

Mesa Verde Timeline

- 500s AD – First pit houses and signs of permanent habitation appear
- Mid-700s – People began grouping houses to form compact villages.



500 AD

- 1100 – 1300 – The Classic Pueblo Period saw the construction of extensive complexes of pueblos. Cliff dwellings number over 600 within the park boundaries.



700

900

- 1300 – Ancestral Puebloan people had migrated from Mesa Verde. There are many possible reasons for the migration.



1100

1300

- 1859 – Great Colorado Goldrush. Professor J.S. Newberry makes the first known mention of Mesa Verde.
- 1870s - 80s – Several cliff dwellings discovered.



1850

1860

- 1880 – Chief Ouray and delegation negotiate treaty in Washington D.C. that includes establishment of reservation lands.



1870

- 1888 – The Weatherill brothers discover Cliff Palace while tracking livestock.
- 1889 – Activist Virginia McClurg begins a decade-long fight to designate the National Park.



1880

1890



1906

1908

1910

1930

1950

1960

1970

1980

1990

2006



- 1906 The Ute Mountain Utes exchange Mesa Verde lands for other lands in Southwest Colorado.
- June 29, 1906 – President Theodore Roosevelt signs legislation creating Mesa Verde National Park.



- 1908 – Building stabilization and archaeological preservation activities are undertaken to protect sites. These activities continue to date and will continue into the future.



- 1910s onward – Tourists and archaeologists begin visiting in increasing numbers.



- 1976 - Lands are added to the National Park with new wilderness designations.
- 1978 - Mesa Verde National Park is declared one of eight original World Heritage Sites by the United Nations.



- 2003/4 Forest fires brought on by drought burn thousands of National Park acres, but leave dwellings undamaged. The process of regrowth is well underway.



- 2006 – After 100 years, Mesa Verde National Park celebrates the continued preservation and protection of these irreplaceable cultural resources for generations to come.