



# Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument



**Location:** Las Vegas, Nevada

**Establishment Legislation:** S. 974/Harry Reid and H.R. 2015/Steven Horsford  
(Co-sponsored by all members of Nevada's congressional delegation)

**Background:** Evidence lies on land 30 minutes north of the Las Vegas Strip, where prides of Ice Age lions and herds of bison once mingled with gargantuan Columbian mammoths, dire wolves, and saber tooth cats. For nearly a quarter-million years—until around 7,000 years ago—this arid desert wash was a lush wetland, home to some of the most massive and unusual species ever to walk the continent. Dense with fossils and scientific data, Tule Springs tells the story of survival, adaptation, evolution, and extinction. It is a place where scientists from around the world are expected to answer long-debated questions about a collection of creatures that simply disappeared. Establishing the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument will help scientists, students, and the public learn more about the fascinating history hidden under these desert lands, and preserves this landscape for generations to come.

## **NPCA Support:**

- In early 2008, armed with a report from the National Park Service that deemed Tule Springs worthy of inclusion in the national park system, NPCA began building a robust coalition of support.
- By November 2008, NPCA secured unanimous support from the Clark County Commission, mayors and councilmembers of the Cities of Las Vegas and North Las Vegas, and tribal leaders of the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe. All four entities passed unanimous resolutions endorsing national park status for Tule Springs
- NPCA worked with city and county leaders and the U.S. Air Force to establish a footprint of 22,650 acres for the national monument. The legislation protects an important military air corridor above the fossil beds. Several thousand acres in this area had been slated for residential and business development; major streets had been mapped and named.
- Nevada's Governor and nearly the entire Nevada Assembly have endorsed making Tule Springs a national monument managed by the National Park Service.

**Learn more:** <http://bit.ly/1Adjv95> and <http://parkadvocate.org/where-the-wild-things-were-the-coolest-critters-of-tule-springs-nevada/>

**Lynn Davis, Senior Nevada Program Manager for the National Parks Conservation Association**

“The National Parks Conservation Association stands with an unparalleled coalition of diverse supporters in welcoming Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument as a ‘backyard national park’ to southern Nevada. With its treasure trove of fossils – Columbian mammoths, dire wolves, saber tooth cats, and Ice Age creatures most commonly found in our history and science books – Tule Springs holds fascination and intrigue for the kid in all of us. As an urban national park, Tule Springs stands to enhance southern Nevada’s overall quality of life by creating new educational program opportunities for all ages as well as provide opportunity for Las Vegas’ 40 million annual visitors to see another side of this international destination – where the wild things *were*. The National Parks Conservation Association thanks Senators Reid and Heller and Representatives Horsford, Amodei, Heck, and Titus for their leadership in making this national park vision a reality.”

**Alan O’Neill, former National Park Service Superintendent and Founder of the Outside Las Vegas Foundation**

“I have been involved in conservation work professionally for over 48 years and can’t recall a better example of a grass roots effort of community building to support a new unit of the National Park System. What started out as an effort of a few woman grew into a diverse coalition involving the environmental, business, education, governmental, Native American, military, and political communities. It is a remarkable example of what is good about America and what can be done when people work together positively towards the betterment of their community.”

**Jill DeStefano, President, Protectors of Tule Springs**

“After eight years of working to educate the public and collaborating with diverse groups in the Las Vegas Valley, we are celebrating the designation of the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument. We look forward to working with the National Park Service to further public education and protect the fossil resources.”

**Steve Rowland, Professor of Geology, University of Nevada, Las Vegas**

"Many people think that the history of Las Vegas begins with Bugsy Siegel. This national monument will allow Las Vegas and tourists to see that Las Vegas has a very deep history. Giant animals that became extinct at the end of the Ice Age will come to life in the imaginations of visitors. It's a fantastic opportunity for promoting science education, research, and ecotourism."

**Josh Bonde, Paleontologist, University of Nevada, Las Vegas**

“Tule Springs is the most prolific Ice Age fossil bearing region I am aware of in the world. The fossils are exposed over a vast area and span over 200 thousand years of Earth history, a period which covers the past two Ice Ages. The proximity of these beds to Las Vegas and North Las Vegas provides for exciting possibilities of STEM educational outreach across southern Nevada. Imagine taking a field trip as an elementary school student to go see a paleontology dig and then being back in class for your next class period, we can do that with the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument.”

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