



Bird painted by Romando Vigil (Tse Ye Mu), Pueblo of San Ildefonso, 1920–30
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

Bird petroglyph,
Rinconada Canyon
NPS / DANIEL LEIFHEIT

Each of these rocks is alive, keeper of a message left by the ancestors.

William F. Weahkee, Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos, Inc.

A Place of Power Petroglyph National Monument belongs to a landscape sacred to the Rio Grande and Western Pueblos of northern New Mexico. It is also significant for Hopi, Navajo, Comanche, and Apache peoples. All have distinct traditions, dialects, and languages. Yet collectively they are one culture that acknowledges the power of this landscape and the petroglyphs carved in its volcanic rocks.

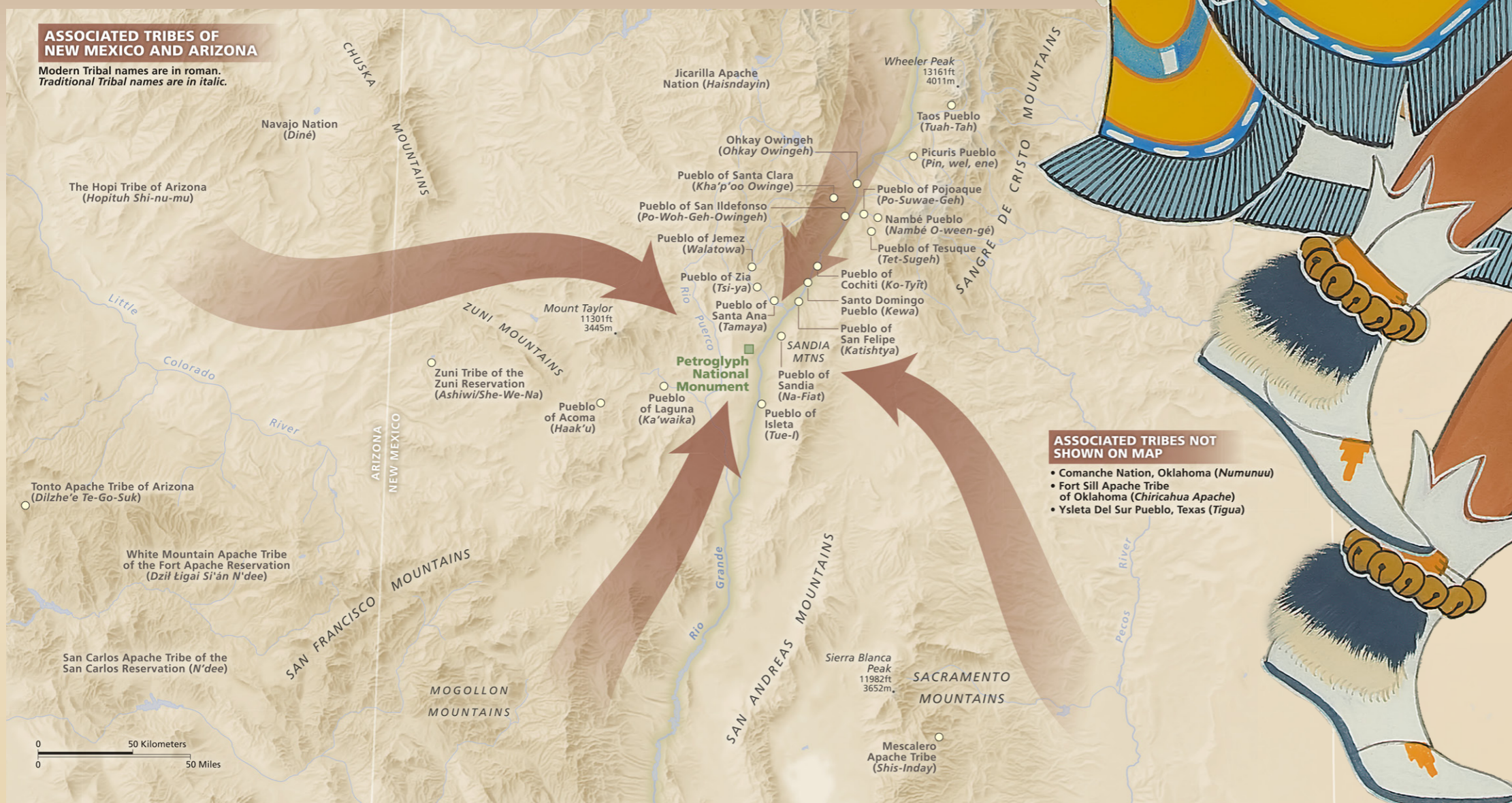
The landscape is important for the continuity of Native cultures. For centuries Native people have come here to see the petroglyphs and collect plants, soil, rocks, and minerals for use in prescribed ways.

