August 25, 2010 marked the grand reopening of the fully rehabilitated historic visitor center at Bandelier National Monument. This building was originally constructed in the 1930’s by members of the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC). Early exhibits displayed work by a young WPA (Work Projects Administration) artist, Pablita Velarde, from nearby Santa Clara Pueblo. The building featured beautiful hand-carved vigas, polished tuff floors, and ornate punched tin light fixtures that stood tribute to the hard work and dedication of the many young men who worked and learned at Bandelier under the CCC.

As the 21st century began it became apparent that the building was increasingly unable to meet many of the needs of the visiting public or working staff. A long and involved planning process began and now nearly a decade later has culminated in a completely rehabilitated visitor center. The new visitor center has all new museum exhibits done in consultation with the park’s affiliated pueblos and a brand new high definition film which features Bandelier’s amazing resources throughout the seasons and elevations. The modernized bathrooms are accessible to visitors with diverse needs and the outdated 1930’s wiring/heating system has been replaced to meet new safety standards. All of this was done while the integrity of the historic structure was kept intact.

The construction project alone took almost a year, while the new film was shot over a five year period so that all four seasons and many different areas of the park could be represented. Likewise, the exhibits took several years and many revisions as park staff strove to acknowledge and incorporate the diverse viewpoints encompassed by the many people who have or have had strong ties to Bandelier throughout its history. We hope the new visitor center will remain relevant in an ever-changing world, for a few decades at least. Let us know what you think of the changes.
Park Highlights

The Main Loop Trail (Tyuonyi, Long House, Alcove House)

Beginning just behind the visitor center the Main Loop Trail leads to numerous Ancestral Pueblo dwellings and petroglyphs. Just over 1.2 miles round-trip, the trail is paved and the first portion is accessible to wheelchairs. Be sure to buy a trail guide to learn more about the fascinating history of this place. An additional mile round-trip trail takes you to Alcove House - a rock shelter that once housed 25 Ancestral Pueblo people.

Cerro Grande Route - Views, Wildlife, and Flowers

Although a steep climb (1300 ft elevation gain in 2 mi), this hike offers wonderful views from the summit at Cerro Grande (10199 ft) of the Valles Caldera and the surrounding countryside as well as unlimited opportunities to encounter wildlife and to observe native high elevation wildflowers such as mariposa lilies, harebells, and monument plant in summer and wonderful golden fall color in autumn. There is a paved parking lot adjacent to highway 4 at the trailhead.

Guided Walks

Ranger-guided walks along the Main Loop Trail to Tyuonyi Pueblo are offered most days throughout the year, once in the morning and once in the afternoon (staffing permitting). The walk follows a path (partly wheelchair accessible) through Frijoles Canyon discussing the lifestyles of the Ancestral Pueblo people. Walks last 45 minutes to 1 hour.

School Programs

Park Rangers offer grade-specific programs for school groups visiting Bandelier, and in the classroom. If you would prefer to bring your class on a self-guided visit to Bandelier, you may also request materials from the visitor center. A fee waiver request can be made and a reservation is required. Call (505)672-3861 ext. 534. Only one bus may be accommodated in the parking area at any given time.

Trail Guides

Printed trail guides are available for the Main Loop Trail, the Falls Trail, Tsankawi, and the CCC Historic District. Main Loop Trail guides cost $1 and describe Ancestral Pueblo life at 21 numbered stops. The Falls Trail guide discusses interest geology and the flora/fauna of the area for $1.50. The guide for Tsankawi also interprets Ancestral Pueblo life with a focus on ties to the modern Pueblos. It costs $.50. For just $1 another guide takes you through Bandelier’s Historic CCC District.

Bandelier Trading Company Gift Shop and Snack Bar

The gift shop features a colorful array of authentic crafts from throughout the Southwest, as well as souvenir items such as hats, shirts, and postcards. They also carry utility items such as film, disposable cameras, rain ponchos, and batteries. The Snack Bar offers a varied menu including local dishes as well as standards, snacks, soft drinks, and bottled water.

Ladders and stone stairs allow you to climb 140 feet up into Alcove House, a rock shelter that once housed 25 Ancestral Pueblo people.

Foot-carved paths at Tsankawi provide access to numerous cliff-side dwellings, a small village, and numerous petroglyphs.

Mariposa lilies are one of the beautiful high elevation wildflowers that grow along the Cerro Grande Route.

