

TAPESTRY OF TIME

Countless colors, hues, and shades paint this tapestry of time that stretches as far as the eye can see. Shaped by wind and water, this land holds vital clues to the past.

Jasper Forest

Petrified Wood Like precious gems shining in the sun, remnants of a prehistoric forest lie at your feet. Colorful specimens, from small shards to massive trunks, are strewn across the landscape. In some areas of the

park, fossilized trunks are visible. In other areas they remain hidden, still buried under layers of soil and rock. As the trees died or were knocked down by wind or water, many were carried downstream and buried by layers of

sediment. The logs soaked up groundwater and silica from volcanic ash and over time crystallized into quartz. Different minerals created the rainbow of colors seen in many pieces.

TRIASSIC TREASURE Petrified Forest National Park is one of the best places in the world to see the fossil record from the Late Triassic Period. The remnants of prehistoric forests, now petrified wood; plant and animal fossils; and artifacts have told us much about this beautiful, wild land, but there is more to be learned.

Explore where early dinosaurs roamed and giant forests toppled. At first glance these badlands might appear barren and lifeless, but look closely and discover a living scientific laboratory that reveals prehistoric plants, animals, and a river system larger than anything on earth today.



Postosuchus kirkpatricki

Fossils provide crucial clues to the past. Hundreds of plant, animal, and trace fossils still being found here help us understand what the world was like during the Late Triassic Period. It was the "dawn of the dinosaurs," when smaller dinosaurs struggled with various crocodile-like reptiles for survival.

ANCIENT ARIZONA Hot. Humid. Lush. Green. It may be hard to imagine the desert grassland before you as a prehistoric rainforest. During the Triassic Period, 225 million years ago, this was a tropical landscape with abundant vegetation—ferns, horsetails, and cycads. As the illustration at right shows, early dinosaurs and reptiles roamed; fish, clams, snails, and crayfish moved through rivers; and giant, 180-foot conifers reached to the skies.

Over the past 200 million years continents moved, regions uplifted, climate changed, and the river system, along with its plants and animals, was buried by layers of sediment. Wind and water have continually molded, sculpted, and peeled back these layers, giving us a glimpse of the once tropical land we know today as Arizona.

Hundreds of species of plant fossils have been found in the park, testifying to the varied and abundant plant life during the Triassic.



Plant fossil



Mural depicting Blue Mesa
NPS/VICTOR LESIAK



HOMELAND The names, faces, languages, and stories of the prehistoric people who lived here are unknown to us, but remnants of their life—projectile points, pottery, and messages in stone—help us piece together their story. Early families wandered searching for food and water. As time passed they settled here and began farming. They

built pueblos and traded with distant people. Around 1380 they started moving away; it is likely years of drought forced them to leave. Hopi tradition says the villagers moved northwest and joined their people. Over 1,000 archeological sites have been found in the park, from one-room shelters to multiple 100-room pueblos.

GRASSLANDS Created by fire, drought, grazing, and storms, this environmental mosaic was once as vast as the sea. Waves of grass provided habitat and food for people and animals living in this endless, open space. The story of the land and its people is rooted in the shortgrass prairie.

By the late 1800s, sheep and cattle ranches were established and thousands of animals competed for each blade of grass. Overgrazing became a problem in the arid west. Ranching continues today, but the grasslands in the park have not been grazed for decades.



Pottery and Arrowheads
Ancient pottery and arrowheads (above) are remnants of 13,000 years of human history.

Petroglyphs The abundant petroglyph sites of Petrified Forest comprise an astonishing showcase of southwestern rock art capturing thousands of years of the human story. Do they

mark trails, commemorate events, or are they prayers? The answers are unknown, but we continue to learn about this art from those who trace their ancestry here.

Solar Calendars While the meanings of many petroglyphs are not clear, several are solar calendars. Some mark the summer or winter solstice, while others indicate both equinoxes.

The Ancestral Puebloan people may have used them to manage ceremonial and agricultural activities. The accuracy of these calendars today is amazing.

Explorers passed this way looking for routes to connect settlements throughout North America.

TRAILS, ROADS, AND RAILS

Petrified Forest is part of a natural travel corridor that has been used for over 10,000 years. In 1853 Congress authorized scientific surveys of all practical railroad routes between the Mississippi River and the Pacific. Lt. Amiel W. Whipple's expedition surveyed a possible route near the 35th parallel.



