

FOLLOWING THE WARPATH: Rancho Cebolla

The turnoff from NM 117 into Cebolla and Sand Canyons is south of the Narrows. (Don't be confused by the Park Service [map](#), which shows another "Cebolla Canyon" between the Sandstone Bluffs Overlook and the Zuni-Acoma trailhead,) on NM117. It's an unpaved and generally unimproved dirt track, rocky in some spots and deep sand in others. There's one steep crossing of the arroyo that cuts down the lower part of the canyon.



Feral burros in Cebolla Canyon, just above where Lobo Canyon branches off to the north. People call them "wild" and it's true they're untamed, but they're not native here or anywhere else in the West, and their sharp little hooves and voracious appetites do a lot of damage to the range.



Cebolla Spring is still live, and the grass is in much better shape up here, above where the arroyo begins to cut deeply into the floor of the canyon.



The remains of Rancho Cebolla are on a little rise above the spring.



Domingo and his friend José Maria are buried close to where they fell. The site was apparently never reoccupied after the massacre.



There are other graves near a petroglyph site farther down the canyon. These were probably Hispanic homesteaders, although it's impossible to tell whether they were contemporaneous with Rancho Cebolla.





Joe Skeen is a BLM campground just south of the Malpais ranger station on NM 117. Picnic tables, fire rings and sun shelters are nicely spread out over open ground; I've never known it to be full, and only rarely are there more than two or three other campers. Views across the lava beds to the south and west make it a great place to watch the summer storms sweep up and across the Continental Divide, bringing rain from the far-off Gulf of Mexico.

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