

Super Bloom 2017 at Carrizo Plain National Monument
Photo credit: Bob Wick, BLM Wilderness Specialist and Photographer

CARRIZO PLAIN NATIONAL MONUMENT, CALIFORNIA

THE PLACE:

Known as “California’s Serengeti,” [Carrizo Plain National Monument](#) protects more than 211,000 acres of San Joaquin Valley grasslands. Bisected by the San Andreas Fault zone in far eastern San Luis Obispo County, the monument provides crucial habitat for many plant and animal species found nowhere else on Earth. It is also rich in geological and cultural resources.

WHY IT'S SPECIAL:

On years with adequate rainfall, the monument erupts into massive wildflower “[super blooms](#)” that can be seen from [space](#).

Among the rare and endangered species whose survival depend on Carrizo Plain is the curious and adorable [San Joaquin kit fox](#). This cat-sized canine preys primarily on the giant kangaroo rat, an endangered rodent who drums its large feet in its underground burrow to communicate with its neighbors.

Other federally protected species that call the monument home include iconic [California condors](#), beautiful blunt-nosed leopard lizards, and two endangered species of fairy shrimp. The monument also supports pronghorn and California endemic tule elk and is a refuge for more than thirty six rare and endangered plants.

The mighty San Andreas fault, where two of the Earth's five great tectonic plates slide past one another, is easily visible where ephemeral streams emerge from surrounding hills and take abrupt right turns as they intersect the fault. Soda Lake, the largest remaining natural alkali wetland in Southern California, is a major stopover for migratory birds.

With rich cultural heritage since 11,000 BCE, the monument protects bedrock mortar milling features, village middens and elaborate pictographs, in support of contemporary Chumash and Yokuts Tribes, including the world-class Painted Rock and Sulphur Springs rock art sites.

THE STAKES:

During his first term President Trump attempted to open Carrizo Plain National Monument up to oil and gas drilling. The Center and allies successfully [fought off](#) that attempt and forced long-overdue reclamation of idle wells. These protections, and the plants and animals that depend on them, could be in the crosshairs under Trump.

Contact:

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