

## Fort Stanton Cave

With eleven miles of mapped passages in its main section, the cave is open for recreational caving under permit from April 15 to November 1. The cave is widely known for its rare velvet formations, and there are also interesting helictites, aragonite, selenite needles, and various forms of gypsum. During the winter months the cave is closed to protect hibernating bats. The cave is gated to protect other unique resources and to prevent unsupervised visitation.

You may visit this undeveloped "wild" cave by obtaining a permit from the BLM Roswell Field Office. You must provide your own caving equipment and observe the rules of conduct within the cave. Download a **cave permit application**, or it can be obtained from the Roswell Field Office.

### Images

» [switch to thumbnails](#)

The [Flash Player](#) and [a browser with Javascript support](#) are needed..

### Camping

Fort Stanton is open to overnight camping with a 14-day maximum length of stay. There are two small formal camping areas: The equestrian trailhead on NM 220 and a small campground at the Fort Stanton Cave entrance.

- **Equestrian trailhead.**

Groups and individuals can camp in the parking lot. A Vault toilet and facilities for equine stock are present. Picketing your horses is preferable to using corrals or panels as it is less damaging to the site.

- **Cave entrance.**

Several tables and fire rings are located here, as well as a vault toilet. The access road is rough and

not suitable to many vehicles. This campground primarily serves those who have been issued a permit to enter the cave.

## **Roads**

There are 20 miles of designated roads within the NCA. Vehicles are limited to designated routes which will be marked with signs stating open or closed.

## **Location / Access**

From Capitan, NM, drive on US 380 east 4.25 miles to NM 220. From Lincoln, NM, drive west 7.7 miles to NM 220. Drive south one mile to the equestrian trailhead. The historic Fort Stanton is approximately one mile further on NM 220. BLM is investigating the opportunity to provide visitor services information about the NCA at Lincoln, Capitan, Ruidoso, and at the historic Fort Stanton.

**More Info:** Check out the [BLM web page](#) for more detailed info.