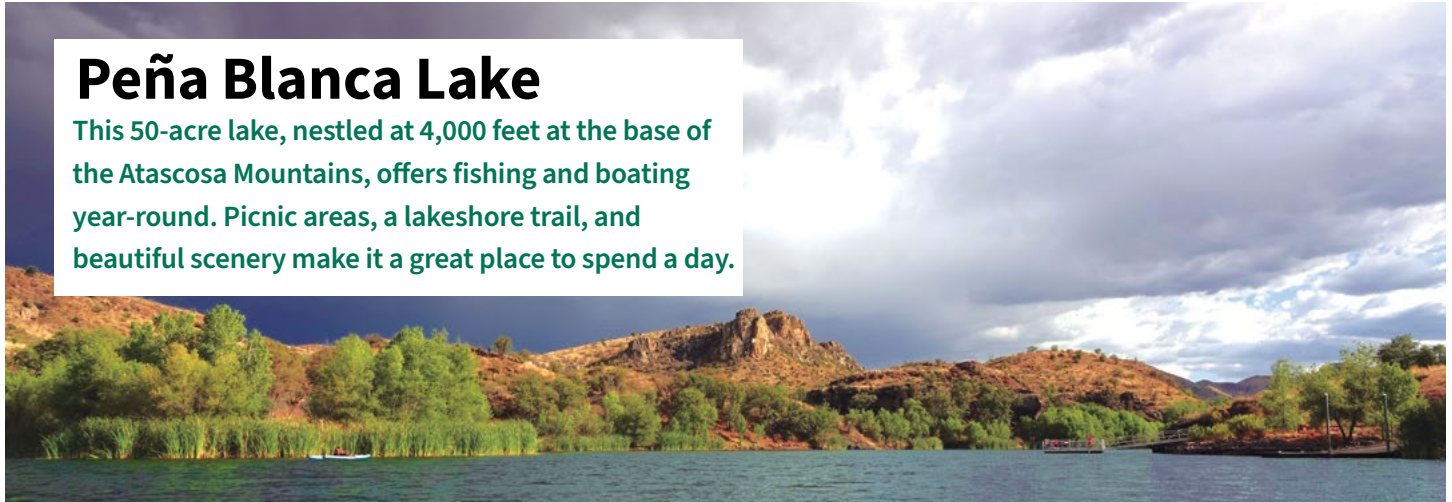




Peña Blanca Lake

This 50-acre lake, nestled at 4,000 feet at the base of the Atascosa Mountains, offers fishing and boating year-round. Picnic areas, a lakeshore trail, and beautiful scenery make it a great place to spend a day.



Know before you go



FISHING & BOATING:

Visit www.azgfd.com for fishing and boating regulations, stocking schedule, fish consumption advisories, and to purchase licenses. All anglers 10 years and older need a valid fishing license.



DAY USE FEE AREA:

Scan the QR code or visit www.recreation.gov to buy a digital pass for this day-use site, or buy one on site with cash or check. No pass is required at three signed, designated no-fee sites near the lake.



AMENITIES: Paved boat launch, floating fishing piers, picnic areas with charcoal grills, vault toilets, and a lakeshore trail



WATER: No drinking water is available.



PETS: Dogs are permitted on leash.



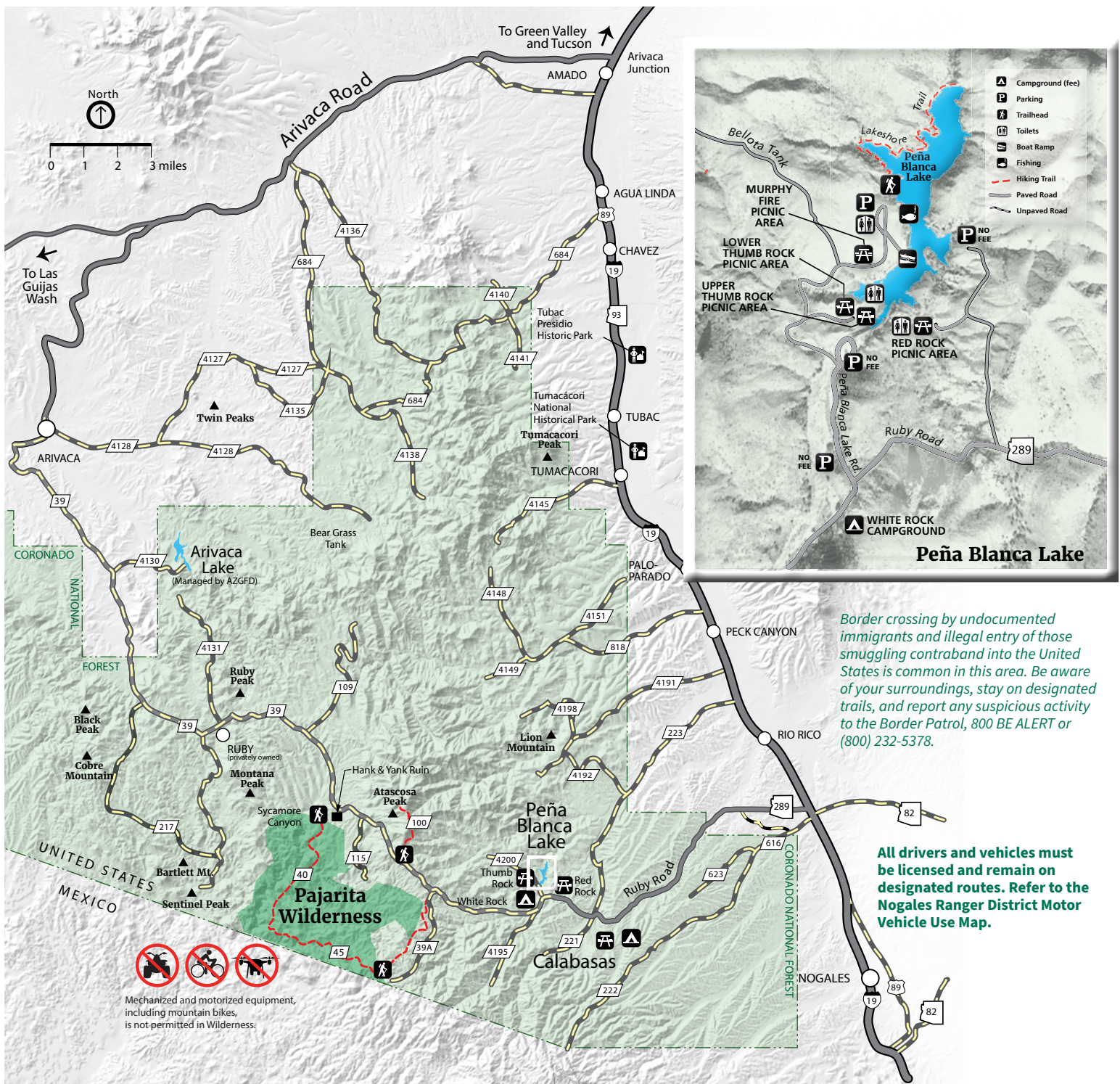
CAMPING: Fifteen first-come, first-serve sites. Pay on site with cash or check. Maximum vehicle length is 22 feet. Reserve Calabasas Group Site at www.recreation.gov.

