



Protecting National Parks from Mining Threats – New Mexico

Mining on Public Lands and National Parks in New Mexico

Celebrated for their scenic beauty, abundant wildlife and cultural resources, New Mexico's national parks—from Carlsbad Caverns to Pecos National Historical Park—are places to be protected and stewarded for future generations to experience. This is why national parks and newly designated conservation areas, such as El Malpais National Monument, prohibit *new* mining claims within their boundaries. Yet, there are still places where mining activities remain possible inside of a national park or monument in New Mexico.



Unlike every other public land use, the specific location of mining claims is largely left up to the claims holder's choice. This drastically limits the ability of New Mexico's public land managers, like the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service, to protect high value conservation areas. **It is also why over 35-percent of mining claims in New Mexico (over 3,500 total claims) are located within 30 miles of national parks and monuments in New Mexico.**

While a mine claim does not guarantee an active mine will develop, it is an exceedingly easy first step; a mine claim has a nominal annual fee and few restrictions considering potential harm to surrounding landscapes or communities. As a result, the claim system directly threatens clean air and water, wildlife habitat, connectivity and cultural resources conserved by parks and monuments. In 2023, **2.2 million** people visited New Mexico's national park sites, contributing **\$177 million** in economic benefit to the state. Meanwhile, mine claim holders paid less than \$10 per acre to possess public lands with a mine claim. Commonsense changes to the mining laws are essential to protect New Mexico's national parks, monuments and local economies.

IMPROVING THE CLAIM SYSTEM TO PROTECT PARKS

National parks are places that bring us together even in divided times. Poll after poll shows Americans overwhelmingly support protecting national parks on both sides of the political aisle, united behind clean air, clean water, and healthy wildlife. NPCA is committed to securing bipartisan victories for the parks with commonsense mining law reform and mobilizing park supporters to protect these cherished landscapes. Now, more than ever, our parks need your help.

For more information:

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SPOTLIGHT

Pecos National Historical Park

Pecos National Historical Park, located along the Pecos River in Northern New Mexico, honors the deep human history of the area and the convergence of several cultures. Upstream of this incredibly unique historical park are an abundance of mining claims where mining interests are actively pursuing the extraction of gold, copper and zinc threatening the health of this critical western watershed.

NEW MEXICO'S MINING CLAIMS BY THE NUMBERS

| NEW MEXICO'S MINING CLAIMS BY THE NUMBERS | |
|---|---------|
| CLAIMS LOCATED ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS | 492,178 |
| CLAIMS LOCATED ON NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS IN NEW MEXICO | 9,963 |
| CLAIMS WITHIN 30 MILES OF NEW MEXICO'S NATIONAL PARKS & MONUMENTS | 3,674 |
| CLAIMS INSIDE NEW MEXICO'S NATIONAL PARKS & MONUMENTS | 23 |