



Harquahala Mountains

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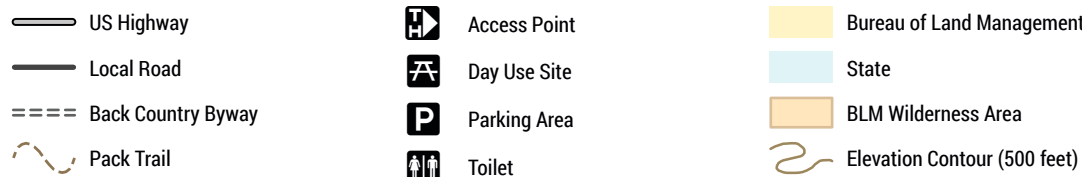
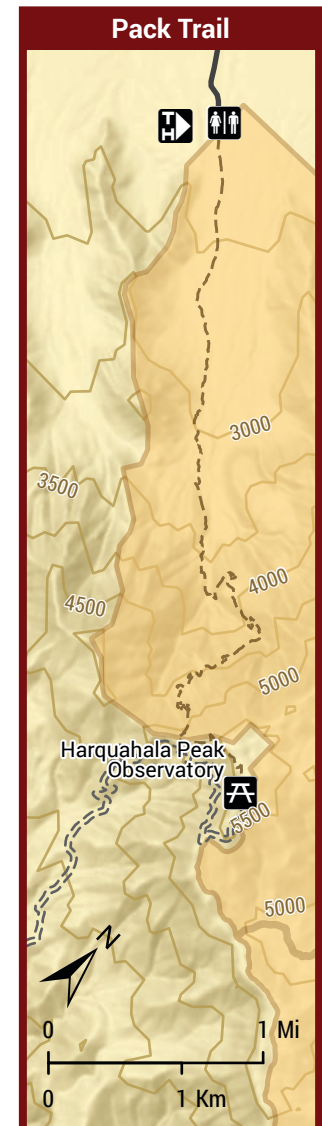
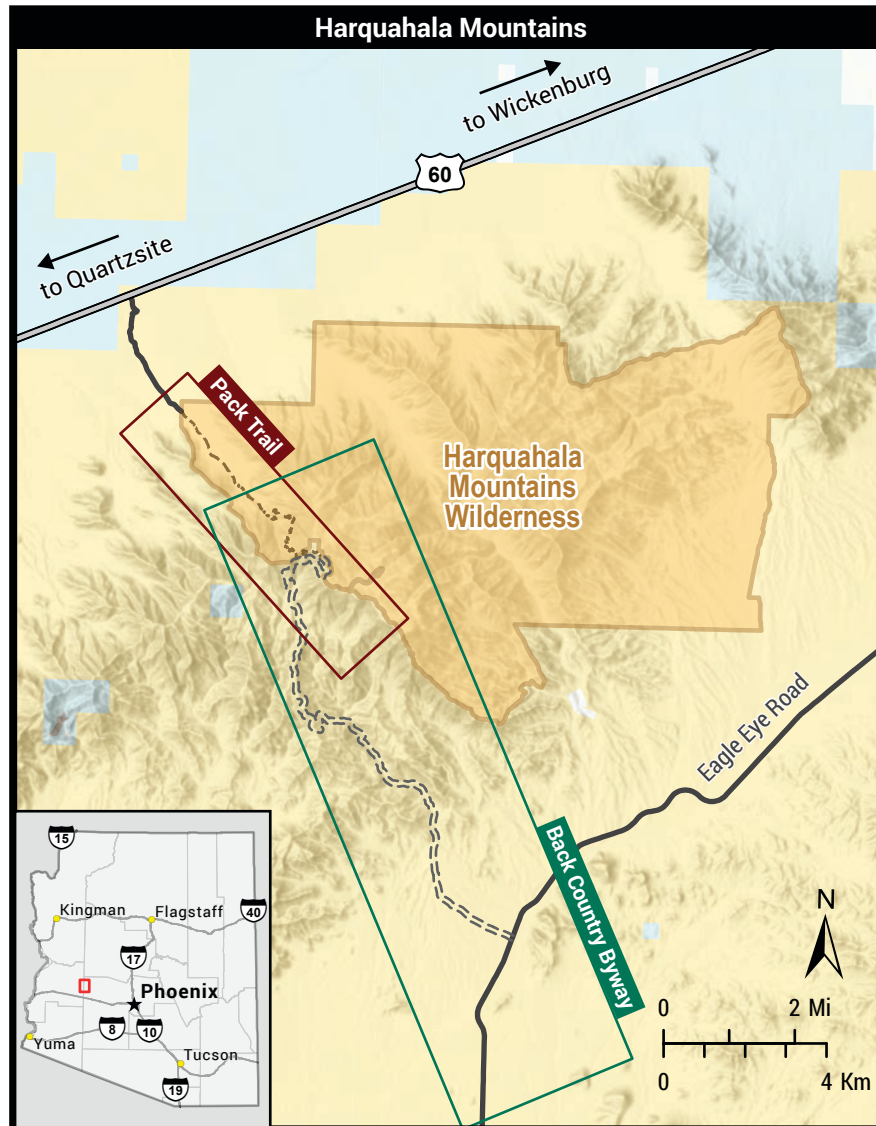
The 22,880-acre **Harquahala Mountains Wilderness** lies in Maricopa and La Paz counties, 80 miles northwest of Phoenix. This wilderness contains part of one of western Arizona's largest desert mountain ranges. The 5,691-foot-high Harquahala Mountain, the highest point in southwest Arizona, provides a breathtaking panorama of surrounding desert and distant mountain ranges.

The **Harquahala Mountain Back Country Byway** is a 10.5-mile challenging, steep, winding, and narrow road for four-wheel-drive, high-clearance vehicles.

Harquahala Pack Trail is an extremely steep 5.4-mile hike to the summit of Harquahala Mountain.

Both trails end at the summit, site of the **Harquahala Peak Observatory**, which was built in 1920 by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory to measure and record solar activity. From 1920-1925 a hardy group of scientists lived and worked here. How these individuals completed their work while struggling with its seclusion and weather, tells of dedicated scientific pursuit and American inventiveness.

Motorized or mechanized equipment is prohibited in the wilderness area.



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