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Xenolith Cave

Caving Difficulty – Difficult

Xenolith Cave is for the adventurous, experienced, and well prepared caver. Please bring a helmet, gloves, kneepads, sturdy shoes, and three sources of light. There is no trail in this cave. Scrambling over boulders and through tight crawlways is part of this area. Practice cave safety and only go as far as you feel comfortable.

White-Nose Syndrome

White-nose syndrome (WNS) is a disease that afflicts hibernating bats. It is spreading rapidly and can kill between 90-100 percent of the bats it affects. By following proper decontamination procedures, and not using any gear that has been inside a WNS cave, you help to reduce and slow the spread of WNS. When getting your cave permit, review the following steps with a ranger:

Check: Has any of your gear been inside any other cave?

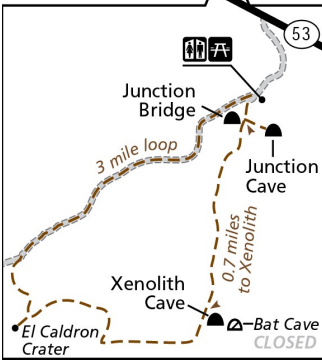
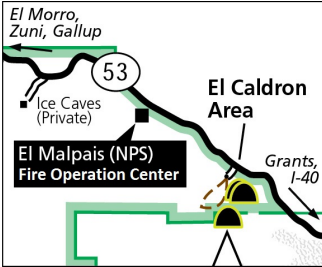
Clean: Remove all debris from gear.

Decontaminate: Any gear that has been in a cave outside of El Malpais needs to be decontaminated. You will also need to walk through a shoe decontamination station, located at trail heads, both before and after your caving experience.

Ask a ranger or call (505) 876-2783 for more details.

Directions

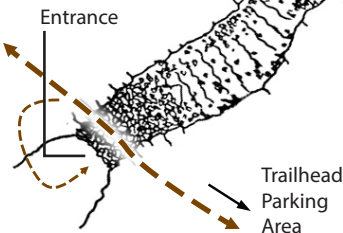
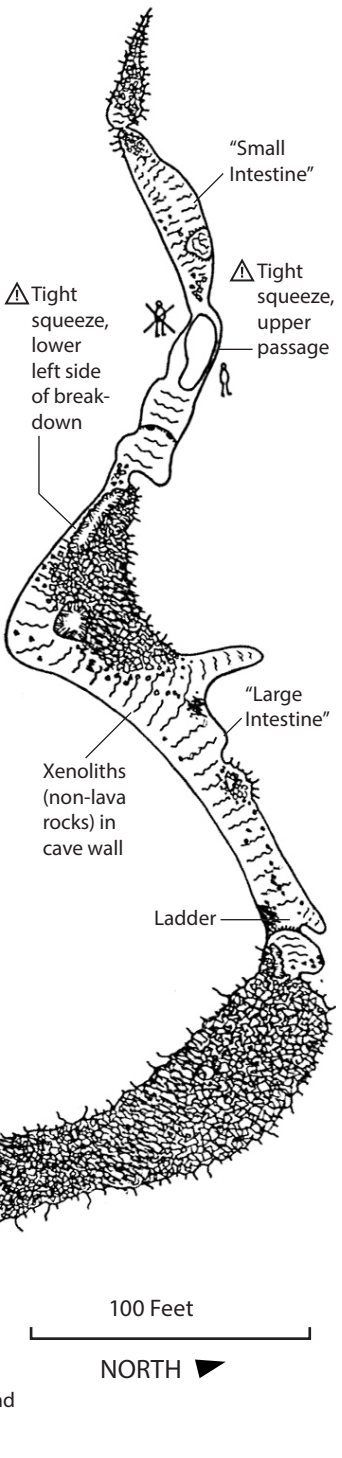
From Highway 53, turn onto the gravel entrance road to the El Calderon trailhead. The trail to the cave is a 0.7 mile hike on a well maintained trail.



Caution

Caving and hiking in remote areas are inherently dangerous. Loose footing, difficult terrain, disorientation, extreme heat and cold, and falls are common risks. Cave ceilings can be low and cause serious head injury. See a park ranger for a caving permit and more information.

Cave Map



For more information, visit www.nps.gov/elma or contact:

El Malpais National Monument
 Visitor Center
 1900 E. Santa Fe Ave.
 Grants, NM 87020
 (505) 876-2783