Abert’s Squirrels are only one of the interesting creatures that live in Bandelier National Monument.
Area Highlights

White Rock Overlook
Standing on the observation platform, you can gaze down at the Rio Grande flowing by in the bottom of White Rock Canyon, over 1,000 feet deep, or look out over the vast panorama of the Jemez and Sangre de Cristo Mountains, the Española Valley, and the Caja del Rio. In White Rock, turn onto Rover Boulevard (at the Conoco on SR 4), left onto Meadow Lane, and left onto Overlook Road. Free admission.

Los Alamos Historical Museum/Art Center
The Historical Museum features exhibits on the history of the area, from the eruption of the Jemez Volcano through the Ancestral Pueblo people, homesteaders, and the Los Alamos Boys School, to the Manhattan Project and the Los Alamos National Laboratory. The neighboring Art Center showcases work of local artists; exhibits change throughout the year, showcasing various styles and media. Both facilities are located next to Fuller Lodge, a historic and distinct log structure originally built for the Boys School, on Central Avenue near Ashley Pond. Mon - Sat 10 - 4, Sun 1 - 4, free.

Pajarito Environmental Education Center (PEEC)
PEEC, the nature center in Los Alamos, offers natural history exhibits and information about the environment of the Pajarito Plateau, from the sun-drenched Rio Grande Valley to the deep green coolness of the Jemez Mountains. PEEC has live animals and interactive exhibits on birds, flowers, water; trail maps; a demonstration garden, herbarium, library; and much more. Visit the PEEC website at www.PajaritoEEC.org to learn about special activities. Find PEEC at 3540 Orange Street, Los Alamos. Tues - Fri 12 - 4, Sat 10 - 1. Free.

Valles Caldera National Preserve
Over a million years ago the huge Jemez Volcano erupted covering more than a hundred square miles with deep flows of volcanic ash. The distinctive canyon and mesa landscapes around Bandelier and Los Alamos are the result of this volcanism. The mountain collapsed, creating a caldera more than 16 miles in diameter. Privately owned until 2001, this caldera is now part of the National Preserve. State Road 4 goes through a very beautiful portion of the caldera, the Valle Grande. A small contact station is open most days. For more information on how to access the Preserve, visit their website at www.vallescaldera.gov.

Pueblos
In the 1500s, people moved from the Bandelier area to villages along the Rio Grande. Today there are 19 pueblos in New Mexico. Taos, Picuris, Okay Owinge, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Pojoaque, Nambe, Tesuque, Santo Domingo (Kewa), San Felipe, Cochiti, Jemez, Santa Ana, and Zia are all within about 80 miles of the park. Remember to be respectful when you are visiting. Follow the rules and regulations of each of the different Pueblos.

Dog Trails
To protect park wildlife from disease, parasites, and disturbance, pets are not permitted in most areas of Bandelier National Monument. Pets are allowed only in the picnic area, and main parking lot. They must be leashed (leash under 6 feet) at all times. Pets are allowed on Department of Energy (DOE) lands that are posted as open for public use (see map). These areas, including the parking areas, are closed after dark.
- Pets may not be left unattended (except within a vehicle) and may not be tied to an object (except when staying in the campground).
- Pets left in vehicles must be given enough ventilation to ensure their safety.
- It is the responsibility of the person accompanying the pet to clean up after it. All pet excrement must be picked up and disposed of properly.

Map of DOE Lands

Use this map to find hiking areas that permit dogs.
Change Comes to Frijoles Canyon
By Park Ranger Theresa Ferraro

By the time I pack up all my belongings; my Park Service uniform, clothes, books and kitchen items, Frijoles Canyon will be drenched in gold and the sky filled with the noisy chatter of Sandhill Cranes. Every autumn we bear witness to thousands of cranes flying overhead on their long journey to wintering grounds south of Albuquerque. With each flap of their immense wings, courtship rituals and hatchlings will be a distant memory until daylight lengthens over the continent once more. The flight of cranes is my cue that my season at the park is about to end.

Beautiful fall color is one of the constants amidst change at Bandelier.

