

## 90. *Pinus arizonica* / *Pteridium aquilinum* Forest Association (P)

### Arizona pine / Western brackenfern Forest Association (P)

This forest community is characterized by a variably dense (40–80% cover) upper canopy (>5 m) solely dominated by Arizona pine (*Pinus arizonica*), with a understory dominated (20–40% cover) by western brackenfern (*Pteridium aquilinum*). Arizona pine (*P. arizonica*) is present as large ([15] 20–30 m) trees with variable cover of 40–60%. Southwestern white pine (*Pinus strobiformis*) and Gambel oak (*Quercus gambelii*) are consistent (0.80) associates. The lower-canopy (2–5 m) and subcanopy (0.5–2 m) strata are extremely sparse (<5% cover), with no clear dominants or common associates. California buckthorn (*Frangula californica*), New Mexico locust (*Robinia neomexicana*), and Fendler’s ceanothus (*Ceanothus fendleri*) are noteworthy associate shrubs. The field stratum (<0.5 m) is characterized by the sole dominance of western brackenfern (*P. aquilinum*). This species contributes cover ranging from 15% to 40%, with the highest cover occurring in and along low-angle drainages.

#### Common species

- *Pinus arizonica*
- *Pinus strobiformis*
- *Quercus gambelii*
- *Pteridium aquilinum*

This community is contained within a two-association map class that covers 0.5% (125 ha/309 ac) of the Rincon Mountain District and is present throughout the trail system that surrounds Manning Camp, Spud Rock, Helen’s Dome, and the Mica Mountain summit. It is found on low-angle (<20%) slopes and along drainages of varying aspects above 2,400 meters (7,874 ft). The surface cover is dominated by a thick layer of pine-needle litter and duff with patchy boulders and bedrock outcrops. The parent material is a mix of quartz monzonite and mica schist.



