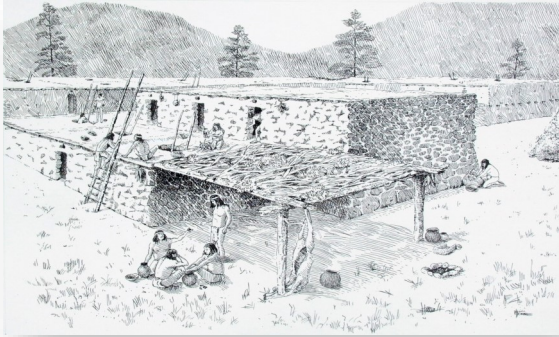


**15. Pueblo 2:** This structure was built during a late population influx about 1250. All other rooms built at that time were added onto the main pueblo. However, not only was this a separate structure, but its rooms are larger than those in the main pueblo and it also had its own ceremonial kiva, outlined here with rocks. The original structure had two ground floor rooms and was two stories high. Two single-story rooms were added later at separate times. As with earlier pit houses, and most rooms here, Pueblo 2 was burned upon abandonment. It was not excavated by Fewkes and remains a primary research focus. Why is this structure separate from the rest of the site? What can it tell us about the newcomers, and the last days of Elden Pueblo?



#### About the Elden Pueblo Project Logo

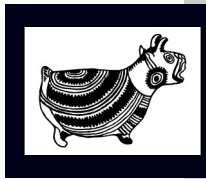
In 1926, J.W. Fewkes excavated this Leupp Black-on-white pregnant antelope effigy jar. It was traded to *Pasiwvi* by the Pueblo people who life in the Little Colorado River Valley area near Winslow, AZ.

Fewkes thought it might represent an early version of the Antelope Society, which still exists at Hopi. This unique vessel illustrates the enduring cultural connections, shared values, and beliefs linking the *Hisatsinom*, the Hopi name for their ancestors, to the Pueblo people today.

For more information about Elden Pueblo educational activities and opportunities, contact the Elden Pueblo Program Manager, Lisa Deem, at (928) 699-5421, or by e-mail at [eldenpueblo@gmail.com](mailto:eldenpueblo@gmail.com).

The many recreational opportunities and other archaeological sites to visit on the Coconino National Forest can be found at [www.fs.usda.gov/main/coconino/about-forest](http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/coconino/about-forest).

For more information on the Sinagua and Native cultures of the Southwest, visit the Museum of Northern Arizona on US Highway 180, north of Flagstaff, and at [www.musnaz.org](http://www.musnaz.org);



## Elden Pueblo Coconino National Forest Flagstaff, Arizona

# TRAIL GUIDE



### The Elden Pueblo Project: *Connecting People With the Past*



#### Project Partners:

The Coconino National Forest  
Arizona Natural History Association  
Flagstaff Arts Council, City of Flagstaff  
Flagstaff Community Foundation  
Museum of Northern Arizona  
Arizona Archaeological Society

## Elden Pueblo (*Pasiwvi*) and the Sinagua: A.D. 1070-1275

Elden Pueblo, or *Pasiwvi* ("Pah-see-'oo-vi") is recognized by the Hopi people as an ancestral village, occupied from A.D. 1070 to about A.D. 1275. Archaeologists refer to these people as the Sinagua, a term that comes from an early Spanish name for the San Francisco Peaks, the "Sierra Sin Agua", or, "Mountains Without Water". Hopi refer to their ancestors as *Hisatsinom* and *Pasiwvi* (Elden Pueblo) is the "place of coming together" or "place where decisions were made".

Indigenous people lived seasonally in the vicinity of the San Francisco Peaks for at least 11,000 years, sharing ideas, new technologies and beliefs. But, in the latter part of the 11th century the eruptions of Sunset Crater, ten miles northeast of here, as well as a 20-year-long period of drought, displaced them to moister, higher elevations. Here, in the ponderosa pines, a few families constructed pit house villages in the shadow of the San Francisco Peaks.

