

Hiking

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service
Lincoln National Forest
Sacramento Ranger District



Rim Trail

Attractions

Located on the western rim of New Mexico's beautiful Sacramento Mountains, the Rim Trail winds through pine and fir trees, quaking aspen and green meadows for 30.5 miles. There are numerous access points along its route offering smaller loop opportunities. The Rim Trail from Cloudcroft to Slide Campground is open only to hikers and pack animals. The remainder of the trail from Slide to Sacramento River is open additionally to bikes and motorcycles. No OHV use is permitted.

Access

From Cloudcroft, take NM130 south 0.8 miles. Turn left onto FR24B where you will find the first trailhead. This section of trail is non-mechanized. For other access points, continue 1.1 miles further and turn right onto NM6565 (Sunspot Hwy). From there you will find numerous access points (please see the map).



Beautiful aspens along the trail (in Karr Canyon).

Use

The Rim Trail is open all year but becomes difficult to hike when snow is present. Cross-country skiers can enjoy this trail during the winter months. One of the most lovely times to make this trip is in the fall when the aspens and maples are at their peak autumn colors.

Much of the trail is located at elevations near 9,000' making it moderate in difficulty due to lesser amounts of oxygen.

Description

The Rim Trail was the first National U.S. Forest Service Trail in New Mexico to be designated as a National Recreational Trail. It is a combination of old Indian paths, railroad grades, homestead trails and logging routes linked together by newer sections built in the 1960's and beyond.

The majority of the trail passes through shaded stands of fir, pine and quaking aspen. At various points along the route there are spectacular views of the Tularosa Basin over 4000' below.

There are primitive dispersed (road-side) camping sites along its route, mostly at points where the trail crosses open roads.

Please call the or visit the Sacramento Ranger District in Cloudcroft at 575-682-2551 for more information.

