



Name Of Trail Loop: Flagstaff Walnut Canyon Loop

Passage And Location: Walnut Canyon, Elden Mountain, and Flagstaff
Passages 31, 32 and 33; south and central Flagstaff

Length Of Loop Trail: 31.5 miles entire loop or 27.9 if using the Mountain Line bus along Route 66 from Sandy Seep Trailhead

Loop Trail Description:

From Buffalo Park the Arizona Trail, Urban/Resupply route, is on the east side of the entrance to Buffalo Park. In fact, there is a Memorial for Dale Shewalter, the “Father of the Arizona Trail”, who passed away in 2010 which is just northeast of this entrance. Head south using the bridge over Cedar Ave and continuing southeast then south along the eastern edge of McMillan Mesa the trail loops west then descends down to Route 66 for 1.7 miles. Cross Route 66 following a concrete Flagstaff Urban Trail on the west side of Ponderosa Parkway then tunnels underneath Butler Ave. Head right/west along Butler Road and then left onto Babbitt Road. At the end of Babbitt, take the service road under the freeway. After crossing underneath the freeway, go past the holding ponds of the Rio de Flag then continue on the Arizona Trail going southeast. Head on to Fisher Point trail junction at 4.6 miles from Route 66. Turn east/right then around the point before going uphill with a couple of switchbacks. Continue for another 9.5 miles reaching the road to Walnut Canyon National Monument. If you would like to check out the monument take a right and travel 0.7 miles. It is another 2+ miles before the Arizona Trail goes under the I-40 freeway lanes. In 5.3 miles is Picture Canyon, a Natural and Cultural Preserve with riparian areas and Petroglyphs. It is another 1.7 miles to the US 89 underpass and Sandy Seep TH a mile further. Two options to proceed:

- From Sandy Seep TH one can walk/ride west along US 89 1.0 mile to Snowflake Drive, right turn, then left turn onto Christmas Tree Lane to hop on the Mountain Line Bus service using the (Red) Route 66 Bus to get back to Route 66 & Ponderosa Parkway where you can head north back up the Arizona Trail, Urban/Resupply route to Buffalo Park for 1.7 miles.
There is also a continuous concrete sidewalk/path paralleling US 89/Route 66 back to Route 66 and Ponderosa Parkway for 4.4 miles.
- Continue generally west from Sandy Seep Trailhead to use all trail and to return to Buffalo Park for 5.6 miles. See details below.

From Sandy Seep Trailhead head northwest on the Arizona Trail for 1.5 miles. Go left/south using the Christmas Tree Trail for 1.5 miles that connects to a portion of Fat Man’s Loop Trail. Head right/north for a short bit then left/west onto the Forces of Natural Trail that goes along the south side of Elden Mountain for 1.9 miles. Continue northwest following a Pipeline trail for 0.7 miles. Take a left/south onto the Arizona Trail, Urban/Resupply route back to Buffalo Park in about a mile.

Recommended Seasons Of Use: Spring, Summer, Fall

Elevation Start: 7120’

Elevation Gain/Loss: 1844’

Access Point: Northwest starting point is Buffalo Park located north of Route 66 by using Fourth St and Cedar Ave on the east or Switzer Canyon Drive & Turquoise Dr and Forest Ave on the west. Buffalo Park is north of Forest/Cedar Ave on Gemini (at a stoplight) 0.3 mile in. There is a dirt parking lot, full seasonal bathrooms, and seasonal water fountain.

North starting point is Sandy Seep Trailhead a little less than a mile north of US 89 and Townsend-Winona Road.

Water: Various sources in Flagstaff. There is a wildlife tank left/north of trail about 100 yards approximately 5.4 miles after the Fisher Point trail junction at 4.50707E, 38.91877N. When the Walnut Canyon Monument is open, water is available at the Visitor Center about a mile south of the trail. For up to date details on water sources please visit the Arizona Trail Water sources at <https://aztrail.org/explore/water-sources/> and even use the Arizona Trail App <https://aztrail.org/explore/maps/mobile-app/> which has user comments about the status of water sources.

Notes: The city bus (Mountain Line) which usually runs each hour, or half hour at peak times which would save about 5 miles of walking/riding. There are stops 1.0 miles south of Sandy Seep Trailhead on Route 66, Route 66 & Ponderosa Parkway, and Cedar Ave & Gemini Dr. For more details and a downloadable app of route maps and locations of buses visit <https://mountainline.az.gov/>

For specific turn by turn information on the Arizona Trail visit the Arizona Trail databook <https://aztrail.org/explore/databooks/> and even use the Arizona Trail App <https://aztrail.org/explore/maps/mobile-app/>

The Arizona Trail Association provides this information as a service to the community. The ATA cannot, and does not, guarantee the accuracy of any of the information. Water and trail reports are only accurate for a limited time. Some information will not be accurate. Trail conditions and water sources may change quickly. Trail conditions are also highly subjective. What is passable to some may not be passable to another. The user of this information is solely responsible for their own safety. Hike your own hike.