

Jemez Mountain Trail

Jemez Mountain Trail takes you through time and past amazing geological formations, ancient Indian ruins, and an Indian pueblo. The area is rich in logging, mining, and ranching heritage. Sites include Jemez State Monument, Bandelier National Monument, Soda Dam, Cabezon, Battleship Rock, and the Spence and Jemez Mountain Hot Springs.



Local Information

Length: 163 miles / 260.8 km

Time Allow three hours to drive,
to or a full day to see the entire
Allow: byway.

Sandoval County Visitors Center

575-867-TOUR

1-800-252-0191

Send E-mail

Visitor Services

Fees



There may be area-use or special attraction fees along the byway.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities



Highway 4 is used heavily by cyclists and pedestrians. The other roads making up this byway are not safe for cyclists.

Camping



There are several campgrounds available along the byway. Some of these include: * **Paliza Campground:** Located four miles north of Ponderosa on SR 290 * **Vista Linda Campground:** Located approximately five miles south of Jemez Springs on SR 4 * **Redondo Campground:** Found 11 miles north of Jemez Springs on SR 4 * **San Antonio Campgrounds:** Located two miles northwest of SR 4, just off SR 126 * **Horseshoe Springs Campgrounds:** Found one mile northwest of SR 4, just off SR 126 * **Seven Springs Campground:** Go eight miles northwest of La Cueva on SR 126, then take Forest Road 314 for one mile. * **Rio Las Vacas Campground:** Found 13 miles east of Cuba on SR 126 * **Clear Creek Campground:** Located 12 miles east of Cuba on SR 126 * **Jemez Falls Campground:** Situated 15 miles northeast of Jemez Springs, just off SR 4 * **Las Conchas Campground:** Located 25 miles northeast of Jemez Springs on SR 4



Food

Food is available all along the byway. Visitors may purchase Native American foods in Jemez Pueblo. Just up the road, Jemez springs has several restaurants. La Cueva and Cuba also offer eating establishments.



Gasoline

Gasoline is available in Los Alamos, White Rock, San Ysidro, Jemez Pueblo, and Cuba.



Information

Information is available in a number of locations along the byway, including in Los Alamos and White Rock. Jemez Pueblo operates an information/interpretive center called Walatowa. The pueblo also shares the center with the USFS Jemez Ranger District which provides a great deal of information. Cuba has an information center, and the Cuba Ranger District is currently improving visitor information and installing interpretive kiosks.



Lodging

Visitors can find lodging in Jemez Springs, La Cueva, and Cuba.



Retail

There are a number of shops along the byway. San Ysidro features about a dozen art-related retail shops. Major art fairs are held at Jemez Pueblo from spring through fall. Jemez Springs houses several galleries and shops.

Special Considerations

There are several special considerations associated with this byway:

- NM-126 is not paved and is generally closed in the winter due to snow.
- Bicycles, pedestrians, and passenger vehicles are accommodated according to the various types of roadways. Different sections of the trail have various accessibility and safety issues. Old NM-44 is now US-550, a 4-lane divided highway with a speed limit of 70 mph, except through towns. NM-4 winds through the mountains and is traveled at lower speeds around 35 mph. Highway 126 is maintained in the summer by the Forest Service and can accommodate all traffic except commercial truck traffic.
- Fire is part of the natural environment along the byway. Please be a responsible camper. Extinguish all fires completely, and be aware of official fire hazard warnings. Call any U.S. Forest Service Office for hazard updates. If a particular national forest is closed to camping or hiking for a few days or weeks, visitors can still have a wonderful time in any of the byway communities.

Restrictions

Most roads along the byway are cleared after a snowfall, but Highway 126 is not paved and is generally closed in the winter due to snow.

Seasons

Best Time to Drive

Because it is located in the high desert, the byway's climate is delightful year round. While it is wonderful during the spring and summer, it is also fabulous to drive through snow-blanketed mountains. Wild Turkey, deer, and elk are frequent sights.

Fall

In the autumn, color along the byway flourishes. Aspens turn brilliant yellow against the deep green of the pines.

High Season

Summer is the busiest time to drive the byway.

Winter

The weather is mild enough, especially with warm sunny days, that nearly everyone can enjoy the drive during the winter. Many visitors enjoy snowshoeing, skiing (cross-country and downhill), and sledding.

Map and Directions



Legend:

Point of Interest	Campground	Featured Byway	Water	State Border
Park	Picnic/Rest Area	America's Byways	Wildlife Refuge	Urban Area
Mountain	Interstate	Other Byway	Wilderness Area	Tribal Nation
City	U.S. Highway	Other Road	Other Federal Lands	Military Base
Capital	State Highway	Trail	Other State Lands	

Driving Directions

Los Alamos to La Cueva

- Start in Los Alamos and go west on NM-4 to La Cueva.

- Here the byway branches, going north and south.

La Cueva to Cuba

- Take NM-126 west out of La Cueva until the pavement ends.
- The unpaved part of NM-126 is not part of the byway, but if weather permits, the road is open and your vehicle can manage it, you can continue on NM-126 through the Santa Fe National Forest about 10 miles until the pavement (and the byway) resumes.
- Continue on NM-126 to Cuba.

