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EARTH Magazine: Preserving Peru's Petrified Forest

Alexandria, Va. — Tucked high in the Andes Mountains of northern Peru is a remarkable fossil locality: a 39-million-year-old petrified forest preserved in nearly pristine condition: stumps, full trees, leaves and all. With its existence unknown to scientists until the early 1990s — and its significance unbeknownst to villagers — this ancient forest hosts the remains of more than 40 types of trees, some still rooted, that flourished in a lowland tropical forest until they were suddenly buried by a volcanic eruption during the Eocene.

Since its discovery a little more than two decades ago, scientists and other concerned citizens from Peru to Colorado have been working to study and preserve the spectacular site — now known as El Bosque Petrificado Piedra Chamana — and its unusual and diverse fossils. Read more about what scientists have learned so far and about the efforts to preserve the site in the July issue of EARTH Magazine: <http://bit.ly/TpPLWu>.

For more stories about the science of our planet, check out EARTH Magazine online or subscribe at www.earthmagazine.org. The July issue, now available on the digital newsstand, features stories on the crazy coloration of dinosaur feathers and how fieldwork has revised the ice-free corridor hypothesis of human migration, as well as a commentary examining the deadly landslide in Washington and emphasizing the need for better planning and insurance, plus much, much more.

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Keep up to date with the latest happenings in Earth, energy and environment news with EARTH magazine online at: <http://www.earthmagazine.org>. Published by the American Geosciences Institute, EARTH is your source for the science behind the headlines.

The American Geosciences Institute is a nonprofit federation of 49 geoscientific and professional associations that represents more than 250,000 geologists, geophysicists and other earth scientists. Founded in 1948, AGI provides information services to geoscientists, serves as a voice of shared interests in the profession, plays a major role in strengthening geoscience education, and strives to increase public awareness of the vital role the geosciences play in society's use of resources, resiliency to natural hazards, and interaction with the environment.