

# Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Tule Springs Fossil Beds  
National Monument



## Park Assets

### Size

22,650 acres

### Economic Impact

Not yet measured

### Annual Visitation

Not yet counted

### Park Infrastructure

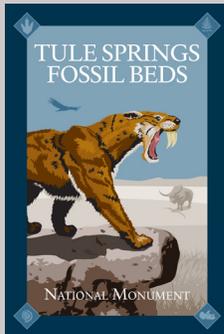
No park facilities

### Natural Resources

- The geologic deposits in the park go back at least 300,000 years. Paleontologists have discovered megafauna fossils dating between 100,000 to 13,000 years ago. Extinct large mammals that once inhabited the area include the North American lion, Columbian mammoth, saber-toothed cat, dire wolf, horse, bison and camel and the giant ground sloth. Smaller animals, such as squirrel, marmot, vole and gopher have been found, along with birds like the extinct teratorn, hawk, duck and owl. Evidence of tortoise, lizard, snake, frog and fish has also been discovered in the monument.
- Rare desert plant species occur here, including the Las Vegas bearpoppy, Merriam's bearpoppy and Las Vegas buckwheat.
- A diverse array of wildlife include endemic poppy bees, kit foxes, burrowing owls, phainopepla (a flycatcher bird), Le Conte's thrasher and a variety of reptiles. Animals listed as sensitive include the western burrowing owl and phainopepla. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lists the Mojave population of desert tortoise as threatened and with designated critical habitat in Clark County.

### Cultural Resources

Five sites in the park that are listed in, or have been determined to be eligible for, inclusion in the National Register include: Prehistoric artifact scatter that led to important advances in archeological methods and analysis, including radiocarbon dating; one of the few known intaglios in Nevada; a prehistoric hearth feature; a historic wagon road; a historic campsite. The area is also a cultural landscape for the Southern Paiute people.



Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument was established as the 405th unit of the National Park Service Dec. 19, 2014. Scientific investigations of the area began in the early 1900s, culminating in the 1962-63 Tule Springs expedition. A long scientific hiatus ended with exhaustive paleontological excavations in the 2000s. These scientific excavations and findings have shown that the park contains the single largest and most diverse open-site assemblage of vertebrate fossils from the end of the Pleistocene epoch found in the Mojave Desert and the southern Great Basin. While there are no facilities or marked trails at the park, at this time, there are opportunities to explore more of the story and see some of the fossils. The National Park Service has an exhibit on display at the Nevada State Museum in Las Vegas.

### Park Purpose

The purpose of Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument is to conserve, protect, interpret, and enhance for the benefit of present and future generations the unique and nationally important paleontological, scientific, educational, and recreational resources and values of the land.

### Next Steps

The park's advisory council has been appointed by the Secretary of Interior. This council provides guidance for the management of the monument, including advisement on the preparation and implementation of a park management plan. The park has one permanent employee, the park superintendent. Additional support is provided by two rangers hired under special term appointments and Lake Mead National Recreation Area staff.

### Interested Agencies & Organizations

Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Air Force, Southern Paiute Tribe, State of Nevada, Clark County (NV), Nevada Department of Wildlife, Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, Clark County School District, Outside Las Vegas Foundation, Protectors of Tule Springs, University of Nevada Las Vegas, Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas Natural History Museum, San Bernardino County Museum, Cities of Las Vegas, North Las Vegas and other gateway communities.

### Congressional District

**Senators:** Dean Heller (R-NV), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV)

**Representatives:** Dina Titus (D-NV), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Ruben Kihuen (D-NV)