Around A.D. 1100, the climate again transitioned to wetter, cooler conditions and most people relocated to lower elevations in the pinyon-juniper zone, where farming was optimal. Still, some families remained at *Pasiwvi* and constructed new stone-lined pit houses as well as pueblos, or, above-ground masonry dwellings. The structures were two to three room units, with each room probably housing one family. The rooms became the nucleus around which Elden Pueblo would grow, eventually becoming a two-story tall complex of about 65 rooms, the largest site in the greater Flagstaff area.

By A.D. 1150, *Pasiwvi* became an important trade center where ideas, as well as goods, were exchanged. Skilled artisans lived at the site, making plainware pottery, obsidian projectile points, and finely woven cotton textiles.

Trade connections extended across the Southwest, bringing shell jewelry from the Gulf of California and the Pacific Ocean, turquoise, argillite, mineral pigments, and even scarlet macaws and a copper bell from Mesoamerica. Sinagua seldom made decorated pottery, but obtained it from the Pueblo people of the Kayenta and Winslow regions to the north, east.

Rare artifacts, such as nose plugs, carved bone hair pins, bird effigy vessels, and turquoise mosaics in the shapes of frogs and birds in flight suggest to some archaeologists that Sinagua had a hierarchical social structure, a clan system, and religious, medicinal, and war societies to serve the community.

Around A.D.1250, during another period of drought, more families began moving into *Pasiwvi*, almost doubling the population. An enclosed courtyard and, later, the large community room were built during this time. But continued dry conditions and a

shorter growing season caused by cooler temperatures resulted in a gradual movement away from the pueblo by A.D.1275. People gathered their belongings, burned their rooms for closure, and moved to areas north, south and east where related families and other groups were already coming together to form large pueblos communities of over 100 rooms.

By A.D. 1400, many people joined the emerging Hopi and Zuni cultures to the north and east. But *Pasiwvi* and other sites in the Flagstaff area were never forgotten. The sites were remembered through oral traditions and annual pilgrimages which are still conducted today to honor ancestors.

Euro-Americans began arriving in the 1870s, including John Elden, a sheepherder for whom Mt. Elden and Elden Pueblo is named. In 1916, Dr. Harold S. Colton and his wife, Mary-Russell Ferrell Colton, founders of the Museum of Northern Arizona, began an archaeological survey of the Flagstaff area. Mrs. Colton discovered Elden Pueblo on Oct. 23, 1916 while horseback riding.

A publication by Dr. Colton likely stimulated Dr. Jesse Walter Fewkes and John P. Harrington of the Smithsonian Institution to excavate the site to better understand Hopi traditions about the Flagstaff area. In 1926 they unearthed 35 rooms and 2,500 artifacts that went to the Smithsonian. Dr. Fewkes believed in sharing the results of archaeological work with the public and he gave regular tours and many lectures to the community, naming the site "Elden Pueblo".

Dr. Fewkes' plans to designate the site as a National Monument never materialized. Nevertheless, he laid the groundwork for public participation and education at Elden Pueblo that continues today.

In 1978, the U.S. Forest Service was considering the Elden Pueblo area for part of a land exchange, but when testing found much of the pueblo was intact, decided it should be preserved as a cultural heritage site instead.

In 1980, it was decided to interpret Elden Pueblo through public archaeology where visitors, particularly school children, could gain an understanding of archaeology and Hopi traditions, while developing a sense of conservation and stewardship for cultural, historical, and natural resources on public lands.

Today, Elden Pueblo hosts an award-winning archaeology program that educates thousands of school children and visitors each year about the lives of the ancient people who once inhabited the land of the *Sierra Sin Agua*.



