

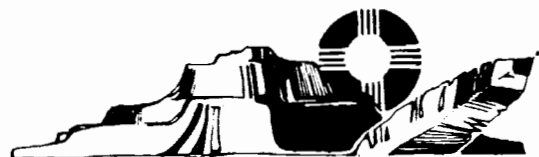
For further information on the Bisti/De-Na-Zin Wilderness and the Farmington area contact



# Bisti/ De-Na-Zin Wilderness

**Bureau of Land Management**  
1235 La Plata Hwy. Suite A  
Farmington, NM 87401  
505-599-8900

Bureau of Land Management  
Wilderness Area  
Northwest New Mexico



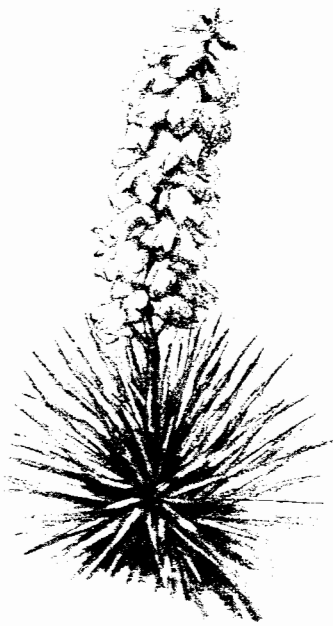
## FARMINGTON

CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

203 W. Main St.  
Farmington, NM 87401



*Illustrations by Jane Wilson*



### **Would you expect to find**

a duck-billed dinosaur in the desert? The barren and seemingly lifeless landscape found today is vastly different than the swampy lush vegetation in which huge dinosaurs roamed millions of years ago.

This 45,000 acre area is known as the Bisti/De-Na-Zin Wilderness. In late 1996, Congress approved linking the former Bisti and De-Na-Zin Wilderness Areas. Translated from the Navajo language, Bisti means "a large area of shale hills" and is commonly pronounced (Bis-tie). De-Na-Zin (Deh-nah-zin) takes its name from the Navajo words for "cranes." Petroglyphs of cranes have been found just south of the Wilderness.

### **During the Late Cretaceous period**

(approximately 80-65 million years ago), this region was the home of many reptiles, large dinosaurs and some very small primitive mammals. This geologic time period is of great importance because it preserves the record of changes in plant and animal life at the end of the Age of Dinosaurs.

As the inland seas retreated to the northeast, the coastal swamps formed where today you see barren badlands. Within the sediments left behind lie the buried remains of the rich animal life that lived here: bones of fish, turtles, lizards, mammals and dinosaurs, who, at their zenith, dominated the other life forms.

Federal law prohibits the collection of fossils and petrified wood without authorization. Collection of petrified wood and other fossil material interferes with scientific research and eliminates the opportunity for others to view and to photograph these unusual wilderness features.

## **Wilderness Management**

The federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages the Bisti/De-Na-Zin Wilderness to protect the area's naturalness, special features, and opportunities for solitude and primitive types of recreation. All Wildernesses must be used and managed in ways that will leave them unimpaired for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

No permit is required to visit the Bisti/De-Na-Zin Wilderness and to engage in primitive types of recreation, but if there are more than eight (8) people in your group, please contact the BLM office in advance. Permits are required for uses such as grazing, scientific research, and commercial guiding.

### **Today,**

the Bisti/De-Na-Zin Wilderness is a remote desolate area of steeply eroded badlands which offers some of the most unusual scenery found in the Four Corners region. Time and the natural elements have etched a fantasy world of strange rock formations and fossils. It is an ever-changing environment that offers the visitor a remote wilderness experience.

The two major geological formations found in the wilderness are the Fruitland Formation and the Kirtland Shale. The Fruitland Formation makes up most of what the visitor will see while in the badlands and contains interbedded sandstone, shale, mudstone, coal, and silt. The weathering of the sandstone forms the many spires and hoodoos (sculpted rock) found throughout the area. The Kirtland Shale contains rock of various colors and dominates the eastern part of the Wilderness. This shale caps the mushroom shaped landforms of the area.

