

# National Parks Air Tour Management Program



**Federal Aviation  
Administration**



**National Park  
Service**

**WELCOME –  
We will begin shortly**

**July 25, 2023**



Photo: Sally King

# National Parks Air Tour Management Program



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Draft Air Tour  
Management Plan for:

**Bandelier National  
Monument**

**July 25, 2023**



Photo: Sally King

# Welcome

- Thank you for joining us today.
- Today's meeting focuses on the draft Air Tour Management Plan (ATMP) for Bandelier National Monument.
- We invite you to share your feedback on this draft ATMP.
- Specific instructions will be provided throughout this meeting on how to submit your questions.
- This meeting is held pursuant to the National Parks Air Tour Management Act (NPATMA) and its implementing regulations.



# Presenters

- **Eric Elmore – FAA, Senior Policy Advisor**
- **Ashley Pipkin – NSNSD, Outdoor Recreation Planner**
- **Patrick Suddath – NPS, Superintendent**
- **Jamie Civitello – NPS, Integrated Resources Manager**



# Asking Questions

- Throughout the meeting, we invite you to share your questions. Please submit questions using the Google form posted by the FAA in the chat.
- Questions will be addressed at the end of the presentations as part of the Q&A portion as time will allow.
- The purpose of today's meeting is to provide an opportunity for participants to ask questions and clarify information so that you can submit official comments.



# Submitting Official Comments

- All written official comments for the record must be submitted via the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) site or sent to the mailing addresses listed on the Bandelier National Monument PEPC site.
- These written comments become part of the official record.
- Please note that written comments must be submitted on or before **August 11, 2023, at 11:59 PM MDT.**



# Format of Meeting

- This meeting will be 90 minutes long.
- We will adjourn at 7:00 PM Mountain Daylight Time.
- In the event all questions are addressed before this end time, we will continue to hold the meeting until this identified end time to allow for any additional questions that might come in.



# National Parks Air Tour Management Program



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**Overview of the  
National Parks Air  
Tour Management  
Act and Air Tour  
Management Plans**

**July 25, 2023**



Photo: Sally King

# NPATMA Overview

- Requires the FAA, in cooperation with the NPS, to develop an Air Tour Management Plan (ATMP) for those parks where operators have applied to conduct commercial air tours.
- An ATMP applies to commercial air tours:
  - Within ½-mile of a park; and
  - Below 5,000 feet altitude above ground level (AGL).
- Does not apply to general aviation, commercial airline, or military flights.
- Commercial air tour operators apply for FAA Interim Operating Authority (IOA) in order to operate over National Park System units.



# Air Tour Management Plans

The objective of this draft ATMP is to develop acceptable and effective measures to mitigate or prevent the significant adverse impacts, if any, of commercial air tour operations on the Park's natural and cultural landscapes and resources, areas of historic and spiritual significance to Native Americans, Wilderness character, and visitor experience.