They leave cornmeal offerings and dance and pray in ceremonies. Both the land and the petroglyphs continue to guide, heal, and connect people with their ancestors.

Nineteen Pueblos and ten Tribes maintain historical, cultural, and spiritual connections to this landscape. Celestino Gachupin, Pueblo of Zia, describes the tradition of use as a “right ... with the people of many different communities sharing the area, performing ceremonies there, and respecting one another’s privacy to do what was needed.”

Petroglyph of macaw parrot,
Boca Negra Canyon
NPS / DANIEL LEIFHEIT

Some petroglyphs depict winged dancers, connecting them with celebrants of traditional dances. Left: Eagle Dancer painted by Joe Hilario Herrera (See Ru, or Blue Bird), Pueblo of Cochiti, ca. 1950
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN
© JOE HILARIO HERRERA



The landscape that surrounds the petroglyphs forms a spiritual world with profound value for Indigenous communities. Not only the basalt boulders inscribed with petroglyphs, but the volcanoes, lava flows, grasslands, canyons, plants, and animals are alive with the spirits of the ancestors.

Many mountains and canyons bear names assigned in the Spanish colonial era, when Spaniards and Mexicans added images to the boulders. In 1692 Spain claimed the area on the west bank of the Rio Grande, calling it *Atrisco* (or Near Water), and granted lands to settlers. According to Atrisco heir Rudolfo Anaya, they “learned from their Native American neighbors that the symbols carved into the rocks were part of the continuous spiritual history of the valley.”

Plains prickly pear
NPS

Soapweed yucca
ADOBE STOCK / MELASTROMICHAN

Collared lizard
© SIMON SCARRETTA

Butterfly Dance performed by the Pueblo of Acoma at Petroglyph National Monument, 2002
NPS



Puebloan pottery, formed from clay given to the artist by Mother Earth, also belongs to the spiritual world. It is often painted with designs of birds.

Jar by Rosalia Medina Toribio, Pueblo of Zia, ca. 1925
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

Brooch with thunderbird figure, The Hopi Tribe of Arizona, ca. 1960
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Visit Petroglyph National Monument

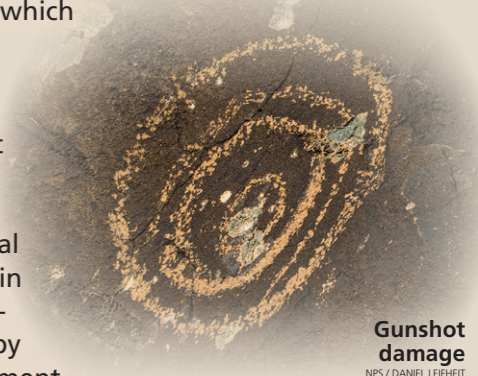
Walk the Rinconada Canyon trail to view the hundreds of petroglyphs concentrated here. Enjoy a beautiful view of the Sandia Mountains at sunset, when the mountains take on a pink hue.



