

C LEVEL HIKING GROUPS - FRIDAYS

Meet at the Eagles Nest clubhouse at 7:00 am, depart at 7:15.

February 7 - Quartz Mine/Lost Creek/Turnbuckle/Granite Falls/Turnbuckle Loop (Skyline Regional Park). Rating C+. This is a loop hike of 7.8 miles with an elevation gain of 1200 ft. This hike does a loop up to a high point in the park and then circles back through a valley. There are lots of views of the west valley. Trail condition – average hiking trail with one long uphill section. Restrooms are at the trailhead. There is no park fee. Driving distance is 30 miles RT.

<https://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/Skyline-Park/Outer-Loop-Trails>

Directions to Skyline Regional Park Trailhead

Go West on I-10.

Turn north (right) on Watson Road.

Drive to end of road and trailhead parking.

Facilities are at the trailhead.

February 14 - Cathedral Rock/Balanced Rock Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve). Rating C+. This is a 8.4 mile loop hike with an elevation gain of 800 ft. There are great views of the surrounding mountains (Weaver's Needle, Four Peaks, Tom's Thumb, etc.) as well as great rock formations along the trail. There are many different cacti species here and late spring could be very colorful after good winter rains. The optional side trip is to the Balanced Rock formation to the east. There is a nice restroom at the trailhead and no park fee. Trail condition - great hiking trail. Driving distance is 100 miles RT.

<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Cathedral-Rock>

Directions to McDowell Sonoran Preserve - Brown's Ranch Trailhead

Take Loop 303 North and drive to I-17.

Turn left (North) on I-17.

Stay right and immediately exit onto Dove Valley Road.

Follow Dove Valley Road about 10 mi. (name changes to Sonoran Desert Drive).

Take Cave Creek Road North (left).

Turn right at first light on Dynamite Blvd (later changes to Rio Verde).

Turn left on Alma School Road.

The road dead ends at the trailhead.

There are restrooms at the trailhead.

February 21 - Spring Valley Trail/Hells Canyon Wilderness (Lake Pleasant). Rating C. A 6 mile round trip hike with 900 ft of elevation gain. From the trailhead you immediately go down the road and drop down into the huge wash. Which, in fact, is Castle Creek. Then turn back to the left passing a couple of very large cairns in the creek. It's interesting to imagine what type of thunderstorm it takes to fill this broad swath. From the right side of the parking lot, you can see the cairns and the yellow login podium across the wide creek bed between some bushes. If not just remember it's north of the fence by maybe a tenth of a mile, almost opposite the parking lot. The Spring Valley Trail takes off up a small rise then heads fairly flat in a west-southwestern line (slightly left). This is a well maintained trail (lots of large cairns). You will pass through a fence and get distant views of Lake Pleasant as the trail slowly curves to the right. It will make a gradual decent into a wash. The wash is our turnaround point. After our break, we will return the way we came. Trail condition – an average hiking trail. No restrooms and no park fee. Driving distance is 97 miles RT (5 miles of dirt road). After the hike you can drive about 2 miles further down the dirt road to the Castle Hot Springs Resort (which is expected to reopen in late 2018).
<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/LakePleasantArea/Spring-Valley-Trail>

Directions to Governors Peak/Spring Valley Trails

Take Loop 303 north and exit at Lake Pleasant Road.
Turn left on Lake Pleasant Rd and follow until it ends at AZ 74.
Turn left on AZ 74 (Carefree Highway).
Go west to Castle Hot Springs Road (the Lake Pleasant turn off).
Turn right on Castle Hot Springs Rd and follow 5.2 miles to the "T" intersection.
Turn left and follow 5.0 miles to pullout on left side of dirt road. The last mile is on the creek bed and there is a cattle guard at the end, so you can't miss it.
Parking is just past the cattle guard on the left.
The hike starts by continuing up the road about 50 yards and cutting across the creek bed on the left. (From the parking area, directly across the creek, you can see cairns in the creek bed and in a gap in the bushes you can see the sign-in box.)

February 28 - Bell Rock & Courthouse Rock Loop (Sedona). Rating C. This is a 6 mile loop hike with an elevation gain of about 700 ft. The hike starts near Bell Rock and goes up to the vortex at Bell Rock before looping around Bell and Courthouse Rocks. Very scenic with many well known rock formations in view as you go around these two rocks. Trail condition - good hiking trail with Bell Rock itself being steep bare rock. Restrooms are at the trailhead. A Red Rock Parking Pass (\$5.00) or a Golden Age Pass is required. Driving distance is approx 240 miles RT. [SCG=4.2/500/2.0]
<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/Category/Bell-Rock-Courthouse-Rock-Loop>

Directions to Sedona - Bell Rock Trailhead

Turn right on Pebble Creek Pkwy to Indian School.

Turn left on Indian School.

Turn right on Loop 303 and follow until it ends at I-17.

Turn left onto I-17 North toward Flagstaff.

From I-17, take exit 298, turn left and head towards Sedona on AZ 179.

Pass through the Village of Oak Creek. Keep on going just past Bell Rock.

Turn right into Courthouse Vista overlook (first scenic overlook just past Bell rock (it's very close to Bell Rock)).

There is a restroom at this trailhead.

Senior Parks Pass or Red Rock Parking Pass (\$5.00) is needed.

There are McDonalds at I-17 exits 262 and 287