



Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds eNewsletter

#16—April 25, 2013

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\$15,000 Grant Award

Udall Congratulates Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument on \$15,000 Grant Award

Mark Udall, the chairman of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on National Parks, congratulated the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument on its receipt of a \$15,000 grant from the National Parks Foundation. Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument in Teller County will use the funds to provide opportunities for military families to engage in our national parks and public lands. The foundation's award-winning "Post to Parks" outreach program includes a week-long youth mentoring and trail crew program, a weekend getaway for families of fallen soldiers and a weekend journalism workshop for National Guard youth.

"Our national parks provide more than unparalleled opportunities for hiking, mountaineering and rafting; they also are some of the best places to connect families and future generations with our great outdoors and to teach them about our unique culture and history," **Udall said**. "This grant will help connect veterans and military families from around our state to a critical part of our Colorado way of life and the stunning prehistoric fossil deposits in the Florissant Fossil Beds."

"One of the great things about our national parks is that every American can relate to these treasured places if given the chance to experience them," **said Jonathan Jarvis**, the director of the National Park Service. "It's our mission to engage visitors from all backgrounds in the diverse stories that we tell in our national parks. Thanks to the support of the National Park Foundation, we can propel that outreach, and engage new audiences that would otherwise never have the opportunity to experience a national park."



Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument is one of 34 national parks across the country receiving these grants as part of the [National Parks Foundation's America's Best Idea program](#), which connects diverse, underserved and under-engaged populations throughout the United

USfalcon Extends Support to the Friends and the Colorado Springs Community

Tom Decot, President of USfalcon Inc presents \$5,000 to Eric Bailey, President of the Friends of Florissant Fossil Beds

Responding to an urgent request from The Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds organization, USfalcon Inc on April 5th donated \$5,000 to the Friends organization to provide seed money for their summer fund raising activities. The Friends of Florissant Fossil Beds is a non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to support the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. The National Park Service has been hit with budget cuts totaling



more than \$100 million, with the impact being felt in every park. Fundraising support from corporations like USfalcon, the public, and organizations like the Friends will be critical to maintain park services this year and in the future.

Established by Congress in 1969, the Florissant Fossil Beds is a 6,000 acre national monument located south of Florissant, Colorado. At 8600 ft elevation, the park is a local and destination favorite. People from around the U.S. and foreign countries seeking to escape summer heat come to enjoy the monument grounds and to see firsthand the work of paleontologists researching Colorado's environment of 34 million years ago through the fossilized remains of insects and plants. Prominently displayed are the stumps of giant redwood trees, fossilized after being buried by a massive mudflow that came from a volcano that was located in the area of modern day Guffey, Colorado.



Among the Friends top priorities is Florissant's Post to Parks Program. Post to Parks is an award winning outreach program that helps connect the military community with our national parks. The park has provided trips for the Warrior Transition Unit at Fort Carson, the Fallen

Heroes Center, and youth centers at Peterson and Schriever Air Force Bases. Numerous other Friends activities support paleontology research, trail maintenance, educational for the public and public school teacher continuing education credits, and youth group seminars outings.

USfalcon Inc provides integrated technology solutions to U.S. government clients world-wide in the National Defense, National Security and National Intelligence markets. In 2011 USfalcon expanded to include Air Force mission operations and Space control operations with the Department of Defense.

Chautauqua on the Park History

On Sunday, April 14th, 2013, the Pikes Peak Historical Society and the Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds sponsored a presentation by Dr. Herb Meyer at the Florissant Library. The program was on the new book co-authored by Dr. Herb Meyer and Dr. Estella Leopold, daughter of Aldo Leopold entitled "SAVED IN TIME: The Fight to Establish Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument."

The exciting excerpt (quoted below) is from that book that details the story of the unsung heroes of the establishment of the Florissant Fossil Beds NM. It exposes the villains as the story unfolds with all of its many twists, turns and insults. Dr. Meyer also recounts the exciting fossil discoveries by paleontologists, homesteaders and landowners. One review states the "book reads like a mystery thriller."



"July 30, 1969, Florissant, CO, women and children stand in



front of the bulldozers, determined to save the 34 million year old fossils. One child (Holly Buchan) remembers"...standing and staring at them. They were big and fierce like dinosaurs. I heard my mom (behind me) saying something like "just stand still. Don't move honey. They won't hurt you." I felt like I was all alone there to facedown/stop the bulldozers from breaking all the fossils."

