




Emily Porter

Natural Resources 4 Odd



National Park Service

Since 1916, the National Park Service has been entrusted with the care of the national parks.

Tribes, local governments, non-profit organizations, businesses, and individual citizens ask for their help in revitalizing communities, preserving local history, celebrating local heritage, and creating close-to-home opportunities for kids and families to go outside, be active, and have fun.

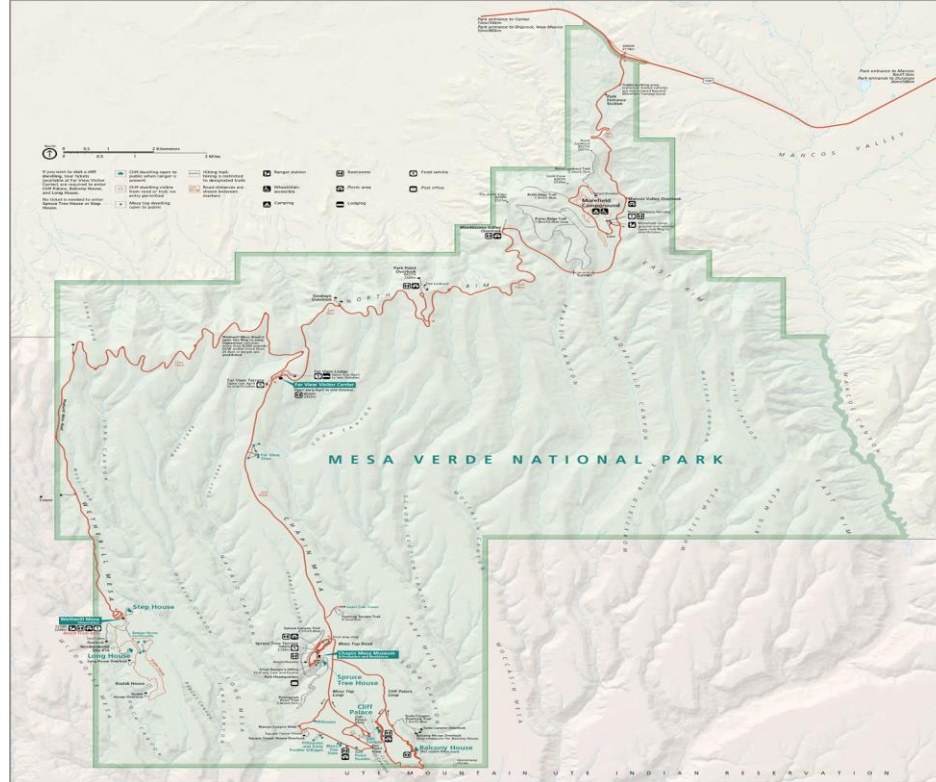


Mesa Verde

Colorado



Map of Mesa Verde



Nature

Animals

Coyote

Black Bear

Weasel

Gopher Snake

Black-Chinned Hummingbird

Mule Deer

Bobcat

Collared Lizard

Western Tanager



Nature

Plants

Snakeweed

Peppergrass

Globemallow

Claret Cup Cactus

Tansy Aster

Sagebrush

Rabbitbrush

Snowberry

Cottonwood



Nature

Environmental Factors

Exotic/Invasive Species

Declining Air Quality due to emissions from nearby coal-burning power plants and visitor and staff vehicle admissions

Deteriorating Water Quality - quality of the Mancos River had declined because of upstream agricultural uses

Physical Wear-and-Tear from heavy visitation

Grazing and Trampling by trespass horses that stray onto the park from the nearby Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation



News

Mesa Verde to Conduct Prescribed Fire this Winter (1/7/2020)

Mesa Verde National Park is planning on having a prescribed fire between January 13 to March 29, 2020, weather permitting. This fire is being prescribed to dispose of material created during fuel reduction projects from last summer.

