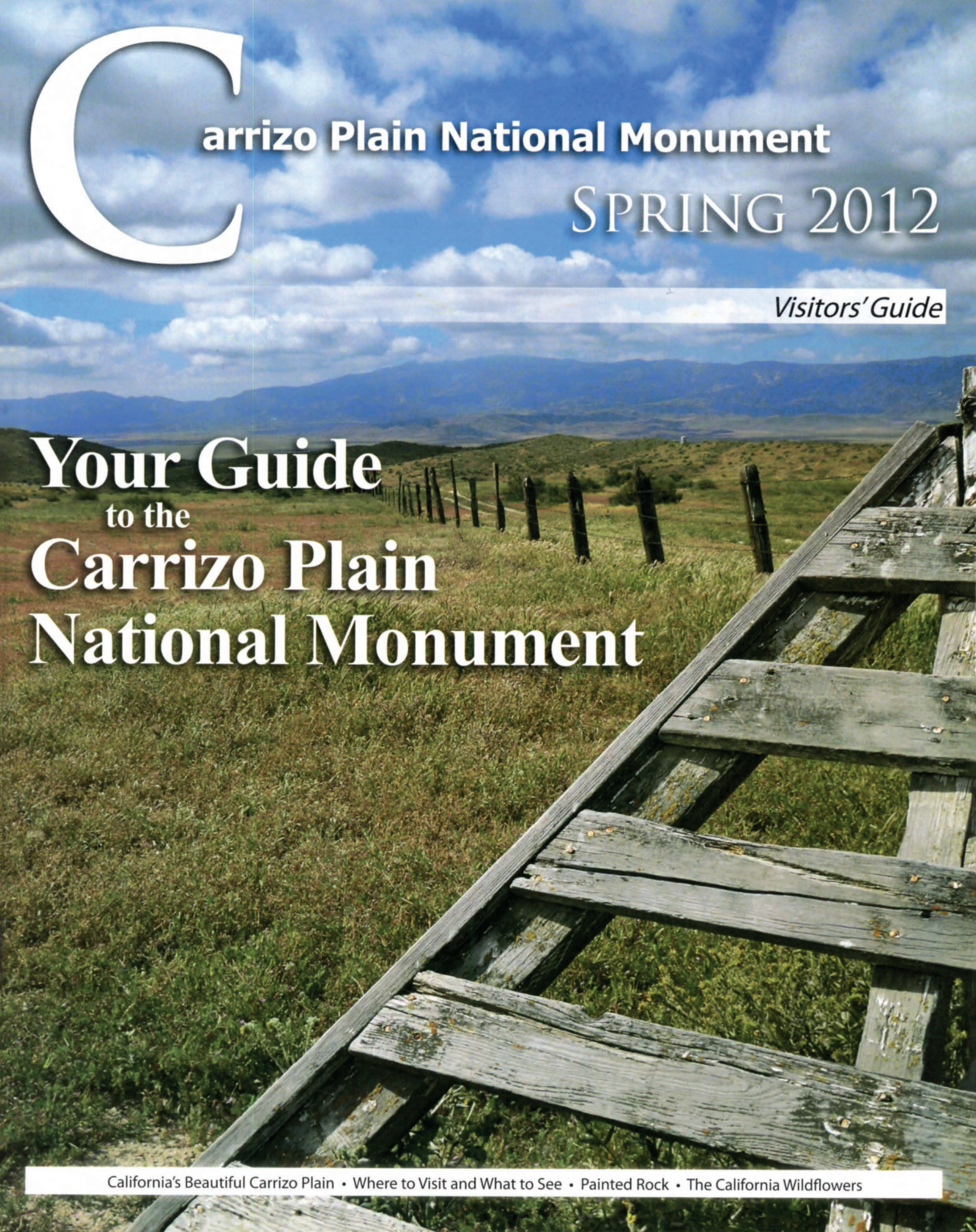


The background of the cover is a photograph of a vast, open landscape. In the foreground, a wooden structure, possibly a remnant of a fence or a bridge, is visible, made of weathered, greyish-brown planks. Beyond this, a field of tall, green and yellow grass stretches towards a line of dark, vertical wooden posts. In the distance, a range of blue mountains is visible under a bright blue sky filled with white, fluffy clouds.

C

arrizo Plain National Monument

SPRING 2012

Visitors' Guide

Your Guide to the Carrizo Plain National Monument

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Carrizo Plain National Monument

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Where is the Carrizo Plain National Monument?

The Carrizo Plain National Monument, the largest remaining tract of the San Joaquin Valley biogeographic province with limited evidence of human alteration, is bordered by the Tumbler Range to the northeast and the Caliente Range to the southwest. It is easily accessible by state Highways 33, 166, and 58.

Getting There

From Taft and Maricopa: Take state Highway 166 west. Turn right on Soda Lake Road.

From North San Luis Obispo County: Take state Highway 58 east. Turn right on Soda Lake Road.

From Ojai: Take state Highway 33 north. Turn right onto state Highway 166 in Cuyama. Turn left on Soda Lake Road.

From Santa Maria: Take state Highway 166 east. Turn left on Soda Lake Road.

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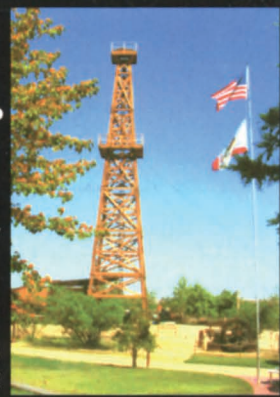
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Welcome to the Carrizo Plain



Dear readers,

On behalf of the Bureau of Land Management, I want to thank The Taft Independent for the opportunity, as the manager of the Carrizo Plain National Monument, to provide a welcome for this visitors' guide.

The Carrizo Plain has long been recognized for its significant resources. The Carrizo Plain has been managed as a natural area by the Bureau of Land Management, Department of Fish and Game, and The Nature Conservancy prior to its designation as a national monument. The Carrizo Plain Natural Area became a monument on Jan. 17, 2001, when President Clinton signed a proclamation designating the area as a national monument. The proclamation recognized the Carrizo's significant geologic, biological, and cultural resources.

When you are out on the monument, there are many things to do depending on your interest. Sometimes the Carrizo boasts beautiful wildflower displays. The peak of the wildflower season is usually at the beginning of April; however, the Carrizo can be beautiful anytime of the year.

For those of you who enjoy viewing wildlife, the Carrizo Plain hosts many migratory birds during the winter months, including mountain blue birds, many raptors, and mountain plovers. Often visitors will catch a glimpse of the pronghorn antelope or, on occasion, the tule elk.

We offer tours to some of the monument's sites, such as the Soda Lake area and one of our cultural sites, Painted Rock. You will need to call the Visitor Center to make arrangements to participate in these tours. The Visitor Center is open December through May, Thursday through Sunday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call (805) 475-2131 for more information.

You can also hike and hunt on the monument. There are a few established trails, or you can just set off and take your own hike. If you are interested in hunting, all the Department of Fish and Game regulations apply. You may want to check our Web site or call the Visitor Center for additional information.

It has been said that during certain times of the year you can "hear the quiet." This is one area that you can go all day without seeing another person. So please be prepared with food, gas, water, and protective clothing before entering the national monument. During the winter, many roads become impassible due to wet conditions. Summer temperatures often exceed 100 degrees. Also, please keep vehicles on existing roads.

In closing, no matter what your interest is in visiting the monument, you may want to remember this phrase: "The closer you look, the more you see."

Enjoy your visit!
Johna Hurl



What is the Carrizo Plain National Monument?

Full of natural splendor and rich in human history, the majestic grasslands and stark ridges in the Carrizo Plain National Monument contain exceptional objects of scientific and historic interest. Since the mid-1800s, large portions of the grasslands that once spanned the entire 400-mile expanse of California's nearby San Joaquin Valley and other valleys in the vicinity have been eliminated by extensive land conversion to agricultural, industrial, and urban land uses. The Carrizo Plain National Monument, which is dramatically bisected by the San Andreas Fault zone, is the largest undeveloped remnant of this ecosystem, providing crucial habitat for the long-term conservation of the many endemic plant and animal species that still inhabit the area.

The monument offers a refuge for endangered, threatened, and rare animal species such as the San Joaquin kit fox, the California condor, the blunt-nosed leopard lizard, the giant kangaroo rat, the San Joaquin antelope squirrel, the longhorn fairy shrimp, and the vernal pool fairy shrimp. It supports important populations of pronghorn antelope and tule elk. The area is also home to many rare and sensitive plant species, including the California jewelflower, the Hoover's woolly-star, the San-Joaquin woolly-threads, the pale-yellow layia, the forked fiddleneck, the Carrizo peppergrass, the Lost Hills saltbush, the Temblor buckwheat, the recurved larkspur, and the Munz's tidytips. Despite past human use, the size, isolation, and relatively undeveloped nature of the area make it ideal for long-term

conservation of the dwindling flora and fauna characteristic of the San Joaquin Valley region.

