

State of New Mexico  
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

---

**Susana Martinez**  
Governor

**David Martin**  
Cabinet Secretary-Designate

**Brett F. Woods, Ph.D.**  
Deputy Cabinet Secretary

**Tommy Mutz, Division Director**  
State Parks Division



## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**May 2, 2013**

Contact: Jim Winchester 505-231-8800; E-mail: jim.winchester@state.nm.us

### **Oliver Lee Memorial State Park Celebrates Heritage Preservation Day** *Event Features Trail Walks, Multimedia Programs & Spring Sky Tour on Saturday, May 11, 2013*

**Alamogordo, NM** – On May 11, 2013, come join us at Oliver Lee Memorial State Park for the annual Heritage Preservation Day. Enjoy a quiet green oasis of cottonwoods, ash trees and maidenhair fern in the Chihuahuan Desert. Experience the beauty and history of Dog Canyon and the Tularosa Basin. Due to Dog Canyon's water resource and rigorous seclusion, it was one of the last strongholds of the Mescalero Apache in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the late 1900's early settlers like "Frenchy" Francois Jean Rochas and rancher Oliver Milton Lee used the rich resources of the canyon to create a new way of life in the Tularosa Basin.

"Come enjoy our main attractions: the nature trail, visitor center and the ranch house; and stay for an evening under the stars with the Amateur Astronomers Group." said Wendy Justice, Park Manager.

The Heritage Preservation Day schedule follows:

#### **Saturday, May 11**

Canyons Trail Walk, 10:00 am to 11:30 am, Meet at Visitor Center

Dog Canyon was one of the last strongholds of the Mescalero Apache in the Sacramento Mts. The Mescalero used resources at Dog Canyon to maintain their rich cultural heritage, which enabled them to thrive. Paulsen's book Canyons, used by many schools in their curriculum, is a compelling story about two teenagers on the verge of manhood: Coyote Runs a Mescalero Apache in 1864 and present day Brennan Cole of El Paso. Come learn about the book and sites in Dog Canyon that inspired Gary Paulsen.

Francois Jean Rochas, 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm, Meet at Visitor Center

NMSU-A Archeologist Pete Eidenbach will present a short multimedia program on the excavation of "Frenchy" cabin, the first European settler at Dog Canyon. Come learn about his life and times at Dog Canyon while viewing the artifacts he left behind, his rock walls and the remains of his cabin. Although this program is not considered a hike, there will be some walking from the Visitor Center to various locations in the park.

Oliver Lee Ranch House Tour, 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm, Meet at Visitor Center

Join Ranger Howard Thomas, park historian, for a tour of the Oliver Lee Ranch House. The Lee Ranch House was originally built in 1893. Furnishings and displays provide a window into the history of early ranching in the Tularosa Basin

Saturn Rising, 8:30 pm to 10:00 pm, Meet at Group Shelter

Join the Amateur Astronomers Group for a spring sky tour. The constellation Leo dominates the sky as Saturn rises in Virgo and Jupiter sets in Taurus. Come early and enjoy the beauty of Dog Canyon at sundown.

Oliver Lee Memorial State Park is eight miles south of Alamogordo via U.S. 54, then four miles east on Dog Canyon Road. There is no charge for programs, however all camping and day use fees do apply. For more information, contact the park at (575) 437-8284 or log onto [www.nmparks.com](http://www.nmparks.com).

###

*Short Trips, Long Memories: Your Best Recreation Value Close to Home  
The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection  
and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.*

1220 South St. Francis Drive • Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505  
Phone (505) 476-3355 • Fax (505) 476-3361 • [www.nmparks.com](http://www.nmparks.com)