



Chimney Rock National Monument

U.S. Forest Service



Chimney Rock is one of the most recognized archaeoastronomical resources in North America. Every 18 years, the Great House Pueblo is perfectly positioned to frame the rising moon between Chimney Rock's twin spires, drawing worldwide visitors.

Facts

- Part of the San Juan National Forest, the impressive site truly is an architectural wonder. Chimney Rock was home to the Ancestral Pueblo People about 1,000 years ago and is culturally significant for Native American tribes.
- The dramatic Great House Pueblo likely was used as an observatory for the annual summer solstice.
- The national monument designation provides the opportunity to tell the story of the Ancestral Pueblo People. Today, their descendants return to this important place of cultural continuity for spiritual and traditional purposes.
- The site is managed by the U.S. Forest Service in partnership with the nonprofit Chimney Rock Interpretive Association Inc.

Background and Significance

- In southwest Colorado, Chimney Rock incorporates spiritual, historic, and scientific resources of great value and significance.
- The site is surrounded by the Southern Ute Indian Reservation and holds great significance for the Native American tribes of southwestern Colorado and neighboring states.
- Chimney Rock National Monument has widespread, bi-partisan support from the Colorado congressional delegation and among the tribal, business, tourism, conservation, academic, and cultural preservation communities.



Photo by Terry Sloan/Southwest Native Cultures

An Eagle dance is performed during one of many special events staged at Chimney Rock

Other U.S. Forest Service-managed monuments:

- Admiralty Island National Monument, Alaska
- Misty Fiords National Monument, Alaska
- Mount St. Helens National Monument, Washington
- Newberry National Volcanic Monument, Oregon
- Giant Sequoia National Monument, California
- Santa Rosa & San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, California

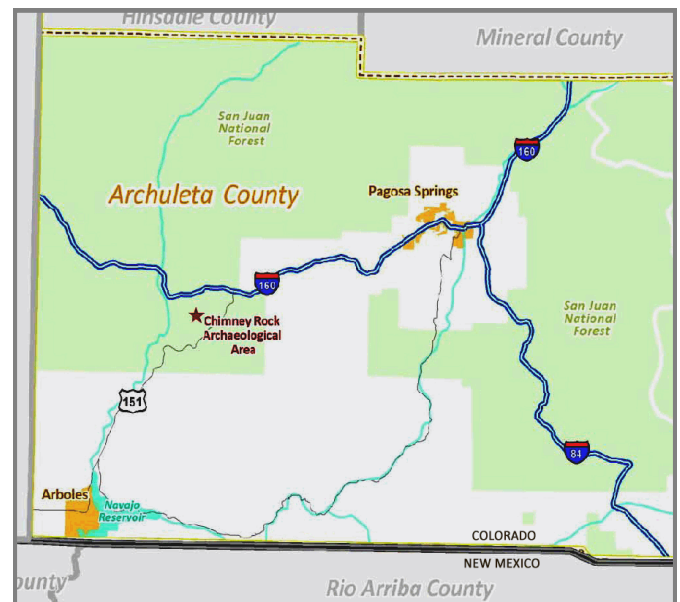


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Recreation and Education

- Chimney Rock Interpretive Association offers guided and self-guided tours and hosts special events, including pottery workshops, night sky programs, and Native American cultural gatherings.
- Annual visitation was 12,000 prior to designation. As a national monument, that number is expected to significantly increase.
- Chimney Rock is an active archeological site that focuses on preservation and protection, including site stabilization on this nonrenewable cultural resource.
- The dramatic geology of the monument stands in stark contrast to the majestic Ponderosa Pine forest and rolling savannah-like plains along the valley floor.
- The Piedra River cuts along the edge of Peterson Mesa in the northern portion of the monument. Steep cliffs and expanses of exposed sandstone and shale are evidence of the geologic era.
- Migratory mule deer and elk herds pass through the area each fall and spring as they have for thousands of years.
- A management plan for the monument will be developed to provide for the protection and interpretation of scientific and historic objects in the monument and for continued tribal and public access.



Source: BBC Consulting

Chimney Rock National Monument covers 4,726 acres between Pagosa Springs and Durango in southwestern Colorado.