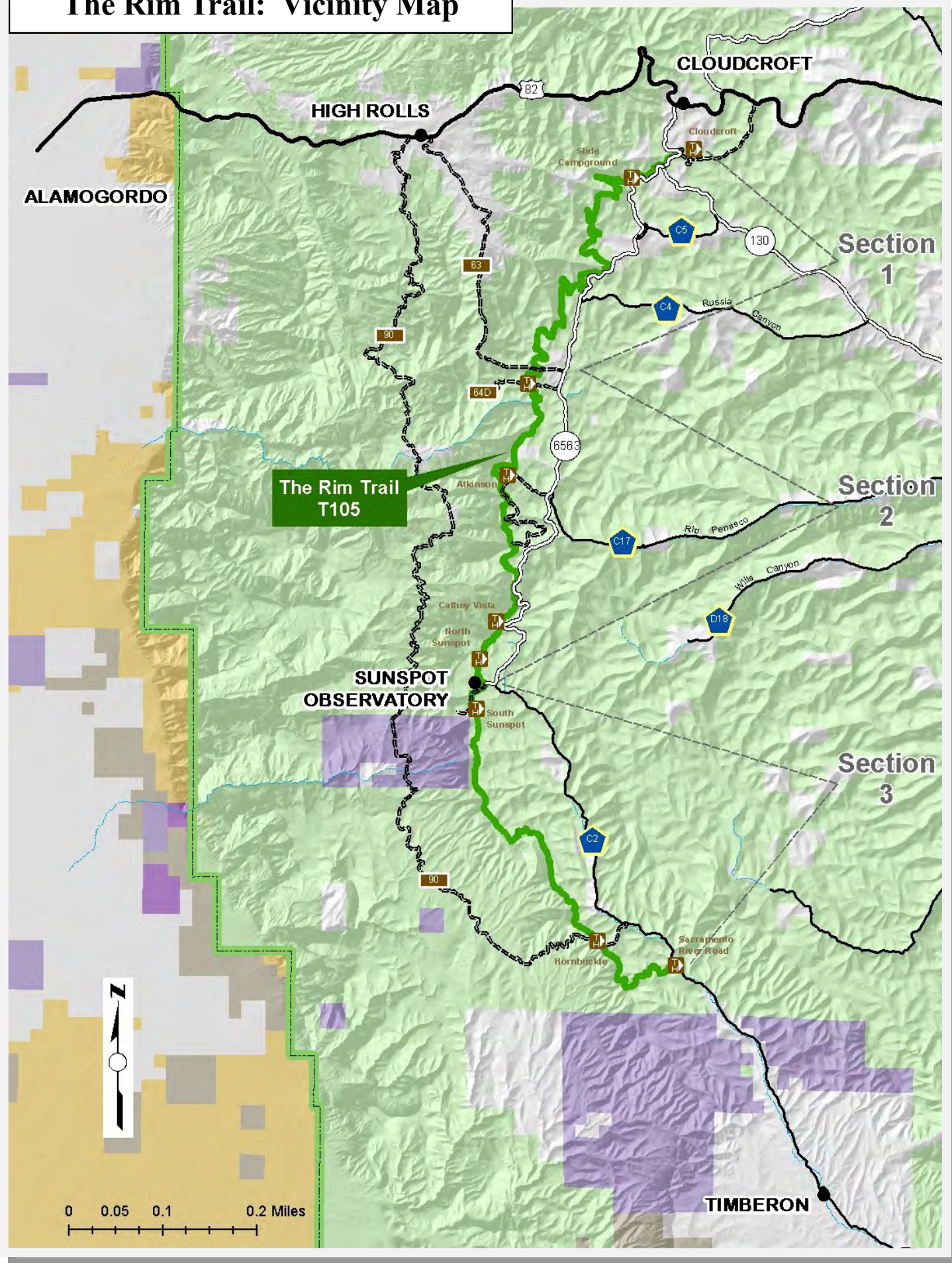
Facilities

No facilities are available along the trail so come prepared with water and extra warm clothing. As always, be sure to **PACK OUT WHAT YOU PACK IN** to leave your public lands better than found them.



The non-motorized section of the trail between Slide Campground and Cloudcroft.

The Rim Trail: Vicinity Map



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Rim Trail (1 of 3): Cloudcroft to Karr Canyon

Attractions

Section 1: Cloudcroft to Karr Canyon (Forest Road 63) is a popular portion of the 30.5 mile long Rim Trail due to its proximity to the Village of Cloudcroft and other easily accessible areas.

Cloudcroft to Slide Group Campground is a 0.9 mile portion of the trail that allows only pedestrian/hiking or pack & saddle traffic. From Slide south the trail adds both mountain bike as well as motorcycle use.

Access

From Cloudcroft, take NM130 south 0.8 miles. Turn left onto FR24B where you will find the first trailhead. This section of trail is non-mechanized (only hikers and pack animals only). Other access points and trailheads can be found along the way as well as parking areas to load and unload your belongings. Many of these parking areas are not immediately adjacent to the trail itself so you will need to travel to the nearest trailhead to begin your journey.

PARKING AREAS			
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	MILEPOST
Parking 1	32.939	-105.752	0.1
Parking 2	32.934	-105.760	0.9
Parking 3	32.911	-105.767	3.1
Parking 4	32.901	-105.901	4.2
Parking 5	32.876	-105.796	

Area Attractions: A few of the popular sites to visit along the Sunspot Highway. All mileposts in the table are measured from the beginning of NM6563, the Sunspot Hwy.

AREA ATTRACTIONS			
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	MILE POST
Hayne's Vista	32.931	-105.762	1.2
Nelson Canyon Vista	32.906	-105.776	3.8
Upper Karr Picnic	32.880	-105.780	5.7
Forest Road 63	32.879	-105.783	5.9

Facilities

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Trailheads

There are many minor trailheads along the length of the Rim Trail. Some are lightly developed with minimal parking, sign and a gate while others are simply road crossings with no development beyond road-side parking.

TRAILHEADS			
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	MILEPOST
Cloudcroft	32.9445	-105.7435	
Slide CG	32.9390	-105.7520	0.1
Forest Road 636	32.9180	-105.7740	3.1
Forest Road 634	32.890	-105.7930	5.0
Forest Road 64D	32.8760	-105.1230	6.2

Distances

Many short to long loops can be enjoyed along the length of this trail to best fit your needs and abilities. The distance matrix below will help you determine your path.

		TO... (distances in miles)					
		Cloudcroft	Slide CG	FR 636	FR 634	FR 63	FR 64D
FROM...	Cloudcroft	0.0	0.8	4.9	10.0	11.2	11.8
	Slide Campground		0.0	4.1	9.0	10.2	10.9
	Forest Road 636			0.0	4.9	6.1	6.7
	Forest Road 634				0.0	1.2	1.8
	Forest Road 63					0.0	0.6
	Forest Road 64D						0.0

The Rim Trail Section 1



Hiking

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Rim Trail (2 of 3): Karr Canyon to Sunspot

Attractions

Section 2: Karr Canyon to Sunspot Solar Observatory is the second-most popular section of the Rim Trail with its accessible trailheads along cross-cutting roads. Hiking here averages approximately 9,000' in elevation so be sure to keep that in mind when choosing an appropriate distance for you to hike.