# Air Tour Management Plans

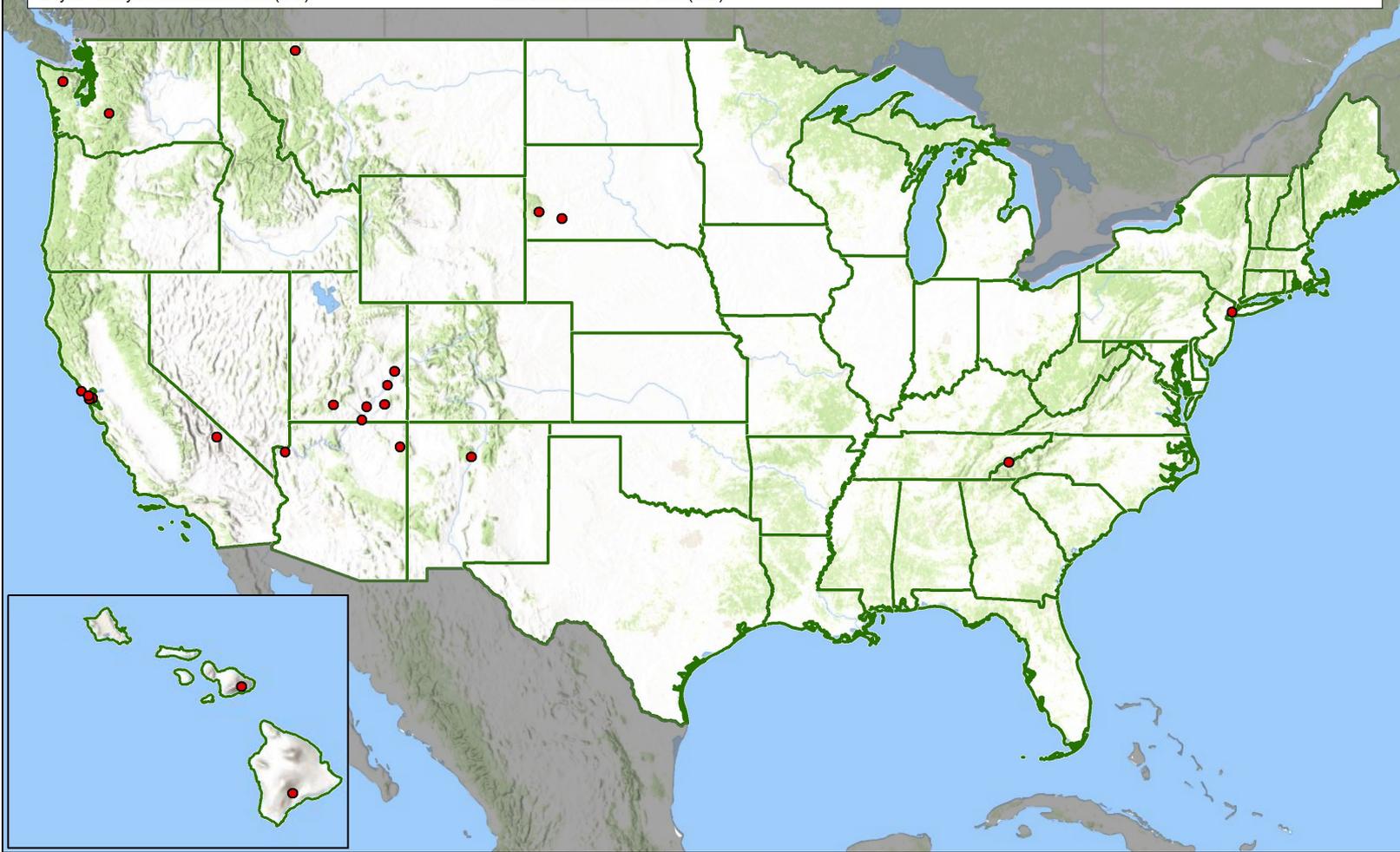
An ATMP:

- May prohibit commercial air tour operations in whole or in part;
- May establish conditions for the conduct of air tour operations including routes, altitudes, time-of-day restrictions, restrictions for particular events, maximum number of flights, etc.;
- Shall apply to all commercial air tour operations within ½-mile outside the boundary of a national park;
- Shall include incentives for the adoption of quiet aircraft technology;
- Shall provide for the allocation of opportunities to conduct air tours when the ATMP limits the number of operations; and
- Shall justify and document the need for measures taken pursuant to items above and include such justifications in the record of decision.



