

Safety Tips

- There is virtually no water along the park’s trail system, this is a near desert area and it is advised to carry at least a half gallon of water with each hiker for longer hikes and 32 ounces for shorter ones.
- Good footwear is important due to steep rocky terrain.
- The weather can change by 30 degrees in minutes here, dress appropriately and pack a couple extra layers for emergencies; waterproof clothing is always good to have along.
- Pets are to be kept leashed and under control at all times to avoid conflicts with wildlife and other users.
- Stay on established trails to avoid hazards and private land bordering the park.
- Be aware of park wildlife. There are often black bears and mountain lions and rattlesnakes in the park, please be aware of safety procedures regarding these animals. Hiking in groups is advised and always be careful with small children.
- April and May are active times for ticks, be sure to check yourself carefully after a hike during the spring.
- There are other hazards as well due to the ever changing conditions of natural park setting. Please be prepared for a variety of circumstances.
- **Call 911 for any emergency.**



Leave No Trace

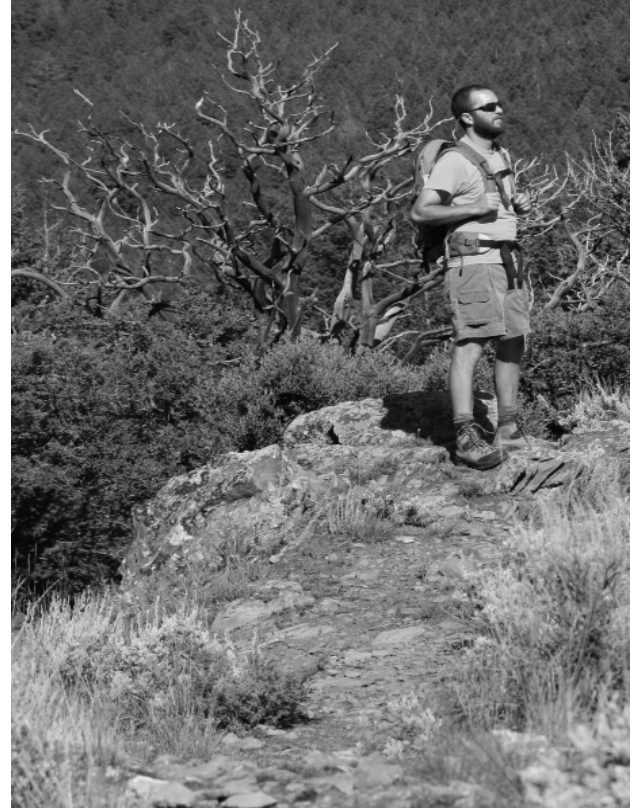
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is a partner in Leave No Trace outdoor ethics



- Plan ahead and prepare before traveling these trails
- Limit travel to the developed trails and do not cross-cut switchbacks.
- Dispose of waste properly. There are no trash cans along the trails so please be sure to pack trash out with you.
- Leave what you find. Leave all plants, animals, rocks and other natural or historic features undisturbed.
- Respect Wildlife. If you come in contact with wildlife while hiking please do not approach or attempt to feed them. Observe them from a distance.
- Be considerate of other Visitors. Please take the experience of other visitors into consideration in regards to your actions on the trail.



Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park Trail Guide



The Greer Gulch Loop Trail extends the Nature Loop to a 2 mile trail with over 400 ft of gain and loss. Atop this trail a scenic ridge top view is found of the nearby peaks in the Tobacco Root Mountains and a chance to see blooming bitterroot flowers in June. From the campground you can make a loop hike starts up the Cave Gulch Trail and turns off after a mile on the short DanMor Gypsum Mine Trail where one can still view the mine from the trail with an interpretive sign on hand providing historical and geological information. With a return on the Fishing Access trail this rolling hike covers over 2 miles round trip.

Moderate Trails

For those looking for a less challenging hike, the short Nature Loop Trail located at the upper picnic area is a pleasant quarter mile walk with signs to identify some of the flora. This short trail offers some of the best wildflower viewing in the park. From the Campground the Fishing Access Trail takes a leisurely 1.3 miles down to the riverside climbing less than 100 feet. It offers access to fishing, swimming or just a reflective moment by the historic Jefferson River.

Easy Trails

The trails of Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park allow the visitor to enjoy and experience many aspects of the park above and beyond the caverns themselves. There is over 3000 acres of terrain in this park and almost 1600 vertical feet. The trail system covers about 10 miles and over 1000 feet in elevation change. The two main trails are rather strenuous with considerable elevation gain or loss, but there are others that provide a more relaxing walk through the park.

The Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park Trail System



The Cave Gulch Trail offers something for those a little more adventurous. It gains nearly 1000 ft elevation in 2 miles from the campground up to the Cave Visitor Center. Cave Gulch Trail is the steepest trail and most closely follows the route taken by Dan Morrison and early cave visitors. The East Side Trail has the same start and destination as the Cave Gulch Trail with twice the distance traveled and 350 extra feet of elevation loss and gain along the way. This trail winds along 4 miles of the east side of the park before reaching the Cave Visitor Center. This trail features much of the Douglas Fir forest that covers the north facing slopes of the park, providing a much more shaded route.