CAROL M. HIGSBY/AMERICAN LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Stretching from Chicago, Illinois, to Los Angeles, California, Route 66 was a destination in itself. Established in 1926, it was one of the original highways in the US Highway System. People hit the road looking for a new life or to just get away from it all. Gas was cheap and magical roadside attractions beckoned you to "get your kicks on Route 66."

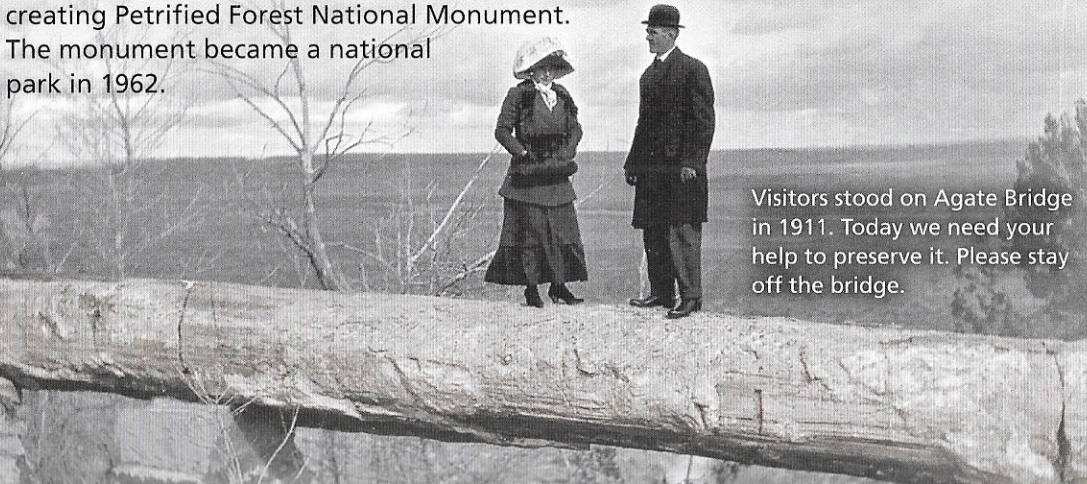
In 1857 the United States government hired E. F. Beale to build a wagon road from Fort Defiance, New Mexico, to the Colorado River. Beale experimented in using a camel corps to build the road.



CCC Camp near Puerco River, 1936

PRESERVING THE FOREST By the late 1800s interest in petrified wood was threatening this landscape. In 1895 the Arizona Territorial legislature petitioned Congress to protect this valuable scientific and cultural treasure. In 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt signed legislation creating Petrified Forest National Monument. The monument became a national park in 1962.

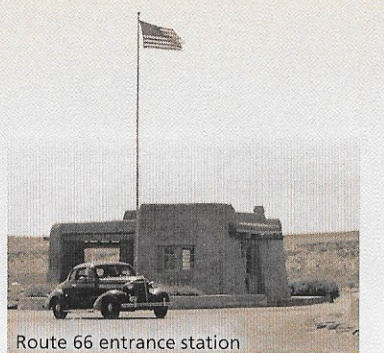
From 1934 to 1941 the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) helped improve the park by building roads, trails, bridges, the Rainbow Forest Museum, and the Painted Desert Inn.



Visitors stood on Agate Bridge in 1911. Today we need your help to preserve it. Please stay off the bridge.



Adamana, 1890s



Route 66 entrance station

In 1956 the faster and more direct interstate highway system brought an end to the romance of travel along Route 66. The road was decommissioned in 1985. Petrified Forest is the only national park that preserves a section of this road, a true American experience.



Painted Desert Tower, February 1957

Welcome to Petrified Forest National Park

Trails Stay on designated trails when in developed hiking areas. The park offers a variety of off trail and back-country hiking. Information is found on the park website and at the park.

Accessibility We strive to make our facilities, services, and programs accessible to all. For information go to a visitor center, ask a ranger, call, or check our website.

Picnicking and Camping Picnic shelters are located at Chinde Point, Rainbow Forest, and Painted Desert Visitor Center. There are no campgrounds in the park. Permits are required for backcountry wilderness camping. Free permits available at Painted Desert Visitor Center and Rainbow Forest Museum.

Wilderness Congress has protected some 52,000 acres of Petrified Forest National Park under the 1964 Wilderness Act. Preserving wilderness shows restraint and humility, and benefits generations to come. Wilderness designation protects forever the land's wilderness character, natural conditions, opportunities for solitude, and scientific, historical, and educational values.