The Carrizo Plain National Monument also encompasses Soda Lake, the largest remaining natural alkali wetland in southern California and the only closed basin within the coastal mountains. As its name suggests, Soda Lake concentrates salts as water is evaporated away, leaving white deposits of sulfates and carbonates. Despite this harsh environment, small plant and animal species are well adapted to the setting, which is also important to migratory birds. During the winter months, the lake fills with water and teems with thousands of beautiful sandhill cranes, long-billed curlews, and mountain plovers.

The Carrizo Plain National Monument owes its existence to the geologic processes that occur along the San Andreas Fault, where two of the Earth's five great tectonic plates slide past one another, parallel to the axis of the Plain. Shifting along the fault created the Plain by rumpling the rocks to the northeast into the Temblor Range and isolating the Plain from the rest of the San Joaquin Valley. The area is world-famous for its spectacular exposures of fault-generated landforms. Stream valleys emerge from the adjacent mountains, only to take dramatic right-angle turns where they intersect the fault. Ponds and sags form where the ground is extended and subsides between branches of the fault. Benches form where the fault offsets valley walls. Many dramatic landscape features are products of the interplay between very rapid fault movement and slower erosion.

A view from the top



The dry climate of the area produces low erosion rates, thereby preserving the spectacular effects of fault slip, folding, and warping. On the Plain, these fault-related events happen intermittently, but with great force. In 1857, the strongest earthquake in California's recorded history ripped through the San Andreas Fault, wrenching the western side of the Carrizo Plain National Monument 31 feet northward.

The area is also distinguished for its significant fossil assemblages. The Caliente Formation, exposed on the southeast side of the Caliente Range, is host to abundant and diverse terrestrial fossil mammal remains of the Miocene Epoch (from 13 million to 25 million years ago). Fossils of five North American provincial mammalian ages (Arikareean, Hemingfordian, Barstovian, Clarendonian, and Hemphillian) are represented in sedimentary rocks in that formation. These terrestrial fossil remains are interlaced with marine sedimentary rocks bearing fossils of mollusks, pectens, turitellas, and oysters.

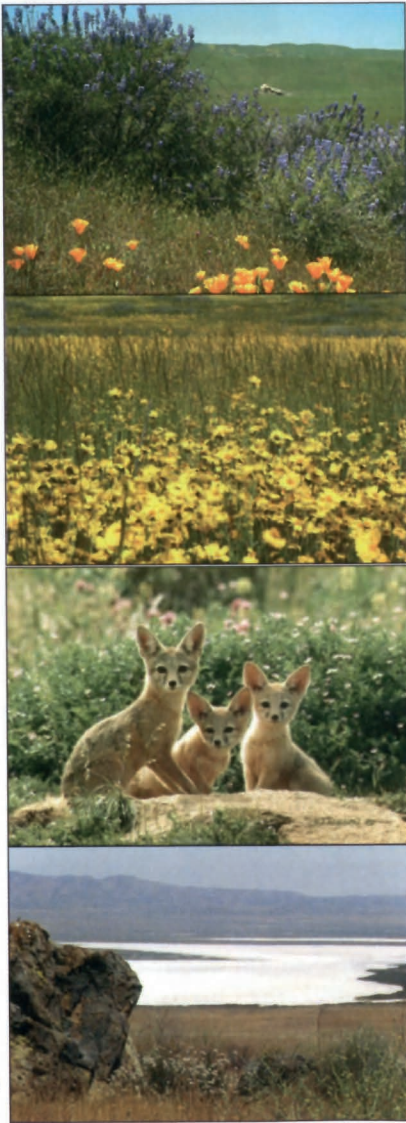
In addition to its geologic and biological wealth, the area is rich in human history. Archaeologists theorize that humans have occupied the Carrizo Plain National Monument area since the Paleo-Indian Period (circa 11,000 to 9,000 B.C.).

Bedrock mortar milling features, village middens, and elaborate pictographs are the primary manifestations of prehistoric occupation. The Painted Rock art site is recognized as world class. European expeditions through the area date back to the late 1700s, with settlement beginning in the 1850s. Livestock ranching, farming, and mining activities in the last century and a half are evidenced by numerous artifacts and historic ranch properties within the area.

Information gathered from The White House's Office of the Press Secretary, written Jan. 17, 2001.



Wernher Krutein/Photovault.com
The Carrizo Plain National Monument offers visitors a glimpse into the San Joaquin Valley's natural habitat.



Carrizo Plain Visitors' Guide



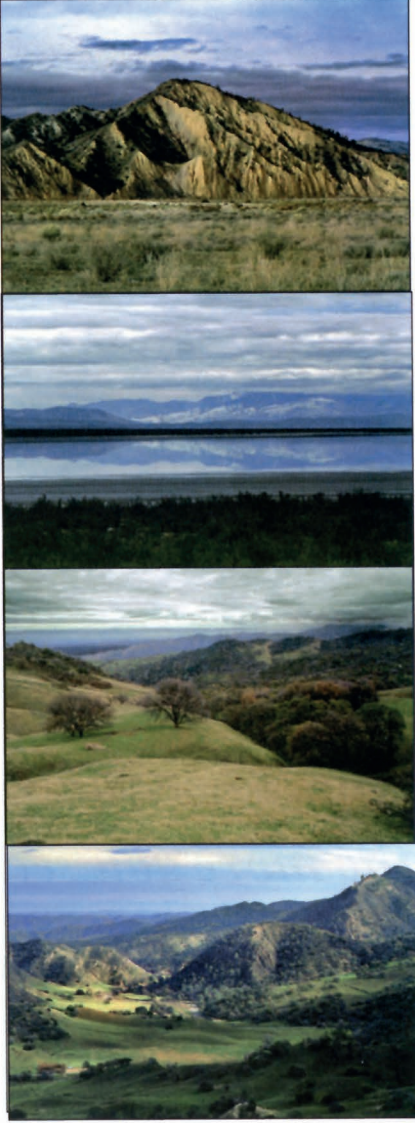
The above photo was taken atop the Temblor Mountain Range behind Crocker Springs over looking the Carrizo Plain with Soda Lake in the distant right. By Jessica Skidgel

The Carrizo Plain is located between the coastal ranges of California's eastern San Luis Obispo County lies an immaculate landscape comprised of blossoming flowers and awe-inspiring views. Hundreds of miles of open space characterize this rolling plain, providing RV rental travelers with a place to relax and rejuvenate before heading off on another west coast adventure. So what is this place, you ask? The Carrizo Plain National Monument of course! Located in California's most secluded region, the Carrizo Plain National Monument has remained relatively untouched by human development for well over three centuries. Known as "Llano Estero" or the "Salt Marsh Plain", the Carrizo Plain National Monument features 250,000 acres of protected terrain, providing an array of rare plants and animals with miles of natural habitat and unspoiled environmental splendor. Owned and cooperatively managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Nature Conservancy and the Department of Fish and Game, the Carrizo Plain is a definite must-visit for RV rental nature lovers – so what are you waiting for! The Carrizo Plain National Monument is ready and waiting to dazzle you with natural beauty, so don't miss your chance to check it out first hand during your upcoming Rent4Less RV rental vacation.

One of the nation's newest National Monuments, the Carrizo Plain is located just 60 miles east of San Luis Obispo. Home to stunning views of the famous San Andreas Fault, the Carrizo Plains National Monument is often referred to as California's "Serengeti". Sprawled across a mix of wetlands and grass areas, the Carrizo Plain is approximately 45 miles long and 10 miles wide, providing a wide variety of endangered species with protected habitat and ecosystems. Until recently the Carrizo Plains were dominated by ranching and farming, destroying much of the area's local vitality and environmental significance. In 1988 The Nature Conservancy, along with numerous federal, state and county agencies, rallied together to save this important patch of California terrain, purchasing 82,000 acres from and out-of-state land and oil company. The Nature Conservancy later partnered with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and the California Department of Fish and Game in order to further ensure the safety of the park. Named a National Monument in 2001, the Carrizo Plains are continually evolving, providing RV rental travelers with an exciting outlet of outdoor fun.

