

Kid, Kit Carson, and General "Black Jack" Pershing. The post was also a Merchant Marine hospital and tuberculosis sanatorium, and World War II prisoner of war camp. Today, the Fort area is still active and the Fort Stanton Museum is open on a limited basis.



Special thanks to the American Endurance Ride Conference, the Lincoln County Sheriff's Posse, the Village of Capitan and other local, state and national groups for volunteering their time to develop the 60 miles of multi-use trails for your enjoyment of the public lands.

#### GETTING THERE

Traveling on U.S. Highway 380: From the Village of Capitan, drive east 4.25 miles. Traveling from the historic town of Lincoln drive 7.7 miles west. Turn south on New Mexico State Highway 220 for one mile and you will arrive at the BLM Horse Trails Parking Lot. The State-owned historic Fort Stanton is about one mile further on State Highway 220.



All photos courtesy of Paul T. Happel Photography

BLM/NM/GI-08-01-1232



For further information:  
Bureau of Land Management  
Roswell Field Office  
2909 West 2nd Street  
Roswell, New Mexico 88201  
575/627-0272  
or  
visit [www.blm.gov/nm](http://www.blm.gov/nm)

# Fort Stanton

## Roads and Trails

New Mexico • Roswell Field Office



The goal of life is living in agreement with nature.

Zeno

## Welcome to Roads and Trails of Fort Stanton!

Welcome to the BLM Fort Stanton Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Fort Stanton was established in 1855 as a cavalry fort. Today, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages the area for biological, archaeological, scientific and quality recreation opportunities.

#### TRAILS

The area has 60 miles of horse/hike/mountain bike trails. It is likely that cavalry patrols followed parts of the same trails in the 1850s through the turn of the century. Use caution in steep, loose, rocky areas. Most of the trails are not mechanically constructed or designed to any standard. The majority of the trails start at the Horse Trails Parking Lot on Highway 220. Hitching rails, stock water, and a toilet are located in the parking lot. Water and electric hookups are available for special events. The trail system design allows equestrians, hikers and mountain bikers to enjoy the back country of Fort Stanton.



Please stay on designated roads within the Fort Stanton ACEC. Roads are marked with signs stating if the road is open or closed. Trails are marked with flexible fiberglass markers with the trail name or arrow. Cross-country horse and foot travel is encouraged. Mountain bikers are asked to stay on established trails to protect the rider and bike.

#### RIO BONITO PETROGLYPH NATIONAL RECREATION TRAIL

Hike the 2-mile Petroglyph Trail along the Rio Bonito and glimpse the past. The Petroglyph Rock, a huge 12-foot high bolder is located at the midpoint in the trail in the river bed. Other petroglyphs can be found on the rock faces and boulders within the area. The Jornada Mogollon pecked these rock symbols about 400 years ago. Petroglyphs and other durable items are the only remains to link to the culture and lifestyle of these ancient

people. The trail length is easy to moderate hiking, with a few hills, and areas with loose footing. Plan to spend at least one hour on the trail. The trail can be reached



from New Mexico State Highway 220 west of the Sierra Blanca Regional Airport. Follow the signs stating "Upper Rio Bonito" to the bottom of the hill and turn left for approximately one mile until you reach the trail head.

#### FORT STANTON CAVE

Fort Stanton Cave is a "wild" cave and the third longest cave in New Mexico with 13 plus miles of passage. In 2001 the Snowy River portion of the cave was discovered and contains the longest cave formation in the world. The cave is open for recreational exploring by permit from April 15 to November 1, and is closed during the winter months to protect hibernating bats. The cave is locked to protect other unique resources and to prevent



unsuspecting visitors from serious injury. You may visit the cave by contacting the BLM Roswell Field Office.

#### HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Fort Stanton is a rich historical and pre-historic area. Please do not remove historic or pre-historic items from the area. Pre-historic artifacts from early tribes and historic items enable us to learn about the past and en-

able us to understand what it may have been like 100 to 400 years ago. Please take pictures and leave only foot prints so others can enjoy the miracle of discovery.

#### CAMPING

Fort Stanton is open to overnight camping with a 14-day length of stay. There are no formal campgrounds within the area. Equestrian groups and individuals camp in the horse trails parking lot. There are facilities for equine stock, a toilet and equestrian water. When camping in the back country please picket your equine stock to lessen the damage to the area.