Changing leaf color and the flight of birds are constants in my world. Both, the leaves and birds have been my calendar markers since I entered Frijoles Canyon some thirteen years ago. My use of the words “change” and “constant” in the same sentence gives me reason to pause. The meanings of constancy and change stand in opposition yet operate to weave a tapestry of knowing into an unknown world. For instance, I think I know what it is like to live in a stone cabin in the heart of this canyon. With each day tumbling towards the chill of winter the sounds of insects, once robust, become fainter. Soon the crickets and cicadas will be silent. The plaintive whistle-like call of the Townsend’s Solitaire has begun to punctuate the stillness of morning. The Solitaires like the Juncos have spent their summer in higher elevation. Now Juncos, Chickadees, and Nuthatches begin to form winter flocks. A morning stroll along the Main Loop Trail will surprise birds out from the cover of shrubs where they peck at the spoils of summer. The Solitaire, the insects, Juncos and Cranes are my constants within change. I toss another book into the box that I am packing and notice the title, LADY OF THE CANYON; EVELYN CECIL FREY A TRIBUTE.

Evelyn Frey was a woman who witnessed the complexity of change during the sixty-three years she lived in Frijoles Canyon. In the spring of 1925, thirty–three year old Evelyn, her husband George and ten month-old son, Richard entered the canyon on the backs of mules. Mrs. Frey and her family came to Frijoles Canyon to operate the Lodge of the Ten Elders once home to Judge Abbot who served as an early custodian to the region. The Freys planted 75 fruit trees in a landscape that was once occupied by the Ancestral Pueblo and later the Montoya family before becoming a National Monument. Red Delicious, Golden Delicious, Grimes Golden and Jonathan apples: Elberta and J.H. Hale peaches; Gold and America and Omaha plums, Superb apricots; Anjou, Duchess, Keifer and Gold Nugget pears; Monterey cherries; and Cumberland raspberries grew in their irrigated orchard. A garden was planted, chickens tended and guests were fed. Evelyn found her new life quite agreeable, although the changes she would witness while living in Frijoles Canyon, until her death in 1988, were unimaginable.

Her husband, George, abandoned their marriage and her beloved son Richard died at the age 23. The home Evelyn loved so dearly was razed and new lodge built in 1939 by the Civilian Conservation Corp. Along with the new lodge came a road paved into the canyon. Perhaps the biggest change of all came in 1941 when the United States entered World War II. In December of 1942 the army took over Los Alamos and soon there after requested the right of entry to the lodge that Evelyn leased. For two seasons the lodged housed the army and scientists who were brought to Los Alamos to work on a secret project, a project that would forever change the World. The fruits of the Manhattan Project were realized in August 1945 when the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Richard Frey was among the men at Los Alamos Bomb Laboratory awarded "outstanding devotion to duty and maintenance of a high standard of discipline." In 1947 Richard died unexpectedly.

Although some of Mrs. Frey’s apple trees and a few pear trees still remain the peach, apricot, and cherry trees are long gone. Deer and bear gather in the orchard each year to savor the bounty of ripe fruit. Not long ago I watched a bear standing on two legs picking apples and wondered whether Mrs. Frey had experienced the same pleasure. Lately, I wonder what Mrs. Frey would think about all the recent changes in Frijoles Canyon. Would she like the new museum exhibits? Would she think the new film celebrating Bandelier’s landscape and culture is worthy of the new auditorium? I will never know Evelyn Frey’s thoughts on these matters. But I do know that cranes will grace our sky in November on their southern flight, crickets will reclaim the sound of summer and bear will find their way to the orchard in the fall.

Black bears are residents in Bandelier that are encountered infrequently.

Mrs. Frey was an early concessionaire and lived here in Frijoles Canyon until her death in 1988.
Birds are a fundamental part of our American heritage. They are beautiful. Their songs inspire artists and poets. Their seasonal movements symbolize freedom. Their health reflects the health of our environment. Perhaps most significantly, all cultures have stories, traditions, and beliefs that use birds to show the meaning and connections of our lives. The U.S. National Park System provides critical habitat for many species of birds. Of these, the migratory birds are continental assets shared across international borders. Because these species use parks on a seasonal basis, sometimes less than 5 months each year, their protection cannot be assured by focusing just on habitats within the parks. The Park Flight Program uses science, education, and international working relationships to protect breeding, migration, and wintering habitats of these ecologically and culturally important species.

**Bandelier’s Efforts Include an International Focus**

Bandelier’s Park Flight program focuses on monitoring songbirds, while educating local students and young Latin American professionals.