The Carrizo Plains National Monument is proud to provide RV rental travelers with a wide variety of facilities and recreation activities, including everything from hiking and camping to wildlife viewing and educational programs. Located off of Highway 58, the Carrizo Plains Preserve is open from sunrise to sunset, providing RV rental travelers with hours of outdoor excitement and activity. If you're planning on visiting the Carrizo Plains National Monument during your upcoming Rent4Less RV rental vacation please feel free to contact the Guy L. Goodwin Education Center at (805) 475-2131 for more details. This center, which is open Thursday through Sunday, 9:00am to 5:00pm, December through May, features a knowledgeable staff as well as interactive displays and colorful brochures. (If you're planning on visiting the Park between June and November please call the Bureau of Land Management at (661) 391-6000 for more details).

Carrizo Plain Visitors' Guide





The Carrizo Plain National Monument from four different views in the summertime.

The Plain, unearthed

With the Carrizo Plain National Monument, “the closer you get, the more you see.”

**Text and photos by
Janelle Eastridge**

Driving down Seven Mile Road, the Carrizo Plain doesn't look like much. Well, to be more precise (and fair), it doesn't look like much midday in July, after the scorching summer sun has begun to take its toll. Here, temperatures hover around 105 degrees, and any amount of rainfall is a cause for celebration.

The road into the heart of the national monument, like nearly every other one contained within its approximately 250,000 acres of land, is mostly dirt, and the landscape, at least to the untrained eye, appears to be “basically the same shade of brown for a while — I've never seen so much of nothing,” as the German exchange student accompanying me described it. “Yeah, it's the contrast of the bright-white lake and the desolate ground that makes it so, uh, boring,” added my younger brother, who also made the hour-long trek from Bakersfield with us.

But as we soon found out, with the Carrizo Plain National Monument, “the closer you look, the more you see.” (Web sites, a pamphlet

from the Visitor's Center, and signs throughout the premise had promised us that this would be the case. And don't you worry, they're right.)

With Maricopa to the southeast, Taft to the east, Ojai to the southwest and Atascadero to the northwest, the Carrizo Plain lies nestled between the Temblor and Caliente mountain ranges. In January 1988, The Nature Conservancy bought 82,000 acres of land from Oppenheimer Industries. That same year and the next, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) received 51,500 acres of land. And in January of 2001, former President Bill Clinton granted the Carrizo Plain national monument status due to the fact that it contains the "largest remaining remnants of the original San Joaquin Valley habitat," as per the BLM's Carrizo Plain National Monument Web site. In other words, if you've ever wondered what the San Joaquin Valley looked like 300 years ago, before agriculture and urban sprawl took over, then the Carrizo Plain is the place to go.

Today, the BLM, the State Department of Fish and Game, The Nature Conservancy, and private landowners hold the rights to the Carrizo Plain National Monument, with the first three groups acting as what Johna Hurl, manager of the national monument, refers to as its managing partners.

As the story goes, the "Carrizo" part of the monument's name refers to the grass that once grew so tall in this area that it touched the bellies of early settlers' horses as they rode through the plain. Before that, the area was called "llano estero," in reference to the area's landmark salt marsh, and later the name was changed to Carrisa Plains. After the managing partners acquired the land, the name was changed back to Carrizo Plain.

Yearly, the national monument attracts about 30,000 visitors, with most of

these visitors touring the Plain from December through May. (It's still beautiful in the summer, though!) The Carrizo Plain National Monument is home to a number of endangered, threatened, and rare species of animals, including the San Joaquin kit fox, the blunt-nosed leopard lizard, the giant kangaroo rat, and the San Joaquin antelope squirrel. It also carries with it a history that dates back to prehistoric times, when the Chumash, Yokuts, and other Native Americans used to trade, hunt, and conduct religious ceremonies on the land. (More on this later.)

As a Bakersfield native who spent many summers playing in the Pismo waves and who just recently graduated from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, I had traveled state Highways 58 and 166 many, many times. (Both of these highways pass entrances to the Plain.) And every time I've driven by Soda Lake Road I've felt the tiny tug of curiosity prompting me to someday discover Soda Lake and the rest of the Plain for myself. At The (San Luis Obispo) Tribune, where I worked as an intern last year, I read several stories that mentioned the Carrizo Plain National Monument. But for me, as I think it does for most people, the Plain remained a mystery.

That is, until I decided to take a self-guided tour — easily downloaded via the BLM's Web site — with the German and my brother. Narrated by Hurl, the tour takes visitors to three major points of interest in the Carrizo Plain: Soda Lake, the Visitor's Center, and Wallace Creek. So we made sure we had enough fuel in the car, since we knew that the nearest gas station would be *at least* 25 miles away in Maricopa, and plenty of water, for obvious reasons, and embarked on our very own Carrizo Plain road trip.

Stop 1: Soda Lake Overlook

As the centerpiece of the national monument, Soda Lake is impressive — a massive expanse of nearly blinding-white mineral deposits shimmering in the bright summer sun, set against varying shades of green from the surrounding shrubs and brown from, well, the dirt. The landscape looks as though a giant baking soda explosion has occurred time and time again. It's beautiful, and for that, you can thank Mother Nature herself.

About 30 million years ago, movement along the San Andreas and San Juan fault lines caused the bordering Temblor and Caliente mountain ranges to rise and the land in between to form the shallow basin now known as Soda Lake, the lowest point in the Carrizo Plain. At one point in time, runoff from the plain drained into the Salinas River in the north. But now, thanks to the San Andreas Fault, water that trickles down into the lake during the winter months from elsewhere in the plain evaporates, and with nowhere else to go, it leaves behind "a glistening expanse of sulfate and carbonate salts that appear to ripple and sway in the heat waves of the summer," a sign at the top of the lookout informed us.

(Side note: Yep, we were fooled by that "mirage in the desert" effect. We thought we saw the "water" of the lake shimmering a few miles away as we first drove down Seven Mile Road's bumpy surface. It was, in fact, much further and of a different substance than we originally thought.)

In the plain's more recent history, salt was once collected and refined, and the sodium sulfate was then used in the manufacturing of detergent, craft paper, textiles, and glass. Evidence of this past life on the lake is apparent.

As the first stop of this self-guided tour, the Soda Lake Overlook provides perhaps the best and most wide-reaching view of the lake. "One of the largest undisturbed alkali wetlands in the state" (also gleaned from the sign), Soda Lake is about five miles long and half-a-mile to two miles wide. It has a surface area of more than 3,000 acres and 102 miles of shoreline. Again, this main feature of the plain is impressive. At this vista, one can also easily see the two plains that comprise the larger Carrizo Plain: the Elkhorn and the Carrizo. Confusing? Yeah, just a little, but it all makes sense seen from the bird's-eye view of the overlook, where one can see both of the plains, uh, plainly. Soda Lake, due to its high concentration of salt, supports certain salt-tolerant animals, including small brine shrimp, and plants, such as iodine bush, which grows adjacent to the lake, spiny saltbush, and alkali larkspur.



Soda Lake, the national monument's focal point, is one of the largest undisturbed alkali wetlands in California.



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Dancing in the Moonlight: The Giant Kangaroo Rat of the Carrizo Plain

by Jan A. Randall Professor Emeritus, Department of Biology, San Francisco State University



A Giant Kangaroo Rat of the Carrizo Plain by Jan Randall

At night the Carrizo Plain, which can seem rather absent of life on a hot summer day, becomes alive with nocturnal animals. If you are lucky and the rodents are active, you may see the giant kangaroo rat, GKR (*Dipodomys ingens*), scurrying across the road.

Better yet, take a walk across the grassy terrain and look for those rodents “dancing in the moonlight,” as they were once

described by a biologist who studied GKR in the late 1930's when they were very abundant. More likely you will see the GKR's stuffing seeds, their main food source, into their external cheek pouches and carrying the treasure into their burrows. Inside the burrow you may hear a strange thumping sound as the kangaroo rat drums its feet to notify that you are in its territory, where it stores and defends its seed larder.

Kangaroo rats are arid-adapted rodents inhabiting deserts and arid grasslands of the southwestern United States and northern Mexico. Of the 20 species in the genus *Dipodomys*, 13 live in California and six species are either threatened or endangered, mainly because of the habitat loss. The GKR, listed as endangered by both the California Department of Fish and Game and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, makes its last stand in the Carrizo Plain where it is down to only 2% of its former population. GKR's are crucial for maintaining biological diversity. As a keystone species they are food for kit foxes and owls, and their extensive burrow systems provide a home for many other animals.

