

T60 Mitten Bar Trail

Smokey Bear Ranger District



T60

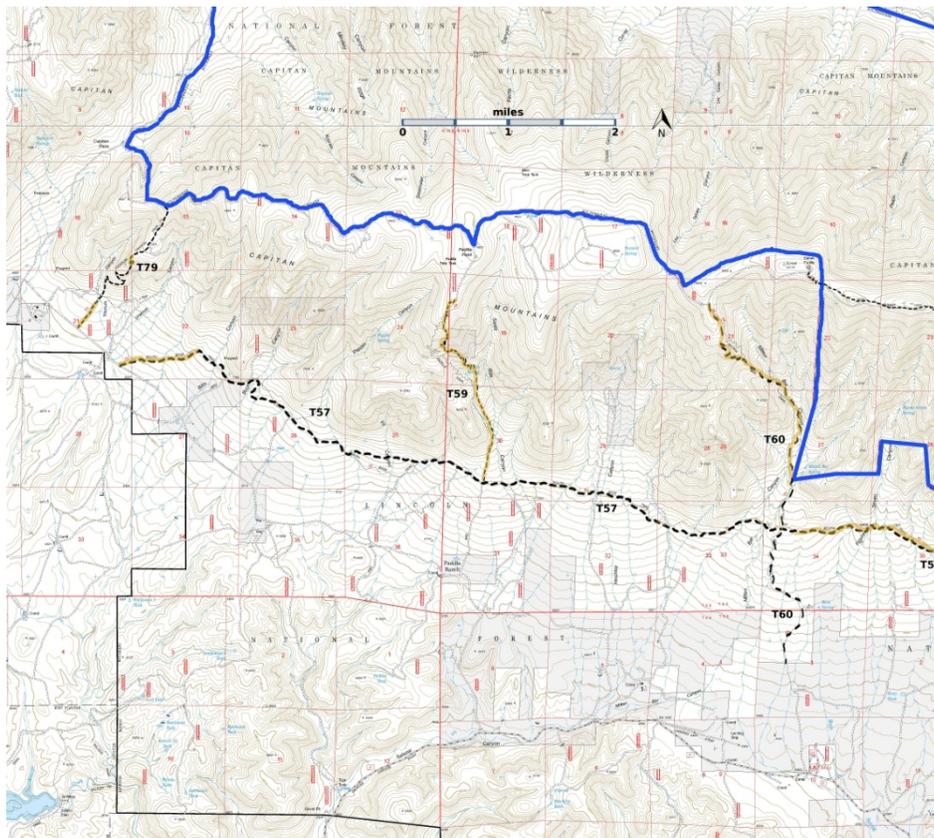
GPS Track (as .GPX)

Left click to open in your browser; then save from browser.

LENGTH	ELEVATION	DIFFICULTY	SCENERY
10.6 miles see text	7320 - 9720 ft 2400 ft difference	Difficult	3

NOTE: This trail is also commonly (mis)named as Mitt and Bar Trail.

Allowed Usage				



[Link to map color/symbol codes](#)

T57 (partial), T59, T60, and T79 are shown as black dashed lines on the map. . Yellow over a trail indicates that that portion of the trail is intermittent or hard to follow. The map image(s) may be downloaded through the links below. The image can then be expanded and/or manipulated at high resolution.

Note: FS maps do not correctly describe T60, particularly in its upper mile.

Caution: T60 is a very difficult hike. From its upper end at FR56, it is 3.2 trail miles to the intersection of T60 and T57. Officially T60 extends another 1.4 miles south of this intersection. However, that lower section is land-locked on the east, south, and west by private property. It is not a viable exit to FR57 Salazar Canyon Road. The best choice is to exit to the west along T57, a distance of 7.4 miles. Total: $3.2 + 7.4 = 10.6$ miles. The gpx track provided with this page is for the full 4.6 miles length of T60.

DESCRIPTION:

Current Description (2018)

Hikers should download the gpx track for T60 and follow it in order to hike T60.

The upper trailhead is well-signed. However, there are many fallen trees across T60, a result of the damage done by the fire. In the first half-mile there is extensive rock-work, which made it possible to locate the trail, but hiking along this section is very difficult because of the fallen trees. Then, lo and behold, the trail emerges in the switchback section with a very well defined trail and few fallen trees. After this section, the trail follows a steep ridge (gradients near 40%) down to the canyon. Actually there is very little visible trail in this section – just make your way down to the green area that marks the water from the spring (not Mitten Bar spring).

