

Backcountry



Bandelier contains 23,000 acres of designated wilderness with more than 70 miles of hiking trails. The terrain is challenging and the scenery spectacular. Elevations range from 5,000 to 10,000 feet. Lush, narrow canyons alternate with sweeping mesa-top vistas. If you wish to explore this beautiful, fragile environment, the following information will help you prepare.

PERMITS are required for ALL overnight hikes and are encouraged for solo day hikers. Permits are free and may be obtained at the Visitor Center. Group size is limited to ten (in some areas to six). Larger groups must split up and camp at least 1/4 mile apart.

Bandelier's backcountry is managed by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. For further information contact:

Superintendent
Bandelier National Monument
HCR 1, Box 1, Suite 15
Los Alamos, NM 87544-9701
(505) 672-3861

SAFETY TIPS

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWING AND OBEYING PARK REGULATIONS - AND FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY.

Problems can be avoided if you are prepared. Ask a ranger about your route; obtain a permit; carry a map and water; read available safety literature.

*All surface water intended for human consumption should be treated. Giardia lamblia exists in Bandelier's backcountry, so be prepared to treat the water or carry your own. Water sources are limited and some are seasonal. Check at the Visitor Center for current information. Summer heat can make hiking difficult. Carry at least one gallon per person per day and **DRINK IT**. Be familiar with symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

* A separate handout on climate in the Los Alamos area is available at the Visitor Center. Spring and fall are the most pleasant seasons for hiking here. Summer heat can make hiking uncomfortable except at the higher elevations. Winter hiking and cross-country ski trips can be exciting challenges for the well-prepared.

*Altitude and rough terrain make hiking more work than mileage would indicate. Check a topographic map.

*Summer thunderstorms produce lightning and sudden drops in temperature. Also, late spring and early winter storms can bring snow and cold conditions. Know the causes and symptoms of hypothermia.

*Be prepared with proper clothing and equipment for the season.

*Use sunscreen, especially at higher elevations.

* Rabies and bubonic plague occur in New Mexico. Learn how to protect yourself.

*Poison ivy is common along watercourses.

HIKING AIDS

Guide to Bandelier National Monument, \$6.95

Trails Illustrated Topographic Map and Hiking Guide to Bandelier, \$7.95

(Add \$3 postage for mail orders)

Available at the Visitor Center or by writing:

SPMA Area Manager
HCR 1, Box 1, Suite 2
Los Alamos, NM 87544-9701
(505) 672-3861

WILDERNESS ETIQUETTE

CAMPsites. Check at the Visitor Center about camping zones and areas off limits to camping. Always choose your site with care. Try to camp at least 50 feet from any trail. Avoid camping in heavily used areas or where vegetation would be trampled by your activity. Do not alter the natural environment in any way. When you leave your campsite, remove all traces of your presence. Camp at least 100 feet from any watercourse or spring to avoid polluting it and to allow wildlife access. Camp at least 1/4 mile away from any visible archaeological site to avoid damaging or disturbing it. Camping in caves is prohibited.

PETS are prohibited in the backcountry.

FIREARMS and other weapons are prohibited within the monument.