Although fundamentally solitary, the GKR's have a rudimentary social structure. They recognize their neighbors and tolerate familiar neighbors more than intruding strangers: a neighbor who has its own territory is less of a threat than an unfamiliar kangaroo rat looking for a new territory of its own. Although kangaroo rats do not normally tolerate visitors, sometimes visitors are welcome. During the winter mating season, males expand their home range to overlap with the territories of neighbor females, and they spend considerable time in the home areas of neighboring females to establish the non-threatening familiarity that leads to

mating. Females prefer to mate on their own territory, so it is important to the male's mating success that the female knows he isn't there to raid her larder or try to kick her out of her home burrow.

Kangaroo rats have evolved complex systems to communicate identity. Familiarity is communicated by scent at sand bathing sites and through foot drumming exchanges. Sand bathing consists of rubbing the front and sides of the body in loose dirt at specific sites at the edge of the territory. The behavior cleans the hair of oils as well as leaves scent to communicate to neighbors that the territory is occupied.

And the kangaroo rats communicate with sound. GKR's drum their feet in a long series of individual thumps combined together into foot rolls. They use one foot at a time and periodically change feet to create foot rolls consisting of up to 300 individual drums. The length and number of foot rolls are combined to identify the individual rodent. These drumming signals can carry long distances through the ground as well as the air and can be heard at some distance by the kangaroo rat's acute low-frequency hearing. Foot drumming usually is sufficient to deter a visiting rat without a chase or fight. However, if the intruder fails to leave, a vigorous chase may ensue.

Kangaroo rats also foot drum in response to predators. This may seem like a risky behavior, but it seems to inform an ambush predator such as a snake that its sneaking tactics have been uncovered. GKR's will repeatedly run up to a snake, jump back and foot drum loudly to communicate that it is aware nimble and not likely to make a meal. If the kangaroo rat spies a more deadly predator such as a kit fox, it will run to a burrow entrance and stand by it and foot drum: the burrow provides refuge if the fox attacks and the foot drumming functions as the first line of defense. GKR's even can detect a recent visit by a snake or fox by the smell of urine and feces.

Currently my students and I are examining the DNA from neighboring GKR's to understand dispersal and to determine whether they live near relatives. In another study, we have collected feces from the bottom of traps and are analyzing them for the hormone metabolites that indicate stress and fertility. We hope these studies an educate people visiting the Carrizo Plain about the complex and beautiful life of the kangaroo rat. They are hardy, courageous and beautiful animals, and their survival requires our appreciation, respect and care.

The Carrizo Plain — fact sheet —

Size:

250,000 acres total;
45 miles long,
10 miles wide

Location:

65 miles from San Luis
Obispo, 25 miles from
Maricopa; accessible via
state Highways 58 and
166

Points of Interest :

Soda Lake, Painted Rock, Wal-
lace Creek (best place to view
evidence of San Andreas Fault
activity), and the Education
Center

Plants:

Several rare and sensitive
plant species, including the
California jewelflower, Hoover's
woolly-star, San Joaquin woolly
threads, pale-yellow layia, forked
fiddleneck, Carrizo peppergrass,
Lost Hills saltbush, Temblor
buckwheat, recurved larkspur, and
Munz's tidy-tips

Animals:

Several threatened, endan-
gered, and unique species,
including the San Joaquin kit
fox, California condor, blunt-
nosed leopard lizard, giant
kangaroo rat, San Joaquin
antelope squirrel, longhorn
fairy shrimp, vernal pool fairy
shrimp, pronghorn antelope
and tule elk

National Monument Status:

Designated as a national monument by former
President William Clinton on Jan. 3, 2001

Other Interesting Facts:

- * Only four percent of California's native grasslands remain – the Carrizo Plains account for a great deal of this, supporting native bunchgrass, needle-grass and blue grass.
- * More endangered species of animals and plant life live on the Carrizo Plains than anywhere else in California. This includes the California jewel flower, the San Joaquin kit fox, the blunt-nosed leopard lizard and the giant kangaroo rat.
- * Numerous species of endangered animals have been reintroduced to the Carrizo Plains over the past 15 years. These include the native tule elk and the pronghorn. Today there are just less than 100 pronghorns on the plain and well over 200 tule elk.

Painted Rock Carrizo Plain National Monument



A view of Painted Rock National Monument

Painted Rock, a horseshoe-shaped monolith rock formation, stands about 55 feet above the high plain adjacent to the Caliente Mountain Range. The geologic formation is a sedimentary rock called sandstone. This sandstone is of marine origin formed about 25 million years during the Miocene Epoch. An ancient river flowing northwestward carved the central portion (saddle) of Painted Rock during the Pleistocene (Ice Age).

The Chumash, Yokuts, and other native peoples lived, hunted and traded in this central region of California. Painted Rock, a special place to the native peoples, is recognized as one of the most important rock painting (pictograph) sites in the United States. Some of the lifeways of the American Indian use of Painted Rock is sacred as they continue to express through their visitations to the site.

At Painted Rock, three colors dominate the paintings; red, black and white. The red ochre is made from hematite, a mineral found locally. Pigment for black paint was made from wood charcoal. The source for white paint comes from diatomaceous shale and/or gypsum, both minerals found locally in the Monument. Animal fat or oil extracted from crushed plant seeds, whites of bird eggs, or milkweed may have served as a binder for making paints. Paint was applied to the rock surface by finger or with a fibrous plant stick.

The paintings were done over a long period of time, with some paintings superimposed or painted over previously painted images. The paintings are estimated to be

from 200 to 3000 years old. The pictographs exhibit a diverse and intricate style that has been long and widely recognized as among the most impressive in North America. Unfortunately, vandalism ranging from graffiti to gunshot impacts over the past 100 years has destroyed or severely damaged some of the rock paintings. Wind and water erosion, and other natural occurrences such as bird excretions and honeybee activity have also damaged the preservation of the rock paintings.

Please help us protect Painted Rock, a cultural resource of the American Indians of California and a special place for future generations of people to enjoy and benefit. The native peoples today are actively involved in the management and preservation of Painted Rock.

No hunting or shooting is allowed in the area of Painted Rock or along the trail for one-quarter (1/4) mile radius. Pets are not allowed at Painted Rock. Please BEWARE of rattlesnakes and honeybees at Painted Rock and along the trail.

Federal Laws make it illegal to excavate, remove, damage, or otherwise alter or deface (or attempt to do aforementioned activities) archaeological resources located on public land. Any person found in violation of the Archaeological Resource Protection Act could be fined not more than \$100,000, or imprisoned not more than five years, or both. Please report any violations to archaeological resources to the Bakersfield BLM Office (661) 391-6000. Thanks for helping us preserve California's heritage resources.

Public Lands Day at El Saucito Ranch

By Roger Gambs
& Mike Malkin



An Aerial view of El Saucito Ranch
by Russell Orrell

Bill Garcia presented the history of his family at El Saucito Ranch to participants in the 2007 National Public Lands Day Celebration held on the Ranch. Bill's grandmother's maiden name was Adalaida Augustina Garcia. Her side of the family came from Spain. The family of his grandfather, Jesus Garcia, came from Sonora, Mexico.

BLM staff from the CPNM organized the annual Public Lands Day event at the historic El Saucito Ranch last fall. FOCF provided lunches for everyone and helped make trails, clean up the grounds, and maintain the ranch house.

The highlight of the day was Bill Garcia's presentation of his family's ancestry leading up to the time when Bill and his family lived, worked, and played on the El Saucito.

During the late 1800's, one branch of Bill's family tree took up saddle making. Will Rogers and Teddy Roosevelt were among the many famous people who rode on Garcia saddles. Today, the world-class custom-made Garcia Saddle is still being handcrafted for discriminating riders.

Bill, a retired teacher and business owner, still runs cattle on his ranch in the Temblors. He's sometimes referred to as "The Rocking Horseman" because he also hand-carves heirloom quality wooden rocking horses, each with Bill's own style of "Garcia" saddle.

National Public Lands Day is September 24th, 2011

Birding in the Carrizo Plain

by Alan Schmierer



A Savannah Sparrow rests on a fence in the Carrizo Plain.

by Alan Schmierer

Over 40 million people in the United States consider themselves “birders”. Who are these birders? They are young and old, and they are found coast to coast and border to border. Some limit their birding to their own back yards. Over half bring the joy of birding with them as they travel, and many of these folks plan their trips around seeing new birds.

Birds are one of the most visible and most beautiful parts of the natural world! They come in an astounding range of bright colors, and range in size from the four-inch long hummingbirds to the condors with their nine-foot wingspan. Seeing their beauty and the fascinating details of their flight and food-gathering takes a little more work than just gazing out the car



A Ferruginous Hawk flies high above the Plain.

by Alan Schmierer

Carrizo Plain Visitors' Guide

window at highway speed. Because some birds are rather shy, binoculars are a must, so that you can see the details of their patterns and their colors from a comfortable distance. A bird guide of some kind will make the experience more fun.

