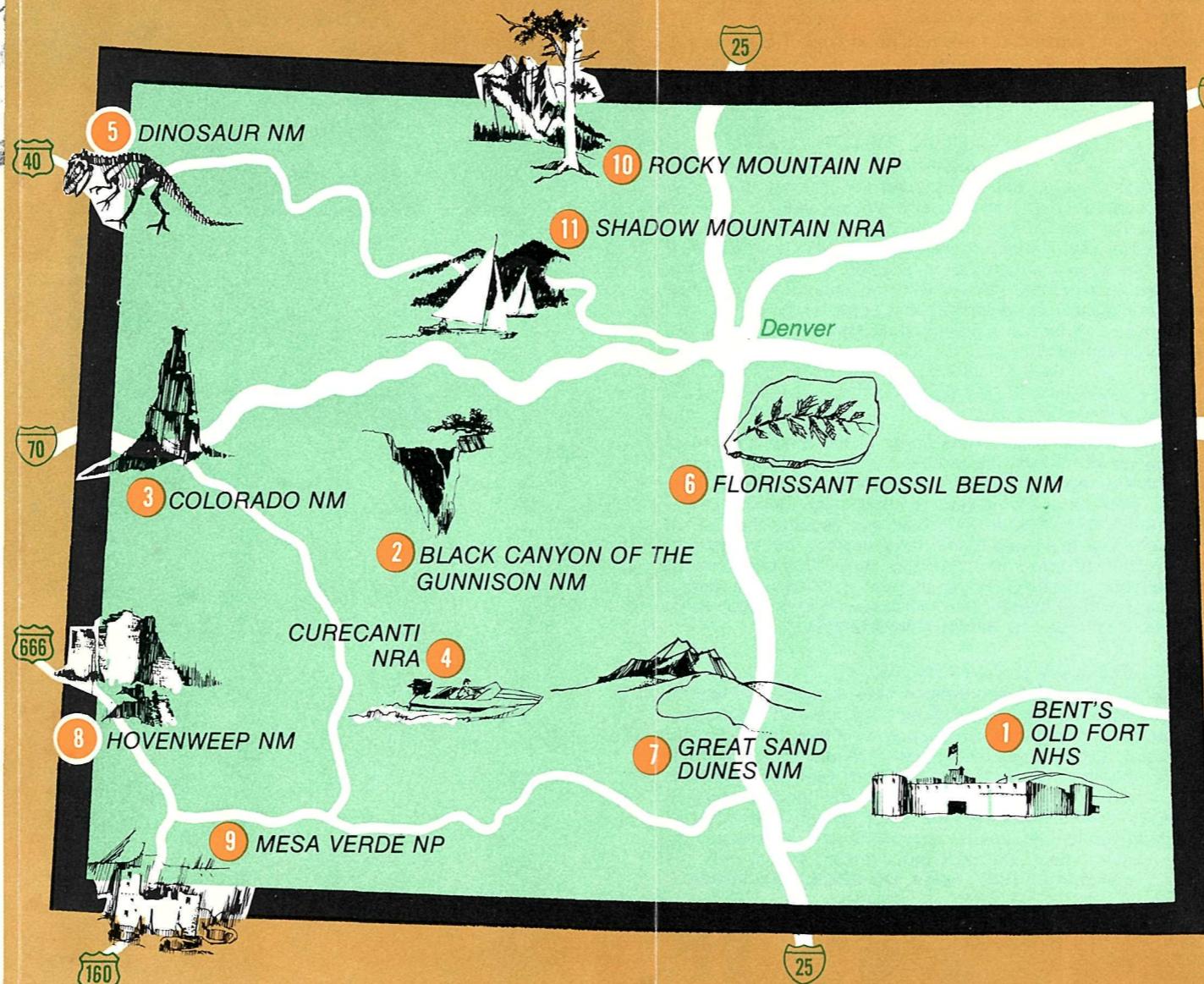


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# colorado



**LEGEND:**

- interstate highways
- other major highways

Use this map in coordination with your highway maps.

**8 HOVENWEEP NATIONAL MONUMENT**

At Hovenweep, a Ute Indian word meaning "deserted valley," pre-Columbian Pueblo Indians left six groups of ruins, all noted for their square, oval, circular, or D-shaped towers. The farmers and craftsmen who lived here in the San Juan region came as long as 2000 years ago and drifted away during a prolonged drought in the late 1200's. All approach roads are unpaved; inquire locally about conditions. Campground on-site; other services are distant. For further information, contact **Mesa Verde NP**.