**23 Parks**

- Mount Rainier National Park (WA)
- Olympic National Park (WA)
- Point Reyes National Seashore (CA)
- San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (CA)
- Golden Gate National Recreation Area (CA)
- Muir Woods National Monument (CA)
- Death Valley National Park (CA/NV)
- Glacier National Park (MT)
- Bryce Canyon National Park (UT)
- Canyonlands National Park (UT)
- Rainbow Bridge National Monument (UT)
- Natural Bridges National Monument (UT)
- Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (UT)
- Arches National Park (UT)
- Canyon de Chelly National Monument (AZ)
- Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NV/AZ)
- Bandelier National Monument (NM)
- Mount Rushmore National Memorial (SD)
- Badlands National Park (SD)
- Great Smoky Mountains National Park (NC/TN)
- National Parks of New York Harbor (NY)
- Haleakalā National Park (HI)
- Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park (HI)



# ATMP Updates

## Completed ATMPS

- Mount Rainier National Park (WA)
- Olympic National Park (WA)
- Point Reyes National Seashore (CA)
- San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (CA)
- Golden Gate National Recreation Area (CA)
- Muir Woods National Monument (CA)
- Death Valley National Park (CA/NV)
- Glacier National Park (MT)
- Bryce Canyon National Park (UT)
- Canyonlands National Park (UT)
- Natural Bridges National Monument (UT)
- Arches National Park (UT)
- Great Smoky Mountains National Park (NC/TN)

## Completed Voluntary Agreement's (VA)

- National Parks of New York Harbor (NY)

## Ongoing ATMPS

- Haleakalā National Park (HI)
- Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park (HI)
- Badlands National Park (SD)
- Mount Rushmore National Memorial (SD)
- Bandelier National Monument (NM)
- Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (UT)
- Rainbow Bridge National Monument (UT)
- Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NV/AZ)
- Canyon de Chelly National Monument (AZ)



# ATMP Development

- For each ATMP, the agencies:
  - Publish proposed ATMPs in the Federal Register;
  - Hold at least one public meeting; and
  - Comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and other legal requirements.
- The purpose of today's meeting is to review the components of the draft ATMP for Bandelier National Monument.



# National Parks Air Tour Management Program



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**Draft Air Tour  
Management Plan for:**

