



BLM NEWS RELEASE

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BLM Celebrates National Fossil Day

The Bureau of Land Management is partnering with the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and other Federal and State agencies, museums, and organizations to hold the first annual National Fossil Day on October 13, 2010. A number of events are scheduled to mark the day, which occurs this year during Earth Science Week.

“National Fossil Day is important because it helps promote public awareness about the importance of paleontological resources on the National System of Public Lands,” said Director Bob Abbey. “A better understanding of our Nation’s heritage will foster a commitment to stewardship of these fascinating resources and an appreciation of their scientific and educational value.”

In fact, last month paleontologists with BLM-Utah announced the discovery of two new species of horned dinosaurs in Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM). The monument encompasses 1.9 million acres of high-desert terrain in south-central Utah and is one of the nation's last great, largely unexplored dinosaur boneyards. The bigger of the two new dinosaurs, with a skull 2.3 meters (about 7 feet) long, is *Utahceratops gettyi* (U-tah-SARA-tops get-EE-i). In addition to a large horn over the nose, *Utahceratops* has short and blunt eye horns that project strongly to the side rather than upward, much more like the horns of modern bison than those of *Triceratops* or other ceratopsians. Second of the new species is *Kosmoceratops richardsoni* (KOZ-mo-SARA-tops RICH-ard-SON-i). *Kosmoceratops* also has sideways oriented eye horns, although much longer and more pointed than in *Utahceratops*. In all, *Kosmoceratops* possesses a total of 15 horns—one over the nose, one atop each eye, one at the tip of each cheek bone, and ten across the rear margin of the bony frill, making it the most ornate-headed dinosaur known.

These discoveries are the result of a continuing collaboration between the Utah Museum of Natural History and the BLM. During the past decade, crews from the BLM and several partner institutions (e.g., the Utah Geologic Survey, the Raymond Alf Museum of Paleontology, and the University of Utah) have unearthed a new assemblage of more than a dozen dinosaurs in GSENM. Most remarkable of all is that virtually every identifiable dinosaur variety found in GSENM is new to science.

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For more information on discovering dinosaurs across the country or events scheduled for National Fossil Day, visit the BLM's web sites at:

http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/CRM/national_fossil_day.print.html

http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/prog/more/cultural/Paleontology/paleontology_announcements/new_dinosaurs_09_22.html

as well as the National Park Service web site at

<http://www.nature.nps.gov/geology/nationalfossilday/index.cfm>

The BLM manages more land – more than 245 million acres – than any other Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1 billion, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

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