



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

News Release

BLM Las Cruces District, NM

For Additional Information

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Public invited to celebrate Prehistoric Trackways 10th Anniversary

LAS CRUCES, N.M. – On March 30, the Bureau of Land Management will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Prehistoric Trackways National Monument. Along with the Friends of the Organ Mountains, the Las Cruces Museum of Nature and Science, the Southern New Mexico Trail Alliance and the Las Cruces Four Wheel Drive Club, the BLM invites the public to come to the Monument and participate in a morning-filled with outdoor activities that highlight the paleontological and recreational resources of the Monument. Festivities will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude early afternoon.

A special opening program, with cake and refreshments, will kick off the morning activities, including several hikes, off-road trail rides, a trail run and bike ride, as well as children's activities where they can earn their Fossil and Geology Junior Ranger badges.

The BLM will have a fossil show highlighting many of the Early Permian trace fossils found in the Monument. In addition, the Las Cruces Museum will feature their Trackways Traveling Trunk, which includes some museum specimens, as well as fossil and mineral identification kits for some hands-on activities.

Starting at 10 a.m., the Southern New Mexico Trail Alliance will conduct a trail run and bike ride on Shane's Super Trail (SST), which will challenge participants for 5.3 miles.

In addition, the BLM will offer two Monument hikes, starting at 10:30 a.m. The first hike, 1.7 miles and moderately difficult, will take visitors to the Community Pit, which is normally closed to visitors. The second hike will lead a maximum of 30 visitors to Branson Canyon, a beautiful, but often unseen portion of the Monument. While most of this hike is within a natural arroyo, the hike is 3.4 miles and considered physically strenuous due to a 12-foot dry waterfall that must be climbed. Signup for this hike will be on a first come basis. Participants on both hikes will learn about the Monument's unique geology and paleontology and learn why the Monument is considered by the scientific community to be one of the best places in the world to study Early Permian trace fossils.

Also joining the celebration will be the Las Cruces Four Wheel Drive Club. Members will have several vehicles on site to offer rides to the public on designated off-road trails in the Monument, throughout the morning. These rugged vehicles can reach areas normal vehicles cannot, giving the public a different perspective of the Monument's outstanding landscape.

The Monument is located off Picacho Avenue and U.S. Highway 70, at the stop light with Shalem Colony Trail. At approximately 5.5 miles north on Shalem Colony Trail, the public will reach a county road called Rocky Acres Trail and turn west for ¼ mile to a dirt road called Permian Acres. The meeting place for all events will be at the second parking lot from the Monument entrance.

Participants for these events are asked to dress appropriately and to remember their outdoor essentials – water, snacks, appropriate footwear, hat, sunglasses and sunscreen. For information on the events, the public can contact Colin Dunn (BLM) at 575-525-4454 or message the BLM Las Cruces District on Facebook.

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The agency's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Diverse activities authorized on these lands generated \$96 billion in sales of goods and services throughout the American economy in fiscal year 2017. These activities supported more than 468,000 jobs.