**Bandelier National  
Monument**

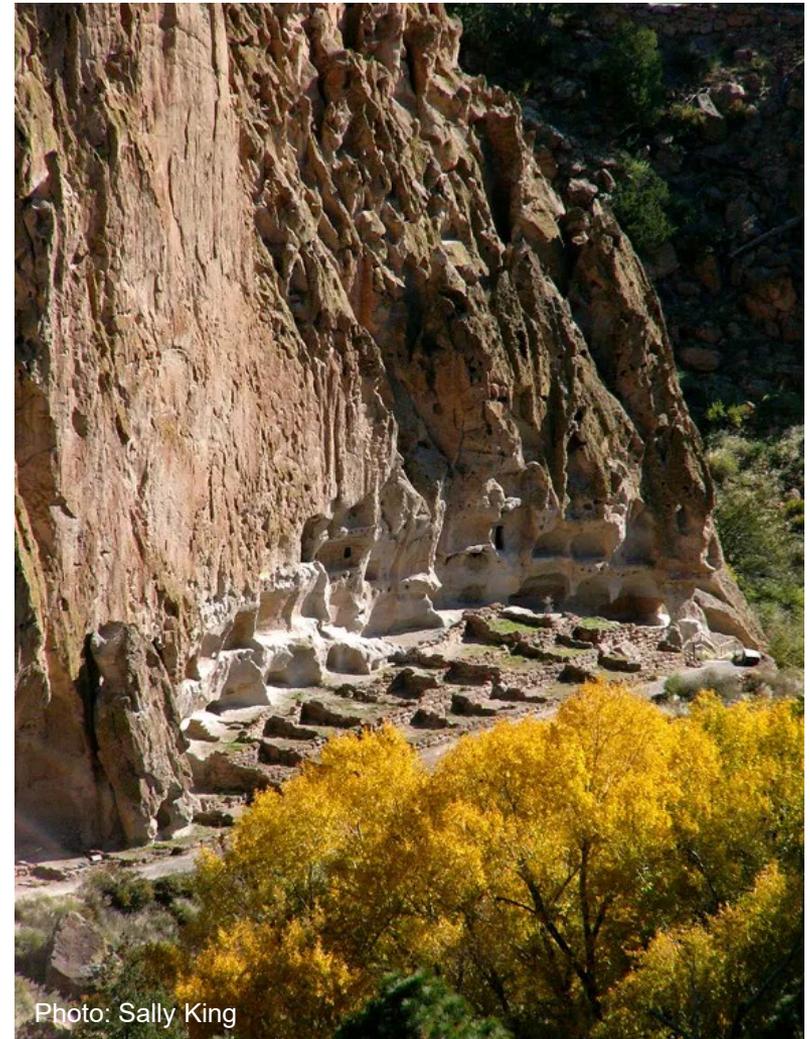
**July 25, 2023**

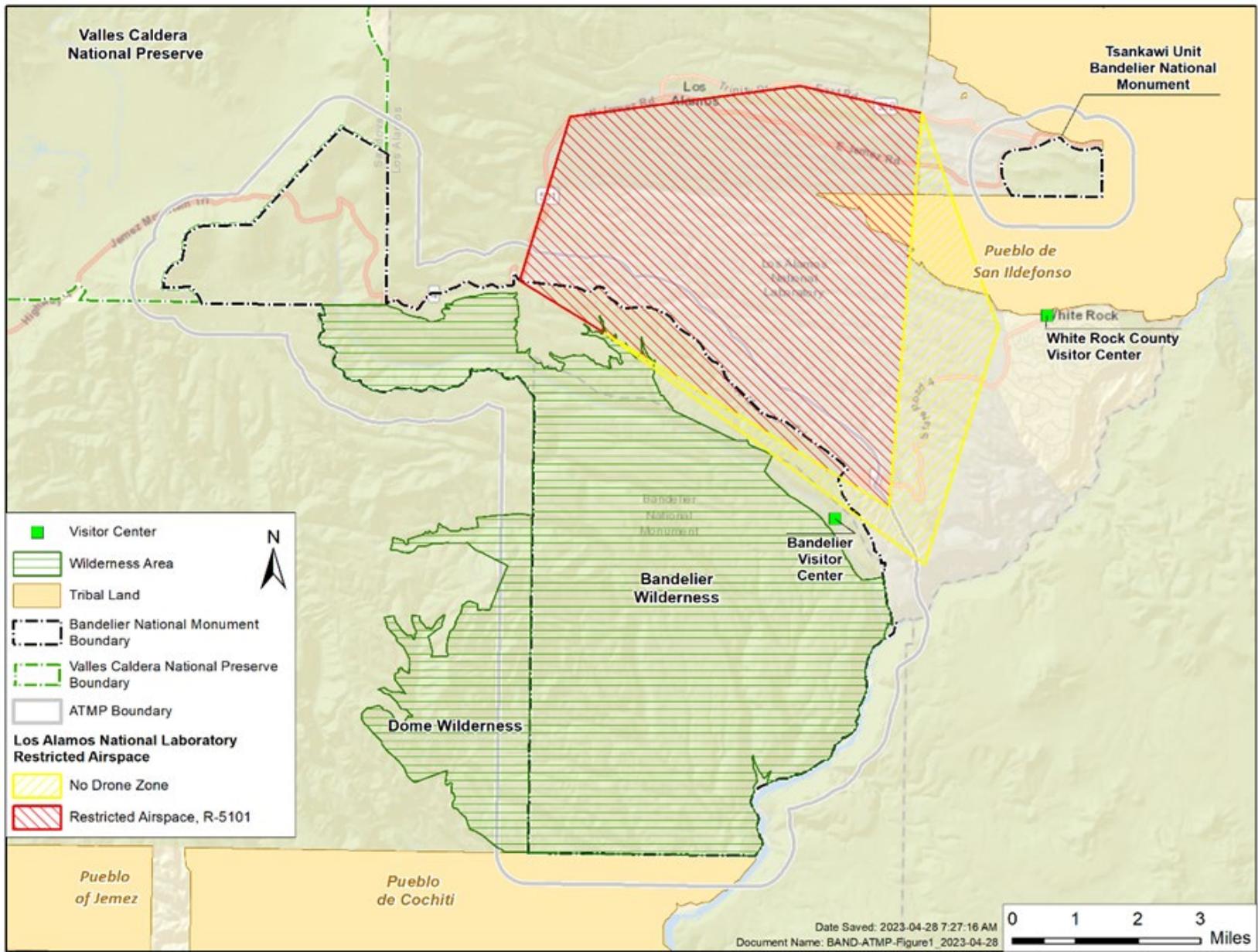


Photo: Sally King

# Park Overview

- Bandelier National Monument preserves over 33,000 acres, 23,267 acres of which are designated Wilderness, in the Jemez Mountains of New Mexico.
- The Park contains canyon and mesa landscapes, as well as evidence of human presence dating back over 11,000 years. Thousands of ancestral Pueblo sites are within the Park, and are accessible via the Park's trail system. Petroglyphs, dwellings carved into rock cliffs, standing masonry walls, and many other cultural and natural features, remain an integral part of Native American culture and provide a context for continuing traditional practices by surrounding communities.





# Park Resources

- Thousands of Pueblo sites such as ancestral homes, rock paintings, rock carvings, and ceremonial sites are located throughout the Park.
- The Park includes historic properties such as the Bandelier Civilian Conservation Corps Historic District and the Mission 66 Historic District.
- The dramatic elevation gradient within Bandelier National Monument creates a unique diversity of habitats for a range of wildlife, including:
  - Mule deer, elk, black bear, short-horned lizard, tarantula, mountain lion, Jemez Mountains salamander, yellow-billed cuckoo, bighorn sheep, and Mexican spotted owl