#### HUNTING AND TRAPPING

Hunting and trapping is allowed within the 24,000-acre Fort Stanton ACEC. Please control your pets so they are not involved or entangled with authorized trapping within the area. Only youth are allowed to hunt deer within the Fort Stanton Area. The hunting and trapping



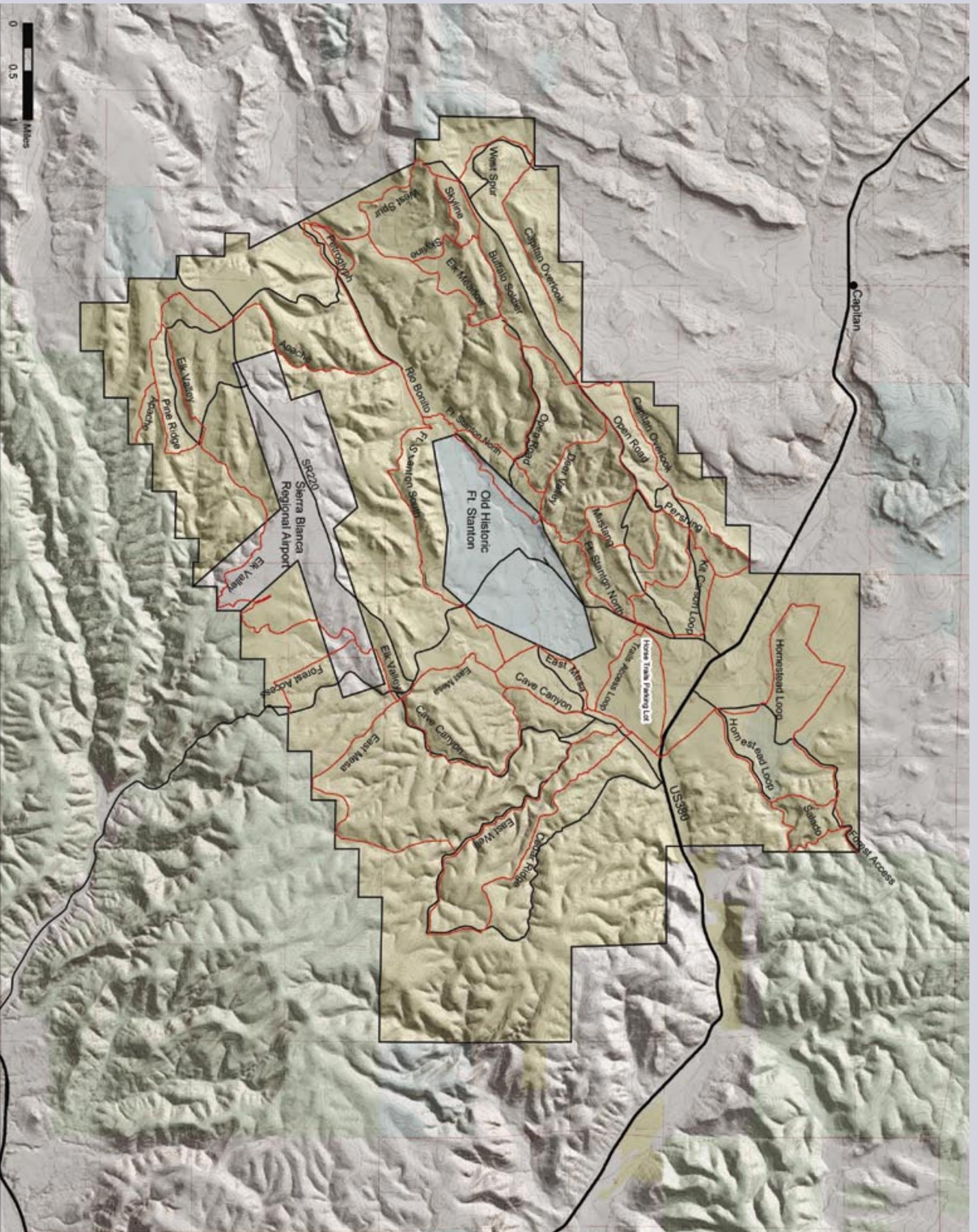
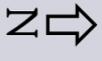
is under the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish Department rules and regulations for all game species.

#### HISTORIC FORT STANTON

The 24,000-acre area is within the original historic Fort Stanton Military Reservation. The military reserve was carved out of the Mescalero Apache homelands in the 1850s. During these tumultuous times, the 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry Buffalo Soldiers were sent to the New Mexico Territory to protect the settlers in the area.

Historic Fort Stanton is one of the few intact frontier forts in the west. Many of the original fort buildings still stand. From 1855 through 1896, the Fort played host to some of the most colorful military units and personalities of the west, including the 9th Cavalry and 10th Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry Buffalo Soldiers, Billy the

- Bureau of Land Management
- Forest Service
- Private
- State
- Designated Trails
- Open Roads



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.