The burn area is 1 acre in size and fuels are comprised of gambel oak, piñon, and juniper. Burning at this time of year should produce low intensity fire behavior, while still achieving desired fuel reduction goals. Ignition operations should take one day, and but the unit may produce smoke for several days afterward. Visitors to Mesa Verde may see smoke in the southwestern part of the park during these activities.



https://www.nps.gov/meve/learn/news/20-01_prescribedfirew2020.htm

News

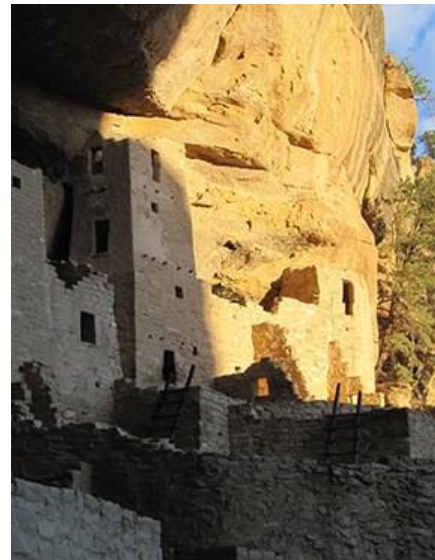
Mesa Verde National Park Moving Into Extreme Fire Danger Level (6/19/2020)

Because of hot and dry weather conditions, the Mesa Verde National Park moved into the Extreme Fire Danger on Monday, June 22, 2020. Due to risk, the park closed the following trails: Spruce Canyon Trail, Point Lookout Trail, Prater Ridge Trail, Lower Petroglyph Trail, and Wetherill Mesa Road, trails, and sites.

No wood and charcoal fires are permitted throughout the park, which include all residences inside the park, Morefield Campground, and the Chapin Mesa picnic area. The park went on the say that smoking or e-cigarettes are only permitted in vehicles, parking lots, or developed areas clear of vegetation, and cigarette buds must be put out in an ashtray or other approved container. But, pressurized gas stoves, lanterns, and other equipment are allowed in at the Morefield Campground and the Chapin picnic area. Fireworks are not permitted on park grounds.

The restrictions will stay in effect until fire risk in the park becomes less severe, and lack of forecasted precipitation in the near future points to the restrictions being in place for an extended period of time.

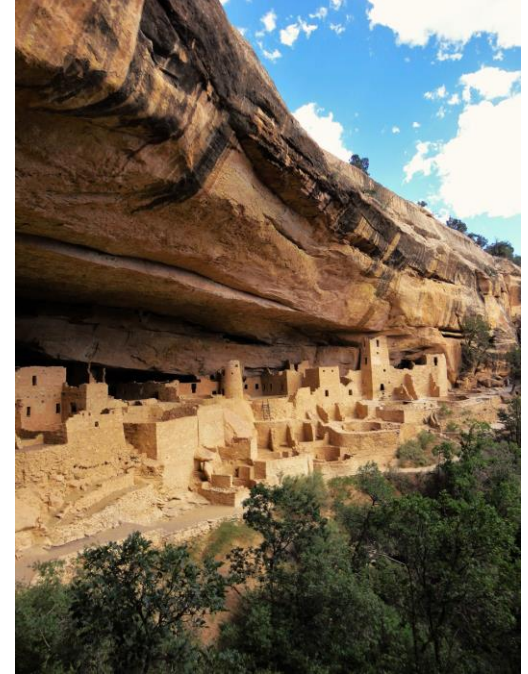
https://www.nps.gov/meve/learn/news/20-09_extfiredanger.htm



News

Lighting Causes Morefield Fire in Mesa Verde (6/28/2020)

A fire was located at Morefield Canyon in the southeast part of the park by Park Point Lookout on June 27, 2020 at 5:40 pm. On the morning of June 28, 2020, the fire was approximately 46 acres. The fire was taken care of by Mesa Verde National Park, along with personnel fighting the fire included the NPS, BIA, and US Forest Service employees, and include aviation resources and ground attack.



