



Carrizo Plain National Monument

Welcome to the Carrizo Plain National Monument; a powerful yet peaceful landscape of sky and earth in a pattern seen nowhere else. As you explore this living museum, remember the closer you look, the more you see.

Geography and Climate: The Carrizo Plain is an internal drainage basin with all surface water draining to Soda Lake. The lake evaporates and becomes a white, salt-encrusted basin during the dry season of May through November. The plain stretches for about 50 miles north to south; it is bordered on the northeast by the Temblor Mountains and on the southwest by the Caliente Mountains. Caliente Mountain, the highest peak in San Luis Obispo County, stands 5,106 feet high while the Temblors reach up to 4,332 feet high at McKittrick Summit. The San Andreas Fault makes its seemingly quiet path through the area and is clearly visible near Wallace Creek. The plain is one of the sunniest places in California and summer temperatures often exceed 100 degrees F. On winter nights, however, temperatures often dip below freezing.

Plants and Animal: Plant communities range from iodine bush and saltbush scrub to valley grasslands and California juniper woodland. Many sensitive species live on the plain including the blunt-nosed leopard lizard, the San Joaquin kit fox, the giant kangaroo rat, and the San Joaquin antelope ground squirrel. Tule elk and pronghorn antelope have been reintroduced into the area and can be seen at various locations on the plain. Winter brings long-billed curlews, ferruginous hawks, and other birds to the Carrizo Plain. Many raptors, including red-tailed hawks, golden eagles, harriers, owls, and others, can be found all year throughout the area. The California condor has been reintroduced nearby and will hopefully return to its historic foraging grounds.

Human History: Chumash, Yokuts, and other Native Americans hunted and traded in the area. Painted Rock, probably used for religious ceremonies, is one of the more significant examples of Native American rock painting in the world. Dryland grain farming and ranching developed in the late 1800s; in 1912 mechanized agriculture brought large-scale farming to the plain. Today, most people come to Carrizo for recreation -- birding, hiking, photography, camping, hunting, and just plain relaxing.

Management: The Carrizo Plain National Monument, covering almost 250,000 acres, is managed jointly by the Bureau of Land Management, the California Department of Fish and Game, and The Nature Conservancy. A primary management focus is rare and endangered plants and animals and restoration of native ecosystems. Research is an active and important part of management, and projects are underway to better understand species and their habitats. Melding human use and species preservation, prescribed fire and livestock are used as tools to reach management goals.

Some Helpful Hints

- Services (gasoline, food, water) are not available. Services are available in Taft to the east and Santa Margarita to the west.
- Vehicles must remain on designated roads. Dirt roads are impassable or closed when wet and have a potential for fire danger in summer. Soda Lake Road is only partially paved.
- Only street legal vehicles are allowed on the monument.
- Permits are required for campfires during fire season and are available at Bakersfield BLM office, 661-391-6000.
- Cultural artifacts and rock art are protected; so please don't remove or touch them.
- Do not harass wildlife.
- Leave No Trace. Pack out what you pack in.
- Follow California Department of Fish & Game hunting regulations.
- Target shooting is **not** allowed on the monument.
- Pets must be under owner control at all times. In addition, pets must be leashed or caged at all developed sites including visitor center, interpretive areas, trailheads and campgrounds.

Painted Rock

- Painted Rock is closed to public access March 1 through July 15 to protect biological and cultural resources.
- Guided tours are offered in March through May by permit only.
- Self-guided tours are offered July 16 through the end of February by permit only.
- Permits for Painted Rock guided and self-guided tours can be booked at www.recreation.gov or by calling toll free, 1-877-444-6777. TDD 1-877-833-6777.
- Horses and pets are not allowed at Painted Rock or on the trail.

Facilities

- KCL and Selby Camp - primitive camping, restrooms.
- Goodwin Education Center (Visitor Center) - information, brochures, campfire permits, restrooms, no water. Open December through May, Thursday through Sunday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Closed holidays.
- Painted Rock - restroom, picnic tables, no water, 1/2-mile trail from parking lot to Native American pictograph site.
- Soda Lake Overlook - vista, restrooms, no water.
- Traver Ranch - Information and self-guided tour of dryland farming equipment.

For More Information

- Goodwin Education Center – 805- 475-2131

Goodwin Education Center
HCR 69 Box 3087
California Valley, California 93453

Carrizo Plain National Monument



Please respect private property rights and the privacy of private land owners within Carrizo Plain NM.

All Roads within Carrizo Plain NM are unpaved, except the portions of Soda Lake Road shown. During wet weather many unpaved roads are impassible.

Legend

- Foot Trail
- Roads: Natural Surface
- Roads: Paved
- San Andreas Fault
- Carrizo Plain National Monument



The Nature Conservancy



Bureau of Land Management
Bakersfield Field Office
3801 Pegasus Dr., Bakersfield, CA 93308, 661-391-6000
www.ca.blm.gov/bakersfield

Goodwin Education Center
(Open December - May: Phone 805-475-2131)



0 1 2 Miles

California Valley

Soda Lake Road

Seven Mile Rd

Elkhorn Rd

58

33

58

McKittrick

Wallace Creek Trail

Boardwalk

Soda Lake

Overlook Hill

Goodwin Education Center

Painted Rock Trail/Parking

Painted Rock

Selby Campground

Caliente Mt. Ridge Trail

KCL Campground

Caliente Mtn. 5,106 Ft.

Caliente

Range

Caliente Mtn. 5,106 Ft.

Traver Ranch

Range

Temblor Range

Elkhorn Plain

Taft

Elkhorn Rd

Elkhorn Grade Rd

Maricopa

166

New Cuyama

166

33

119

5