



Foundation Document Overview

Bandelier National Monument

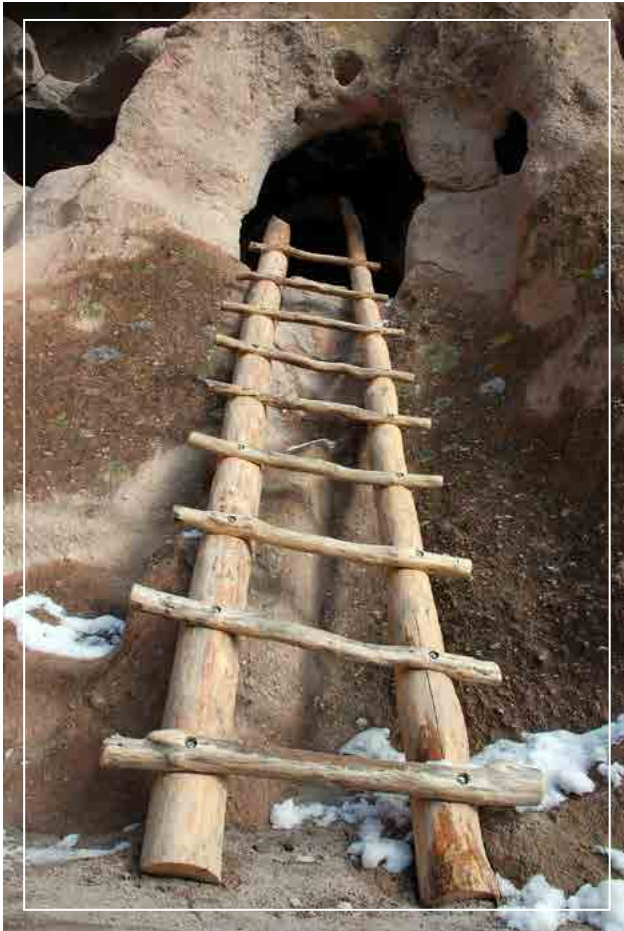
New Mexico



Contact Information

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Purpose



The purpose of BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT is to protect, preserve, and interpret an outstanding portion of the Pajarito Plateau, including one of the largest concentrations of Ancestral Pueblo archeological sites in the American Southwest. The monument provides opportunities for people to connect with and enjoy a diversity of cultural and natural resources, striking scenery, wildlife habitats, remnants of a volcanic landscape, and wilderness.

Significance

Significance statements express why Bandelier National Monument resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

- **Archeological Resources.** Bandelier National Monument preserves a high density and variety of archeological resources from the Ancestral Pueblo period, including cavates carved into cliffs of volcanic tuff. Bandelier is one of the few places in the world where these types of resources are found.
- **Cultural Connections.** Archeological sites and natural features of Bandelier National Monument remain an integral component of pueblo culture and provide a context for continuing traditional practices. The monument plays an important role for the traditionally associated pueblos, providing a direct cultural connection to resources, stories, and oral histories.
- **Study and Preservation of Culture.** Early scientific research of Ancestral Pueblo sites at Bandelier National Monument was fundamental to the development of American archeology, anthropology, and ethnography, and contributed to cultural resource preservation in the American Southwest. Ongoing research continues to expand our knowledge in these fields.
- **Diverse Natural Systems.** The dynamic natural systems associated with 5,000 feet of elevation change and dissected volcanic landforms, including mesas and canyons, support diverse vegetation, wildlife, and biotic communities. This area, stretching from the Valles Caldera rim to the Rio Grande, is relatively intact compared to the surrounding landscape.
- **Wilderness.** The Bandelier Wilderness and backcountry provide exceptional opportunities for visitors to access, recreate in, and experience expansive views, clean air, dark night skies, quiet, and solitude, all within an environment rich in archeological sites, which is unique among NPS cultural parks.
- **Civilian Conservation Corps Historic District.** The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) National Historic Landmark District at Bandelier is the largest collection of CCC structures and furnishings in the national park system. The district is an outstanding example of design and workmanship from the New Deal era, the greatest campaign of public works in our nation's history.

Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

- **Archeological Resources**
- **Continuing Cultural Connections**
- **Science and Research**
- **Natural Landscape**
- **Wilderness**
- **Museum Collection and Archives**

Bandelier National Monument contains other resources and values that may not be fundamental to the purpose and significance of the park, but are important to consider in management and planning decisions. These are referred to as other important resources and values.

- **Recreational Values / Visitor Experiences**
- **New Deal Era Legacy / Civilian Conservation Corps National Historic Landmark District**
- **Other Cultural Resources**



Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from—and should reflect—park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

- **Pueblo Timeline.** The long, rich, and continuing human history of the pueblo people in the Bandelier area provides opportunities to explore how cultures and individuals shape and are shaped by the land.
- **Ecosystems.** The unusually intact and diverse ecosystem of the Bandelier area offers outstanding opportunities to explore natural processes and the value of restoring and maintaining healthy, functioning systems.
- **Civilian Conservation Corps.** The high concentration and integrity of CCC structures and furnishings at Bandelier National Monument foster appreciation for both the hard work and talent of those involved and the importance of the 1930s American public works programs as a response to national environmental and economic crisis.
- **Recreational Opportunities.** The Bandelier landscape provides unique opportunities to enjoy its cultural, natural, aesthetic, and wilderness values in its wilderness, backcountry, and frontcountry with a range of recreational opportunities such as solitude, animal and plant viewing, photography, hiking, camping, backpacking, horseback riding, snow-shoeing, cross-country skiing, biking, climbing, trail running, exploration, and bird-watching.