https://www.nps.gov/meve/learn/news/20-10_morefield-fire-2020.htm

News

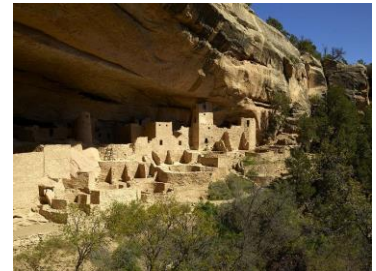
Finding of No Significant Impact Signed for Mesa Verde's Top Loop Rehab Work (8/19/2020)

On August 13, 2020, Mike Reynolds, the Regional Director for the NPS Regional Office Serving Department of Interior Regions 6, 7, and 8, signed a FONSI for an environmental assessment for improvements to the Mesa Top Loop roads in Mesa Verde National Park. After consideration, the NPS has decided to resurface, restore, and rehabilitate the Mesa Top Loop, Sun Temple Loop, and Cliff Palace Loop. All worn and failing roads will be repaired by widening the width and having super elevations reconstructed.

Current asphalt walkways along the Mesa Top Loop, Sun Temple Loop, and Cliff Palace Loop will be replaced with colored concrete sidewalks, curbs, and ramps. A new accessible route with ramp will be constructed at Sun Point Overlook on Mesa Top Loop Road, and the existing juniper shade structure above Balcony House will be removed for reconstruction and replaced with a new shade structure. A new parking lot will be developed on the Headquarters Loop Road that will be open to the public and be able to hold 60 vehicles for visitation overflow.

Construction will occur daily for 12 months during daylight hours.

https://www.nps.gov/meve/learn/news/20-13_fonsi_mtl.htm



News

Anonymous Tip Leads to Discovery of Human Remains at Mesa Verde (9/18/2020)

On June, 9, 2013, a man named Mitchell Dale Stehling went missing. Seven years later, on September 17, 2020, his remains were found by Park Law Enforcement Rangers in a remote area of Mesa Verde National Park, which was approximately 4.2 miles from where Stehling was last seen. Personal items found with the remains were consistent with the identity, with DNA analysis to be performed to positively identify the remains. There is no identification of foul play.

Dale, as he was known, left behind his wife, his five children, and his many loving friends and family members. He was known for unforgettable laugh, inventive creations, and loving soul. His family has many memories of camping, card games, and listening to music to remember him by. Dale was 51 when he went missing.



https://www.nps.gov/meve/learn/news/20-15_discovery.htm

<https://www.crossroadstoday.com/remains-of-mitchell-bill-stehling-found-at-mesa-verde-national-park/>

History

How did it become a National Park?

President Roosevelt established Mesa Verde to “preserve the works of man”

Who was established it established by?

President Theodore Roosevelt

How/Why did it received its name?

Mesa Verde means “green table.” Its name comes from the juniper trees and other foliage inn the area.



History

The Ancestral Pueblo People of Mesa Verde

About 1,400 years ago, a group of people living in the Four Corners region chose Mesa Verde for their home. For more than 700 years, they and their descendants lived and flourished here, eventually building elaborate stone communities in the sheltered alcoves of the canyon walls.

Then, in the late A.D. 1200s, in the span of a generation or two, they left their homes and moved away. Mesa Verde National Park preserves a spectacular reminder of this ancient culture.

The park contains nearly 5,000 known archaeological sites including cliff dwellings and the mesa top sites of pithouses, pueblos, masonry towers, and farming structures.



Research

During the summer of 1923, the First National Geographic Beam Expedition, under A. E. Douglass, collected tree-ring specimens in the park (Douglass, 1929, p. 750). In 1932-33, H. T. Getty, of the Tree-Ring Laboratory, continued this work (Getty, 1935, pp. 21-23).

In 1926, Superintendent Jesse L. Nusbaum excavated three early seventh century pithouses in Step House Cave and, during the winters of 1926-29, did a small amount of salvage excavation in the previously disturbed refuse of several cliff dwellings.

