

The Sun Country Striders  
 Welcomes You to  
 El Morro, El Malpais, & more



**Cibola County**  
 AVA Sanctioned Year Round Event

This walk is composed of 3 separate routes ranging from 2-6k each which can be combined for a total of 11k. All 3 trails are located along a 35 mile stretch of NM-53 from El Morro National Monument at the west end and the El Calderon Trailhead in El Malpais National Monument on the east end. The Headland trail at El Morro is 3k and loops around the base of the rock to the 'inscription' rock, then up and around the bluff. The Ice Cave & Bandera Volcano is a privately owned site (fee charged) open from Mar 1 to Oct 31 with a 2k trail leading to the volcano caldron and then to an Ice Cave in a collapsed lava tube which never warms above 31 degrees, not even on the 100 degree summer days. The El Calderon Trail is the longest trail at 6k and is part of the El Malpais National Monument. The trail passes collapsed lava tubes and continues to a volcano crater.

**Walk Registration:**

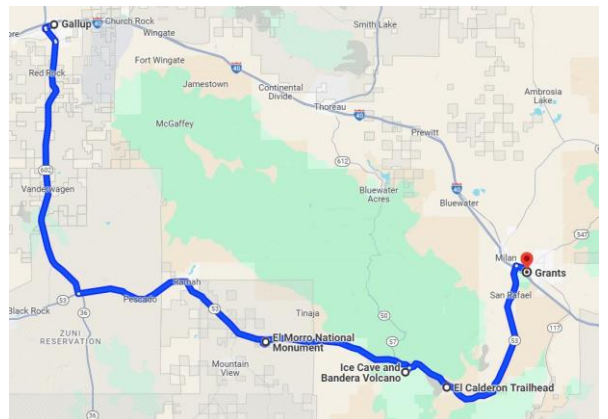
Please use the Online Start Box (OSB) to register. The directions and stamps will be available during the Las Cruces National Convention Apr 30 thru May 4 and at the group walks May 5-8, 2025 from the POC at selected sites. If wishing to do the walk on the way to the events, use the OSB or contact the POC.

**Walk Completion and Walk Credit:**

Once you have completed the walk, login to your Online Start Box account click on the "My Start Box" tab, then the "Finish Table" tab, then click on "Go to Finish Table" button for the event you have completed. Submit the date and distance of your walk as well as applicable AVA Special Programs to generate stamped "virtual" insert cards.

**Driving Directions to Start Point:**

Restrooms available at the start at El Morro and the Ice Cave, but none available at El Calderon trailhead. From Gallup, take NM-602 south to NM-53, then east on NM-53 to El Morro N'tl Monument. Continue another 18 miles east to the Ice Cave, and another 16 miles to the El Calderon trailhead on the south side of the highway. From Grants, take NM-53 south 22 miles to the El Calderon trailhead. Grants and Gallup are both on I-40 west of Albuquerque.



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**EL MORRO NATIONAL MONUMENT - CIBOLA COUNTY – 3K**

Walk starts at the El Morro National Monument Visitor Center at milepost 44.6 along NM-53. Check the National Park Service website for Alerts ([www.nps.elmo](http://www.nps.elmo)). Currently open 9AM-5PM on Thurs thru Mon, closed on Tues and Wed. Must start Headland trail by 3:30. Visitor Center has exhibits and a short movie about El Morro's importance of a reliable hidden waterhole located at the base of a sandstone bluff. No entrance fee.

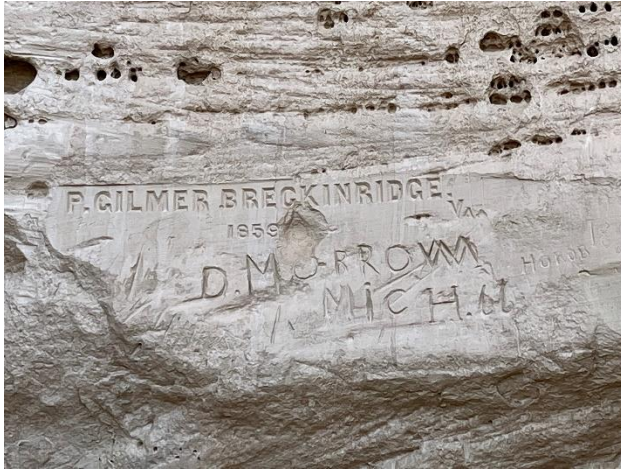
These walk directions and maps may only be used in conjunction with a signed American Volkssport Association athletic waiver. All other uses are prohibited.

1. After touring the displays at the Visitor Center, exit to the front, then **LEFT** on trail. **Check with rangers about possible trail closures.**
2. Stop at waterhole and view the many inscriptions etched on the bluff denoting the explorers and pioneers who depended on this waterhole while traveling in this barren territory.
3. Continue on trail with the bluff on your left, then hike up the switchback trail to the top of the bluff.
4. At the top, follow the trail around the bluff's rim. Take time to admire the rock formations and the canyon on the backside.
5. Return down the stone steps to the back of the Visitor Center. **END of 3k.**