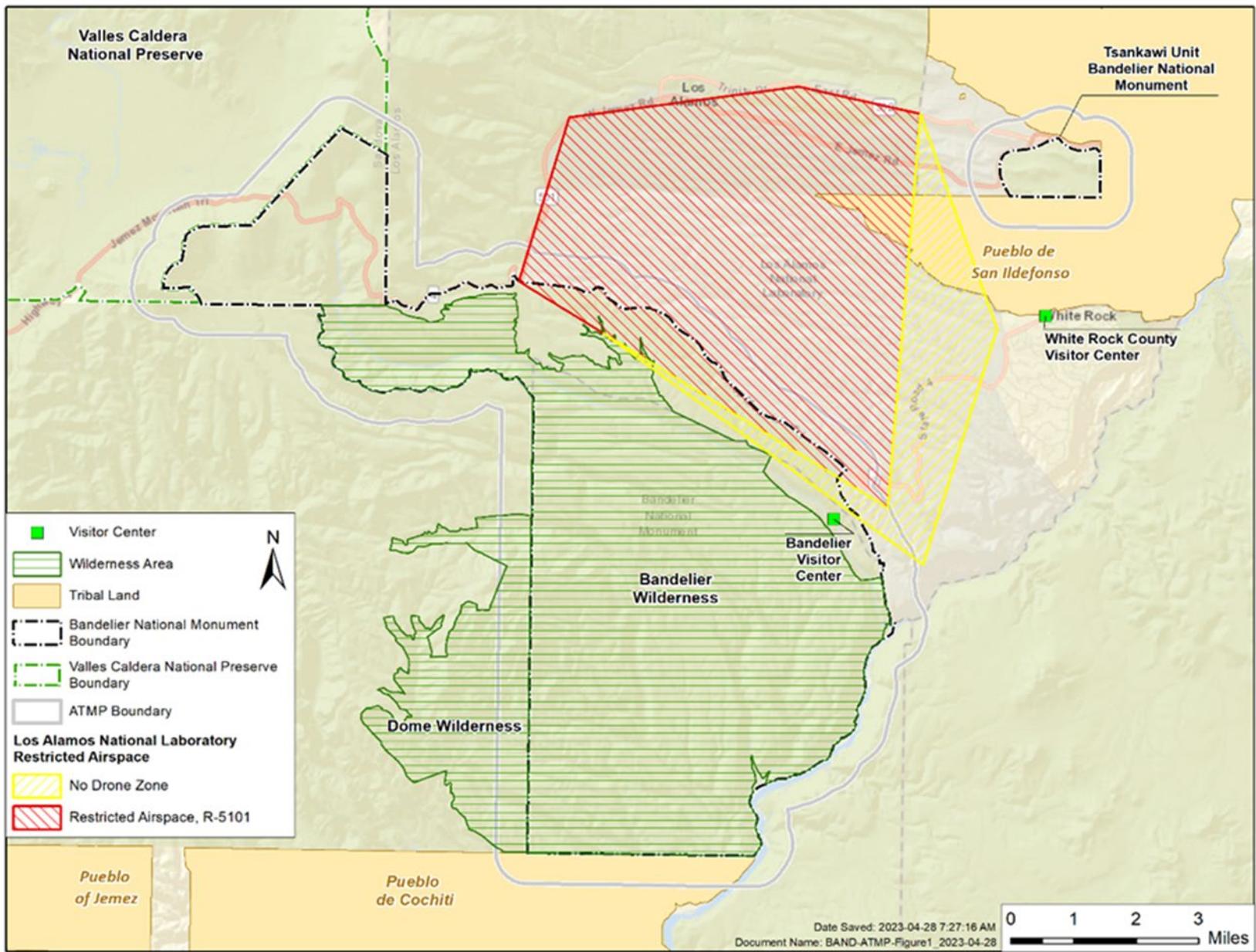
# Existing Air Tour Conditions

- One commercial air tour operator currently holds Interim Operating Authority (IOA) for a total of 126 flights per year over the Park.
- The three-year average of reported data (2017-2019) is 101 total flights conducted by one operator each year.
- Annual number of commercial air tours at the Park is limited by the IOA.
- There are no restrictions on routes, altitudes, or time-of-day; no procedures to establish no-fly periods.



# Draft ATMP for the Park

Attribute	Existing Air Tour Conditions	Draft ATMP
Number of Air Tours Authorized Per Year	IOA: 126 flights per year 3-Yr. Average (2017-2019): 101	0 flights per year The establishment of the ATMP would result in the termination of IOA for the operator.
Routes and Altitudes	No mandatory routes or no-fly zones, aside from the Los Alamos National Laboratory restricted airspace that overlaps a portion of the northeastern edge of the ATMP boundary.	No air tours would be allowed within the ATMP boundary. Operators could fly routes outside the ATMP boundary, in unrestricted airspace, similar to existing flight paths, or routes could vary greatly from those currently flown and would depend on operator preference and weather conditions at the time of the tour, or above the ATMP boundary (at or above 5,000 ft. AGL).
Time-of-Day Restrictions	No restrictions, may occur at any time.	Commercial air tours would not be permitted within the ATMP boundary.
Day-of-Week Restrictions	No restrictions, may occur on any day of the week.	Commercial air tours would not be permitted within the ATMP boundary.
Restrictions for Particular Events	No restrictions, may occur on any day of the year.	Commercial air tours would not be permitted within the ATMP boundary.