In 1929, H. S. Gladwin, of Gila Pueblo, surveyed 103 mesa-top and canyon-head sites. Sporadic testing and probing during stabilization of cliff and mesa-top ruins and removal of burials encountered, comprise the only other research for this period.



Management

There are many opportunities to work for the National Park Service. At Mesa Verde National Park variety of seasonal positions are filled each summer in several career fields. Summer Seasonal positions are generally advertised from November through early spring. Vacant permanent positions are announced.

How many people work there:

Undisclosed

Full Time:

Undisclosed

Part time:

Undisclosed

How many people visit park annually?

More than half a million people visit Mesa Verde annually.

List the year of data:

2018

Special Features

Visitors encounter rugged terrain at an elevation of 7,000 to 8,000 feet. Steep cliffs, deep canyons, and narrow trails can be a danger to all visitors. Persons with heart or respiratory ailments may have breathing problems at this altitude. Wheelchairs with wide rim wheels are recommended on trails.

Cliff Dwellings:

Mesa Top

Sites:

Balcony House
Tower

Cliff Palace

Long House

Badger House Community

Cedar Tree

Spruce Tree



View Sites

5 Things to do at the Park

1. *Balcony House Tour*

Balcony House was a mid-sized village of 38 rooms and two kivas and probably housed up to 30 people. Two naturally-occurring seep springs were located nearby, one within the alcove and one just below. Interestingly, its alcove faces northeast, which means the homes inside received little warmth from the sun during the winter months. Perhaps residents considered other needs, such as easy access to water, more important.

Evidence of how room and passageway construction in the alcove evolved through time can easily be seen in Balcony House. Today, the tunnel, passageways, and modern 32-foot entrance ladder are what make it the most adventurous cliff dwelling tour in the park

Fee Required

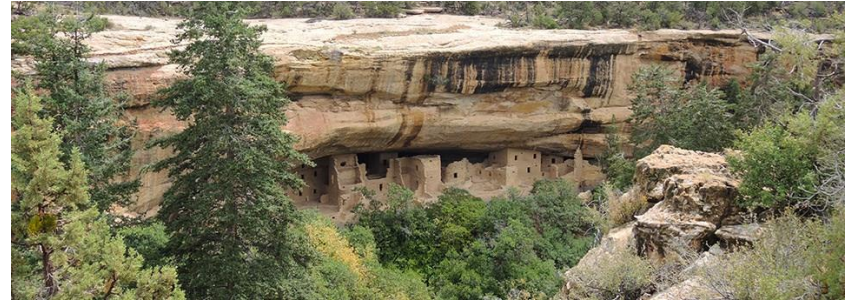


5 Things to do at the Park

2. Spruce Tree House

Spruce Tree House, the third largest cliff dwelling (Cliff Palace and Long House are larger), was constructed between about 1211 and 1278 CE by the ancestors of the Pueblo peoples of the Southwest. The dwelling contains about 130 rooms and 8 kivas (kee-vahs), or ceremonial chambers, built into a natural alcove measuring 216 feet (66 meters) at greatest width and 89 feet (27 meters) at its greatest depth. It is thought to have been home for about 60 to 80 people.

The cliff dwelling was first discovered in 1888, when two local ranchers chanced upon it while searching for stray cattle. A large tree, which they identified as a Douglas Spruce (later called Douglas Fir), was found growing from the front of the dwelling to the mesa top.



5 Things to do at the Park

3. Far View Area

Includes: Far View House, Pipe Shrine House, Coyote Village, Far View Reservoir, Megalithic House, and Far View Tower.

The Far View area was once an extensive farming community and one of the most densely populated regions of the Mesa Verde. In ancient times, it was a place of modest homes interspersed with small farm fields. It was a place filled with people, vibrant life, and constant change.