Along the way you will find a number of interesting stopping points including Cathey Vista and Sunspot Solar Observatory with its official Visitor Center. Both are located near the end of the Sunspot Scenic By-way (NM6563).

Access

From Cloudcroft, take NM130 south until you reach the junction of NM130 and NM6563 (Sunspot Scenic By-way). Along the Sunspot highway are a number of access roads which cross the Rim Trail's paths. Although many are considered unofficial trailheads, they none the less make great access points to begin and end a days hike.

PARKING AREAS			
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	MILEPOST
Parking 5	32.876	-105.796	
Cathey Vista	32.804	-105.805	12.5
Sunspot North	32.790	-105.812	
Sunspot South	32.781	-105.814	

Official parking areas can be found in the table above and marked on the map on the reverse side. Mileposts shown here begin at the beginning of NM6563. Be sure to reset your odometer for best results.

AREA ATTRACTIONS			
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	MILE POST
Upper Karr Picnic	32.880	-105.780	5.7
Sunspot Visitor Center	32.788	-105.818	

Facilities

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Trailheads

There are many minor trailheads along the length of the Rim Trail. Some are lightly developed with minimal parking, sign and a gate while others are simply road crossings with no development beyond road-side parking.

TRAILHEADS			
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	MILEPOST
FR 63	32.879	-105.783	5.9
FR 64D	32.8760	-105.1230	6.2
Cathey Vista	32.804	-105.805	12.5
Sunspot North	32.790	-105.812	
Sunspot South	32.781	-105.814	

Distances

Many short to long loops can be enjoyed along the length of this trail to best fit your needs and abilities. The distance matrix below will help you determine your path based upon miles to the next intersection. Please use the map on the reverse side for the access points.

		TO... (distances in miles)							
		FR 63	FR 64D	T110/111	T235	T125	Cathey	T105A	Sunspot N
FROM...	Forest Road 63	0.0	0.6	3.6	5.5	6.0	7.8	8.7	9.0
	Forest Road 64D		0.0	3.0	4.9	5.4	7.2	8.1	8.4
	Trail 110/111			0.0	1.9	2.4	4.2	5.1	5.4
	Trail 235				0.0	0.5	2.3	3.2	3.5
	Trail 125					0.0	1.8	2.7	3.9
	Cathey Vista						0.0	0.9	1.2
	Trail 105A							0.0	0.3
	Sunspot North								0.0

The Rim Trail Section 2



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Rim Trail (3 of 3):

Sunspot to Sacramento River Road

Attractions

Section 3: Sunspot Solar Observatory to Sacramento River Road is the southern-most and newest section of the Rim Trail.

Access

There are 3 access points to this portion of the trail with a convenient parking area found at the spot where FR5010 (the road to Apache Point Observatory) meets the Rim Trail.

PARKING AREAS		
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
Waterfall	32.714	-105.752
Apple Tree	32.714	-105.747
End of Trail	32.705	-105.742

AREA ATTRACTIONS		
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
Sunspot Visitor Center	32.788	-105.818
Sacramento Lookout	32.747	-105.761
Cathey Vista	32.804	-105.805

Area Attractions: (above) A few of the popular sites to visit along the Sunspot Highway. All mileposts in the table are measured from the beginning of NM6563, the Sunspot Hwy.



Trailhead at the Sunspot North site.

Facilities

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Trailheads

There are many minor trailheads along the length of the Rim Trail. Some are lightly developed with minimal parking, sign and a gate while others are simply road crossings with no development beyond road-side parking.

TRAILHEADS		
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
Sunspot North	32.790	-105.812
Sunspot South	32.781	-105.814
Hornbuckle Ridge	32.711	-105.769
Sacramento River	32.705	-105.742

Distances

Many short to long loops can be enjoyed along the length of this trail to best fit your needs and abilities. The distance matrix below will help you determine your path based upon miles to the next intersection. Please use the map on the reverse side for the access points.

		TO... (distances in miles)				
		Sunspot N	Sunspot S	T90V	FR90	End
FROM...	Sunspot North	0.0	0.9	4.2	7.9	10.7
	Sunspot South		0.0	3.3	7.0	9.8
	Trail 90V			0.0	3.7	6.5
	FR90				0.0	2.8
	End					0.0

The Rim Trail Section 3