Wilderness Hiking and Camping Overnight hiking/camping in wilderness requires a free permit, obtained at Painted Desert Visitor Center, Rainbow Forest Museum, or Painted Desert Inn. **Water** is not available in the backcountry; carry one gallon per person per day. There are no designated campsites. No permit is required for day use.

Protect Petrified Wood Please help us preserve the archeological and geologic features at Petrified Forest. Do not disturb artifacts, rocks, or minerals. **Federal law prohibits removal of any natural or cultural objects from the national park.**

Safety and Regulations Do not climb on petrified logs. • Be aware of symptoms of high altitude sickness: nausea, dizziness, headache, rapid heartbeat, and shortness of breath. Keep hydrated. • Wear sunglasses with UV protection, hat, and sunscreen. • Wild animals can carry diseases including rabies, hanta virus, and plague. Do not handle or allow your pets near any live or dead animals. Avoid nests and burrows. • Do not stop in

roadway. • Pets must be kept on a leash and are not allowed in buildings. Clean up after your animals and please, don't leave pets in a closed vehicle. • Bicycles and motorized vehicles are permitted only on paved roads. • Federal law prohibits collecting petrified wood, fossils, rocks, plants, animals, and archeological objects. • For firearms regulations, check the park website or ask a ranger.

Emergencies
Call 928-524-9726 or 911.

More Information
Petrified Forest National Park
PO Box 2217
Petrified Forest, AZ 86028
www.nps.gov/pefo
928-524-6228

Petrified Forest National Park is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about national parks and National Park Service programs in America's communities, visit www.nps.gov.

National Park Foundation.
Join the park community:
www.nationalparks.org

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Printed on recycled paper.

Save Time and Gas Westbound
I-40 exit 311 to north entrance, drive south in park to US 180, west to Holbrook and I-40.

Reminiscent of a landscape from another world, nature's stark beauty and whimsical artistry can be found throughout Petrified Forest National Park. Follow the 28-mile park road for an amazing journey.

Painted Desert Visitor Center has information, a park film, historic architecture, a bookstore, a gift shop, food, gas, and restrooms.

Chinde Point offers restrooms and picnic area.

Blue Mesa features a 3.5-mile loop road drive. A steep one-mile trail enters the vibrant badlands with equally colorful petrified wood.

Painted Desert Inn, a National Historic Landmark, offers exhibits on the building's rich 20th-century history.

Route 66 Alignment features a 1932 Studebaker where historic Route 66 once cut through the park.

Agate Bridge features sweeping views and a 110-foot long petrified log bridge.

Painted Desert Overlooks showcase spectacular views of the Painted Desert.

Puerco Pueblo highlights ancestral Puebloan homes, occupied 1250-1380 CE, and petroglyphs along a 0.3-mile loop trail.

Jasper Forest has a panoramic view of an area with a high concentration of petrified wood.

Tawa Point is the trailhead for the Painted Desert Rim Trail, a one-mile roundtrip walk through pinyon-juniper shrubland atop volcanic rock. Enjoy excellent views and learn what makes the park special.

Newspaper Rock displays over 650 petroglyphs, some over 2,000 years old.

Crystal Forest is a paved 0.75-mile loop trail in a badlands landscape with numerous intact colorful petrified logs.

Save Time and Gas Eastbound
I-40 exit 285 to US 180 east from Holbrook to south entrance, drive north in park to I-40.

Rainbow Forest Museum offers information, a park film, fossil exhibits and skeletons, bookstore, trail access, and restrooms.

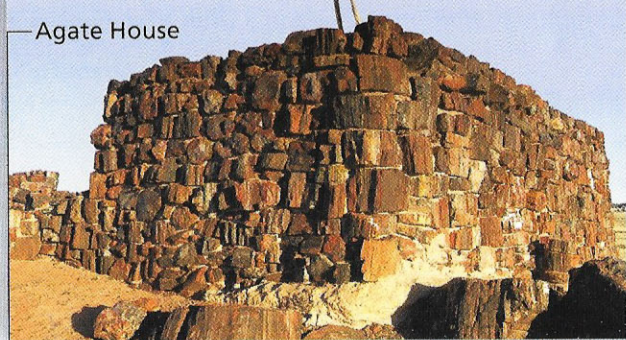
Long Logs Trail*
1.6-mile loop
Site of a Triassic log jam, this area has a tangle of logs, some over 180 feet long.

