

Climate

Summer highs often reach 110°F/43°C and can exceed 120°F/49°C, with nighttime lows ranging from 80°F/20°C to upper 90s°F/36°C. Winters are mild with temperatures ranging from freezing to 75°F/24°C. Average annual rainfall is below seven inches, coming from light winter showers and summer thunderstorms.



Many trails are closed from May through September due to extreme weather resulting in heat-related illnesses and fatalities.

Geology

The park’s red sandstone formations were once sand dunes during the age of the dinosaurs over 150 million years ago. Limestone from the days when this land was once covered by sea, and petrified wood from a forested past, can be found. Water and wind erosion continue to shape the landscape.

Wildlife

Desert tortoises and Gila monsters spend most of their lives underground. Some animals like kit foxes and jackrabbits live a nocturnal lifestyle. Desert bighorn sheep stock up on water when it is available, consuming up to five gallons in one sitting. Reptiles like rattlesnakes and chuckwallas are often found basking in the sun, but will take shelter from both the cold and extreme heat. Gambel’s Quail benefit from their naturally higher body temperature of 107°F/42°C, allowing them to release body heat until the air temperature exceeds their own internal temperature. Many desert plants are able to go into a state of dormancy, appearing dead until proper temperatures and a small amount of rainfall allow them to once again sprout leaves and flowers. Plants like brittlebush and desert holly are light in color, which reflect the sun’s rays and help the plant stay cool. The waxy leaves of creosote bush conserve water.

Cryptobiotic Soil

In some areas, living microorganisms like cyanobacteria, fungi, and algae take hold in the sand, creating a dark ‘crust’ on the surface that provides nutrients to surrounding plants and resists erosion. Be careful to avoid stepping on this living layer.



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Valley of Fire State Park



Nevada Department of Conservation & Natural Resources
Division of State Parks
Southern Region

Welcome to Valley of Fire!



Named for its fiery appearance under the sun’s glow, Valley of Fire is a geologic wonderland shaped over millions of years. Explore ancient petroglyphs, scenic hiking trails, and iconic landmarks like Atlatl Rock and Elephant Rock.

Whether you’re here to hike, picnic, camp, or simply marvel at the landscapes, Valley of Fire promises an unforgettable adventure. Please, enjoy your visit!



Photo: Atlatl Rock Campground

A Brief History

For thousands of years, these lands have been used by Native Americans for many purposes. Their petroglyphs (carvings on desert varnish and sandstone) are found throughout the park. Ancestral Puebloans lived nearby from AD 1-1250. They relocated after a harsh drought and social conflict, and the Nuwu, or Southern Paiute, entered the area and are still part of our community.

This geologic region became known as ‘Valley of Fire’ in the 1920s after gaining popularity among motorists. The park formally opened in 1934 and received legal designation in 1935. During the first year of operation, 9,000 people visited. It is Nevada’s largest state park.

Protect the Park

“Hi there, friends! It’s me, Carson Kit Fox, here to remind you to help protect this beautiful park. When you’re exploring, please follow these simple tips: pack out all your trash, keep your pets on leash, and never touch or disturb the historical artifacts. The desert is fragile, and together we can keep it wild and wonderful for generations to come. Thanks for being a park protector, see you on the trails!”



Valley of Fire State Park Hours:

Day-Use: Sunrise to Sunset Daily
Visitor Center: 9:00am - 4:00pm Daily
(office hours may vary on holidays)

Field Notes

- It is illegal to remove or damage rocks, minerals, artifacts, sand, etc.
- Carving into or writing on the rocks is not permitted.**
- It is illegal to disturb or remove plants and wildlife. Do not feed the animals.
- Do not climb on arches or petroglyphs.** Help preserve petroglyphs by not touching them.
- Camp only in designated campground sites; dispersed camping is not permitted.
- Pets are welcome on a leash up to 6ft long. Only service animals are permitted in the visitor center.
- Drones and RC vehicles are not allowed.**
- Fires must be in designated pits and grills. Note that fire restrictions may be in place during some times of the year.
- Rappelling only in specific area – Inquire at the visitor center. Climbing involving chalk or inserting items into rock is not permitted.
- Permit required for commercial photography and filming.** Contact the park for more information.



Photo: Desert Bighorn Sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*)

ANNUAL TRAIL CLOSURES

All trails longer than 1mi/1.6km are closed annually May through September.



Hiking not recommended above 85°F/29°C.

Camping

There are two campgrounds with a total of 73 sites and one group camping area with three sites. Amenities at each site include potable water, a fire pit, and picnic table. Reservations can be made up to 11 months in advance and must be made at least 72 hours in advance at www.reservenevada.com.

Campgrounds full? There is dispersed camping on public lands outside the park’s boundaries.