**9 MESA VERDE NATIONAL PARK**

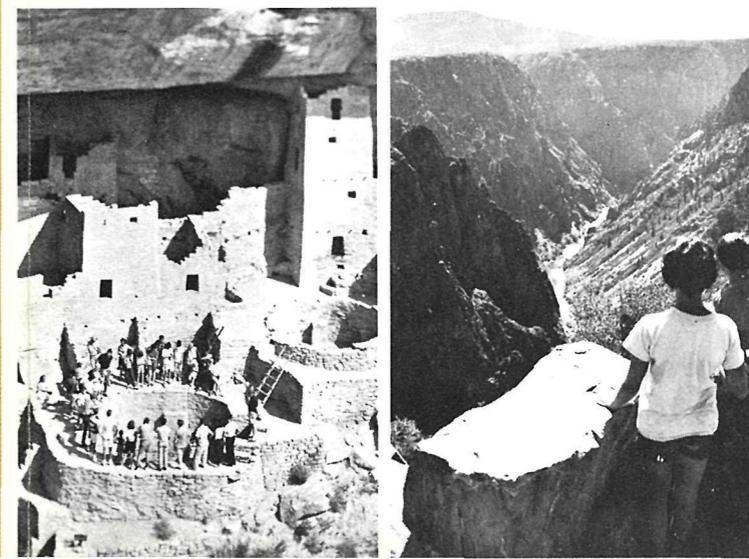
Mesa Verde's spectacular 8th through 13th century cliff dwellings and mesa-top pit houses offer the nation's most thoroughly accessible and well-interpreted archaeological sites. Free tickets required for some tours in summer; plan plenty of time. Ruins accessible in summer by combination of car and free shuttle; only Spruce Tree House open in winter. Meals, lodging, bicycle rental available summer only. NPS maintains campground, some trails; most backcountry use restricted. Elevation 7000-8500'. **Mesa Verde National Park, CO 81330; (303) 529-4465.**

**10 ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK**

Rocky Mountain National Park embraces one of the most easily accessible high mountain areas in North America, with elevations ranging from 7800 to 14,255'. Trail Ridge Road, generally open Memorial Day to mid-October, takes you to glacially sculptured valleys, rugged gorges, lakes, and vast areas of alpine tundra. Autumn colors are spectacular. Camping, backpacking, fishing, technical climbing, stables, downhill and X-C skiing. Backcountry permits by mail. Tourist facilities nearby. **Estes Park, CO 80517; (303) 586-2371.**

**11 SHADOW MOUNTAIN NATIONAL RECREATION AREA**

Bordered by the beautiful and rugged mountains of the Continental Divide, and adjacent to Rocky Mountain National Park, the impounded Granby and Shadow Mountain Lakes are linked by channel to Grand Lake, Colorado's largest natural body of water. Shadow Mountain NRA is the spot for high-intensity recreational activity including varied water-oriented sports, hiking, camping, hunting under State regulations, snowmobiling, X-C skiing. Nearby towns and resorts offer tourist services. Elevation 8400'. For more information, contact **Rocky Mountain NP**.



**4 CURECANTI NATIONAL RECREATION AREA**

Three reservoirs — Blue Mesa, Morrow Point and Crystal — stretch for 40 miles along the Gunnison River. On Blue Mesa, the largest lake in Colorado when filled to capacity, the NPS provides campgrounds and free boat-launching ramps. A marina offers rental boats and equipment for fishing, sightseeing and water skiing and docking and mooring. At Cimarron, a historic narrow gauge railroad exhibit rests on a stone and steel trestle built in 1882. In summer, self-guiding tours may be taken of the underground powerplant at 469-foot high Morrow Point Dam. Free tour boat rides are offered daily during the summer on Morrow Point Lake, which lies in a fiord-like canyon. Elevation 6535-9480'. **P. O. Box 1040, Gunnison, CO 81230; (303) 641-0403 (April 15-October 15), 641-2337 (October 16-April 14).**

**5 DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT**

Rivers tumbling through lovely canyons and a world-famous dinosaur fossil quarry make an attractive package here! At the quarry, visitors watch as technicians bring into relief the 140-million year old fossilized bones. And on the Green and Yampa Rivers, whitewater rafting enthusiasts enjoy thrills and occasional spills on two of the finest runs in the west. Free permits required for river-running; numbers strictly limited by advance reservation. Campgrounds in monument; other services nearby. **P. O. Box 210, Dinosaur, CO 81610; (303) 374-2216.**

**6 FLORISSANT FOSSIL BEDS NATIONAL MONUMENT**

Under the rolling meadows of this inconspicuous valley, 8,200 feet in elevation, lie fossilized impressions of insects and leaves preserved by volcanic ashfalls in an ancient lakebed 34 to 35 million years old. More than 1,100 species of insects and over 140 plant species have been identified, and several can be seen in the visitor center museum. Petrified stumps of giant sequoias, one of them more than 13 feet in diameter, have been excavated nearby. During the summer, an 1875 homestead is open to the public. Day use only. Tourist services available nearby. Area attractions include Pikes Peak and the Gold Rush town of Cripple Creek. **P. O. Box 185, Florissant, CO 80816; (303) 748-3253.**

**7 GREAT SAND DUNES NATIONAL MONUMENT**

Spectacular sand dunes, shapes ever changing in the winds of the arid, 8,200 foot San Luis Valley, nestle against the base of a gigantic sandtrap, the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. A spring-time stream running adjacent to the dunes and August sunflowers make those times favorites for many. Birding, hiking popular. One four-wheel drive/trail bike road; backcountry rides available summer only. Great backpacking nearby in the Sangre de Cristos. Camping on-site, other services available nearby. **P. O. Box 60, Alamosa, CO 81101; (303) 378-2312.**