Dr. Meyer is the paleontologist for the Florissant Fossil Beds NM. He is also Adjunct Curator, University of Colorado at Boulder and Research Associate for the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Dr. Meyer is also the author of the highly acclaimed book, "The Fossils of Florissant" (Smithsonian Institution, 2003).

The Friends of the Fossil Beds wish to thank Pikes Peak Historical Society for the opportunity to co-host this event. Dr. Meyer did an outstanding job of "telling the story." For members who wish to make a donation for the book which has been autographed by both authors, please call Sally McCracken at 687-9204.

Save the Date

Don't forget to mark your calendars for the "opening celebration" of the new visitor center at the Florissant Fossil Beds NM. The Ribbon cutting will be on Friday, June, 14, 2013. Saturday and Sunday are Fee Free days for the community with events to be held from 10 AM to 3 PM including talks by 6 dignitaries who were important to the founding of the Monument and study of the fossils, green tours, ranger guided hikes, Hornbek homestead interpretation and a Jr. Ranger concert at 12 noon, Saturday only. Any Friends' member who would be able to help with the 3 days, please contact the Monument at 748-3253 and ask for the Friends extension to leave a message. Thank you so much for your willingness to help man the Friends table during the weekend.



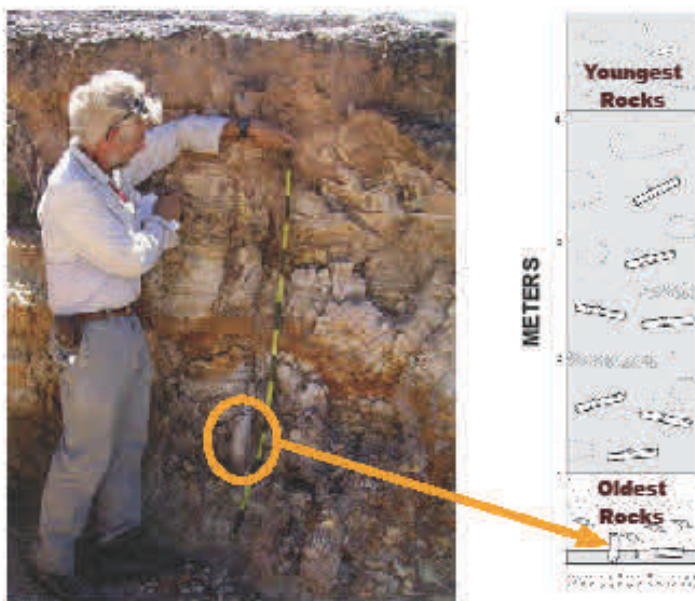


Geologic Time

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Timing of Events

The trees of The Petrified Forest Piedra Chamana lived 39 million years ago. In geology, this time corresponds to the Eocene epoch of the Cenozoic era. The Cenozoic encompasses all time since the Mesozoic (also known as the "Age of the Dinosaurs"), which ended approximately 65 million years ago. The fossils at Sexi date to a time tens of millions of years before the first humans existed on Earth!



This stratigraphic column (right) depicts the vertical sequence of rock layers near Sexi, which are part of the Huambos Formation. Because the oldest rocks were deposited first, they are positioned at the bottom of the column. In the adjacent photograph, Dr. William McIntosh examines a tree fossilized in growth ("in situ") position.

ERA	PERIOD	EPOCH	AGE Millions of Years	
Cenozoic	Quaternary	Holocene	Present	
		Pleistocene	0.0117	
	Tertiary	Neogene	Pliocene	2.588
			Miocene	5.332
		Paleogene	Oligocene	23.03
			Eocene*	33.9
				39.4 Age of Petrified Forest
				55.8
				65.5

Subdivisions of the Cenozoic era. The rocks at Sexi are 39 million years old, dating them to the Eocene epoch¹.

Stratigraphy

Geologists study prehistoric events by examining features (e.g. rocks and fossils) of the geologic record. The rock layers, or stratigraphy, are illustrated as a stratigraphic column that reveals the sequence of events contributing to the fossilization of the ancient forest.



The Age Puzzle

Analysis of argon isotopes in plagioclase, a mineral that formed in the rocks during a volcanic eruption, produced the middle Eocene age of 39.4 million years.

Read more about the volcanic rock layers at Sexi.

¹ U.S. Geological Survey Geologic Names Committee, 2010, Divisions of geologic time—major chronostratigraphic and geochronologic units: U.S. Geological Survey Fact Sheet 2010-3059, 2 p.