The Middle View Trail is our newest addition to the Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park trail system. It runs between the Cave Gulch and East Side trail around and down a large dolomite knob. It connects with the damor mine trail .8 miles from the campground for a 2.7 mile hike from the Cave Visitor Center to the campground. It offers some of the best views of all the park trails.

An entire day can be spent on the “Grand Loop”, a 5.9 mile hike that starts and finishes at either visitor center or the campground and includes the entire Cave Gulch and East Side Trails or 7 miles to do the East Side and Middle View Trail version. For those with less time the Cave Gulch and Middle View Loop is under 3 miles and starts and ends at the Cave Visitor Center.



There are several ecosystems encountered along these trails giving you the chance to see many different kinds of animals, with great birding opportunities and the chance to see some of the over 200 different species of wildflowers found in the park. The lower trails feature riparian and prairie habitats and as you move higher you encounter an open juniper/limber pine forest as well as denser douglas fir forest. Much of the upper south-facing slopes are borderline desert with mountain mahogany and skunkbush sumac mixing in with the junipers. Mule deer are common and black bears are present in the park, but the birding is the best wildlife viewing the park has to offer. Hiking the park trails gives a good chance to see everything from raptors and the beautiful Mountain Bluebirds to the raucous Clark’s Nutcracker.

Flora and Fauna along the park trails

Please be courteous of other users and always yield to foot traffic. Uphill traffic always has the right of way. Please avoid cross cutting switchbacks, be sure to stay on trails and avoid widening present trails. Trail erosion problems could lead to trail closures in the park, so please avoid riding wet trails and dismount if you are unable to properly ride a switchback. Please keep bike speeds under 10 mph on trails and the campground area and 30 mph on the main park road. Due to conflicts with heavy downhill mountain bikes, mountain bikers are asked to only access trails from the lower part of the park. The Greer Gulch Trail and Nature Loop are closed to biking. Please respect the solitude of other users.

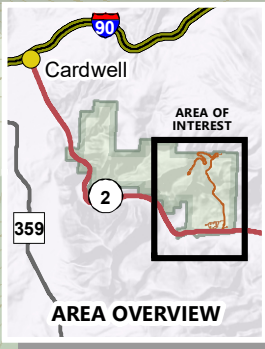
Mountain Bikers



LEWIS AND CLARK CAVERNS

STATE PARK | TRAIL MAP

DIVISION OF MONTANA
FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS
STATEPARKS.MT.GOV



Caverns Tours operated
May 1st - September 30th

Cave Visitor Center

0.6 mi
0.6 mi
0.9 mi

Caverns Entry Trail
Caverns Exit Trail
Caverns trail access by ticket only

Cave Gulch

0.2 mi
1.5 mi

East Side
Middle View Trail

0.06 mi
0.2 mi
0.3 mi

Connector Trail
DanMor Historic Gypsum Mine

0.2 mi
0.2 mi
0.7 mi

DanMor Mine Trail
Cave Gulch Trail

0.5 mi
0.9 mi

Limespur Fishing Access Trail
Limespur Fishing Access

0.2 mi
0.1 mi
0.1 mi

Amphitheater Trail
Cave Gulch

0.07 mi
0.1 mi

Campground Trail
Caverns Campground

0.1 mi

East Side
Main Visitor Center

0.1 mi

Park Entrance

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To Cardwell
5 miles

To Three Forks
18 miles

State of Montana
Land Parcel

Montana FWP
Land Parcel

BLM Land Parcel

BLM Land Parcel

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BLM Land Parcel

	Trailhead		Amphitheater		Interpretive Exhibit		Point of Interest		Teepee Rental
	Trail Access		Cabin Rental		Interpretive Trail		Restroom (flush)		Visitor Information
	Trail Intersection		Campground (electric)		Parking		Restroom (vault)		Water
TRAIL USE			Fishing Access Site		Pedestrian Crossing		RV Waste Disposal		Main Park Road
	Hiking		Gift Shop		Picnic Area		Scenic Viewpoint		Secondary Road
	Hiking, Biking		Group Use Picnic Shelter		Playground		Shower		Stream

STAY ON ESTABLISHED TRAILS TO MINIMIZE IMPACTS AND AVOID ADDITIONAL HAZARDS

Please consult park staff to gather more information on specific trail conditions, trail difficulty, and route selection. Trail lengths are in miles. Elevation levels are in feet. Portions of trails depicted on this map, which fall outside of the State Park boundary, are on other publically accessible state and federal land. The Caverns entry and exit trails, unless authorized otherwise by park staff, are reserved for visitors who have purchased a caverns tour ticket only. No claims are made to the accuracy of the data or its suitability to a particular use.