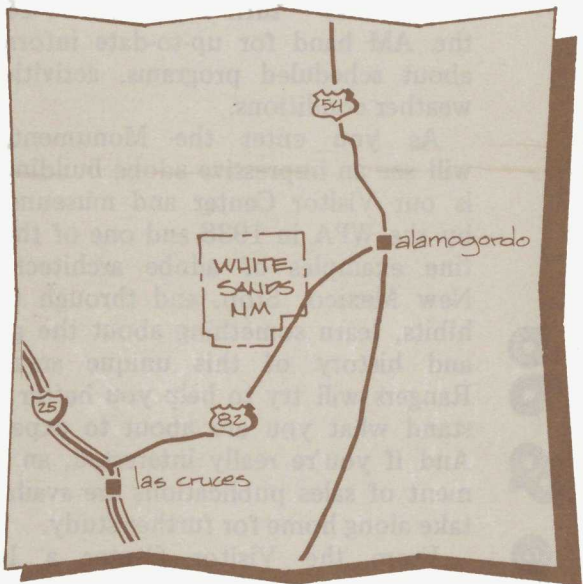


your SUPER-77 visit planner for

WHITE SANDS

National Monument



have a SUPER visit

**Safely
Use
Preserve
Enjoy
this Resource**

In the middle of New Mexico's Tularosa Basin is about 280 square miles of beautiful white sand dunes — the world's largest Gypsum Dunefield. In 1933, President Herbert Hoover set this area aside, to be preserved for the enjoyment of all, forever, as the White Sands National Monument.

You cannot visit White Sands without wondering about the hows and whys of the great white carpet covering the floor of this desert basin. We'll try to answer some of these questions for you during your visit, but you need not be a geologist to explore and enjoy the white sands. If you simply want to take a walk in a different world, White Sands National Monument can provide you the opportunity.

When you near the Monument — within 8 to 10 miles — turn your radio to 1610 on the AM band for up-to-date information about scheduled programs, activities and weather conditions.

As you enter the Monument, you will see an impressive adobe building. This is our Visitor Center and museum, built by the WPA in 1938 and one of the truly fine examples of adobe architecture in New Mexico. Stop, and through the exhibits, learn something about the geology and history of this unique area. Park Rangers will try to help you better understand what you are about to experience. And if you're really interested, an assortment of sales publications are available to take along home for further study.

From the Visitor Center a 16-mile round trip scenic loop drive — the only road into the dunes — leads to the heart of the white sands. Along the drive on your right you will notice posts with numbers. These correspond to those in the guide leaflet you will be given as you begin your tour and explain what you see.

About 3 miles in on the drive is a small parking area. This is the trail head of the Big Dune Trail. A leisurely one hour walk takes you through the marginal

area of the dunes, then atop one of the highest dunes for a spectacular view before you return to your car. A guide book is available at the trail head.

Continuing on the drive you enter an area of larger dunes. Another 3 miles (about 6 miles from the Visitor Center) are several picnic shelters. Beyond, the road divides to form a 2-mile loop into the heart of the dunefield. Interpretive markers are found along the route.

This is one area where the National Park Service encourages you to get off the beaten path and explore. Walk over the crest of a dune and descend the other side. Suddenly you are alone in a world so unlike any other that your mind can once more be free to discover and experience for itself. And you don't have to worry about disturbing the environment. Tonight's breezes will erase every indication that you were ever there. We even encourage you to rent "sand surfboards" at the Visitor Center and "ride the dunes."

During the summer season, naturalists conduct guided walks and present evening programs at designated points within the dunes.

For the hiking enthusiast, a primitive backcountry campsite is available. Inquire at the Visitor Center for more information if this is your thing.

Wherever you go at White Sands, carry your camera. The photography is terrific!

near by

Missile Park, a static display of the different missiles tested by your government at the White Sands Missile Range. 34 miles west on U.S. 70.