The archeological evidence at Far View reveal the presence of thriving mesa top communities long before the existence of the more famous cliff dwellings. But they also help disclose another, little known fact. Not everyone ultimately moved into and lived in the cliff dwellings. Some families clearly chose to remain on the mesa top, like those at Far View, well after many of their neighbors moved into cliff alcoves.



5 Things to do at the Park

4. Sun Temple

According to modern Pueblo Indians, Sun Temple's features classify it as a ceremonial structure. Because neither household goods nor roof beams were found by archeologists at Sun Temple, some believe the symmetrically planned "D" shaped building was never completed. Yet its size alone points to the amount of labor that went into its construction. The stones in the fine masonry walls were shaped and given a "dimpled" flat surface by the builders of the structure. Based upon the amount of fallen stone removed during excavation, the walls probably were between 11 and 14 feet high. The thick walls were double coursed and filled with a rubble core. Today, modern concrete covers the top of the walls to prevent moisture from going into the rubble placed between the walls.

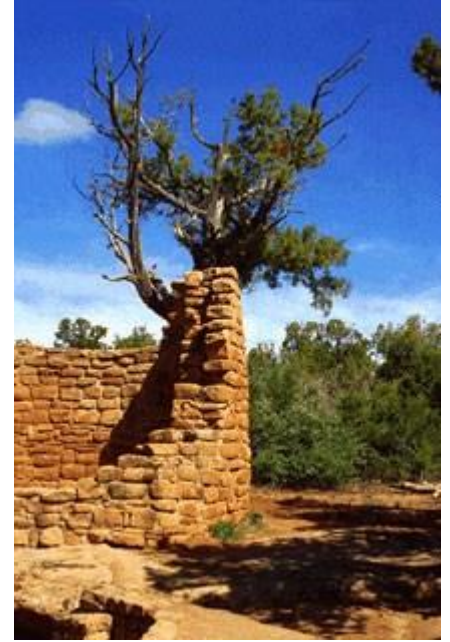


5 Things to do at the Park

5. Cedar Tree Tower

Cedar Tree Tower is one of several tower sites that have been discovered on the mesa tops. Towers were primarily built during the Classic period (A.D. 1100 to 1300) at Mesa Verde and are usually associated with a kiva. The purpose of a tower-kiva complex is not known. Some speculate that towers had a ceremonial purpose based on their close association with kivas. Other people propose that the mesa top towers were part of a communication system.

Adjacent to the Cedar Tree Tower area is the trailhead for the [Farming Terrace Trail](#). This 1/2 mile loop trail provides an opportunity for a leisurely hike. Along the trail there are good examples of Ancestral Puebloan check dams and farming terraces.



5 Interesting Facts

- 1 1765 - Don Juan Maria de Rivera, under orders from New Mexico governor Tomas Velez Cachupin, led what was possibly the first expedition of white men northwest from New Mexico. Rivera's men saw ancient "ruins," but made no identifiable reference to Mesa Verde in their journals.
- 2 1875 - The second cliff dwelling in the Mesa Verde area to be named was Sixteen Window House. William H. Holmes, leader of a geological government survey, discovered and named the site found in Mancos Canyon.
- 3 1888-1884 - Prospector S. E. Osborn spent the winter in the canyons of Mesa Verde and later wrote about many of the sites seen. Many believe he is the first first documented visitor to enter Balcony House. His name and date March 20, 1884 were carved in a nearby dwelling in Soda Canyon.
- 4 1900 - The Colorado Cliff Dwellings Association was formed under the leadership of Virginia McClurg and Lucy Peabody. The organization's sole purpose was to preserve the cliff dwellings of the Mesa Verde area. They promoted their campaign to make Mesa Verde a national park through letter writing, fund raising, and even tours of Mesa Verde for the press.
- 5 1996-2003 - Five large wildfires burned over 50% of the park's areage. Subsequent BAER (Burned Area Emergency Response) surveys located previously unknown archaeological sites that were revealed by the fires. New sites included lithic scatters, farming terraces, petroglyphs, hand-and-toe trails, as well as a few small alcove sites.