The red hills are a result of clay soils being baked by coal fires while buried millions of years ago. The billowy mounds you see, made-up of a crumbling layer of caked soil, are the product of rapidly eroded silts and clays.



## What to do:

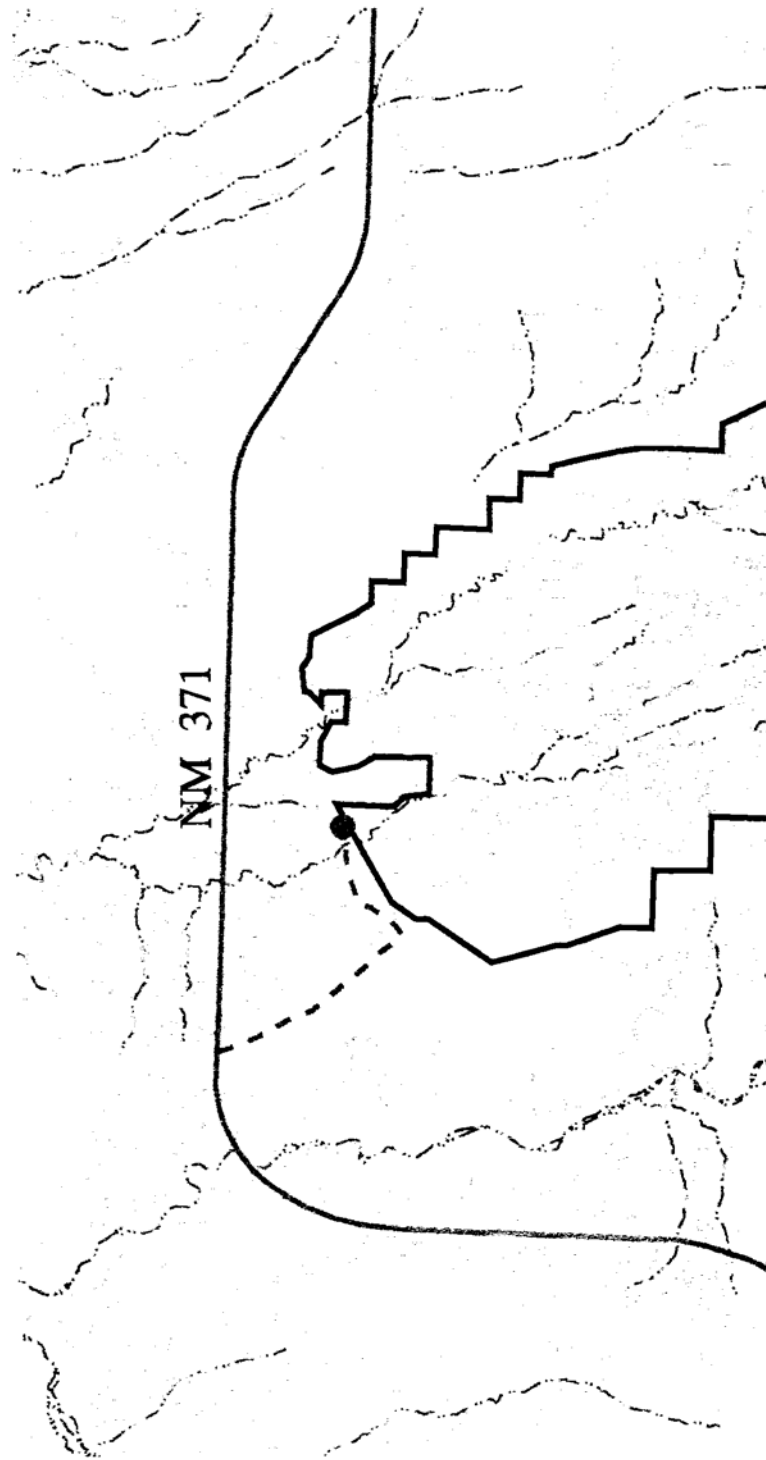
- Hike for an hour . . . or a day
- Take pictures
- Ride a horse
- Backpack overnight
- Enjoy the solitude
- Take plenty of water
- Enjoy a full moon hike

