

Rim Trail



Attractions

Located on the western rim of New Mexico's beautiful Sacramento Mountains, the Rim Trail winds through pine and fir trees, quaking aspen and green meadows for 30.5 miles. There are numerous access points along its route offering smaller loop opportunities. The Rim Trail from Cloudcroft to Slide Campground is open only to hikers and pack animals. The remainder of the trail from Slide to Sacramento River is open additionally to bikes and motorcycles. No OHV use is permitted



Figure 1 – Beautiful aspen along the Rim Trail in Karr Canyon

Access

From Cloudcroft, take NM130 south 0.8 miles. Turn left onto FR24B where you will find the first trailhead. This section of trail is non-mechanized. For other access points, continue 1.1 miles further on NM130 and turn right onto NM6563 (Sunspot Hwy). From there you will find numerous access points (please see maps).

Use

The Rim Trail is open all year but becomes difficult to hike when snow is present. Cross-country skiers can enjoy this trail during winter months. One of the loveliest times to make this trip is in the fall when the aspens and maples are at their peak autumn colors.

Much of the trail is located at elevations near 9,000' making it moderate in difficulty due to less oxygen.

Narrative

The Rim Trail was the first U.S. Forest Service Trail in New Mexico to be designated as a National Recreation Trail. It is a combination of old Indian paths, railroad grades, homestead trails and logging routes linked together by newer section built in the 1960's and beyond.

The majority of the trail passes through shaded stands of fir, pine and quaking aspen. At various points along the route there are spectacular views of the Tularosa Basin over 4,000' below.

There are primitive dispersed (road-side) camping sites along its route, mostly at point where the trail crosses open roads.

Facilities

No facilities are available along the trail so come prepared with water and extra warm clothing. As always be sure to **PACK OUT WHAT YOU PACK IN** to leave your public lands better than you found them.

As always, let someone know before you go.



Figure 2 – Non-motorized section of the trail between Slide Campground and Cloudcroft

Please call or visit the Sacramento Ranger District in Cloudcroft at (575) 682-2551 for more information.