Macaw parrots native to Mexico and Central America were brought up along trade routes long before Europeans came to the area. Their brilliant plumage is used in modern Puebloan dances and ceremonies.

Protect the Petroglyphs Petroglyphs are fragile, irreplaceable cultural resources important in our collective human history. Organized efforts to protect them began in the 1970s with the establishment of Indian Petroglyph State Park at Boca Negra Canyon and Volcano Park in Albuquerque. In 1986 the 17-mile escarpment was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Friends of the Albuquerque Petroglyphs and other groups led the effort to create Petroglyph National Monument, which was established by Congress in 1990.

We ask you to respect and help protect this sacred place. Federal laws protect all natural and cultural features in the monument. Violations are punishable by fines and/or imprisonment.



Gunshot damage
NPS / DANIEL LEFFREY

To report vandalism call Petroglyph National Monument (505-899-0205), the Archaeological Resources Protection Act Hotline (800-227-7286), or Grand Canyon Dispatch (928-638-7805).

What is stored in the petroglyphs is not written in any book or to be found in any library.

Herman Agoyo (Kaafedeh, or Blowing Leaf), San Juan Pueblo



Roadrunner
ADOBE STOCK / DENNIS DONOHUE

For a safe visit, remain on trails, keep your distance from wildlife, and watch for sudden storms. Take shelter in your vehicle at the first sign of thunder or lightning, and stay away from drainages (arroyos and dry washes) and the mesa top. • Watch for rattlesnakes; report sightings to a ranger. • Wear sunscreen, protective shoes, and a hat. • Carry plenty of water. • Keep your pet on a six-foot leash and clean up their feces. • No public phones, food service, lodging, or camping in the park; find services nearby. • Some areas may be closed during severe weather. • For firearms regulations check the park website.

Accessibility We strive to make facilities, services, and programs accessible to all. To learn more, go to the information center, ask a ranger, call, or check the park website.

Petroglyph National Monument is one of over 425 parks in the National Park System. To learn more, visit www.nps.gov.

Petroglyph National Monument Information Center
Unser Blvd. NW
(at Western Trail NW)
Albuquerque, NM 87120
505-899-0205
www.nps.gov/petr

City of Albuquerque
Open Space Division
PO Box 1293
Albuquerque, NM 87103
505-452-5200
www.cabq.gov/openspace