The Carrizo Plain provides a great place for birding. The setting is vast, peaceful and breathtakingly beautiful. The lack of traffic makes it easy to stop frequently on the back roads of the monument to look and listen for birds. Winter is a good time to bird the area. The open plain attracts a large and spectacular variety of raptors. Sometimes in a single morning one can see Golden and Bald Eagles, Red-tailed and Ferruginous Hawks, American Kestrels and Prairie Falcons. When there is water in Soda Lake, flocks of Sandhill Cranes spend the night in the shallow lake waters and fly out to nearby fields to feed during the day. Large flocks of Long-billed Curlews can be seen in the grassy areas, and looking carefully in the most barren areas may reveal the rather rare Mountain Plover. Large flocks of the all blue Mountain Bluebirds brighten the winter

landscape. Look in the weedy and grassy areas for a variety of wintering sparrows (Sage, Savannah, Vesper, White-crowned, Lark and others). The rather rare and reclusive LeConte's Thrasher is resident in the saltbush flats near the Elkhorn Scarp. Horned Larks, Western Meadowlarks and Loggerhead Shrikes are found in this same habitat.

The juniper-oak hills are home to a variety of birds, including the Lawrence's Goldfinch. Birders from all over the country come to the Carrizo to see this spectacular little bird. In spring and fall any areas with trees and water act as a magnet for migrating birds. Summer birding is more quiet, but still interesting early in the morning and in the cooler hilltop areas.

Details of where the birds are found and what some of the roads at the Monument are like are found at a Morro Coast Audubon Society web page at <http://www.morrockcoastaudubon.org/carrizo.htm>. In addition, one should obtain a copy of “Birds of the Carrizo Plain National Monument”. This handy pocket sized booklet lists all of the species of the area, their preferred habitat, and shows bar graphs of the expected species and the relative frequency of each. It is available at the CPNM visitor center or through the Morro Coast Audubon Society in Morro Bay (<http://www.morrockcoastaudubon.org/contact.htm>) for a few dollars.

Take your time, be patient, look carefully and you will begin to feel the joy of observing birds!



An American Kestrel. by Alan Schmierer



Carrizo Plain National Monument

Legend

Land Ownership

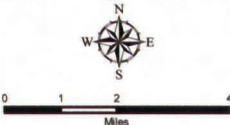
- US Bureau of Land Management
- US Forest Service
- US Fish & Wildlife Service
- State Lands
- Private Lands
- No Shooting Zone
- Open Camping Area
- Carrizo Plain National Monument
- Wilderness Study Area
- San Andreas Fault
- County Maintained Roads
- Paved County Roads
- Open Roads
- Administrative Use Only
- Closed to Vehicle Use
- Foot Trail
- ? Information Board



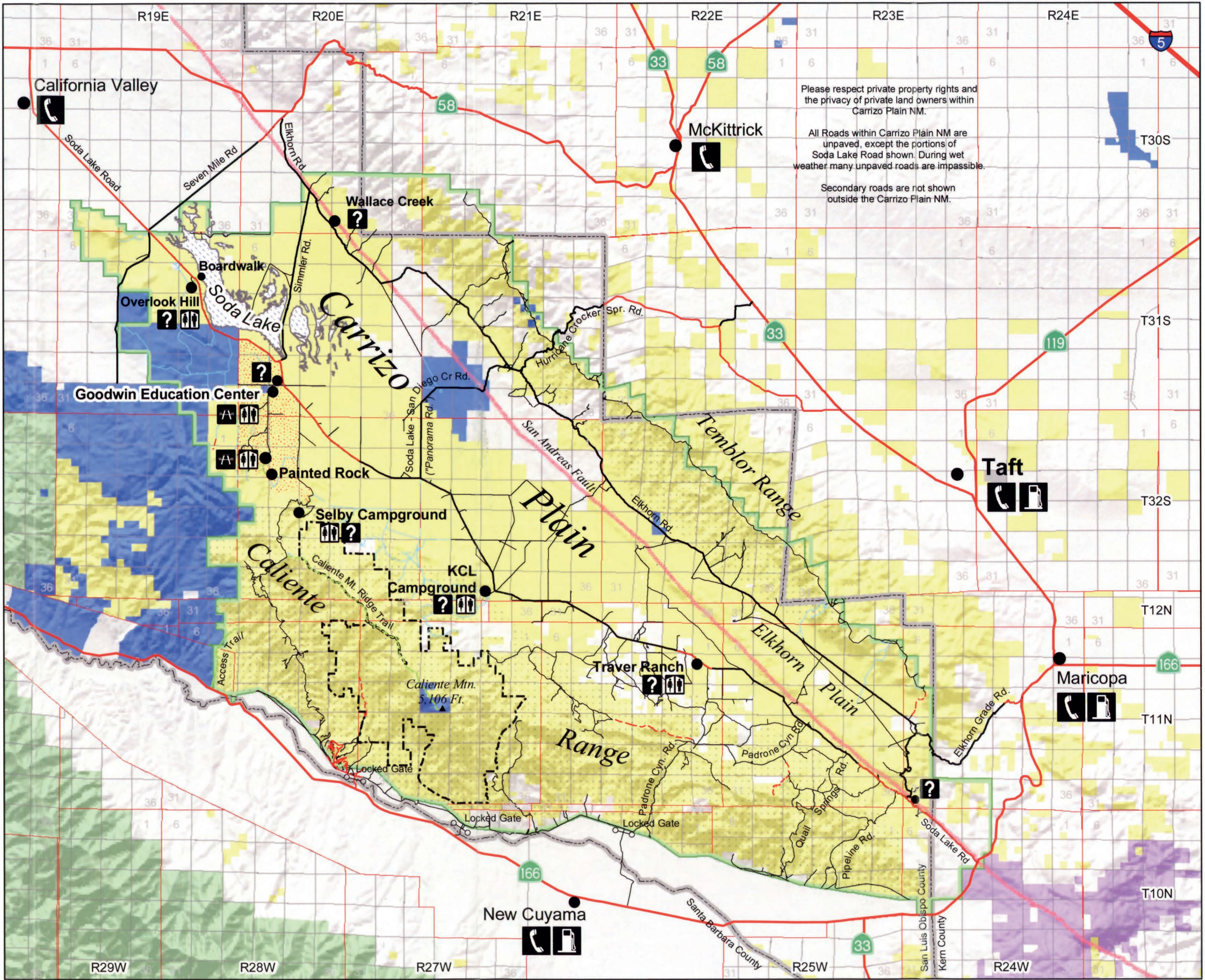
Location Map

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)



Revised: November 15, 2006



Stop 1 (continued from page 8)

At this point in the tour, there is also the option of walking closer to the water on a few trails and a boardwalk. We chose to forego this option since we had unwisely chosen to visit the Carrizo Plain during the hottest part of the day. It was a bad choice on my part, because if we had gone to closer to the water...

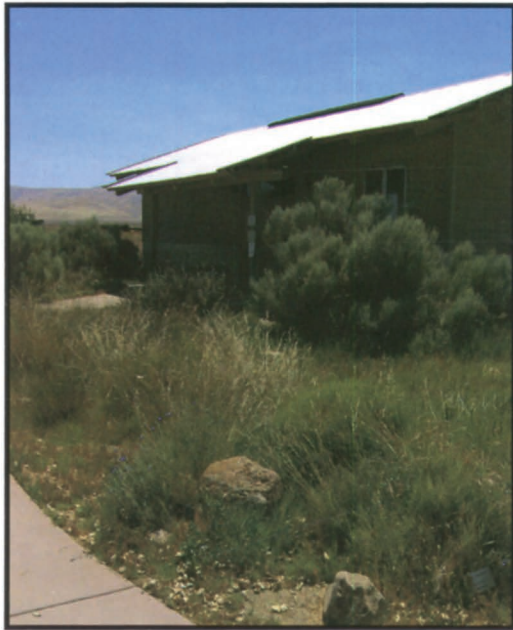
I COULD HAVE WALKED ON WATER.

Well, kind of and just maybe. But more specifically, I could have walked on the lake's salt crust. According to Hurl:

"During the winter, Soda Lake may have enough water to be a shallow lake. The depth of the water varies depending on the amount of rainfall, but averages between one and three feet. In one really wet year, the water level reached all the way up to Soda Lake Road at the base of the Overlook Hill. *In the dry months, water lies just below the salt crust. Be careful if you walk out there, because you may break through the crust and sink into the mud.* We prefer that you stay on the Boardwalk."