Map of Rim Trail and surrounding features

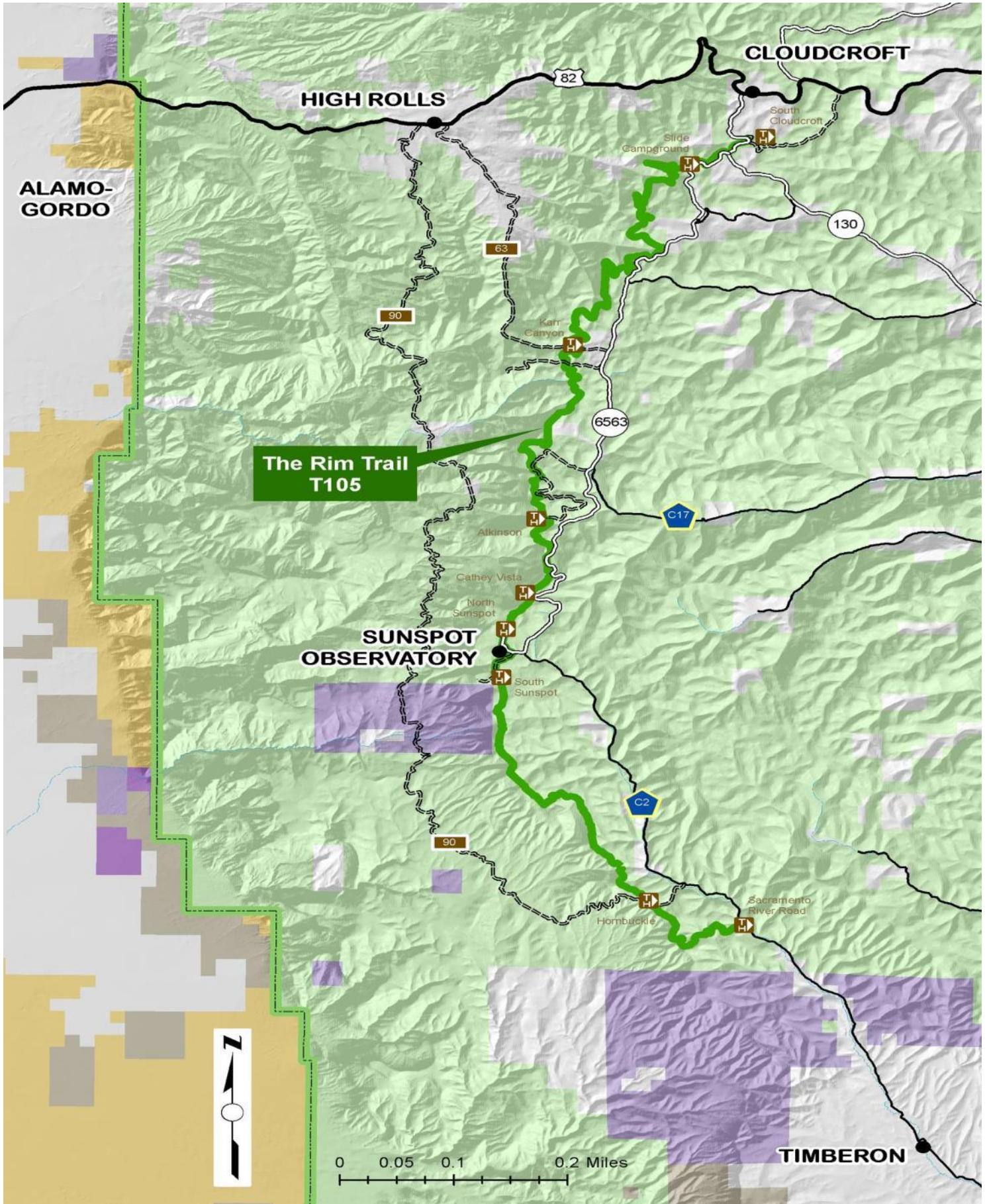


Figure 3 - Map of Rim Trail complete 30.5 miles

Rim Trail (1 of 3) Cloudcroft to Karr Canyon



Attractions

Section 1: Cloudcroft to Karr Canyon (FR63) is a popular portion of the 30.5 mile long Rim Trail, due to its proximity to the Village of Cloudcroft and other easily accessible areas.

Cloudcroft to Slide Group Campground is a 0.9 mile portion of the trail that allows only pedestrian/hiking or pack and saddle traffic. From Slide south, the trail adds both mountain bikes as well as motorcycle use.

Access

From Cloudcroft, take NM130 south 0.8 miles. Turn left onto FR24B where you will find the first trailhead. This section of the trail is non-mechanized (hikers and pack animals only). Other access points and trailheads can be found along the way, as well as parking areas to load and unload your belongings. Many of these parking areas are not immediately adjacent to the trail itself, so you will need to travel to the nearest trailhead to begin your journey.

PARKING AREAS			
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	MILEPOST
Parking 1	32.939	-105.752	0.1
Parking 2	32.934	-105.760	0.9
Parking 3	32.911	-105.767	3.1
Parking 4	32.901	-105.901	4.2
Parking 5	32.876	-105.796	

Figure 4 – GPS coordinates of Rim Trail Section 1 Parking areas

AREA ATTRACTIONS			
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	MILE POST
Hayne's Vista	32.931	-105.762	1.2
Nelson Canyon Vista	32.906	-105.776	3.8
Upper Karr Picnic	32.880	-105.780	5.7
Forest Road 63	32.879	-105.783	5.9

Figure 5 – Attractions along Rim Trail Section 1, Mileposts begin at NM6563, the Sunspot Hwy

Facilities

No facilities are available along the trail, so come prepared with water and extra warm clothing. As always, **PACK OUT WHAT YOU PACK IN** to leave your public lands better than you found them.

Trailheads

There are many minor trailheads along the length of the Rim Trail. Some are developed with minimal parking, sign and a gate. Others are simply road crossings with no development beyond road-side parking.

TRAILHEADS			
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	MILEPOST
Cloudcroft	32.9445	-105.7435	
Slide CG	32.9390	-105.7520	0.1
Forest Road 636	32.9180	-105.7740	3.1
Forest Road 634	32.890	-105.7930	5.0
Forest Road 64D	32.8760	-105.1230	6.2

Figure 6 – GPS coordinates of Rim Trail Section 1 Trailheads

Distances

To best fit your needs and abilities, many short to long loops can be enjoyed along the length of the trail. The matrix below will help determine your path.

