

Wilderness Trails

Front Country Ranger District San Bernardino National Forest



The San Gorgonio Wilderness embraces the summit of the San Bernardino mountain range. At 11,503 feet, Mt San Gorgonio or "Old Greyback" is the highest peak in Southern California. Within its boundaries, are 56,749 acres of forest, small meadows and lakes, and large barren slopes that stretch from the timberline to the summit of Mt. San Gorgonio.

Free permits are required for all hikes into the San Gorgonio Wilderness. However, an Adventure Pass (which costs \$5/day or \$30/year per vehicle) is needed to park at trailheads. Wilderness and Adventure Passes may be obtained in person at Mill Creek Ranger Station, Barton Flats Visitor Center (summer only), and Big Bear Ranger Station (Fawnskin). Wilderness permits may also be requested up to three months in advance by contacting the Mill Creek Ranger Station.

Open water sources are easily contaminated by human and animal waste. Do not drink water from springs, lakes, ponds, or streams without treatment. A recommended way is to bring water to a rolling boil for 5 to 10 minutes before drinking. Also, please remember to camp at least 200 feet from meadows, streams, springs, trails, and other occupied sites.

South Fork Trail

The South Fork Trailhead is on Jenks Lake Road, 2.5 miles from Highway 38. The trail begins at the large paved parking lot (6,900') on Jenks Lake Road East and climbs 2.5 miles where it crosses the Wilderness boundary just beyond a short side trail (NE) to a photo overlook (Poop-Out Hill, 7,740') and a wilderness information display. The trail then crosses the Wilderness boundary and continues for another 1.7 miles to South Fork Meadows (8,200'). Here, the trail forks: (1.5 miles, 9000') to the left (east) is Dry Lake, and 2 miles to the right (west) is Dollar Lake (9,300').

The Dry Lake camping area is spread through two drainages. The first has only one or two good camping sites. The second, in the largest draw, has almost all the sites as well as Lodgepole Springs (about .25 mile up the trail towards Fish Creek Saddle-9,000'). (Remember that camping is at least 200 feet from meadows, streams, springs, trails, and other occupied sites.)

One and three tenths mile further is Trail Flat Camp (no water.) Three-tenths mile further on is Mineshaft Saddle (9,700') from which the hiker may choose to climb to the summit of Mt. San Gorgonio (11,503').

The 3.5 mile Sky High Trail from Mineshaft Saddle to the peak is occasionally steep, often rocky, and usually snow-covered in the early fall, winter, and late spring. This climb should always be done with care. Warm garments are necessary since the wind can pick up sharply at the peak. Summit Camp is just west of Mt. San Gorgonio and is best reached by either the Sky High or the Vivian Creek Trail. Rocky and windswept, the trail presents a panoramic view of Southern California. Here you will find a few rock walled shelters to take protection from the frequent buffeting wind.

Camping at Dollar Lake is at Dollar Lake Forks Trail Camp (9,300') located approximately 0.3 miles from the lake. Camping is prohibited within 0.25 miles of Dollar Lake, including camping on the ridges above the lake.

Dollar Lake Saddle (9,960'-no camping here, no water) is located 0.7 miles beyond Dollar Lake. From the saddle, it is 5 miles to the summit. One popular campsite accessible from Dollar Lake Saddle is Red Rock Flat (10,100') ¼ mile west of the saddle. High Meadow Springs (10,400') is ½ mile further with water available for both camps.

Lost Creek Trail

The Lost Creek Trailhead is across Hwy 38 from South Fork Campground. Beginning at the parking lot (6,320') it crosses under the bridge. The beginning of the Lost Creek Trail follows the Santa Ana River Trail (2E03.) After approximately .5 mile, the Lost Creek Trail splits from the Santa Ana Trail and heads up an old jeep road for about 1 mile before heading off on a trail towards Grinnell Ridge Camp (no water-8,500'.) From the Grinnell Ridge Camp, the trail descends into South Fork Meadows and meets with the South Fork Trail.