Each year, young teachers and scientists come to Bandelier to learn and teach about migratory birds. They learn to band and to document the physical heath and age of birds. These young professionals also give field trips and classroom presentations about birds to local students. The skills that the Park Flight Program teaches these visitors from Latin America is building a cadre of bird conservation leaders beyond the United States who are essential to keeping our parks filled with the colors and sounds of summer songbirds.

**Bird Banding is a Powerful Research Tool**

Bird banding is one of the most powerful tools in the study of wild birds. It is a richly valuable tool because it provides a great deal of information using a very low-tech approach. Birds are caught using fine-mesh nets and individually fit with a lightweight ankle bracelet. Using the numbers on these bands, individual birds can be re-captured and identified year after year as they return to their summer breeding areas. That re-capture information tells us if changes in bird populations are the result of conditions of the wintering ground, in the breeding areas, or both. Thus, bird banding can provide valuable insights into the cause and effect relationships that control overall bird numbers.

**Migratory Birds are Declining in Numbers**

The 2010 State of the Birds report, a collaborative effort between federal and state wildlife agencies, found that nearly a third of the nation’s 800 bird species are endangered, threatened or in significant decline. Equally worrisome was a 2009 report from the Institute for Bird Populations (IBP) that used 15-years of bird banding information from more than 650 stations from across North America. The IBP report found that the total number of adult birds likely declined by more than a 20% over the 15 years when considering 192 species. At Bandelier, worry is beginning to focus on the Grace’s Warbler which data suggests has declined in the southwestern United States by 54% over the last 40 years (1965-2005). This decline seems to be widespread with the steepest declines in New Mexico. In most cases of declining bird populations, land managers have no clear idea of the causes of the declines or what actions to take to reverse the declines.

**Where and When Information is Needed**

For conservation to be effective, park managers need to know where and when to focus their efforts. Counting birds in the same way every year can show long-term trends in bird populations, but such counts don’t tell us if the declines are due to problems on the breeding grounds, on the wintering grounds, or during migration.

To get the where and when information needed by park managers, Bandelier’s Park Flight Program bands birds to learn about the number of young produced each year as well as the survival of birds from one year to the next. These life-history rates provide information critical for management. The indirect relationship between environment conditions and population size decreases our ability to interpret cause and effect relationships that control overall bird numbers, while the direct link between environmental conditions and survival and reproduction rates provides us with a clearer view of those relationships. Without reproduction and survival information we cannot achieve a clear understanding of population trends.

“‘The future of migratory birds is uncertain,’” may be an understatement. Optimism, however, is justified based on the Park Flight Program’s ability to provide valuable information to park managers, as well as providing research and education skills to our Latin American conservation colleagues. The movements of birds transcend any man made borders; to be good stewards of our internationally shared bird species, our efforts must transcend those same borders.

For more information, consider visiting these web sites:
http://www.nps.gov/oia/topics/flight/flight.htm
http://www.stateofthebirds.org/
http://www.birdpop.org/

For the Web-disinclined, consider asking for these bird books at your local public library:
“Silence of the Songbirds” by Bridget Stutchbury, 2007
“No Way Home, the Decline of the World’s Great Animal Migrations” by David Wilcove, 2008
“101 Ways to Help Birds” by Laura Erickson, 2006
Living in Interesting Times: Big Changes at Bandelier

The Problem: A beautiful historic building that lacked proper accessibility, had asbestos in the heating system, an electrical system designed for the 1930's, and outdated interpretive exhibits.

The Work: The planning process began almost 10 years ago. Demolition, followed by construction, in the visitor center started in early September 2009.

The Solution: Today the visitor center has an accessible theater, exhibits, and restrooms. The new theater offers an intriguing view of the diverse resources within the park. A space that was once the theater now offers many more titles and educational merchandise from Western National Parks Association. Brand new exhibits reflect new information gathered from in-depth research programs and broader consultation with affiliated pueblos.
Pika: The Rabbit that Squeaks
By Park Ranger Sally King

Pika in Bandelier?
If a contest was ever held to determine which animal in the animal kingdom was the cutest, the American Pika would definitely be amongst the qualifiers. You might not expect to find this small ball of fur with legs in Bandelier National Monument. Pika are alpine residents and are intolerant of even short term hot temperatures. In this park, pika are found in small isolated colonies only at the highest elevations. They live in volcanic boulder fields where they retreat to cool tunnels under the rocks for protection from the heat on long summer days.