		TO... (distances in miles)					
		Cloudcroft	Slide CG	FR 636	FR 634	FR 63	FR 64D
FROM...	Cloudcroft	0.0	0.8	4.9	10.0	11.2	11.8
	Slide Campground		0.0	4.1	9.0	10.2	10.9
	Forest Road 636			0.0	4.9	6.1	6.7
	Forest Road 634				0.0	1.2	1.8
	Forest Road 63					0.0	0.6
	Forest Road 64D						0.0

Figure 7 – Distance Matrix for Rim Trail Section 1



Map of Rim Trail Section 1

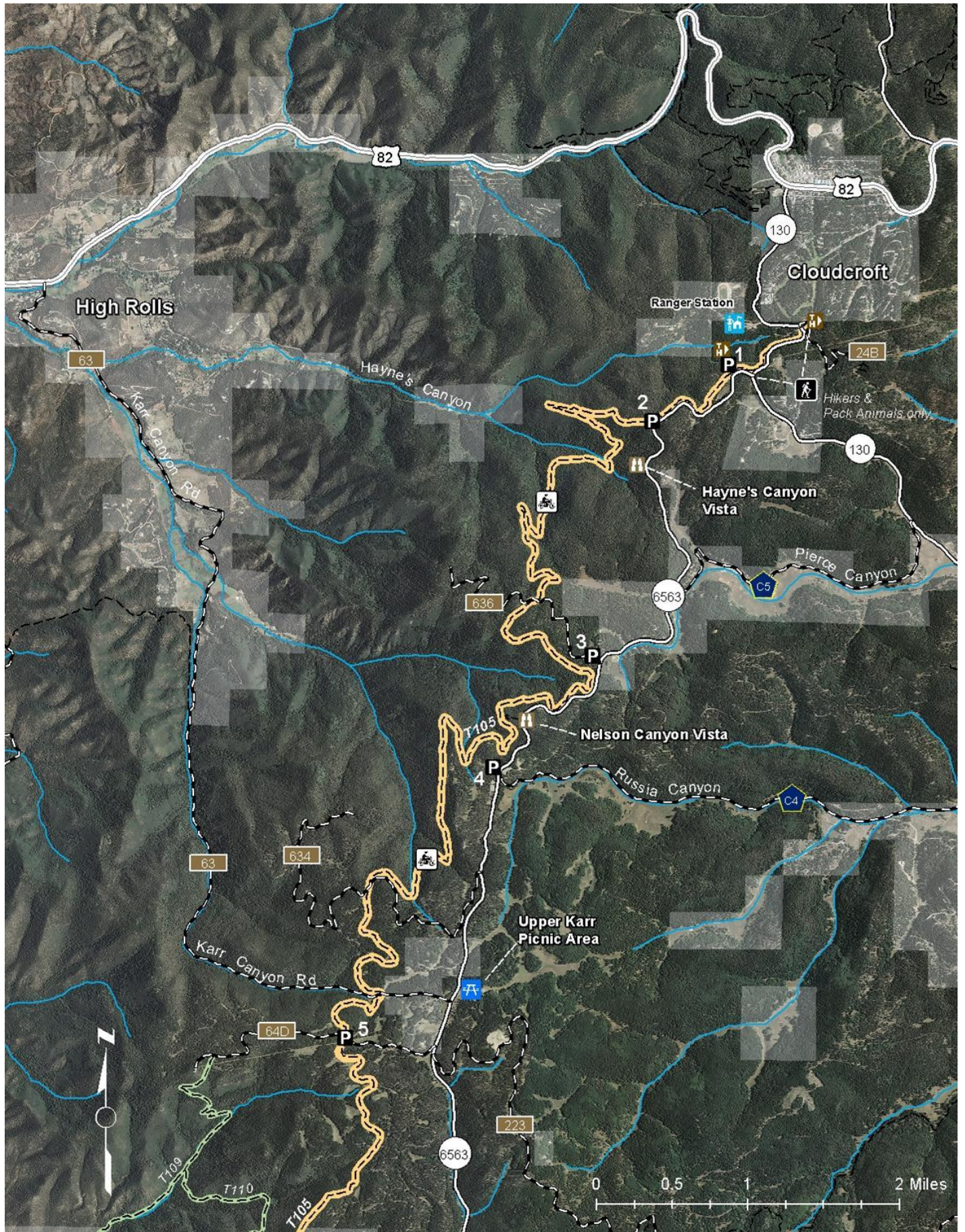


Figure 8 - Map of Rim Trail Section 1

Rim Trail (2 of 3) Karr Canyon to Sunspot



Attractions

Section 2: Karr Canyon to Sunspot Solar Observatory is the second-most popular section of the Rim Trail with its accessible trailheads along cross-cutting roads. Hiking averages approximately 9,000' in elevation, so be sure to keep that in mind when choosing an appropriate distance for your hike.

