



Contact:
Courtney Lyons-Garcia
512-529-1149
friendsdirector@yahoo.com

February 25, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Friends of Big Bend Reaches \$1 Million Mark in Funds Donated

Friends of Big Bend National Park has raised and contributed over \$1 Million to Big Bend National Park. This funding milestone was reached at the February board meeting with gifts of \$10,000 for planning a future paleontology exhibit, \$25,000 for improvements in the current paleontology exhibit area and \$3,000 for general trail improvements. The money for the paleontology projects was raised through the sale of the Big Bend license plate, and the trail improvement funds were raised at the October 2009 Ride for Trails motorcycle rally.

Friends of Big Bend was founded in 1996 to support, promote and raise funds for Big Bend National Park and the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River in partnership with the National Park Service. From the beginning the Friends of Big Bend has worked to improve visitor services and the visitor experience at Big Bend National Park. Contributions from the Friends bridge the gap between the park's annual federal funding and its actual needs. Gifts from the Friends to the park have funded a wide variety of projects over the years including the northern entrance station to the Park at Persimmon Gap, new interpretive displays at the Panther Junction visitors' center, new wayside informational signs and maps, and new technology for the Park Rangers and staff. None of these projects would have happened without the support of the Friends.

"We are pleased to provide vital funds to Big Bend National Park and reaching the \$1 Million mark gives us fresh energy and inspiration to continue our mission. Now, in these difficult economic times, it is even more important that we raise these funds for the park" said Rick Lannen, president of the Board. "We thank every donor and license plate holder who has contributed over the years and hope you will continue your support."

For more details about the activities of Friends of Big Bend National Park, log onto www.bigbendfriends.org.

###