

Prehistoric elephant skull excavated in New Mexico

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Scientists and paleontologists in New Mexico are excavating a prehistoric elephant skull that an expert says is one of the most intact ever found.

Officials at Elephant Butte Lake State Park say the skull was being dug out Thursday. It will be protected with plaster and transported to Albuquerque.

Paleontologists at the New Mexico Museum of History and Science are working with the park and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation staff to excavate the fossil.

The Las Cruces Sun-News reports campers discovered the stegomastodon skull last weekend at the park, which is named for a [rock formation](#) rising above the reservoir.

Gary Morgan, the museum's curator of paleontology, says it's the "most complete elephant skull of any kind" that he's seen in his 20 years of experience in the field.

Experts say stegomastodons went extinct around 1.3 million years ago.

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