Giant Logs Trail
0.4-mile loop
See some of the largest petrified logs in the park, including "Old Faithful" which is almost 10 feet across its base.

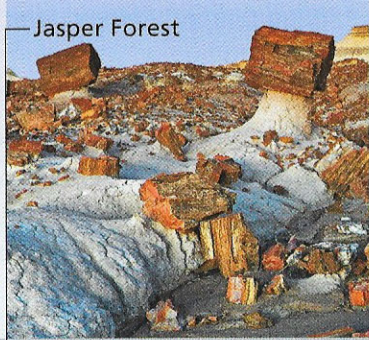
Agate House Trail*
2-mile round trip
Walk to a seven-room pueblo reconstructed of petrified wood.

*These trails combined total a 2.6-mile hike.

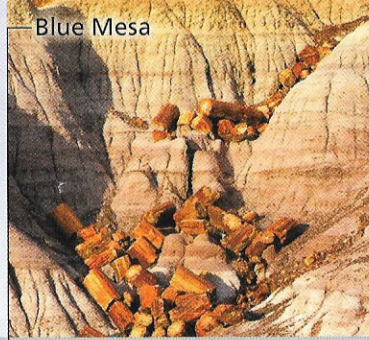
A Landscape Through Time



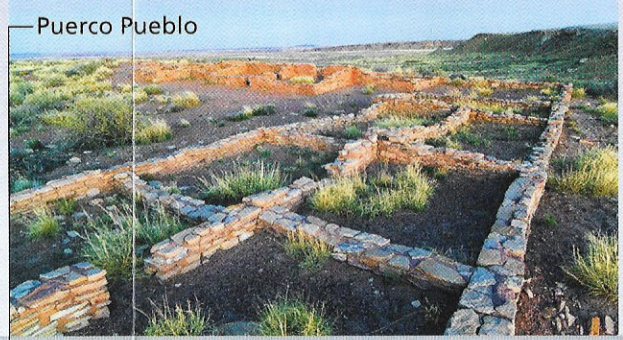
Agate House



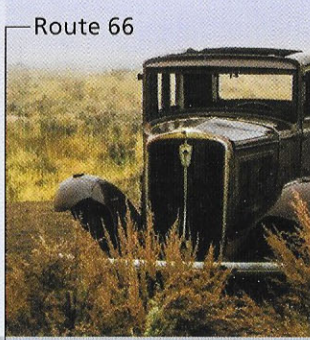
Jasper Forest



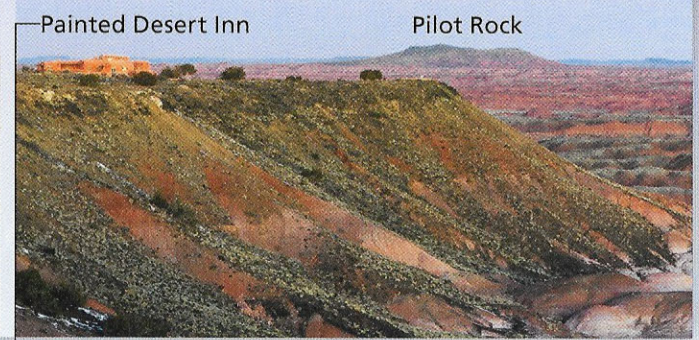
Blue Mesa



Puerco Pueblo



Route 66



Painted Desert Inn

Pilot Rock

Rainbow Forest Museum

Puerco River

Painted Desert Visitor Center

Bidahochi

Owl Rock

Petrified Forest

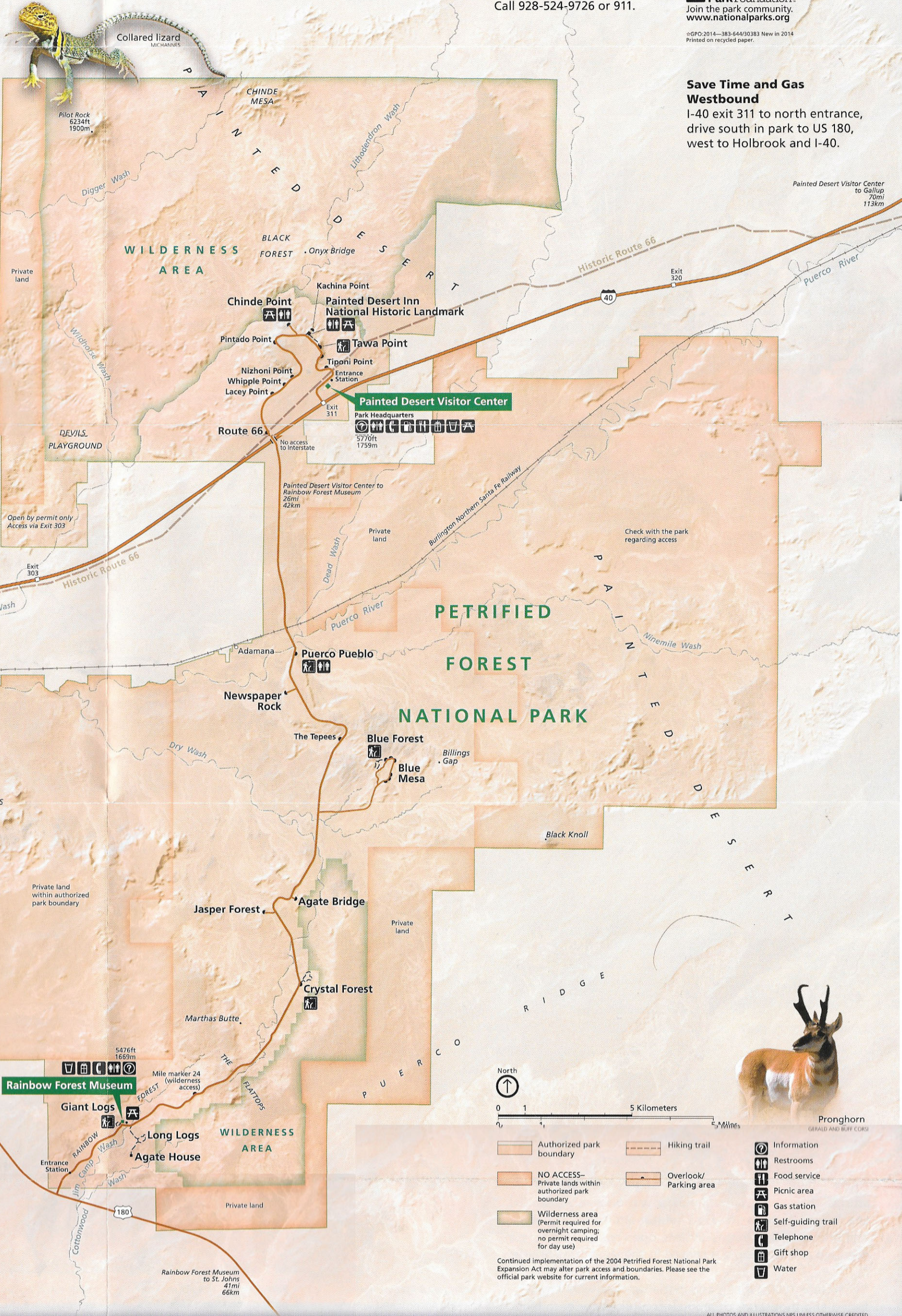
Sonsela

Blue Mesa
Mesa Redondo

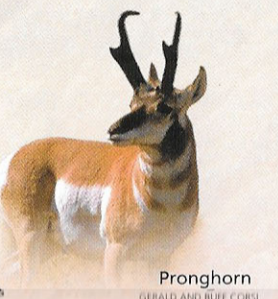
The Chinle Formation Characterized by colorful bands of sedimentary rock, this formation was deposited between 227 and 205 million years ago by a northwest flowing river system. Based on rock type, it is divided into five members: Mesa Redondo, Blue Mesa, Sonsela, Petrified Forest, and Owl Rock. These members reveal a transition from moist to arid environments.

Bidahochi Formation Sixteen to four million years ago, lake sediments were deposited on top of the older, eroding Chinle Formation across much of northern Arizona. Volcanic eruptions placed basalt layers above the lake beds, preserving them. Further erosion of the Chinle Formation has left the basalt as high points from which you can enjoy spectacular views of the Painted Desert.

Moenkopi Formation and older Paleozoic and Precambrian rocks.
This layer is not part of the Chinle Formation.



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Pronghorn