**Waterhole at Base**

**Event related assistance:  
Helen Hull: 972-530-1026**



Inscription Rock



View of the Canyon



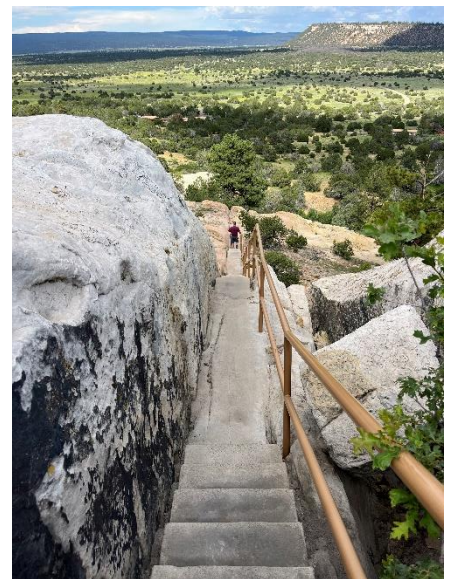
El Morro Bluff



Kiva Ruins on Top

Return Stairs to Visitor Center ----->

El Morro National Monument

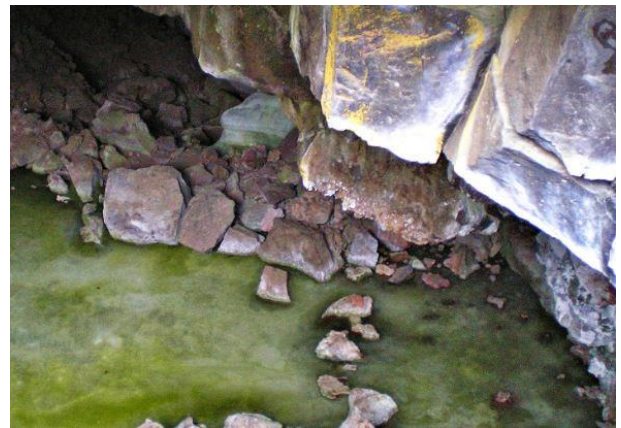


**ICE CAVE & BANDERA VOLCANO - CIBOLA COUNTY – 2K**

Walk starts at the Ice Cave & Bandera Volcano Store at 12000 Ice Cave Rd (NM-53). This is a commercial property and charges an entry fee (\$12 adults, \$10 seniors). Hike the 1+ mile trail to the volcano caldron and then continue on trail as it loops back to the Ice Cave and finally returns to the Gift Shop. Descend the steps to the entrance of the collapsed lava tube to view the ice, then back up the stairs. Note the big change in temperature in the summertime. Hiking boots and poles are a plus. OPEN March 1 thru Oct 31, 9AM-5PM.

These walk directions and maps may only be used in conjunction with a signed American Volkssport Association athletic waiver. All other uses are prohibited.

1. After paying your fee, follow the trail to the volcano. Trail is a gradual incline to the volcano.
2. U-TURN and follows signs to the Ice Cave. Descend the stairs for a closeup view of the ice pool at the bottom of the collapsed lava tube.
3. Climb the stairs and return to the gift shop. **END of 2k.**



**Ice Cave**

**Event related assistance:  
Helen Hull: 972-530-1026**



**Bandera Volcano**



**Stairs to the Ice Cave**

**EL CALDERON TRAIL - CIBOLA COUNTY – 6k**

**K**

Walk starts at the El Calderon Trailhead 34 miles east of El Morro and 22 miles south of Grants on NM-53 on the south side of NM-53. Look for signs for the trailhead. El Calderon trail is in the El Malpais National Monument. No restrooms at trailhead. No entrance fee. Trail follows a wide well-maintained trail with a gradual incline. But the climb to the top of the cinder cone, although not drastic, is steep. Hiking boots and pole are a plus for the cone

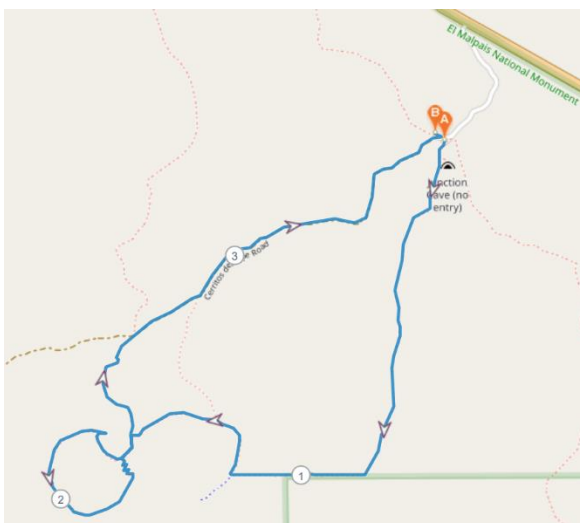
These walk directions and maps may only be used in conjunction with a signed American Volkssport Association athletic waiver. All other uses are prohibited.

1. Look for the El Calderon trail sign and follow the trail to a fence. Pass the Double Sinks and the Bat Cave, collapsed lava tubes.
2. **RIGHT** at the fence and continue following the trail to the base of the El Calderon cinder cone (sign '.2 miles to cinder cone').
3. **LEFT** to follow switchback trail to the top of the cone.
4. After viewing cone, you may return back the way you came or on a slightly different trail back to the base. (When reaching base, **LEFT** on trail back to the cinder cone sign.)
5. At sign, continue straight following signs back to the parking lot. **END of 6k.**



**One of the Double Sinks**

**Event related assistance:  
Helen Hull: 972-530-1026**



**El Caldron Cinder Cone**