Oh, well, I guess there's always next time.

Note: Close to the vista site are two recently installed bathrooms. As there are few bathrooms available, it'd be smart to use them now.



Although closed during the summer, the Visitor's Center does provide tourists with an informative brochure and a detailed map of the area.

Stop 2: The Goodwin Education Center

From the Soda Lake Overlook, the Visitor's Center is just a seven-mile drive down Soda Lake Road, the main thoroughfare in the Carrizo Plain National Monument. Unfortunately for us, the center was closed when we went (and will remain closed until December). Luckily, though, an informative brochure and a detailed map are available just outside the center's doors, so we made good use of those materials instead.

The small building does, however, feature an easily accessible outdoor native plant garden and a helpful brochure to aid in the identification process. This outdoor area also serves as an observation point from which to view remnants of the Plain's farming past, including a grain elevator. I didn't understand the complete significance of this history at the time, as it is a complicated one, but it sure looked cool, and we got some good photos, too.

When the center is open, visitors can sign up for guided tours to Painted Rock, a former gathering spot for local and nearby Native American tribes, possibly including the Chumash, the Southern Valley Yokuts, and the Salinan. The Carrizo Plain grasslands provided plenty of game for the men to hunt, and the rock provided them with a

place where they could trade goods. Painted Rock is now hailed as one of the most important Native American pictograph sites in California, and Native Americans still use the site today during the summer solstice (one reason why it's closed in the summer). Its elaborate markings and bedrock mortar milling features suggest that Native American groups first occupied the area as early as 11,000 B.C.

In an effort to protect nesting birds such as prairie falcons, ravens, gold eagles, and barn owls and to continue the preservation of the rock itself, Painted Rock is closed from March 1 through July 15. So for us, all we could do was read about its history and look at Painted Rock from a distance, which, I must admit, is not too interesting.

Again, maybe next time.

Stop 3: Wallace Creek

I'm embarrassed to admit this, but we accidentally bypassed Wallace Creek. I know what you're thinking: *"This girl wanted to go on the self-guided tour to write a piece for this Carrizo Plain Visitors' Guide, and she couldn't make it to one-third of the sites?!"*

Yep, that's correct.

But in my defense, we didn't avoid the creek because we didn't want to see it or its accompanying trail, but rather I didn't realize where it was in relation to Stop 2. We wanted to continue on state Highway 166 on our way out of the monument, and Wallace Creek was just a bit out our way that day.

(Side note: The paved portion of Soda Lake Road ends shortly after the turnoff for the Visitor's Center. Driving for more than an hour on the unpaved portion of this road is not enjoyable. Seven Mile Road, accessible from state Highway 58, though also unpaved, proved to be a better entrance into the national monument for us; it's also a shorter drive. Also, signs along the side of Soda Lake Road and elsewhere warned us that roads were impassable when wet, so be careful!)

Wallace Creek, for those who *do* make it out there, is perhaps the best place in the monument to view just how dramatically the San Andres Fault — the 625-mile fault line that runs nearly the entire length of California, from just below Los Angeles to the Bay Area — has affected the Carrizo Plain. Evidence of its work can be seen in the offset of the creek bed and fault scarps, which according to Hurl in the self-guided tour, are particularly well preserved in the Carrizo Plain.

Hurl also explained that the 8.0-magnitude Fort Tejon earthquake of 1857 "may have centered in the Carrizo and is probably the strongest earthquake to hit California in historic time. Surface ruptures extended 200 miles and offsets of 10 meters occurred within the Carrizo. Future seismic activity within the Carrizo is highly likely."

The creek is currently offset by about 130 meters, 10 meters of which were caused by the 1857 Fort Tejon earthquake.

Because of these unique features, the Carrizo Plain provides academics with plenty of research opportunities. Evidence of the fault's activity can be easily seen elsewhere in the monument, too.

Those who wish to take the self-guided Carrizo Plain National Monument tour themselves can find the four podcasts (an introduction and one for each of the stops) at :

www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/bakersfield/Programs/carrizo/self-guided-tour.html

Seeing firsthand the beauty of the Carrizo Plain National Monument, it's obvious that there *is* more to it than what meets the eye. (It's not just brown and hot, I promise.)

My favorite example of this — the highlight of our trip — was the spotting of a male pronghorn antelope. We saw him toward the end of our visit, as we traveled on Soda Lake Road out of the national monument and toward state Highway 166. I must say, seeing a lone pronghorn antelope run as fast as he could from the side of the road when he first saw our car round the corner, then stopping at a safe distance to observe us — just like we did with him, camera at the ready — was spectacular. We were two species alone in this barren, hot environment, both trying to understand the significance of this encounter, and we understood him perfectly.

Right, a pronghorn antelope, one of only 100 on the Plain, has a close encounter with the author. Below, a view of the Carrizo Plain from Soda Lake Road and the entrance to the KCL camping site.



The Peoples Who Once Lived On The Carrizo

by Jane M McCabe

Those who know Spanish know that “carrizo” means reed, telling us that the Carrizo Plain was so named because it was once filled with reeds. Central California between the coast and the San Joaquin Valley is uninhabitable in some areas, a land of mountains and deserts. The Carrizo Plain (please see map on page 13) is a swath of high desert plain that runs from Highway 166 in the south to 58 in the north, a distance of about 45 miles. Its width is about 15 miles. To visit it you can enter from 166 about 10 miles west of Maricopa or from 58 about 20 miles west of Highway 33. The road runs through it from the south to the north, northwest. Along the road to the east is Soda Lake, a pencil shaped alkaline lake with a crust of white salt surrounding it. In the middle of the plain to its west is Painted Rock, a horseshoe-shaped rock made of marine sandstone about 250 feet across and 45 feet tall.

Few people live on the Carrizo Plain today, but it was once home to various tribes of indigenous peoples, who attributed religious significance to the rock and painted on its surface. (One can probably assume these people also used the reeds of the plain to weave baskets, though none of these remain today.)

The interior of the rock alcove is adorned with many pictographs created by the Chumash, Salinan and Yokut peoples over many thousands of years. Ancient rock art in red, black and white yucca pigments, and some yellow, green and blue were painted with rodent tail hair brushes or simple finger painting.

The Chumash People

Estimates are that the Chumash people first populated the Carrizo Plain about 2000 BCE (when Abraham migrated from Haran to Canaan) but mostly abandoned it, possibly due to drought, about CE 600 (after Rome was overrun by barbarians.)

Pictographs and petroglyphs are common through interior California, the rock painting tradition thrived until the 19th century. Chumash rock art is considered to be some of the most elaborate rock art tradition in the region.

The Chumash lived in the present-day counties of Santa Barbara, Ventura, and San Luis in southern California until the early 19th Century. They were a Hokan-speaking, maritime, hunter-gatherer society whose livelihood was based on the sea. They developed excellent skills for catch-

ing fish, shellfish, and other marine mammals. Beyond fishing, however, they were also skilled in creating rock art. Rock art may have been created by shamans during vision quests. No one is absolutely certain about the meaning of the Chumash Rock art, but scholars generally agree that it is connected with religion and astronomy.

Chumash rock art is almost invariably found in caves or on cliffs in the mountains. It makes sense that the rock art sites are always found near streams, springs, or other sources of permanent water as the artists would need water to mix their pigments.

Chumash traditional narratives in oral history says that religious specialists, known as ‘alchuklash created the rock art. Non-Chumash people call these practitioners medicine men or shamans. The sites for the vision quests were usually located near the shaman’s village. The Chumash considered caves, rocks, and water sources quite powerful, and the shamans saw them as “portals to the sacred realm...where they could enter the supernatural.”

The way a shaman interacted with the supernatural was by entering a hallucinogenic trance, or altered state of consciousness. In this altered state, brought on either by surprisingly potent native tobacco or jimsonweed, shamans received visions and supernatural power from spirit helpers often in the forms of dangerous and powerful animals like rattlesnakes and grizzly bears. Spirit helpers almost never took the form of an animal that was an important source of food, because it was considered taboo for a shaman to eat meat from one of his helpers.

(Like many others who read the Don Juan books written by Carlos Castaneda during the 1970’s, I knew shamans existed in the Sonora Desert of Mexico but didn’t realize they lived too in California.)

Subject matter and materials

Chumash rock art depicts images like humans, animals, celestial bodies, and other shapes and patterns. These depictions vary considerably and appear to be in no particular order or arrangement. The colors of the paintings vary as well, from red or black monochromes to elaborate polychromes. The Chumash made paint from mixing soil, mortar, and a liquid binder like blood or oil from animals or mashed seeds, which helped to make the paint permanent and waterproof. Orange and red paint contained hematite or iron oxide, while yellow came from limonite, blue and green from copper or serpentine, white from kaolin clays or gypsum, and black from manganese or charcoal.