## Self-Guided Tour of Elden Pueblo

The Hopi name for Elden Pueblo is *Pasiwvi* (*Pah-see'-oo-vee*) - "The place of coming together", or, "The place of making decisions". *Pasiwvi* figures prominently in the traditions of several Hopi clans, and offerings and prayers are made at *Pasiwvi* during pilgrimages to ancestral sites and the San Francisco Peaks.

From an initial population of perhaps 20 people, the community grew to about 100 residents between A.D. 1150-1250, and as many as 200 people between A.D. 1250 and 1275.

Why build here? The area may have been selected for its proximity to Doney Park, an open, alluvial basin to the north-east with excellent soil for agriculture. The San Francisco Peaks are extremely sacred to the Hopi and 12 other Southwestern tribes. If this significance existed in prehistoric times, there may have been religious responsibilities for the Peaks that ensured people would stay here year 'round.

In the protective shadow of Mt. Elden, the climate is much milder and consistent than elsewhere in the Flagstaff area. Two springs, each about two miles away, are the closest water sources.

**1. The Zeyouma Trading Post:** From 1927 or 1928 to 1933, Philip Zeyouma, a Hopi from the village of Mishongnovi, operated a trading post here, made from the fallen wall stones of Elden Pueblo. The Depression spelled the end of the tourism-based business, and the Zeyouma family moved to the newly established Parker Reservation on the Colorado River.

**2. Pueblo 2:** This small masonry pueblo was one of the last structures constructed at the site, about A.D. 1250. By 1275, *Pasiwvi* was depopulated as people moved to lower elevation in response to deteriorating climate conditions

**3. The Community Room:** This room was built about 1250 and could have held the entire population of the pueblo at its height of occupation. Similar very large rooms have been found at other Sinagua sites and are thought to identify major community centers in the Sinagua region. Its presence here indicates *Pasiwvi* was the primary site of the Mt. Elden area and confirms Hopi traditions about *Pasiwvi* as a place where the community gathered to promote social harmony and safeguard the natural environment and its resources, for all people.

Art, photography and maps courtesy of Don Keller, Brian Donohue, and Marvin Marcroft. Appreciation is extended to Thomas Woodall, Walter Gosart and Lisa Deem for their continued stewardship of Elden Pueblo.



Features in the floor of the community room being excavated.

As with many rooms reportedly dug by Fewkes, the community room had not been completely excavated. Continuing research suggests that the room was frequently remodeled. The central part of the space contained numerous basins, pits, post holes, and fire pits, many of which had been purposefully filled with rocks and plastered over by new floor surfaces. They may have been locations for ceremonial caches. Like Hopi kivas, the room may have been replastered annually, as many floor surfaces were found.

The community room was dug into a natural mound for a depth of one meter, reminiscent of kivas, which were also dug into the ground. A thick layer of black volcanic cinders from the eruption of Sunset Crater had been purposefully spread over the final floor, possibly indicating a ritual closure of the room when residents left the site around A.D. 1275. Sunset cinders do not occur in this area and would have had to be brought to the site for this purpose. Other structures in the region have also been found with a layer of Sunset Crater cinders on the floor. Why would this have been done?

**4. Dendrochronology (Tree ring dating):** This science tracks time by measuring the growth of trees during dry or moist periods of climate change. Wide rings indicate a wet year while narrow rings suggest a dry time, offering a glimpse into weather patterns of long ago. Dendrochronology remains an important tool widely used today for dating sites and developing concepts of how people adapted to fluctuating weather patterns.

**5. Remodeled Rooms:** These areas remain as Dr. Fewkes interpreted them in 1926, but it is not accurate. Instead of the two, oddly shaped rooms you see, there were originally four evenly-sized rooms here, all constructed after A.D. 1250. The doorway is one of the few found on the site as all were walled up and entry restricted to an open hatchway on the roof, accessed by a ladder. The room in front of you began as a habitation, but was remodeled into a special corn grinding area suggested by the placement of three metates against the north wall after the doorway was closed off.