Aspen Grove Trail

Turn right (south) off Highway 38 about 6 miles east of the Barton Flats Visitor Center on Forest Service Road 1N02. Follow 1N02 until it forks right to 1N05. Go right up 1N05 (this is a rough, unmaintained road not intended for low-slung autos) to the signed Aspen Grove Trail parking (7,400') 2.6 miles from Highway 38. After crossing the creek, take the trail to the left. After 1.5 miles, the trail joins the Fish Creek Trail (8,180'.) **This trail offers quiet and opportunity for the visitor to explore a small remnant grove of Quaking Aspens (*Populus tremuloides*), only found in one other location outside of the Sierra Nevada range.**

Fish Creek Trail

To reach the trailhead, turn right (south) off Highway 38 about 6 miles east of the Barton Flats Visitor Center on Forest Service Road 1N02. Follow 1N02 until it forks right to 1N05. Follow 1N05 (not intended for low-slung autos) about 7 miles to the trailhead (8,180'.) From Fish Creek trailhead, it is 1.7 miles to Fish Creek Trail Camp (8,600'). Water is available (normally) approximately ½ mile beyond Fish Creek Camp (Fish Creek crosses the trail). During early spring, water may be found flowing directly through camp.

Three and three-tenths miles further is Fish Creek Saddle (no water-9,900'). Water is obtained from Lodgepole Spring (9,000',) seven-tenths of a mile down a trace trail to Dry Lake (9,000',) or packed up from Fish Creek. From Fish Creek Saddle, it is .9 mile to Mineshaft Saddle (9,960') where it meets the Sky High Trail. The summit of San Gorgonio (11,499') is 3.5 miles further.



United States
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Forest Service
Pacific Southwest Region
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North Fork, Whitewater River

The best access to this trail is via the Fish Creek Trail (8,180'.) Two camps are accessible from Mineshaft Saddle (9,960'.) From Mineshaft Saddle, the trail descends northeast to Mineshaft Flats (1.8 miles-9,960'.) The camp lies to the west of the trail. Water is available approximately .3 miles along the trail below the camp. One mile beyond (and below) Mineshaft Flats is Big Tree Camp (8,400'). Water is available from the North Fork of the Whitewater River. **This area is remote and rugged and offers the visitor solitude and far-off views of Yucca Valley and Joshua Tree National Park.**

Vivian Creek Trail

The trailhead is reached by turning off Highway 38 to Forest Falls. Continue through Forest Falls to the top end (east end) of the picnic area at the end of the road (6,080'.)

The Vivian Creek Trail is the shortest and the steepest route to the summit of San Gorgonio. One and two-tenths miles from the trailhead is Vivian Creek Camp (7,100'.) Campsites are located upslope to the right of the trail after reaching the stream: one is halfway up the slope, and the other is at the top of the slope (no camping within 200 feet of the trail or creek).

One and tree-tenths miles from Vivian Creek Camp is Halfway Camp (8,100'). Water is obtained from the creek 200 yards before camp. Two and tree-tenths miles further is High Creek Camp (water available- 9,200'.) The summit of San Gorgonio (11,499') is 3 miles beyond High Creek. **The upper end of this trail offers outstanding views of Yucaipa Ridge and Galena Peak, as well as sweeping panoramic views from the top of Mt. San Gorgonio. After the South Fork Trail, this is the second most used trail in the Wilderness.**

Momyer Creek Trail

The trailhead is reached by turning east off Highway 38 to Forest Falls. Continue up the road 3 miles to the large parking area (5,400') on your left 100 yards before the fire station. Alger Creek Camp (7,100') is 3.7 miles. The single site is located about .25 miles below the trail.

