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First National Fossil Day to be Held During Earth Science Week 2010

Alexandria, VA – The American Geological Institute (AGI) and the National Park Service (NPS) are collaborating to hold the first annual National Fossil Day - October 13, 2010 - during Earth Science Week (October 10-16).

Join paleontologists, educators, and students in fossil-related events and activities across the country in parks, classrooms, and online during National Fossil Day. NPS has developed resources and activities to highlight the scientific and educational value of paleontology and the importance of preserving fossils for future generations. Visit the NPS National Fossil day site at <http://nature.nps.gov/geology/nationalfossilday/> for standards-based lesson plans, fossil trading cards, videos, a virtual museum exhibit featuring dinosaurs, and more. Fossil-themed activities are also available in the Earth Science Week 2010 toolkit available at <http://www.earthsciweek.org/materials/index.html>.

The National Park Service is sponsoring a National Fossil Day Art Contest. Entries should address the theme “Paleontology: Preserving the Past for Our Future.” This contest is open to any U.S. resident age five or older. Entries are due October 5, 2010. See complete contest guidelines at <http://nature.nps.gov/geology/nationalfossilday/>.

In addition to online resources, local events, and contests, NPS and the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History will hold the National Fossil Day kick-off event in Washington, D.C. This celebration on the National Mall will take place from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. on October 13, 2010. All are invited to learn how to become a Junior Paleontologist, study the history of life that has been preserved in over 230 NPS units, listen to Fossil Talks, and hunt for your own fossils. For more information on the kick-off event, visit <http://www.nature.nps.gov/geology/nationalfossilday/natmallevnt.cfm>.

AGI coordinates Earth Science Week annually in cooperation with its sponsors and the geoscience community as a service to the public. Each year, community groups, educators, and interested citizens organize celebratory events. Earth Science Week offers the public opportunities to discover the earth sciences and engage in responsible stewardship of the Earth. Earth Science Week is supported by the U.S. Geological Survey, the AAPG Foundation, the U.S. Department of Energy, NASA, the National Park Service, ExxonMobil, and ESRI.

To learn more about Earth Science Week and National Fossil Day, go to <http://www.earthsciweek.org/>.

The American Geological Institute is a nonprofit federation of 47 geoscientific and professional

associations that represents more than 120,000 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.

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