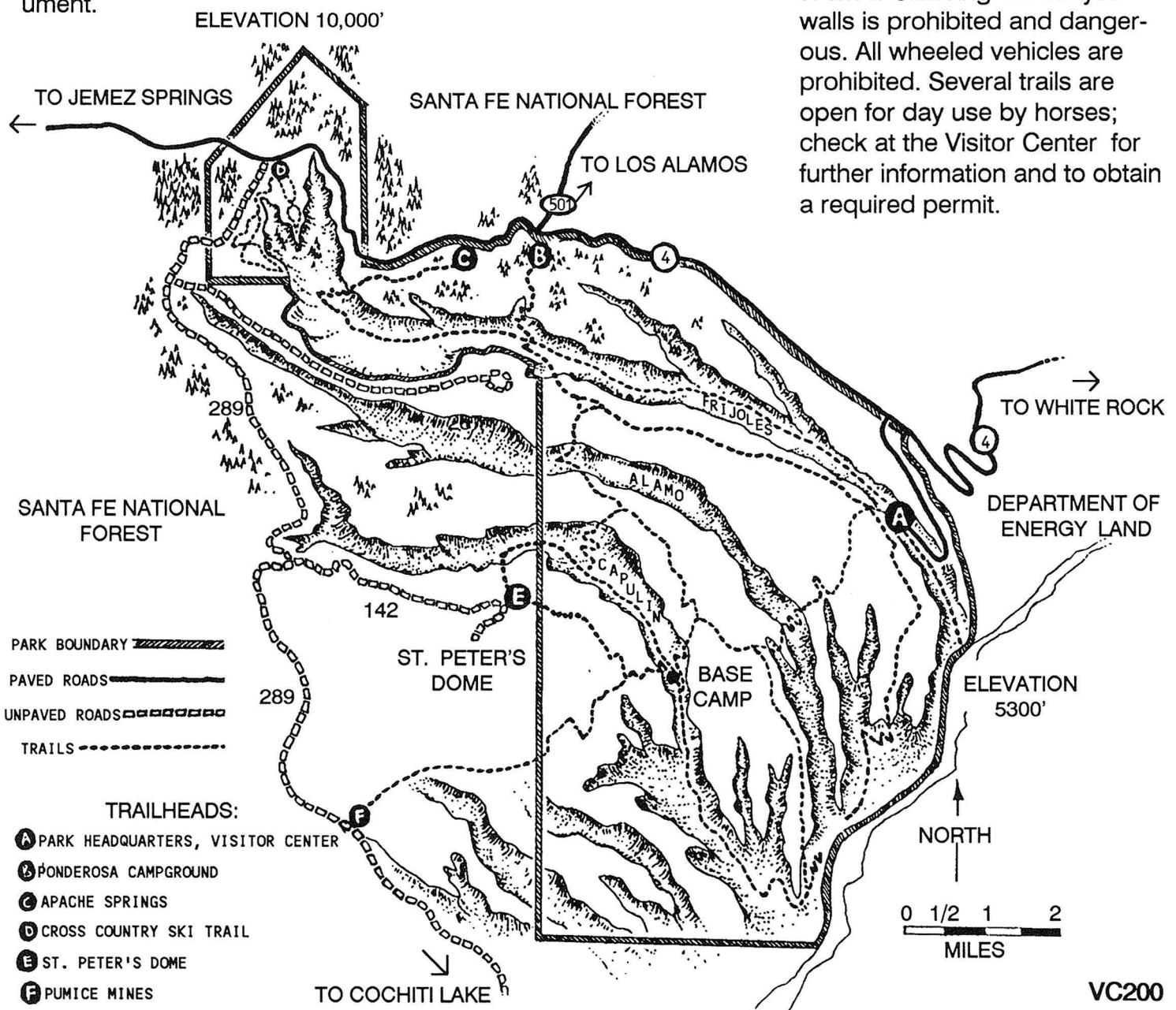
HUMAN WASTE/SANITATION. Human waste is a major source of waterborne diseases such as Giardiasis. Dig a small hole at least 6 inches deep in rich soil and replace the soil when finished. Pack out ALL toilet paper. Burial and burning are inadequate methods for disposing of trash.

CAMP FIRES are prohibited within the park except in Juniper Campground and Ponderosa Campground. Fuel-type backpacker or camp stoves are permitted.

LITTER. If you can carry it in, you can carry it out. This includes food scraps, cigarette butts, toilet paper, and foil scraps. Make sure that those who follow you will enjoy the same pristine wilderness experience that you expect for yourself.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES. There are many unexcavated sites in Bandelier's backcountry. Feel free to explore them but observe the following rules to ensure that the sites will be there for future visitors and archaeological research. Camp at least 1/4 mile from any visible site. When exploring, do not walk on exposed walls or remove anything from a site. Archaeologists rely on the number and location of surface artifacts to gather important information. Damage to cultural resources is a criminal offense subject to imprisonment and/or fines up to \$100,000.

TRAILS. When traveling on maintained trails, do not short-cut; this causes erosion, especially on switchbacks. When off trail, choose your route to minimize erosion and damage to vegetation and archaeological sites. Climbing on canyon walls is prohibited and dangerous. All wheeled vehicles are prohibited. Several trails are open for day use by horses; check at the Visitor Center for further information and to obtain a required permit.



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