Two miles further is Dobbs (water available-7,200'.) Another 1.5 miles is Saxton Camp (8,400'.) Water here is obtained from a small spring .2 miles below the camp along the trail. Two miles further is Dollar Lake Saddle (no water-9,960'.) **This is of the most underused trails. The area offers the visitor solitude and good views of Mill Creek Canyon and Yucaipa Ridge from the upper end of the trail.**

San Bernardino Peak Trail

From Angelus Oaks, turn east off Highway 38 onto Manzanita. Then turn to the immediate left onto the frontage road that parallels Highway 38. Turn right onto FS road 1W07 and stay to the right up the dirt road 300 yards to the trailhead (5,960'). Columbine Camp (water available-8,000') is 4.7 miles from the trailhead just beyond the Manzanita Flats. The camp is to the right (south) of the trail and .7 mile and 300 vertical feet below it.

Two miles beyond Columbine Springs Junction is Limber Pine Bench Camp (9,200'.) Water is obtained from a spring .3 miles beyond the camp.

2.2 miles further beyond Limber Pine Camp located on the San Bernardino Peak Divide Trail is San Bernardino (10,624') and San Bernardino East Peaks. Another two miles east along the Peak Divide Trail is Trail Fork Springs (water available near trail junction-10,400'.) **The San Bernardino Peak Trail and the Divide Trail both offer outstanding views in all directions. The flatlands of the Inland Empire lay nearly 10,000 vertical feet below Limber Pine Camp and the trail above.**

Forsee Creek Trail

Turn right (southeast) on Jenks Lake Road West off of Highway 38. 0.25 miles from Hwy 38 is a signed dirt road on your right. This is a rough, rocky road not intended for low-slung autos, but is usually passable.

One mile up the trail is the cutoff for John's Meadow (heading to the west,) John's Meadow (and camp) is located at 7,200' and 2.7 miles from the trailhead. Plenty of water is available here year-round.

Four miles from the trailhead (6,400') is Jackstraw Camp. Jackstraw Camp (9,200') is located 0.2 miles to the right (west) of the trail and is supplied by a small and intermittent water source. 1.1 miles beyond Jackstraw is Trail Fork Springs Camp (10,400'.) Water is located about 100 yards southwest of the camp at the spring.

To the east along the Peak Divide Trail lie two additional camps. The first, Anderson Flat (no water-10,500'.) is .4 miles up the trail. The second is Shields Flat (no water-10,400') 1.8 miles east of Anderson Flat, 2.3 miles east of Trail Fork, and only 1.2 miles west of High Meadow Spring (10,300'.) which is the preferred water source. **This trail is mostly shaded up to Jackstraw Springs Camp, and offers outstanding sunset views west from Trail Fork Springs Camp.**

Kitching Peak Trail (access to trailhead closed until further notice)

Drive Interstate 10 to Fields Road exit and go north. Turn left onto Seminole and right onto Fields Rd to the guard shack. After checking in, proceed north on Fields Rd, turn right onto Sullivan Rd, turn right onto Ramon Rd, and turn left onto Martin Rd. Proceed for about 0.10 mile. After the cattle guard, make a diagonal left (NE) onto an unnamed dirt road. Proceed 0.75 mile to Millard Canyon Rd and turn right. Take the right branch of this road, following signs to Kitching Peak Trailhead (4,240'.) It is 4 miles to Kitching Peak Sink (5,570') and 5.5 miles to Kitching Peak (6,560'.) No water is available at either site.

Deer Springs Trail (access to trailhead closed until further notice)

Follow the same directions as the Kitching Peak Trail (above.) On Millard Canyon Rd, Take the left branch and look for signs to Deer Springs (4,400'.) Only Explorer Permits are issued for this area.

Bear Wallow Trail (access to trailhead closed until further notice)

Follow the same directions for Deer Springs Trail (above.) On Millard Canyon Rd look for signs to Bear Wallow Trail (4,560') after passing the Deer Springs Trailhead (4,400'.) The camp (4,660') is .5 miles up an easy trail. Water is obtained from the creek.

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