Once you reach the canyon bottom, locate the black vinyl pipe and follow it down canyon. You will have to work your way over/around many fallen trees, but at least you will have the pipe to follow. At a large cairn, leave the black pipe path and work your way along the ridge and down into the drainage on your left (250 feet). If you cross the drainage at the right point, as you come out of the drainage you can find an old wooden sign that says “Mitt Bar Canyon”.

Make your way south and south east – sometimes you can find the depression that marks old tread – to cross the ridge. Once you reach the old road, you are in great shape. Follow it to the intersection of T60 and T57.

John Stockert’s Description (1994, before the fire)

This rugged trail passes through a great diversity of vegetation. It may take more time to access its lower trailhead than to hike T60 itself! From its upper terminus, the path is well constructed with stone, and is discernible along its first mile as it passes moss-covered rocks and threads through a splendid, thick, mixed conifer forest with a variety of trees from young saplings to those fully mature. The gradient is no more than 20%, and usually 15% or less, along this exquisite path. At mile 1.0 from the upper end is an old helipad, a small open area with great views.

Immediately beyond, the trail takes on a *totally different character* and becomes steep (up to more than 40%) and very poor. At mile 1.7 is the incorrectly signed Mitt Bar Spring, a nice scenic spot. Actually, this spring is not officially named and is shown as an unnamed spring on the Capitan Mountains Wilderness Map. Used by a local rancher, the water comes from a small concrete spring box. Beautiful moss-covered rocks line the sides of the small, rocky, stream channel. Just 0.1 mile downstream are conifers upwards of 100 feet high, and the trunk of one Douglas-fir is 4.5 feet in diameter!

At mile 2.7, a fallen, deteriorated sign indicates "Mitten Bar Spring" at the beginning of a vague spur trail to the east. The spring is reached in about 800 feet by taking a diminishing path, which eventually fades out. The spring consists of a series of stagnant puddles in a stream bed (1994). Upon returning to T60, the trail soon takes on the appearance of an old road for its last 0.5 mile to the signed, lower trailhead.

It is worth the effort to hike down from the upper trailhead to the old helipad and then return. For the well-seasoned hiker, visiting the unnamed spring and tall tree area just beyond is also worthwhile. However, access to this area is very difficult, even if one hikes from the upper trailhead and plans to walk on through. It is not recommended to go from the lower trailhead to the upper end unless the hiker is experienced, in excellent health and conditioning, and plans to spend more than a day.

ACCESS: A high clearance vehicle is required to access both trailheads; 4-wheel drive is strongly recommended for FR56. To reach the upper trailhead, begin in Capitan at the New Mexico NM48 and US380 intersection. Drive US380 east 2.0 miles to FR56, Capitan Pass Road, also known as County Road C001. Turn left and follow FR56 14.9 miles to the signed upper T60 trailhead. An acceptable place to park must be sought along the narrow, exposed FR56.

At mile 5.4, the maintained FR56 turns right and becomes FR338, also known as County Road C003. *Do not turn right.* Instead, proceed straight ahead over a rutty set of tracks signed as FR56 that gives way to a rough route. *Do not attempt if wet.* At mile 7.1 (on Capitan Pass), turn right to continue following FR56 that becomes steep and rocky until a ridge is reached at mile 9.3. Beyond here the road to the trailhead is periodically rocky and rough.

Reaching the lower trailhead is long and difficult. No access is available directly south from this trailhead to FR338 because private property in between is closed to trail users. However, there are three other ways for access: See the T59 ACCESS directions for locating two of those ways from that trail's lower terminus. After finding the lower T59 trailhead, follow T57 east 3.3 miles to the signed T60 junction. The wooden sign at the T57/T60 intersection has a arrow that points downhill rather than uphill.

GPS Coordinates for Key Points

NAD83	Lat/Lon hddd mm ss.s	UTM (13 S)
Trailhead (North)	N33 36 04.9 W105 22 34.7	465088 3718020
Cairn (leave pipeline)	N33 34 47.6 W105 21 50.1	466228 3715636
Old Sign	N33 34 46.8 W105 21 47.7	466290 3715612
Old Road (upper end)	N33 34 35.5 W105 21 46.1	466330 3715264
Junction of T57 and T60	N33 34 16.9 W105 21 52.7	466157 3714690

Links to Other Resources

[Capitan Mountains Area-p1 \(10 MB\)](#)

[Capitan Pass Topo Map](#)

[Capitan Peak Topo Map](#)

Last Hiked: 7/21/2018

1/3/2020