Activities

Fishing	Quiet coves and shoreline vegetation provide habitat for a variety of fish, including catfish, bass, and sunfish. Rainbow trout are stocked during the cooler months. Three fishing piers are available near the boat ramp. All anglers 10 years and older need a valid fishing license. Bag limits and fish consumption advisories are posted on site.
Boating	A paved boat ramp and nearly 50 acres of lake to explore make this a perfect destination for a day on the water. All boats with motors are limited to one 10 horsepower motor or less. Great for canoes, kayaks, and paddle boards. Bring your own watercraft; no rentals available.
Swimming	Swim at your own risk. Levels of contaminants, including mercury, might be present in the lake and are not routinely monitored. There is no designated swimming area and no lifeguard on duty. Swimming is prohibited near the boat ramp.
Picnicking	Four developed picnic areas offer scenic views, along with shaded tables, charcoal grills, vault toilets, and bear-safe trash receptacles. Upper Thumb Rock Picnic Area has a horseshoe pit and piñata pole.
Hiking	The 1.5-mile (round trip) Children's Forest Discovery Trail begins at the north end of the boat ramp and follows along the western shore of the lake to the dam. Enjoy the shade of oak trees and watching wildlife along the way.
Birding	Spring and fall are the best times of year for birding at Peña Blanca. Between March and May, migratory species including gray and zone-tailed hawks, summer tanagers, and broad-billed hummingbirds arrive to breed and nest. Many species of waterfowl arrive in fall and spend the winter months at the lake.
Scenic driving	If you have a high-clearance vehicle, Ruby Road turns to dirt just west of the lake and continues for 25 miles through the Atascosa Mountains. Take in the stunning scenery and see historic mining and ranching sites along the drive. Return the way you came, or continue to Arivaca and take the paved route back to I-19. Allow 2-3 hours for the 55-mile loop. Drive with caution; watch for open-range cattle.

EMERGENCY OR FIRE: DIAL 911

NOGALES RANGER STATION: (520) 281-2296



About Peña Blanca Lake

Peña Blanca Lake is named for the white cliffs (*peñas blancas*) of volcanic tuff that jut out from the surrounding hillsides. The lake sits in the foothills of the Atascosa and Pajarito Mountains at the southern end of the Tumacacori Highlands, an area known for its fascinating geological formations and rich biological diversity. The Highlands are comprised of three ranges: the Pajarito, Atascosa, and Tumacacori Mountains. Atascosa Peak, the tallest in the area at 6,422 feet, is visible from the lake. The peak and range are aptly named from the Spanish word *atasco*, meaning “obstruction,” referring to the steep ridges and bands of cliffs that define the area.

Intermittent streams cut canyons through these mountains and create habitat for a variety of wildlife including javelina, white-tailed deer,

black bear, coatimundi, and mountain lion. The area is known for harboring a great diversity of snakes, many of which are more common in tropical areas to the south. The lake, and surrounding landscape, is also a hotspot for birding. Numerous species of waterfowl winter at the lake, while migratory warblers, tanagers, orioles, flycatchers, and other songbirds visit the lake in spring and fall. Herons and egrets are common along the shore.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department built an earthen dam in 1957 to retain the north-flowing waters of Peña Blanca Wash and create this lake for recreational fishing. Today the Department manages the lake for trophy largemouth bass and seasonal trout fishing.