For a contrast, visit the Valley of Fires State Park, 2 miles west of Carrizozo (which is 59 miles north of Alamogordo) on U.S. 380. The black lava flow is one of the most recent in New Mexico — only 2,000 years old.

directions
overnight
food

The Old Lincoln State Museum — an entire town virtually unchanged from the days when "Billy the Kid" and Pat Garrett trod its wooden sidewalks back in the nostalgic times of the "old west" — is 40 miles east of Carrizozo on U.S. 380.

U.S. 70 crosses the Sacramento Mountains and passes through the Mesquero Apache Indian Reservation. In the town of Mesquero you can visit their Cultural Center.

There are several winter sports areas on the Sacramento Mountain and State Parks in the general area.

White Sands National Monument is 15 miles west of Alamogordo on U.S. 70-82. Alamogordo is in south-central New Mexico on east-west U.S. 82 and north-south U.S. 54. Commercial airlines and buses serve the city.

The nearest overnight accommodations are in the cities of Alamogordo, 15 miles to the east, and Las Cruces, 54 miles west. Both offer a range of accommodations and services.

The closest public campgrounds are in the Lincoln National Forest near Cloudcroft, 35 miles to the east, and Aguirre Spring, near the summit of San Augustin Pass, about 38 miles west on U.S. 70-82.

Privately operated campgrounds are available in both Alamogordo and Las Cruces.

Refreshments can be purchased in the Gift Shop at the Visitor Center. Your closest spot for a complete dinner is Alamogordo, 15 miles east.

This high desert basin, 4,000-foot elevation, is subject to harsh and rapid weather changes. Summer highs frequently top 100 degrees, but the evenings are usually cool and comfortable. Most of the 8

try weather read safe

inches annual precipitation occurs in summer as thunderstorms and hail.

Winters are usually mild, but evening temperatures often go below freezing. Snow is infrequent, but heavy falls have occurred.

During the spring, wind and dust storms may last for several days.

If you really want to get to know the White Sands, consider a visit when crowds won't interfere with your experience. Ninety per cent of the visitors come between Memorial Day and Labor Day. During the remainder of the year temperatures are milder — and probably tempers are too.

In preparation for your visit, you may enjoy reading:

- White Sands, of Wind, Sand, and Time* by Richard Atkinson \$1.83
- Big Dune Nature Trail Guide* \$1.11
- Lake Lucero Trail Guide* \$1.52

Prices include tax. Send your orders to White Sands National Monument Information, P.O. Box 458, Alamogordo, NM, 88310. Include 25 cents for postage and handling. Checks or money orders should be made payable to the Southwest Parks and Monuments Association.

Drive with caution. The Visitor Center and picnic areas are often congested and the road has many curves. Children are busy being children; let's give them a chance.

Do not tunnel in the face of the dunes. The sand will collapse and you may be buried. This is a very real temptation for children, so parents, please keep an eye on them.

If you plan to hike into the back-country, notify a Ranger before you leave. Take plenty of water — and don't hike alone.

Three species of poisonous rattlesnakes, desert centipedes and scorpion

rules

inhabit the Monument. Stay away if you see them. Above all, don't try to kill them. They will avoid you if at all possible. Remember, you are in their environment.

Driving on the dunes is a no-no. Stay on the roadway or parking areas.

The entire Monument is a plant and wildlife sanctuary. Molesting or disturbing of natural or historic features is prohibited. Do not take any of the white sand!

Help protect your Monument and yourself by obeying the Park rules. It's more fun for everyone.

PARKS AND FORESTS

When you are enjoying yourself, what difference does it make if you are in a National Park or a National Forest? Both offer outstanding recreational opportunities and special facilities and services to enhance your visit.

Differences are in concept — which determines the way they are managed. National Forests are managed as renewable natural resources — timber, forage, water, wildlife. National Parks are set aside to be preserved, as they are, in perpetuity.

National Forests are managed for your benefit by the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. The National Park Service is a bureau of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Included in the National Park System are great natural areas, as Parks, Monuments, Seashores, Lakeshores, Rivers and Riverways. The System also includes prehistoric and historic areas, as Monuments, Memorials, Memorial Parks, Historic Sites, Historical Parks, Battlefields and Battlefield Sites. "National" is generally part of their title.

National Park Service ★★★★★
U.S. Department of the Interior

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