Description

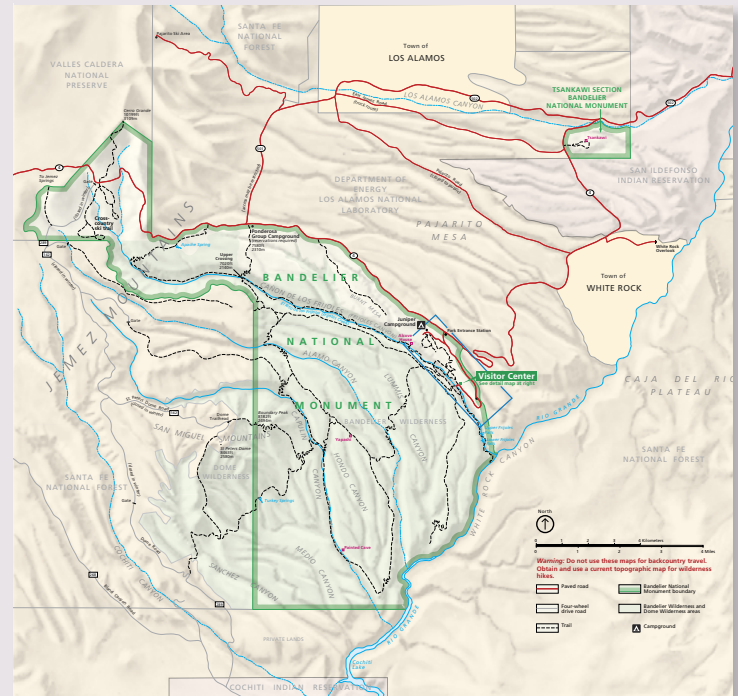
Located in Los Alamos County, New Mexico, Bandelier National Monument contains one of the largest concentrations of pre-Hispanic archeological sites in the American Southwest. Within the monument are more than 3,000 sites, most dating from AD 1100 to 1550 and associated with the Ancestral Pueblo period. These sites consist of large villages containing up to 400 rooms, hundreds of small farming hamlets, cliff houses, and scatters of artifacts. Major sites include Frijolito, Yapashi, Tyuonyi, Long House, San Miguel, Painted Cave, and Tsankawi. The monument and the surrounding area also contain a high concentration of a unique architectural form called cavates (cliff houses that have been carved out of the soft volcanic tuff bedrock).

Adolph F. Bandelier, a pioneer in the study of Southwest history and ethnology, visited Frijoles Canyon in October 1880 and was the first person to record the existence of many of the major archeological sites in the area. He was guided by inhabitants of Cochiti Pueblo, who have direct ancestral ties to the sites in Frijoles Canyon. Bandelier's scientific and popular writings brought the area to public attention. In the late 1890s the archeological remains in the region were first proposed for protected status under the names of "Pajarito National Park or Cliff Cities National Park." This park proposal, spearheaded by Edgar L. Hewett, included a much larger tract than the current monument boundaries. To further his proposal, Hewett assisted in the development of the Antiquities Act, which became law in 1906, permitting the president to create national monuments "to preserve historic and prehistoric structures and objects of historic or scientific interest" (Antiquities Act, section 2). Bandelier National Monument was established by presidential proclamation on February 11, 1916, named after Adolph Bandelier, who died in 1914.

Bandelier's original 22,352 acres were administered by the US Forest Service from 1916 until the National Park Service assumed responsibility in 1932. Over time, lands have been added to and removed from the monument. The monument's current boundaries include approximately 32,831 acres. In 1976, Congress designated 23,267 acres of the monument as wilderness.

In May 1987, the Bandelier Civilian Conservation Corps Historic District of 32 stone buildings was designated as a national historic landmark. This historic district harmonizes with its natural and cultural setting and helps define the mood of the headquarters and main visitor center area in Frijoles Canyon.

Bandelier National Monument is within the Pajarito Plateau. This large geographic feature is composed of volcanic ash ejected from the Valles Caldera in a series of eruptions, the last occurring approximately one million years ago. After the ash and flows of the last eruption had cooled and coalesced, the forces of erosion carved the plateau into a series of deep



canyons that reach from the edge of the Valles Caldera to the Rio Grande. Of these, the Capulin, Alamo, Frijoles, and other smaller canyons are within the monument boundaries. The Rio Grande, a major southwestern river, marks the monument's southeastern boundary. The monument extends from the Rio Grande at 5,300 feet to the summit of Cerro Grande at 10,200 feet on the caldera rim. Major vegetation types vary with increasing elevation, including juniper savannas, piñon-juniper woodlands, canyon-wall shrublands, ponderosa pine forests, riparian forests, mixed conifer forests, and montane grasslands.

The 799-acre Tsankawi unit of Bandelier National Monument is 12 miles from the main park. It includes more than 150 archeological sites, including cavates, petroglyphs, and the Ancestral Pueblo village of Tsankawi on Pajarito Mesa. The Tsankawi unit is of critical importance to the cultural heritage, beliefs, customs, practices, and history of nearby San Ildefonso Pueblo—the direct descendants of the people who inhabited the Tsankawi unit.

In 2010, prior to the Las Conchas Fire, more than 230,000 people visited Bandelier National Monument, primarily from March through September. Popular activities include hiking, picnicking, photography, bird-watching, backpacking, and camping. Most visitors are day users and spend their time visiting archeological sites in Frijoles Canyon. Popular trails and destinations include the Main Loop Trail to Tyuonyi and the cliff dwellings, Alcove House, and the Falls Trail. Fewer people venture into Bandelier's rugged wilderness to hike and backpack.