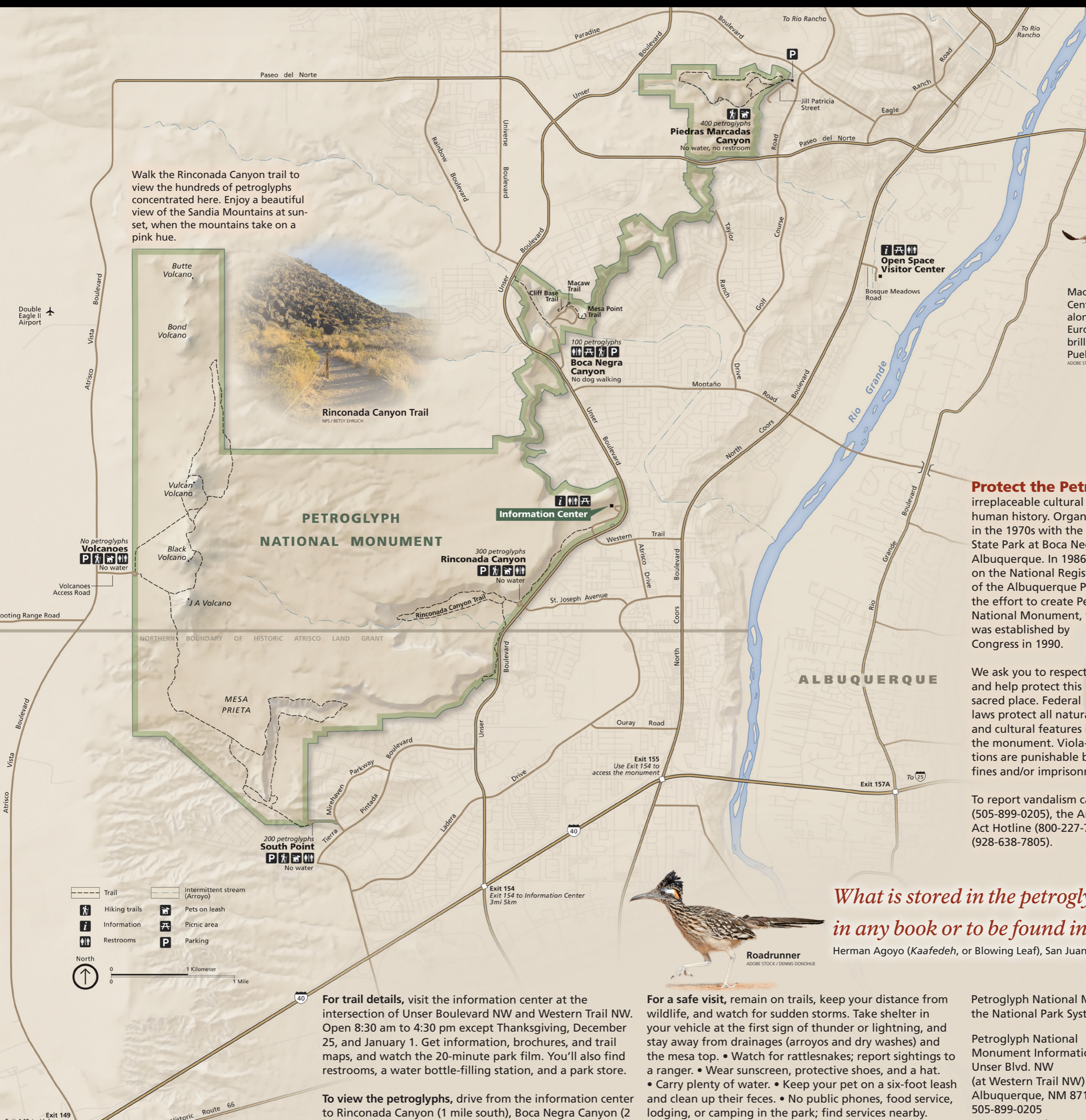
Use the official NPS App to guide your visit.

National Park Foundation
Join the park community.
www.nationalparks.org

Emergencies call 911

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PETROGLYPH NATIONAL MONUMENT



For trail details, visit the information center at the intersection of Unser Boulevard NW and Western Trail NW. Open 8:30 am to 4:30 pm except Thanksgiving, December 25, and January 1. Get information, brochures, and trail maps, and watch the 20-minute park film. You'll also find restrooms, a water bottle-filling station, and a park store.

To view the petroglyphs, drive from the information center to Rinconada Canyon (1 mile south), Boca Negra Canyon (2 miles north), or Piedras Marcadas Canyon (6 miles north).

To visit the volcanoes day-use area on the monument's west side, drive 12 miles from the information center via I-40 from Atrisco Vista Boulevard. A trail winds around the bases of the cinder cone volcanoes. No petroglyph viewing in this area.



Purple aster
©ALAN CHESLER

Desert marigold
NATURALIST / DRUGS

Indian blanket
NATURALIST

Volcanoes formed the West Mesa 100,000 to 200,000 years ago. A north-to-south fissure opened along what is now the western edge of Petroglyph National Monument. Eruptions from the fissure created cinder cone volcanoes. Lava flowed from the volcanoes, forming the mesa's basalt caprock. At the eastern edge of the mesa, erosion and weathering caused sections of the caprock to fracture and fall. On the fallen boulders, Indigenous peoples, Spanish settlers, and later emigrants carved petroglyphs.

Sandia Mountains

Cinder cones, West Mesa
NPS / DANIEL LEFFREY