Along the way you will find a number of interesting stopping points including Cathey Vista and Sunspot Solar Observatory. Both are located near the end of the Sunspot Scenic By-Way (NM6563).

Access

From Cloudcroft, take NM130 south until you reach the junction of NM130 and NM6563. Along NM6563 are a number of access roads which cross the Rim Trail. Although many are considered unofficial trailheads, they still make great access points to begin and end a day hike.

PARKING AREAS			
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	MILEPOST
Parking 5	32.876	-105.796	
Cathey Vista	32.804	-105.805	12.5
Sunspot North	32.790	-105.812	
Sunspot South	32.781	-105.814	

Figure 9 – GPS coordinates of Rim Trail Section 2 Parking areas

Distances

To best fit your needs and abilities, many short to long loops can be enjoyed along the length of the trail. The matrix below will help determine your path.

		TO... (distances in miles)							
		FR 63	FR 64D	T110/111	T235	T125	Cathey	T105A	Sunspot N
FROM...	Forest Road 63	0.0	0.6	3.6	5.5	6.0	7.8	8.7	9.0
	Forest Road 64D		0.0	3.0	4.9	5.4	7.2	8.1	8.4
	Trail 110/111			0.0	1.9	2.4	4.2	5.1	5.4
	Trail 235				0.0	0.5	2.3	3.2	3.5
	Trail 125					0.0	1.8	2.7	3.9
	Cathey Vista						0.0	0.9	1.2
	Trail 105A							0.0	0.3
	Sunspot North								0.0

Figure 12 – Distance Matrix for Rim Trail Section 2

AREA ATTRACTIONS			
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	MILE POST
Upper Karr Picnic	32.880	-105.780	5.7
Sunspot Visitor Center	32.788	-105.818	

Figure 10 – Attractions along Rim Trail Section 2, Mileposts begin at NM6563, the Sunspot Hwy

Facilities

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Trailheads

There are many minor trailheads along the length of the Rim Trail. Some are developed with minimal parking, sign and a gate. Others are simply road crossings with no development beyond road-side parking.

TRAILHEADS			
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	MILEPOST
FR 63	32.879	-105.783	5.9
FR 64D	32.8760	-105.1230	6.2
Cathey Vista	32.804	-105.805	12.5
Sunspot North	32.790	-105.812	
Sunspot South	32.781	-105.814	