Paint was applied with a person’s finger or a brush. Images depicted in the paintings are representational and abstract. Abstract images include squares,

Other Area Attractions

West Kern Oil Museum

This museum set in the oil-rich hills of Taft tells the story of the oil companies, of everyday life in the early oilfields and in the oil camps, and the story of oil itself. To schedule a tour, call (661) 765-6664.

Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Tuesday – Saturday); 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. (Sundays)

From the Plain: Take Highway 166 East to Maricopa. At the stop sign in Maricopa, turn left onto Highway 33. Proceed approximately 7 miles to Wood Street, the first paved left turn coming into Taft. Turn left onto Wood Street, and look for the Oil Museum parking sign.

Painted Rock

The sandstone formation at Painted Rock has long drawn the attention of Carrizo Plain visitors. About 3,000 – 4,000 years ago, Native Americans began to paint their sacred images within the alcove of the rock. Not surprisingly, the power of this place continues to enthrall, and it still receives many visitors today.

Unfortunately, the attraction and accessibility of the site have also drawn the attention of peoples who didn't appreciate the significance of the pictographs, or rock paintings, created by earlier Native Americans. The site sustained significant damage due to vandalism over the last century as a result. Measures have been taken to repair some of the damage but what has been lost can never be reclaimed. Management of the site is focused upon protection, preservation, public education and research, while respecting the Native American values of this sacred site.

Visiting Painted Rock

Painted Rock may be visited as part of a BLM guided tour or with a self-guided tour permit. Tours or permits are available according to the calendar below.

- March 1 to July 15: Painted Rock is available to visitation only via BLM guided tours. No other form of public visitation is allowed during this time period.

- July 16 to end of February: Self-guided tour permit is available and required for unguided public access to Painted Rock.

BLM Guided Tour and Self Guided Tour Permit Reservations

BLM guided tour reservations and self-guided tour permits can be both booked either online or by phone at the numbers listed below through recreation.gov. Permits and tours booked either by phone or online through recreation.gov will be charged a \$1.50 processing fee for each reservation.

When booking online first click the "Tours" tab; then click "Carrizo Plain National Monument"; then click on "Book Now"; then select either the "Soda Lake/Painted Rock Tour" or the "Painted Rock Self Guided Tour"; then follow the instructions to complete the booking process. When making a BLM Guided Tour reservation, click on Soda Lake/Painted Rock Tour. When booking a self-guided permit online, click on Painted Rock Self Guided Tour to obtain a permit.

Recreation.gov phone numbers

Painted Rock BLM Guided Tour and Self Guided Tour Permit reservations (toll free): 1-877-444-6777. International reservations 518-885-3639 TDD 1-877-833-6777 Customer Service (toll free) 1-888-448-1474

Buena Vista Aquatic Recreational Area

A man-made site comprised of two lakes — Lake Evans and the much larger Lake Webb — the recreation area offers tourists fishing, boating, jet sky, camping, picnicing, and bicycling opportunities. For reservations, call (661) 868-7050.

Hours: 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

From the Plain: Take Highway 166 to Highway 33. Turn right on Enos Lane (near the Texaco and Shell stations), which will take you to the Main Gate Entrance.

Kern National Wildlife Refuge

Located in the historic Tulare Lake Basin, the refuge was the first effort to preserve wetland habitat in the area. The west side of the refuge contains upland habitat for endangered wildlife endemic to the San Joaquin Valley. For more information, call (661) 725-2767.

Hours: 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset

Waterfowl Hunting Season: October through January; tour route closed on Wednesdays and Saturdays during the hunting season

From the Plain: Take Highway 166 East to Interstate 5. Go north on I-5, then take Highway 46 East 5 miles to Corcoran Road and turn north. Drive 10.6 miles to the refuge, located at the intersection of Corcoran Road and Garces Highway.

Visit the Taft Chamber of Commerce Carrizo Plain Visitors Center



Information On The Carrizo Plain Maps of the Carrizo Plain National Monument

Taft, California
"Gateway to the Carrizo Plain"
400 Kern Street, Taft, CA 93268 (661) 765-2166.

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Taft, CA 93268
(661) 765-7059

Visitor Services Around the Carrizo Plain

The Cuyama Valley, McKittrick and Derby Acres



Santa Barbara Pistachio Company
3380 Highway 33
Ventucopa

Services: Gas, food, and information

Store Hours:

Monday through Sunday from 8am to 6pm

Farm Store Phone: (661) 766-2177

Santa Barbara Pistachio Company and Store is located on Highway 33 in Ventucopa. The family-operated farm is known as the "original home of the flavored pistachio."

The area's perfect high-desert climate of sunny days and cool, clear nights is almost identical to the pistachio's native climate in the Middle East.

Still a small family enterprise in these modern times of corporate, high-tech agribusiness, Santa Barbara Pistachio is owned and operated by Gene and Gail Zannon, with their sons, Tristan and Josh, in charge of production and farming the 380 acres of pistachio trees. At Santa Barbara Pistachio Company, quality does grow on trees.



Sagebrush Annie's
4211 Highway 33
Ventucopa

Services: Wine tasting, dinner, and special events

Wine Tasting Room: Open Friday,

Saturday, and Sunday from noon to 5:30pm

Dinner: Served Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, from 5:30 to 9 p.m. For reservations, call (661) 766-2319

Sagebrush Annie's is located about one hour north of Ojai on Highway 33 and about one hour southwest of Bakersfield via state Highway 119 to Highway 166 in Maricopa and then to Highway 33 south in Cuyama Valley. From the Los Angeles area, we are a two-hour drive via Interstate 5 north to Frazier Park and then west through the Lockwood Valley. A less-traveled scenic route from the Los Angeles area is west from Frazier Park through Pine Mountain Club and along Cerro Noroeste Road to highway 166, then southwest to Highway 33 south.



The Place
4014 Highway 33
Ventucopa

Services: Breakfast, lunch, and dinner; catering; and special events

Hours:

Open Monday through Friday from 9am - 9pm

Open Saturday and Sunday from 8am - 9pm

Phone: (661) 766-2660.

The Place restaurant is located in Ventucopa and offers homemade breakfast, lunch, and dinner. They also have great pizza. On Saturday and Sunday, they offer rib eye steak dinners.

Stop by and say hello to owners Vicky and Alick.

The Place Restaurant

Vicky and Alick
4014 Hwy 33 Ventucopa



Open 7 Days
Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
(661) 766-2660

McKittrick

The community of McKittrick is located near the crossroads of Highway's 33 and 58 in western Kern County. The Penny Bar and Cafe, located in the old McKittrick Hotel, is known for its famous penny bar, containing over 1 million pennies that cover the floors, walls, and bar. The restaurant is open 7 days a week, and features breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The hotel, however, has not rented rooms for over 40 years.



Derby Acres

Derby Acres is a small town located about 10 minutes north of Taft on Highway 33. The Tumbleweed Cafe and Bar, located in the heart of Oil Country is a favorite place to eat and drink on the westside of Kern County. The restaurant features breakfast and lunch, and dinner on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Stop by and say hello to owner, inventor and world traveler Orchel Krier.



Visitor Services Around the Carrizo Plain

Taft and Maricopa



The City of Taft

The City of Taft is located approximately 24 miles east of the Carrizo on Highway 119 and Highway 33.

With a population of over 7,500, Taft is a full-service city offering more than 25 restaurants, 3 hotels, 2 supermarkets, 2 pharmacies, more than a dozen service stations, and other essential traveler services.

Taft has been officially designated the "Gateway to the Carrizo Plain", with a Carrizo Plain Visitors Center located at the Taft Chamber of Commerce, 400 Kern St. The Chamber's phone number is (661) 765-2166.

Taft is known for friendly people who are always ready to answer questions, and ready to recommend a good restaurant or give directions.



Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge

The Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge is located in the southwestern San Joaquin Valley foothills of Kern County, California. Elevations on the Refuge range from 1,600 to 4,680 feet. Purchased to protect dwindling California condor foraging and roosting habitat in 1985, the 14,097-acre refuge is the site where the last wild female condor was trapped in 1986.

The refuge is managed to preserve historic endangered California condor foraging and roosting areas. The refuge has an active grazing program, using cattle to manage wildlife habitat.

The refuge is administered by Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge Complex. The refuge complex main office is located off-refuge at 2493 Portola Road, Suite A, in Ventura, California.

The refuge is closed to public use.



