

Fall field trip to Corral Bluffs Open Space

Sunday, September 20, and Sunday, October 4

Sharon Milito, of the Corral Bluffs Alliance (CoBA), has offered to provide the CSS with two separate guided tours of the Corral Bluffs fossil-discovery site to examine the strata where Denver Museum of Nature & Science (DMNS) researchers Tyler Lyson and Ian Miller, along with colleagues, deciphered a trove of plant and animal fossils that tell a remarkable story of how life recovered after the Chicxulub asteroid impact event 66 million years ago. The walking tours will start at the Cretaceous/Paleogene (K/Pg) boundary and climb up-section as the paleo-environment evolved from Fern World to Salad-Bar World. Be prepared to meet the mammals that inhabited those various environments. We'll also see where the Earth's magnetic poles flipped, permitting the DMNS scientists to pinpoint the timeline of all fossil discoveries.



Because of current Colorado Springs restrictions on in-person gatherings, each tour will be limited to 9 participants, and the use of facial coverings is required. The site is about 15 miles east of Colorado Springs and will require participants to provide their own COVID-friendly transportation. The ~4-mile-roundtrip hike will take about 3 to 4 hours, including a lunch break, and will allow plenty of time for discussion. The hike is of moderate to strenuous difficulty, mostly because there are no improved trails, the ground is uneven, and the path follows a gently-rising arroyo with a sandy surface. Plan to arrive in Colorado Springs at 9:00 am with plenty of water and a lunch. Appropriate field clothing is required (sturdy, closed-toe footwear as well as long pants—no shorts). If it's precipitating, below 40°F, or there are gale-force winds, the tour will be rescheduled. No dogs are allowed, and no smoking is permitted. Like other natural areas in Colorado, there are rattlesnakes, cactus, and uneven ground. A \$5 donation is requested to help pay for CoBA liability insurance and support their website.



To register on a first-come basis, please contact Cal Ruleman at cruleman@usgs.gov. You will be required to sign two liability waivers and will receive additional information upon registering.