Figure 11 – GPS coordinates of Rim Trail Section 2 Trailheads



Map of Rim Trail Section 2

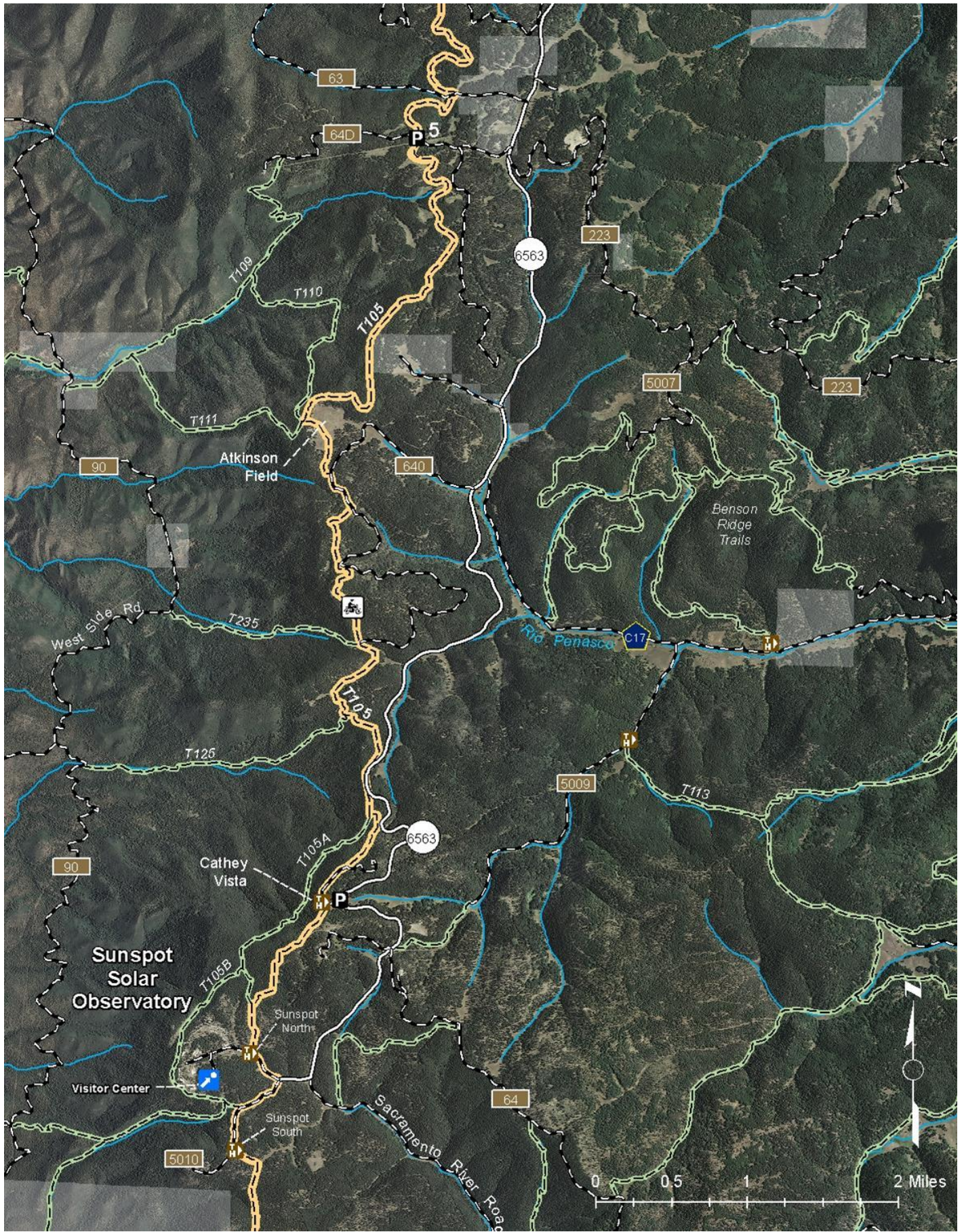


Figure 13 - Map of Rim Trail Section 2

Rim Trail (3 of 3) Sunspot to Sac. River Road



Attractions

Section 3: Sunspot Solar Observatory to Sacramento River Road is the southern-most and newest section of the Rim Trail.

Access

There are three access points to this portion of the trail. A convenient parking area is located at the spot where FR5010 meets the Rim Trail.

PARKING AREAS		
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
Waterfall	32.714	-105.752
Apple Tree	32.714	-105.747
End of Trail	32.705	-105.742

Figure 14 – GPS coordinates of Rim Trail Section 3 Parking areas



Figure 15 – Trailhead at Sunspot North

AREA ATTRACTIONS		
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
Sunspot Visitor Center	32.788	-105.818
Sacramento Lookout	32.747	-105.761
Cathey Vista	32.804	-105.805

Figure 16 – Attractions along Rim Trail Section 3

Facilities

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Trailheads

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TRAILHEADS		
	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
Sunspot North	32.790	-105.812
Sunspot South	32.781	-105.814
FR 90	32.711	-105.769
Sacramento River	32.705	-105.742

Figure 17 – GPS coordinates of Rim Trail Section 3 Trailheads

Distances

To best fit your needs and abilities, many short to long loops can be enjoyed along the length of the trail. The matrix below will help determine your path.

		TO... (distances in miles)				
		Sunspot N	Sunspot S	T90V	FR90	End
FROM...	Sunspot North	0.0	0.9	4.2	7.9	10.7
	Sunspot South		0.0	3.3	7.0	9.8
	Trail 90V			0.0	3.7	6.5
	Forest Road 90				0.0	2.8
	End					0.0

Figure 18 – Distance Matrix for Rim Trail Section 3



Map of Rim Trail Section 3



Figure 19 - Map of Rim Trail Section 3