

Continental Divide Trail

The Continental Divide Trail (CDT), one of three trails in the famous Triple Crown of Hiking, is one of the more rewarding reasons to get a Recreational Access Permit. The 3,100-mile long trail stretches north from the New Mexico Bootheel through another four states (Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana) to Canada. In all, New Mexico is home to 820 miles of the Continental Divide Trail which takes visitors from the rugged and majestic southern Rocky Mountains to breathtaking high-desert grasslands of the Chihuahuan Desert. From the southern terminus at Crazy Cook Monument to Cumbres Pass, the CDT traverses about 70 miles of State Trust Land in New Mexico.

The New Mexico State Land Office and the [Continental Divide Trail Coalition](#) (CDTC) have developed a successful partnership with the CDTC being granted permission to issue Recreation Access Permits on behalf of the NMSLO. The CDTC website has more maps and info on thru-hiking.

Along the way, Recreationists can experience the thrill of navigating through the Gila Wilderness, the nation's first designated wilderness area. Over the course of the New Mexico stretch of the adventure, visitors will encounter the peaceful forests and open spaces of the San Pedro Parks Wilderness, the awe-inspiring ancient mesas and canyons immortalized by Georgia O'Keefe's art, the scenic Rio Chama, the volcanic badlands of El Malpais National Monument, and much, much more. Wildlife is abundant and CDT hikers might glimpse antelope, elk, deer, javelina, and turkeys, among others. The flora is equally impressive with huge swaths of ponderosa pines and stunning stands of colorful aspen along the route. Prickly pear, yucca and other native plants are also plentiful along the trail.

GETTING THERE:

South of Silver City

Head south on NM 90 for about 20 miles. A USDA Forest Service sign on your right will point you to a Trailhead on your right. This section of the CDT takes you to Jack's Peak at 7,986' and Burro Peak at 8,035'.

After Burro Peak at about 5 miles, the trail's current route descends to Tyrone Road and connects back to NM 90, about 11 miles south of town.

North of Silver City

Access a rolling, wooded section of the CDT by taking Little Walnut Rd. north of Silver City. Continue past the Gomez Peak Day Use area and the Little Walnut Picnic Area, remaining on FR 506. 1.8 miles after the road turns to dirt from pavement, you'll find a parking area on the left side of the road. Traverse south for excellent views of Bear Mountain to the west and dip into the Walnut Creek drainage. Or, head north from the road, where you'll be able to hike to views of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Benedictine Monastery, which abuts the Gila National Forest.

There are many access points along the CDT. Some of the more popular segments can be accessed via Hopewell Lake, Abiquiu Lake, the San Pedro Parks wilderness near Cuba, NM, Mount Taylor, the El Malpais Wilderness, the Gila National Forest south of Pie Town, and the Aldo Leopold Wilderness near Pinos Altos, NM.

THINGS TO KNOW:

- * A Recreational Access Permit is not required to access the CDT on State Trust Lands due to the recreation easement with the Bureau of Land Management. Recreational users of other State Trust Lands must have a recreational access permit to access these lands. You can apply for the permit here: <https://openforadventure.nmstatelands.org/>
- * Obey all postings / respect private property.
- * No digging for or collecting cultural artifacts
- * SLO operates under a multiple-use concept therefore visitors may encounter other permitted users on-site.
- * We strongly recommend visitors to trust lands carry and utilize a GPS device to avoid trespassing on to lands not managed by the NMSLO.
- * Visitors are not allowed to manipulate any of the site's improvements and are prohibited from interfering with the ranching operations.
- * Please try to minimize your use footprint and pack out all trash. [Leave No Trace.](#)
- * Please be attentive to weather reports. Storms can form quickly.
- * Pack appropriate clothing for the season. During spring, summer and fall, typical day-hiking gear is recommended.
- * Please be aware of prohibited activities under the [Recreational Access Permit.](#)

For more information, please call 505-827-5760