

Protectors of Tule Springs

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PROTECTORS OF TULE SPRINGS NEWS RELEASE

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Editor's Note: Additional photos can be found on Dropbox [here](#).

National Park Service hosts CCSD students, staff, families for cleanup day at Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument *Event kicks off the 2017 Mammoth Penny Push Campaign*

LAS VEGAS – By 9 a.m. March 4, almost 50 Clark County School District (CCSD) students, staff and their families gathered at the edge of the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument at the corner of Aliante Road and Horse Drive in North Las Vegas. After a safety briefing, the volunteers were provided with bright red buckets and then led into a section of the monument to help with a cleanup effort, one of many group cleanups planned for the spring. Over a two-hour period, the group had picked up several truckloads of paper, bottles, broken tiles and glass, and even furniture.

Established in December 2014, Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument spans nearly 23,000 acres in the northern Las Vegas Valley. In 2016, more than 355 tons of trash were removed from the monument.

Brendan, a CCSD first-grader, said he learned a lot about the fossils at Tule Springs, but wasn't surprised by how much trash there was. He commented, "People don't know what's out here and think it won't hurt" to leave trash. Alexa Lopez from Mabel Hoggard Elementary agrees. "It was hard work out here today. I think that if more people knew, maybe they would stop [littering]." Both pledged to help spread the word about how important it is to protect Tule Springs to friends and classmates.

The cleanup day kicked off the second annual Mammoth Penny Push, an educational outreach and fundraising campaign created by Protectors of Tule Springs (POTS), the nonprofit organization that serves as the friends group of Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument. The campaign, which will run through the end of March, provides Clark County educators with resources they can use in the classroom, including: information about the fossils of ice age animals that have been discovered at the monument; the endangered plants and animals that are now protected on this land; and, themed activities for various age groups. Students are also encouraged to donate their pennies during the one-week fundraising drive. This year's fundraiser will enable the NPS to work the Desert Research Institute to develop educational "Green Boxes" to teach students about geology, archaeology and paleontology. These self-contained teaching kits will be available to be checked out free of charge by CCSD teachers. Prizes for fundraising efforts will be awarded at the school, team and classroom levels.

Last year's Mammoth Penny Push campaign raised more than \$36,000 to help POTS assist the NPS with cleanup efforts. A portion of those funds were used to purchase park interpretive materials and a new trailer to support cleanup efforts at the monument, which is now wrapped with vibrant images of ice age animals.

NPS Acting Superintendent Roxanne Dey praised the efforts of the CCSD students, staff and their families. "The passion these students showed for Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument today is just amazing. It is really exciting to know that this is the generation that will benefit most from the work being done to develop this monument. These kids are invested now in 'their park,' and they will grow up with a greater appreciation of what this protected land has to offer for our community. I also want to thank our important educational partners, the Protectors of Tule Springs and the Clark County School District."

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About Protectors of Tule Springs

In 2006, a small group of North Las Vegas residents joined together to raise awareness of the need to protect important fossil deposits against planned urban development. Together, along with community supporters, they helped spur legislation to create the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument. The mission of the Protectors of Tule Springs is to increase public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument, through aid to the National Park Service and support of programs for the interpretation and protection of Monument resources. Protectors of Tule Springs is a 501(c)(3). For more information about the Protectors of Tule Springs, visit tulespringslv.com.



National Park Service Ranger Curt Burbach shows CCSD students several fossil replicas of the ice age animals that once roamed Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument, including the skull of an American lion and the forearm of a giant ground sloth.



The National Park Service unveiled a new trailer this week for Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument, wrapped with images of ice age animals. The trailer will be used for cleanups and other events and was donated by the Protectors of Tule Springs, using funds raised by Clark County School District students during the 2016 Mammoth Penny Push campaign.