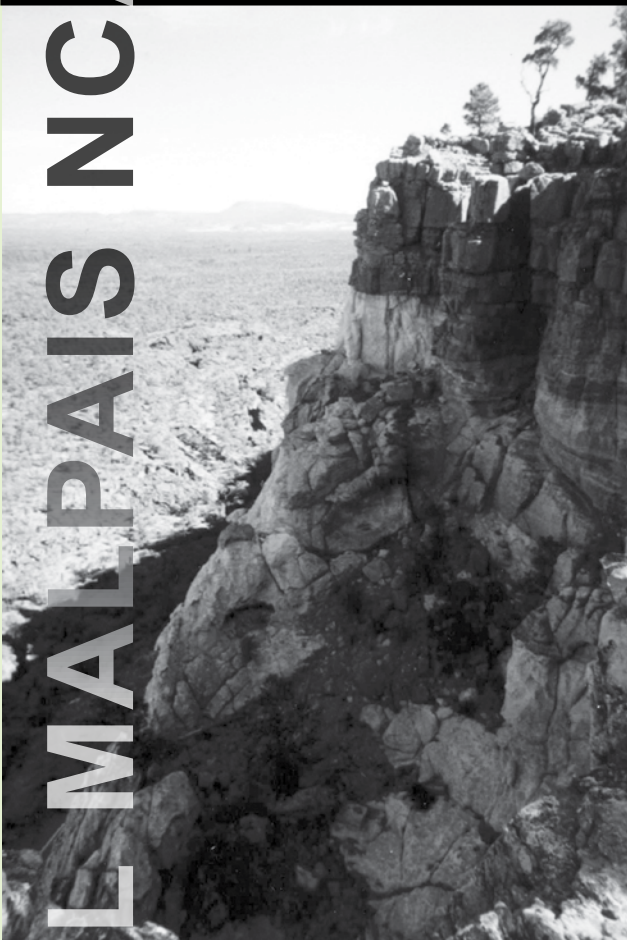


Narrows Rim

EL MALPAIS NCA

New Mexico • Rio Puerco Field Office



Safety Tips

- Wear proper clothing. Even in summer, carry a flashlight and light jacket in case you are caught out after nightfall. Wear good walking shoes or hiking shoes.
- Carry plenty of water, up to a gallon (4 liters) per person per day when performing strenuous activity in hot weather. Also bring a high energy snack.
- It is best to hike with at least one other person. If you go alone, always leave word as to where you are going, what time you are leaving and what time you expect to return.
- Please don't disturb wildlife. There are rattlesnakes in this part of the country, but they won't bother you if you don't bother them.
- If you become lost, stay in one place. You will conserve your energy and make it easier for searchers to find you.
- In case of accident or lost person, notify the nearest New Mexico State Police office, they will then notify a search and rescue field coordinator 505/ 287-4141.
- Know your limitations; don't attempt climbs or hikes that you don't have the ability, equipment, or time to accomplish. Do not climb on cliffs unless you are an experienced rock climber.

Contact us at:
 El Malpais National Conservation Area
 Bureau of Land Management
 P.O. Box 846
 Grants, New Mexico 87020
 505/287-7911
www.blm.gov/nm
 or
 Northwest New Mexico Visitor Center
 1900 East Santa Fe Avenue
 Grants, New Mexico 87020
 505/876-2783
www.nps.gov/elma



A thing of beauty is a joy forever.

John Keats



Leave No Trace: Plan ahead and prepare - Travel and camp on durable surfaces - Dispose of waste properly - Leave what you find - Minimize campfire impacts - Respect wildlife - Be considerate of other visitors.

Within the El Malpais National Conservation Area lies *the Narrows*. It is named for the 3-mile narrow corridor that developed when lava flowed close to the base of a 500-foot sandstone mesa. Most of the lava observed is from McCarty's crater, and at approximately 1500 years old, it is the youngest flow in the area.

The trailhead and parking area for the Narrows Rim Trail are located at the south end of the Narrows Picnic Area, which is 21 miles south of I-40 on NM 117. The trail is approximately 4 miles (8 miles round trip) along the rim of the mesa.

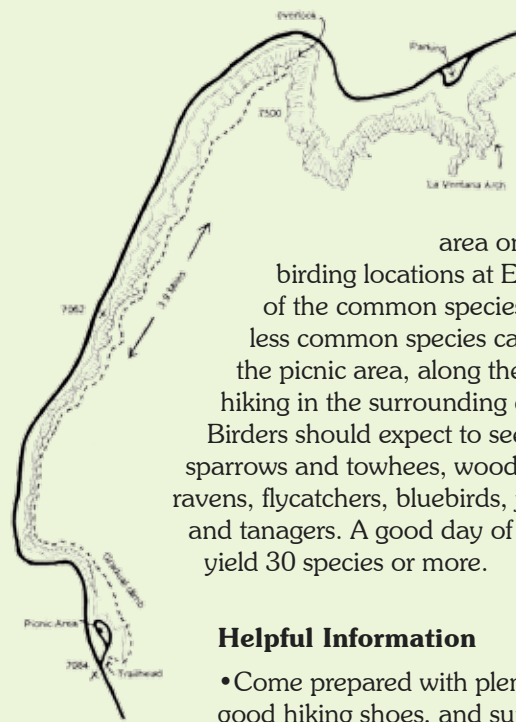
Narrows Rim Trail gives hikers the opportunity to witness geologic processes, thousands of years apart. Stroll along the ancient mesa top and view the much younger lava flows below. This remarkable scenery of the lava beds and surrounding countryside ends with a picturesque view of La Ventana Natural Arch.



The views from the narrows rim are spectacular to say the least. Going to the far end, a distance of 3 miles, will result in excellent vistas.

Abundant in the spring and summer, a variety of wildflowers can be found along this trail. Ponderosa pine, pinon/juniper woodland and a variety of oak and shrub species line the path and provide shady spots for a rest and to enjoy the views.

Lucky hikers might get the opportunity to see many species of wildlife. Mule Deer, Elk, Bobcat, and Black Bear have been spotted on the trail. To the careful eye, tracks and droppings can reveal the other creatures that use this trail. Rabbits, squirrels, birds, chipmunks and lizards are plentiful.



The varied vegetation and habitats make the Narrows Rim Trail and surrounding area one of the best birding locations at El Malpais. Most of the common species and many less common species can be seen at the picnic area, along the trail or by hiking in the surrounding countryside. Birders should expect to see raptors, sparrows and towhees, woodpeckers, ravens, flycatchers, bluebirds, jays, warblers and tanagers. A good day of birding should yield 30 species or more.

Helpful Information

- Come prepared with plenty of water, good hiking shoes, and sunscreen.
- During the summer months, thunder-storms build quickly and lightening is often present.
- The trail is located on the very top of a mesa, so it is recommended that hikers head back or move to a lower elevation as soon as a storm starts moving in.
- The altitude of this hike is over 7,000 feet, so for those who are not yet acclimated to the elevation, it's a good idea to allow plenty of time for rest stops.
- Pets are permitted on the trail but are required to be on a leash.
- This is a designated wilderness area and is not open to bicycles.

Check in with the Ranger Station, (9 miles south of I-40 on NM 117) for more information on this hike as well as other great hiking opportunities within El Malpais.



El Malpais Ranger Station is open seven days a week from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.