Maricopa

The City of Maricopa, with a population of 1,250 is located 19 miles east of the southern entrance to the Carrizo Plain at the intersection of Highways 33, 166, and 119. The city features one Shell service station, a Motel 8, and three restaurants. The city also features an old-fashioned quilt shop, the Maricopa Quilt Company, featuring hand-made quilts and supplies.

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fastrip9929@bak.rr.com

Maricopa MOTEL 8

Manji Kumar
General Manager

By Motel 8 Group

600 Poso St.
P.O. Box 608
Maricopa, CA 93252

Phone: (661) 769-8291
Fax: (661) 769-8852

Visitor Services Around the Carrizo Plain - Santa Margarita

Santa Margarita is an unincorporated town located in San Luis Obispo County, California founded in 1897 near Cuesta Peak and San Luis Obispo along State Route 58. It's one of the most rural areas in San Luis Obispo County. The town's name comes from the name issued by the Mexican government to describe the area when it was a land grant inside Alta California. It is home to a Mexican mission named Santa Margarita Asistencia. Santa Margarita Lake, a major water source for San Luis Obispo, is located several miles southeast of the town on the Salinas River. It is served by the zip code 93453 and area code 805.

The town is surrounded by the Santa Margarita Ranch, a 15,000+ acre Spanish rancho which is home to the historic Santa Margarita de Cortona Mission Asistencia. Secularized from Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa, these lands in the

foothills of the Santa Lucia Mountains were originally granted to Joaquin Estrada, who later sold it to the Martin Murphy, Jr. family. Californio culture is still very much alive at the Rancho, which remains in the private ownership of local developers Rob Rossi, Doug Filliponi, Karl Wittstrom, and Ron Hertel. It remains a working stock ranch and is also now home to the Ancient Peaks Winery and the Pacific Coast Railroad Company, a narrow gauge steam heritage railway.

Santa Margarita was founded in 1897, not to be confused with Rancho Santa Margarita, California that was founded in the 1990's. The population of Santa Margarita is small, but has finally surpassed the number of the towns elevation which stands at 1,100 feet.

Santa Margarita is just north of San Luis Obispo. The climate is similar to Napa Valley, with rainfall at about 20 inches, and

frost appearing from November through March.

The town is home to a few restaurants, a gas station, a liquor store, a feed store, and a lumber store. The town also has several other conveniences, but no stop lights!

Santa Margarita is located just northeast of San Luis Obispo between San Luis Obispo and Atascadero along US Highway 101 near Santa Margarita Lake.

Santa Margarita is part of the San Luis Obispo-Atascadero-Paso Robles metro



visit **Santa Margarita**.com

Gateway to North San Luis Obispo County
& the Carrizo Plain National Monument

HOME OF THE
SANTA MARGARITA WILDFLOWER FESTIVAL

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The Peoples Continued from Page 16

circles and triangles, zigzags, crisscrosses, parallel lines, and pinwheels. Interpretations

In the early 20th Century, non-Natives began studying California rock art, including a number of archaeologists, such as Julian Steward and Alfred Kroeber. Because of some commonly occurring symbols in paintings, it is believed that portions of the rock art depict themes of fertility, water, and rain. The Native California Indians are very reluctant to talk to anyone about the rock art and some deny any knowledge of it altogether. The natives' hesitancy to discuss the art led archaeologists to believe that they had no idea of the origin of the pictographs.

A radiocarbon test on pigment from a Santa Barbara area pictograph site showed that the sample was about 2,000 years old (which would mean it was created about the time of Jesus.)

In recent times there have been many marks left by early settlers such as one reading "Geo. Lewis 1908", founder of Atascadero, California. Unfortunately there has also been major defacing of this site. In the 1920s the large pictogram was irreparably damaged from a shotgun blast. To protect these treasures from further vandalism the public is restricted from close access to the pictograms.

Beginning Nov. 10, the Bureau of Land Management will require permits to visit the pictograph site at Painted Rock on the Carrizo Plain National Monument.

"Painted Rock is widely considered to be among the finest examples of Native American pictograph painting in the world. Although the original painted panels have been damaged, largely due to turn of the century souvenir collectors who purposely removed sections of paint, a significant amount of the paintings are intact. Painted Rock continues to hold important spiritual values for contemporary Native American people who often visit the site for ceremonies and religious observances," said Tamara Whitley, archaeologist in the BLM Bakersfield Field Office.

The BLM manages Painted Rock for public visitation and education while balancing Native American values and concerns. The permit application process allows the BLM to educate the public about appropriate visitation of the site monitor impacts through the visitor tracking system.

Permits will be available online at recreation.gov, by phone at the numbers listed below and, if space is available, at the Goodwin Education Center on the Carrizo Plain National Monument when open. Permits booked through recreation.gov will be charged a \$1.50 processing fee for each permit. From March 1 to July 15, Painted Rock will be open for guided tours only. Reservations for guided tours, which also visit the Soda Lake Overlook and wildflower viewing sites, can also be made online at recreation.gov, by phone at the numbers listed below or, at the Goodwin Education Center. Larger group tours must be booked through the Goodwin Education Center by calling (805) 475-2131. The Goodwin Education Center is open December through May, Thursdays through Sundays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Greetings from the Carrizo Plain



My name is David Dennis, and I am the current President of the Friends of the Carrizo Plain. As I write this, it is near sunset at the Autumnal Equinox and the light on the hills casts the deep, long shadows that show off the many centuries of movement on the San Andreas fault. I am reminded of how fortunate we are that so many "Friends" have contributed their skills, resources and energy to help save this beautiful, quiet place that is so close to the rush of southern California. The Friends of the Carrizo Plain's role in this story began with nine Board members, primarily interested residents from the surrounding communities, shortly after the Monument was established in 2001, but the work to protect this landscape began much earlier. Local landowners, residents, and concerned naturalists worked alongside public agencies and The Nature Conservancy, to establish what would become the Carrizo Plain National Monument. It is now managed by the Bureau of Land Management, the California Department of Fish and Game, and The Nature Conservancy with assistance from public advisory groups.

For our part, the Friends of the Carrizo Plain seeks to achieve our mission through: educating the public about the Monument's special qualities, increasing public understanding of the value of protecting the Monument's resources, and recruiting their support in protecting this unique part of the National Landscape Conservation System. The role of educating the public is one of our major objectives.

Our primary method for accomplishing that objective is the operation of the gift shop and book store at the Goodwin Education Center. Here we encounter the largest number of people who seek to understand better this last remaining jewel of California's once vast grasslands. Our ability to provide resources and materials that help explain the value of protecting the Carrizo Plain, is an important tool in increasing the public's support for conservation of the area.

We also educate the public by outreach at community events, leading informational tours, developing print and electronic educational materials for display at the Education Center, by providing participant luncheons and educational materials at volunteer activities such as National Public Lands Day, and informational tables at various civic events (Taft Carrizo Days, and the Morro Bay Bird Festival). Our continued role of educating the public about the value of conserving this landscape is very important to achieve protection for the Monument.

I want to take this opportunity to say thank you, to all of those individuals and organizations, past and present, for helping to protect this precious landscape, and I would like to extend an invitation to all of you reading this to visit the Carrizo Plain National Monument. The opportunities to enjoy, to learn, to share, to preserve, and to protect the Carrizo Plain National Monument's wildlife, geology, plants and other unique features are waiting there for all of us to discover.

JOIN THE FRIENDS OF THE CARRIZO PLAIN

"Protecting the Unique Beauty of the Carrizo"

www.carrizo.org

The Friends of the Carrizo Plain (FOCP) is composed of volunteers devoting time, energy, and resources to support the managing partners (Bureau of Land Management, The Nature Conservancy, and California Department of Fish and Game) in the education, interpretation, and conservation of the unique resources of the Carrizo Plain National Monument.

A Carrizo Plain National Monument that remains unique and preserved, providing an internationally recognized model of cooperative resource conservation.



Values:

- Being good stewards of the land
- Fostering trust between the FOCP, the managing partners, and the public
- Promoting and generating enthusiasm for understanding the resources of the Carrizo Plain National Monument
- Cooperating and building consensus to achieve goals
- Respecting the serenity of the Carrizo Plain National Monument
- Leaving a legacy of the Carrizo Plain National Monument for future generations to appreciate

Why join FOCP?

Your membership will help support activities of The Friends of the Carrizo Plain that are consistent with its mission, vision, and values.

PLEASE JOIN US: Fill out and return the form below with your check to:

Friends of the Carrizo Plain
HCR 69 - Box 3078
Santa Margarita, CA 93453

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
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Email _____
Membership Categories (pick one)
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