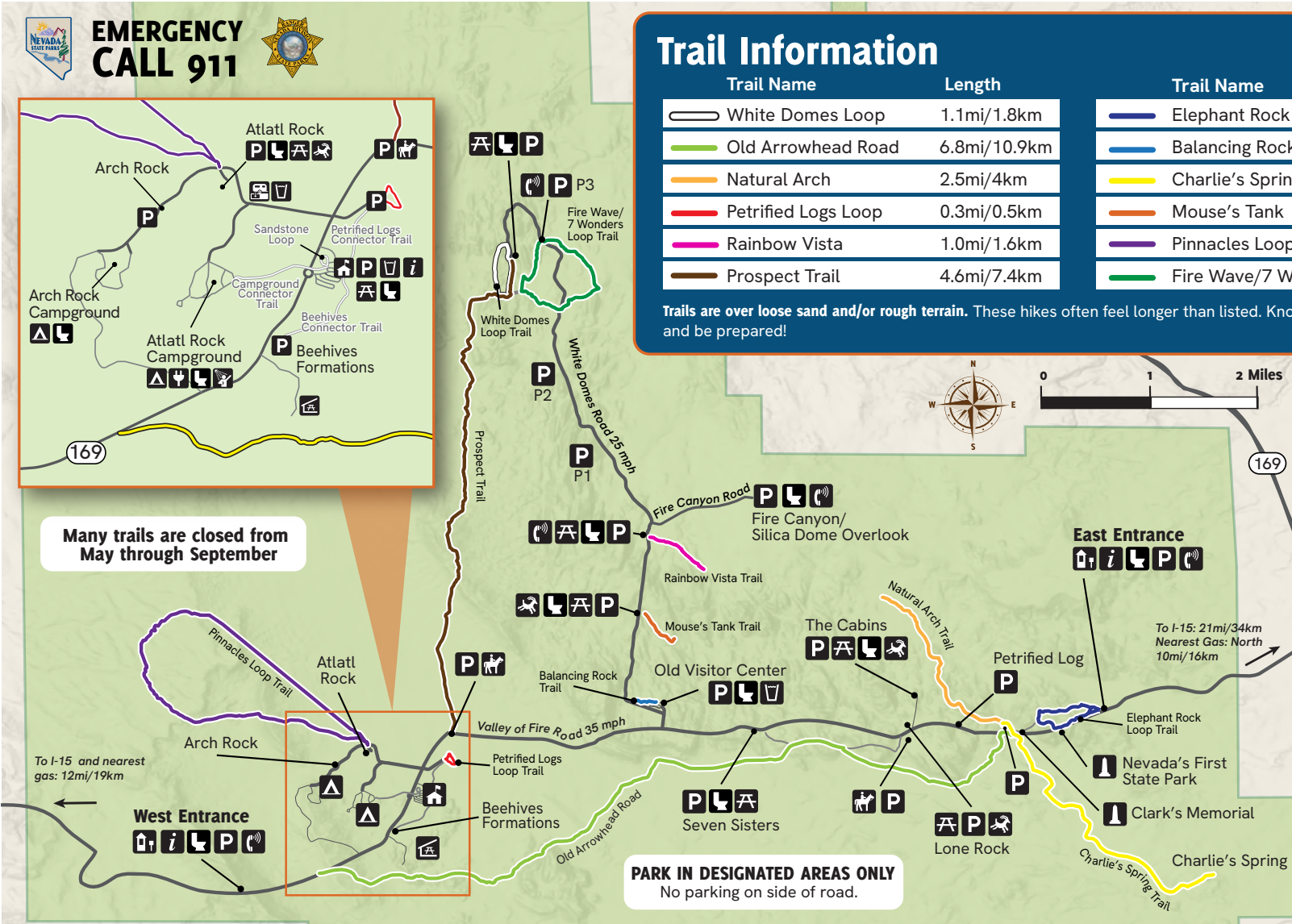


Photo: White-tailed Antelope Ground Squirrel (*Ammospermophilus leucurus*)

Popular Locations

Atlatl Rock: centuries-old rock writings featuring a spear-throwing tool, the atlatl.
Cabins: built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s.
Elephant Rock Loop Trail: hike to an arch that resembles an elephant. There is a direct path (0.1mi/0.16km) and a longer loop (1.2mi/1.9km).
Fire Wave/Seven Wonders Trail: many colorful formations and small slot canyons.
Mouse’s Tank Trail: features petroglyphs and natural water tank.
Rainbow Vista Trail: hike to a stunning canyon view.
Silica Dome Overlook: a beautiful view and Star Trek: Generations (1994) filming location.
White Domes Loop Trail: a slot canyon and remains of a ‘60s movie set.