# Justification for Measures Taken

- Commercial air tour operations at existing levels result in unacceptable impacts to the Park's cultural landscapes and resources, sacred sites, ceremonial areas, pueblo cultural practices within the Park, and cultural and historic resource sounds associated with Park purposes.
- Prohibiting air tours protects the Park's National Register listed or eligible cultural resources, including sacred sites, ancestral sites, cultural landscapes, and traditional cultural properties.
- Prohibiting air tours improves privacy conditions for Tribes during traditional uses and ceremonies within the ATMP boundary, respects the spiritual significance of the Park to tribal people, and maintains cultural connections to the Park.
- Prohibiting air tours within the ATMP boundary is necessary to protect Park resources and values, meet Park management objectives, and is responsive to the concerns of the tribes.



# NEPA

- The FAA and the NPS are complying with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in development of the draft ATMP.
- NEPA requires that the agencies:
  - Consider the human and natural environment that could be affected by their action (ATMP).
  - Determine the appropriate level of NEPA review.
  - Prepare associated environmental review documents.
- The agencies considered over 2,200 public scoping comments obtained September 3 through October 13, 2021, on the draft ATMP proposing the adoption of existing conditions. Based on feedback during tribal consultation and comments received on the September 2021 draft ATMP, the NPS and FAA agreed to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate reasonable alternatives for the ATMP. A revised draft ATMP and the draft EA are currently available for public review and comment.



# Section 106 / NHPA

- The FAA and the NPS are complying with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) in development of the draft ATMP and draft EA.
- Section 106 includes the requirement that the agencies:
  - Define the Undertaking and Identify Consulting Parties;
  - Determine the Area of Potential Effects and Identify Historic Properties;
  - Assess Effects to Historic Properties; and
  - Resolve Adverse Effects, if Any, to Historic Properties.
- The FAA and the NPS have consulted with the New Mexico SHPO, Native American Tribes, and Consulting Parties. The agencies also considered comments during scoping of the draft ATMP regarding potential impacts to cultural resources.
- The FAA proposed a Finding of No Adverse Effect to historic properties in a letter that was sent to the SHPO and all Consulting Parties.



# Section 7 / ESA

- The FAA and the NPS are complying with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in development of the draft ATMP and draft EA.
- Section 7 includes the requirement that the agencies:
  - Ensure their actions do not jeopardize the existence of any species listed under ESA or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat.
- The agencies are currently conducting Section 7 analysis for federally listed species and anticipate the preferred alternative would have no effect on federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat.



# Public Review of the Draft ATMP and Draft EA

- The FAA and the NPS invite official comments from the public, agencies, Native Tribes, and other interested parties on the draft ATMP and draft EA.
- Official comments must be received on or before **August 11, 2023, at 11:59 PM MDT.**
- Submit your official comments:
  - Online:  
<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectId=103440> or  
<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?documentID=129475>
  - Via Mail:

Volpe National Transportation Systems Center  
Kaitlyn Rimol, V-326  
Attn: Bandelier National Monument ATMP  
55 Broadway  
Cambridge, MA 02142



# Next Steps

- Following the end of the public comment period, the FAA and the NPS will:
  - Review the comments and use them to inform the final ATMP.
  - Complete Section 106, Section 7, and any other necessary consultations and compliance.
  - Conclude the NEPA process and sign a decision document.
- Upon the completion of the public comment period, consultations, and NEPA process, the ATMP will be finalized. The final ATMP will be available on the FAA and the NPS websites.
- Operations specifications for the operator will be rescinded or amended by the FAA to incorporate the operating parameters set forth in the ATMP within 180 days after the effective date of the ATMP.



# Questions and Comments

- **During the meeting**, please submit **questions** using the Google form posted by the FAA in the chat.
- Please submit your **official comments** for the record on or before **August 11, 2023**, at **11:59 PM MDT**:
  - Online:
    - <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectId=103440> or <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?documentID=129475>
  - Via Mail:

Volpe National Transportation Systems Center  
Kaitlyn Rimol, V-326  
Attn: Bandelier National Monument ATMP  
55 Broadway  
Cambridge, MA 02142

## Protecting Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

*Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment - including your personal identifying information - may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.*

