

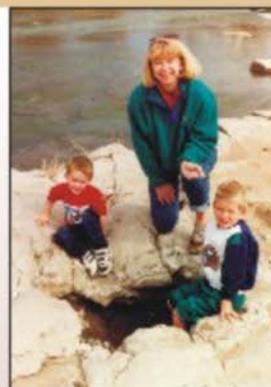
Picketwire Canyonlands

DINOSAUR Tracksite

The largest dinosaur tracksite in North America

About 150 million years ago, during the late Jurassic Period, hundreds of dinosaurs inhabited the area that is now the Purgatoire River valley. These animals frequented the edge of a vast freshwater lake in what is now southeastern Colorado.

As they plodded through the mud along the edge of this lake, they left behind vast trails of footprints in the soupy muck. Later, these muddy flats were buried and turned to stone. Today, over 1,300 of these footprints are exposed at the Picketwire Dinosaur Tracksite.



Exceptionally deep sauropod tracks

The preserved footprints were made by several kinds of dinosaurs, but are mainly representative of large, long-necked plant-eating sauropods like *Apatosaurus* and two-legged meat-eaters such as *Allosaurus*.



Apatosaurus

Allosaurus



The Purgatoire River, the same force that unearthed the tracksite, has since begun to erode it away. The USDA Forest Service has taken steps to ensure the long-term preservation of the tracksite by installing erosion control structures constructed from eroded blocks of the tracksite itself.

Comanche National Grassland
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