## What not to do:

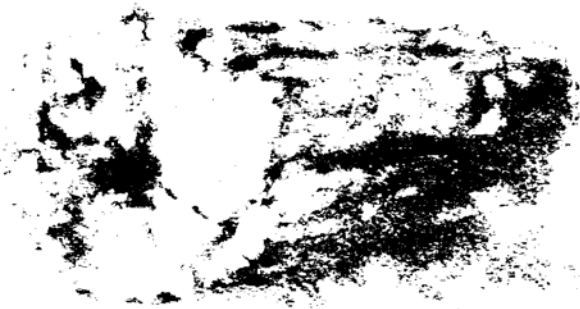
- Drive a motor vehicle
- Ride a mountain bike
- Light a campfire or any type of fire
- Collect fossils or petrified wood
- Climb on delicate geologic features
- Travel in a group of more than eight (8) people

## Public Access

The Bisti/De-Na-Zin Wilderness is about 30 miles (as the raven flies) south of Farmington, New Mexico. To reach the Bisti access off State Highway 371, go 36 1/2 miles from the San Juan River crossing to a left turn on Road 7297 and then follow a gravel road for 2 miles to the Bisti parking lot. This turn is about 46 miles north of Crownpoint, New Mexico, just past the crest of the hill after crossing the Don Gleason Bridge over De-Na-Zin Wash. The De-Na-Zin parking lot and access is off County Road 7500, which connects Highway 550 (at the Huerfano Trading Post) with State Route 371, 8 miles south of the Bisti access exit. It is important to note that County Road 7500 can become impassible in bad weather.