Originally, however, the doorway entered a large open courtyard, framed by surrounding rooms. It appears to have been used for only a short time. It was likely replaced by construction of the Community Room and then partly filled with trash. This is the only known occurrence of an interior courtyard in the Sinagua region. Similar courtyards are found in some pueblos in eastern Arizona, but at a somewhat later date.

**7. Pit houses:** Here is the edge of a cluster of pit houses — structures dug into the ground with a central fire pit and roof support posts in all four corners. In construction, a roof framework of poles had split pine shingles laid over them, then a layer of whole Indian rice grass plants for insulation, which was then covered with thick layer of mud. Walls of the pit house excavation were covered with mud plaster or lined with stones that were also plastered over. Entry was through a roof hatchway with a ladder. About 21 pit houses have been identified, a few representing the earliest occupation of A.D. 1070-1100, but most date to the early pueblo occupation of A.D. 1150-1250.



**8. Construction Techniques:** This area offers insights into how the Sinagua constructed rooms using basalt and dacite rocks set in a mud mortar. Five masonry styles have been identified at *Pasiwvi*. An analysis of these styles, along with wall abutments and datable pottery sherds, suggests people began constructing above ground pueblo rooms here around A.D. 1150.

**9. Home Sweet Home:** This is a typical living room for a Sinagua family of 3 to 5 people, although most daily activities took place on top of the roof or outside. The room to your left is much smaller and was probably used for storage.

*Pasiwvi* as a community began with a few 2-3 room pueblos and about ten pit house dwellings. As time went on, more rooms were built in open areas between the original small pueblos and around the perimeter of the pueblo. This entire room block is built on fill from an earlier living area, the next row of rooms in front of you, where a filled-in doorway can be seen. To your right, is a wall stub indicating this chamber was constructed after an earlier room had been removed.

**10. Remodeled Rooms:** Excavations in this area found remnants of earlier rooms that were razed when this part of the pueblo was enlarged. The long stone in the floor by the vent in front of you represents the vent of an earlier room, destroyed when this new room was constructed.

**11. The Plaza:** This area was the location for communal food preparation and other shared activities as indicated by 35 basins, pits, fire pits, two rock-lined roasting pits, and post holes that might indicate ramadas, or open, covered areas. Of particular interest is that these features were constructed on a prepared, plastered surface. Only a few such formally prepared outside activity areas are known in the Southwest. The surface is also found beneath some of the walls, indicating the plaza was used during the early occupation of the pueblo before some of the rooms were constructed on top of it.

**12. Experimental check dams** spaced across this natural wash demonstrate how the Sinagua grew squash, corn, cotton, and beans in a region with marginal soil, sparse rainfall, and often only 190 frost free days per year. Corn needs 60 to 100 days to grow to maturity. In order to collect priceless rainwater and snowmelt in this high, semi-arid land, people engineered check dams and terraces across washes, dug reservoirs, and constructed rock-outlined borders and garden plots to slow evaporation from the dry soil. The Sinagua were master farmers!



**13. Grinding basins** in the rock at your feet are usually associated with processing seeds, but these may have been used to shape stone axes. Dr. Fewkes found five axes in a nearby room that perfectly fit these depressions, and this may indicate specialized craft production of these tools as an important trade item for *Pasiwvi* artisans.

*Thank you for not touching the basins!*

**14. Early Pit houses:** Two of the earliest pit houses at the site, dating to about A.D. 1070, are located beneath this room block. A pit house has been outlined with rocks to give you an idea of the living space for one family. These early structures are much larger and shallower than later pit houses, but both have central fire pits and four posts in the corners to support the roof.

Note the different masonry styles in the southwest corner of the room. The wall stub of larger stones indicates an earlier outside wall. The smaller stones are typical of interior walls that don't bear the weight of heavy roofs supported by the exterior walls and may indicate a remodeling episode in the growth of the pueblo as more people joined the community and families expanded.