

## *Discover an oasis in the desert*

The 1,200 acre Black River Recreation Area is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to provide recreation and environmental education opportunities while maintaining a healthy river system.

The Black River flows for 50 miles and joins the Pecos River south of Carlsbad. Some of the water in the river comes from rain in the Guadalupe Mountains; much of the water comes from springs. Caves, sinkholes and underground rivers are common in landscapes like this that are largely composed of limestone.

The river's streams, pools and shorelines are home to rare species of plants, fish and reptiles. During migration seasons, the area teems with birds, including waterfowl, shorebirds and songbirds. Lush desert vegetation and clear pools of water provide excellent opportunities for viewing wildlife.

## *Location*

The Black River Recreation Area is located about 26 miles southwest of Carlsbad, NM. From Carlsbad, take US 62/180 south for about 25 miles and turn west onto CR 418. Travel another 2 miles and turn left at the fork.

## *Hours/Fees*

Open year-round. The trails and recreation area are for day-use only. Admission is free.

# Black River Recreation Area

*Information/trail guide*

For more information contact:

Bureau of Land Management  
Carlsbad Field Office  
620 E. Greene Street  
Carlsbad, NM 88220  
(575) 234-5972



## Activities

- Hiking
- Wildlife viewing
- Photography
- Picnicking
- Swimming (at your own risk)
- Fishing (with current license)



Cottonwood Day-Use Area

## Trail Guide

### Cottonwood Day-Use Area

This area includes the picnic shelters and toilets near the parking lot and the viewing platform at the end of this path. From the viewing platform, you can access two trails: Roadrunner Trail to the north and Heron Trail to the south. Drinking water is not available. Neither trail is wheelchair accessible.

### Roadrunner Trail

This 2.3-mile long trail follows the river and takes about 1-1½ hours for a round trip hike. Along the trail you will find interpretive sign panels that explain the natural and cultural of the area.

### Heron Trail

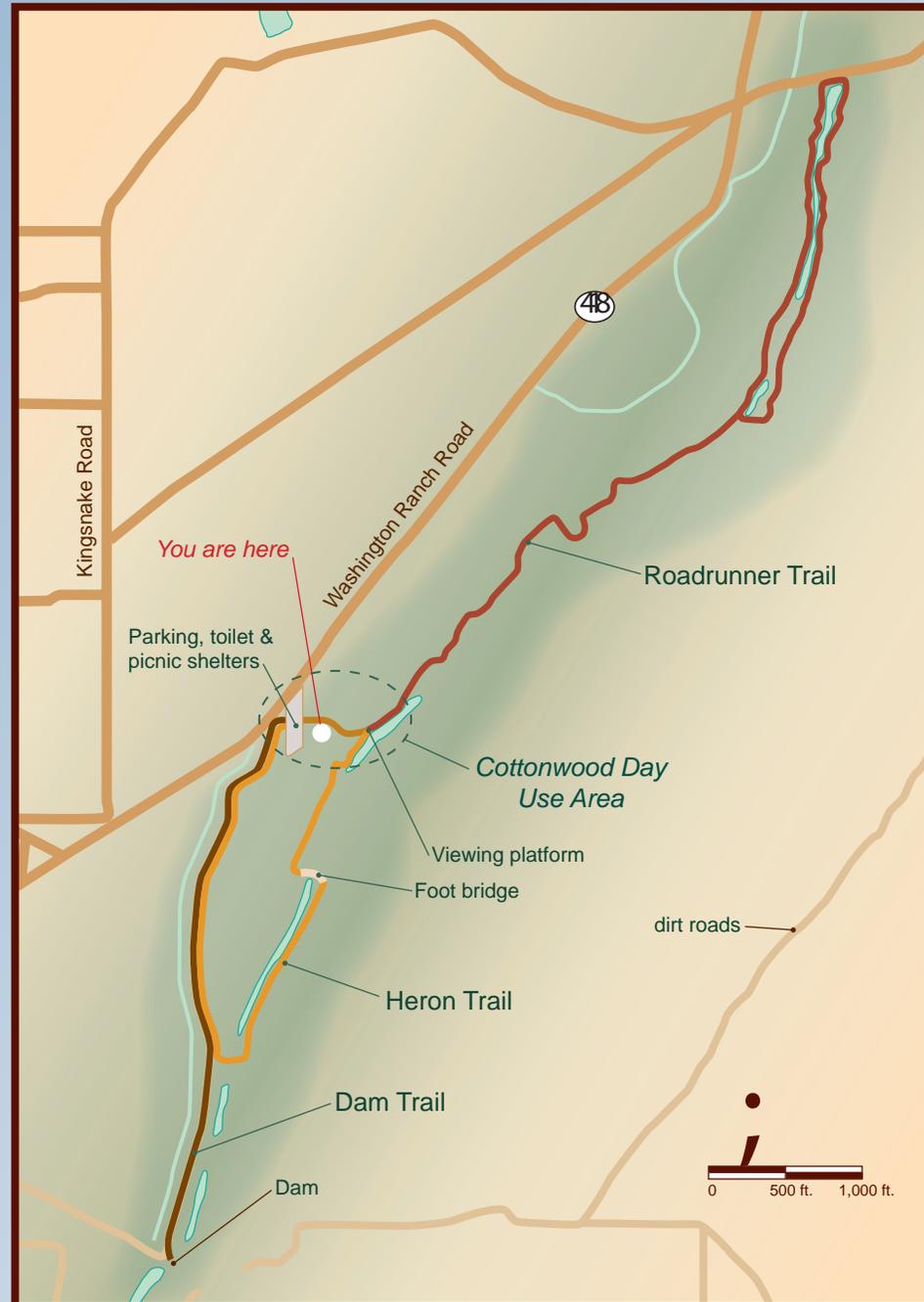
This 1.5-mile long trail loops around one of the largest pools in the river. Along the way you can see where the river goes underground. It takes about 45 minutes for a round trip hike.

### Dam Trail

This trail starts at the parking area and follows a dirt road to a small dam on the Black River. This easy hike is a 1.5-mile round trip and takes about 45 minutes.

# Black River Recreation Area

## Site map



*Make sure to bring plenty of water and keep your pets on a leash.  
Please do not litter and be respectful of wildlife.*



## A rare riparian habitat

Habitats next to streams, lakes and ponds are called riparian. The riparian habitat you see here provides food sources and nesting sites for many animals that live next to the river. It also permits many other animals to survive in the surrounding dry, rocky landscape by providing a year-round water source. Shade created by shrubs and cottonwood trees near the riverbank helps to maintain a more constant water temperature, which supports even more wildlife.



Great Blue Heron

## Restrictions

- No overnight camping
- No motorized boating
- No discharge of firearms or weapons
- No hunting or trapping
- No fireworks
- No OHV's or horses
- No glass containers
- No cutting, collection or removal of plants or trees including dead/down