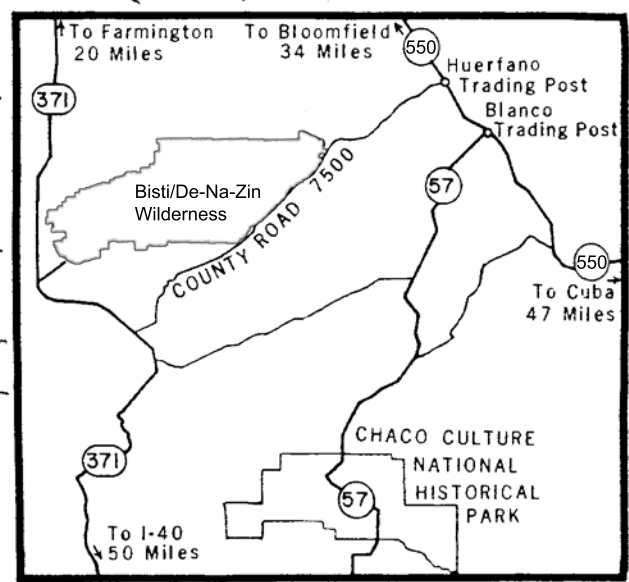
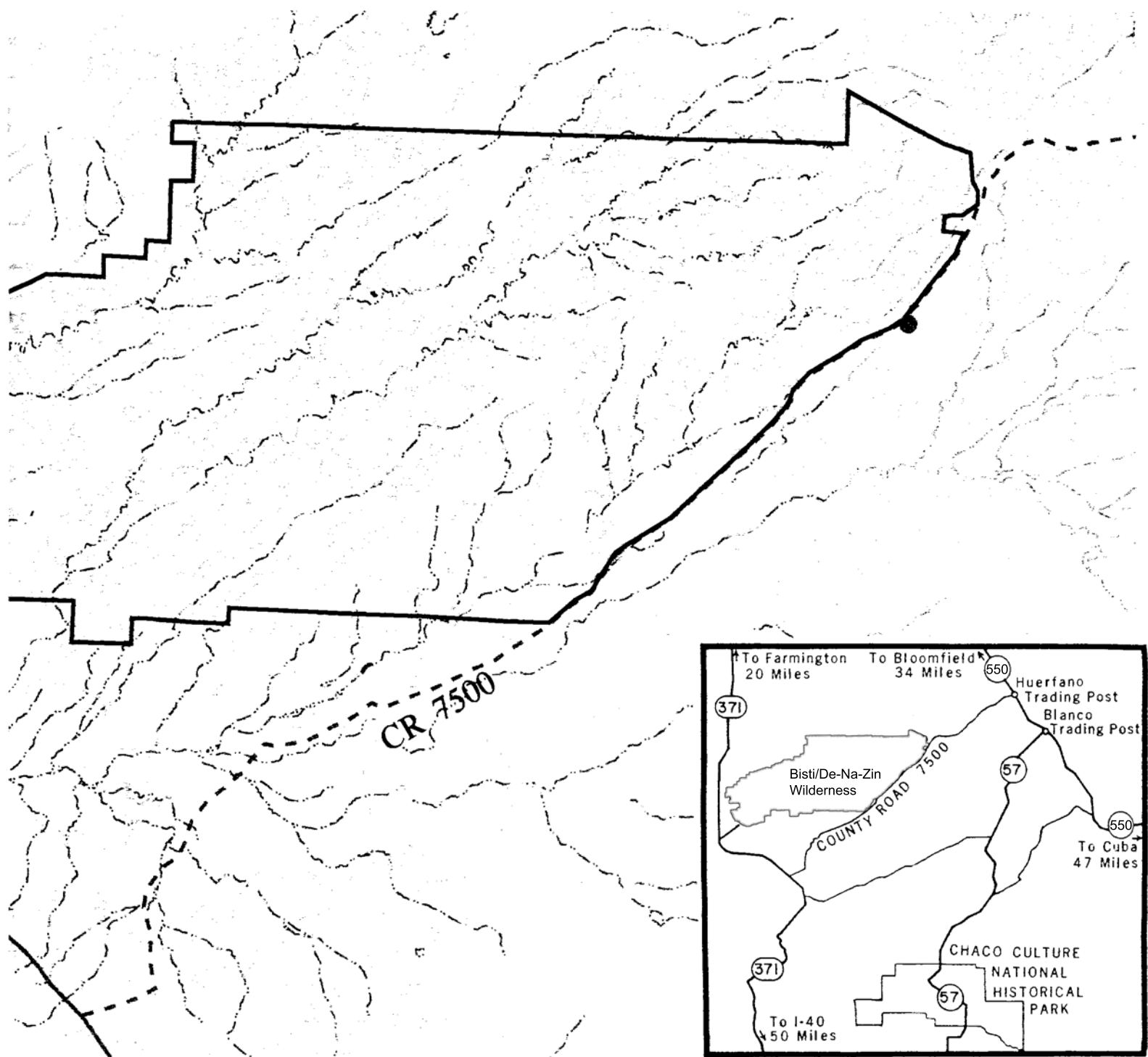






1 0 1 2 3 4 Miles



## Enjoy the Wilderness

The Bisti/De-Na-Zin Wilderness is open year round. There is a primitive recreation experience and emphasizes solitude. There is a fairly easy hike. In the De-Na-Zin, hiking requires a little snow throughout the Bisti portion each year, while the De-Na-Zin



-  Parking
-  Wilderness boundary
-  Dirt road
-  Paved road



There are no water sources in the wilderness, nor are there designated trails. BLM's management of the Bisti/De-Na-Zin maximizes wild adventure for the visitor. In the Bisti, the visitor can follow the relatively flat areas surrounding the washes, making for a more enjoyable climbing, and finding your way back to the starting point is somewhat more difficult. About 10,000 visitors wander the wilderness each year, but it is visited by perhaps 1,000. Because of the climate, most of the visits occur in the late spring/early summer and in the fall.