La Cueva to Cuba via San Ysidro, NM

- Take NM-4 south from La Cueva to San Ysidro.
- Take US-550 west and then north along the Rio Puerco to Cuba.

Getting to the Byway



Nearby cities

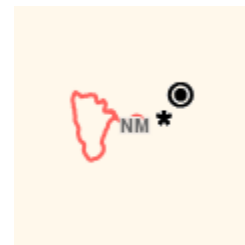
Espanola, NM (18 miles / 28.97 km, 30 minutes)

Start:  NM-30 southbound, Espanola, NM
N 36.007° W 106.065° [?]


Directions:

- You can access the byway from Espanola by driving south on NM-30 to 502/3 and thence to NM-4 at White Rock.

Junction with byway: * NM-4, White Rock, NM
N 35.829° W 106.207° [?]

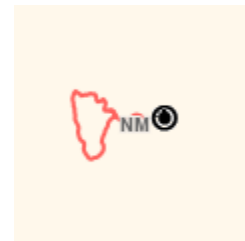


Los Alamos, NM (1 miles / 1.61 km, 1 minute)

Start:  NM-4, Los Alamos, NM
N 35.829° W 106.207° [?]

Directions:

- The byway can also be accessed from Los Alamos by taking NM-4 through White Rock.
- The byway begins in San Ysidro and follows NM-44 to Cuba.
- In Cuba, get on NM-126 and go to La Cueva, whereupon you enter NM-4 and follow it to San Ysidro and on to Sandoval City Line/Los Alamos.



Jemez Mountain Trail



Santa Fe, NM (32 miles / 51.50 km, 41 minutes)

Start: ● NM-84 northbound, Santa Fe, NM
 N 35.681° W 105.955° [?]

Directions: Drive north from Santa Fe on NM-84. to the
 exit at Pogueque Pueblo and then up the hill
 toward Los Alamos on NM 502/3.

**Junction
with
byway:** * NM-4, White Rock, NM
 N 35.829° W 106.207° [?]



Road Trip: Jemez Mountain Trail Tour

Departure: Bradbury Science Museum, New Mexico

Destination: Jemez State Monument, New Mexico

Time to allow: 1 day

This tour begins at Bradbury Science Museum and travels the eastern leg of the Jemez Mountain Trail, stopping along monuments and hot springs, all set in New Mexico's Jemez Mountains. A full day will allow you to appreciate all that these stops have to offer.

Day 1

- **Start: Bradbury Science Museum**

The Bradbury Science Museum offers a great deal of information and fun for everyone, so discover the wonders of the Los Alamos National Laboratory's current work and its historic role in the Manhattan Project and the development of the atomic bomb.

- **Stop 1: Bandelier National Monument**



From previous stop: 13 minutes / 22 mi (35.2 km)

Directions: Leaving the museum, go south on 15th Street for 0.1 miles, then turn right onto Trinity Drive (NM-502). Follow for 1.5 miles, then turn a slight right onto NM-501 (West Jemez Road). Drive for 4.3 miles, then turn left onto NM-4 and drive for 6.3 miles. Turn right onto Entrance Road and drive for 0.8 miles until you reach Bandelier National Monument.

Suggested time at this stop: 1 hour

Bandelier National Monument near Los Alamos is a wonderful place to see the ruins of many cliff houses and pueblo style dwellings of 13th Century Pueblo Indians.

- **Stop 2: Valle Grande at the Valles Caldera National Preserve**



From previous stop: 55 minutes / 28 mi (44.8 km)

Directions: Leaving the monument, go north on Entrance Road (toward NM-4) for 0.8 miles. Turn left onto NM-4 and drive for 15.0 miles. Turn right and drive for 5.7 miles. Turn slight right and drive for 1.7 miles. Turn sharp left and drive for 4.8 miles until you reach Valles Caldera.

Suggested time at this stop: 3 hours

Once private ranch land, the Valles Caldera National Preserve contains the remains of Valle Grande, a volcano that erupted 1.4 million years ago. Natural hot springs and recreation abound in the area, making for an afternoon of activities sure to be remembered forever.

- **Stop 3: Spence Hot Springs**

From previous stop: 20 minutes / 9 mi (14.4 km)

Directions: Leaving Valles Caldera, go west for 0.6 miles, then turn left and drive for 6.1 miles. Turn right onto NM-4 and drive for 2.7 miles until you reach Spence Hot Springs.

Suggested time at this stop: 1 hour 30 minutes

Take an afternoon soak in this natural hot spring located just past Battleship Rock.

- **End: Jemez State Monument**

From previous stop: 10 minutes / 6.7 mi (10.7 km)

Directions: Leaving Spence Hot Springs, go south on NM-4 for 6.7 miles. Jemez State Monument is located at 18164 NM-4.

Jemez State Monument, the last point on the itinerary, contains the ruins of an ancient pueblo of the Jemez people known as Giusewa and the ruins of a 17th Century Spanish Mission known as San Jose de los Jemez.

Totals for Day 1

Total Distance Traveled: 65.7 miles / 105.1 km

Total Travel Time: 1 hour 38 minutes

Total Stopping Time: 5 hours 30 minutes