Rabbits, not Rats
Pika are closely related to rabbits and hares. Pika have shorter, rounder ears and their hind legs are only slightly longer than their front legs. Unlike rabbits, pika run and don’t hop. Pika emit a variety of sounds which are also very different from their very quiet cousins. Pika are active mostly during the day. They will often venture off their rockpile homes to eat or collect plants for later consumption.

The Cold of Winter
Pika do not hibernate but stay active all winter long traveling in tunnels under the rocks and snow. In fact, a deep blanket of snow is important for the pika’s survival. If the snow is deep enough it provides insulation for the pikas living below. Too little snow and the pika risk freezing to death. The pika stay alive during the long cold winter by eating dried plants cached earlier in the year and by traveling out to vegetated areas nearby to collect more plant materials.

In Danger?
If the cute contest isn’t held soon, the American Pika may not be around to attend. As climate trends change globally the pika may face extinction or extirpation, especially isolated colonies in places such as Bandelier. As the population as a whole moves ever northward and to higher elevations, these Bandelier pika will have no where to go. Last year the US Fish and Wildlife Service considered whether to classify the American Pika as an endangered or threatened species but decided that as a whole, the American Pika doesn’t not meet the criteria at this time. They also suggested that further study was needed.

Become a Bandelier Junior or Deputy Ranger
You’re Never Too Old
Bandelier’s Junior and Deputy Ranger programs are free to any visitors (as long as you can read, write, or draw) who wish to participate. The requirements include completing hands-on activities about a variety of subjects that are important at Bandelier National Monument, including Ancestral Pueblo people, geology, plants, and wildlife. Bandelier’s program is broken into 4 categories: PreK to 1st Grade, 2nd Grade to 3rd Grade, 4th Grade to 6th Grade, and 7th Grade and Up (Deputy Ranger). The booklets can be downloaded on-line from the park’s website, www.nps.gov/band, or are available at the park visitor center. The junior/deputy ranger program offers children and adults the chance to do field observations, crossword puzzles, write poetry, draw pictures, or think like a squirrel. It’s fun and educational for all ages. Participants earn a free patch upon completion of the Junior/Deputy Ranger Challenge booklet. Inquire for more information at the park visitor center.
Friends of Bandelier

Who are we?
The Friends of Bandelier are private citizens who love the monument. A Board of Trustees governs the activities under a formal Memorandum of Agreement with the National Park Service. Park rangers request help on special projects and the Friends group tries to meet the park’s needs. The membership stays informed of Friends’ activities, and of key issues affecting the Monument, through letters, field trips, and announcements in the local newspapers. The mission of the Friends of Bandelier is to provide assistance to Bandelier National Monument. You are invited to join the Friends. Dues start at $15 per year (and more is greatly accepted). Send to P.O. Box 1282, Los Alamos, NM 87544.

The Friends of Bandelier provide support for:
♥ Handicapped Access
♥ Traditional Crafts
♥ Education
♥ Special projects such as trail maintenance
♥ Archeology
♥ Visitor amenities such as water fountains
♥ Scientific research
♥ Publications, including this newspaper

Further details concerning the Friends of Bandelier can be found at www.friendsofbandelier.org.

Volunteers

The National Park Service Volunteers-In-Parks Program (VIP) was authorized by Public Law 91-357 enacted in 1970. The primary purpose of the VIP program is to provide a vehicle through which the National Park Service can accept voluntary help and services from the public. The major objective of the program is to coordinate this voluntary help so as to be mutually beneficial to the National Park Service and the volunteer. In FY 2008 186 volunteers donated 21,213.5 hours to Bandelier and many special projects were accomplished. If you’d like to help, you can join us too. For more information, visit http://www.nps.gov/volunteer or call 505-672-3861 x 517 and ask for the park volunteer coordinators.

Abert’s squirrels are year-round residents in Bandelier and can be seen in Frijoles Canyon.

Western National Parks Association

Western National Parks Association (WNPA) was founded in 1938 to aid and promote the educational and scientific activities of the National Park Service. As a non-profit organization authorized by Congress, it makes interpretive materials available to park visitors by sale or free distribution. All net proceeds support the interpretive and research programs of the NPS. For more information about WNPA or memberships, log onto www.wnpa.org. Join WNPA and support the preservation of our national heritage.

Western National Parks Association offers publications on a wide variety of topics including the Ancestral Pueblo people, geology, and wildlife.