

Hike: Bonanza Peak - trail
Trailhead: Cold Creek Trailhead - marked.
Distance: 10 miles – up and back
Elevation gain: 2,300 feet
Elevation of Peak: 10,400 feet
Time: 5 to 6 hours – up and back
Difficulty: 3
Danger level: 1
Class: 1
How easy to follow: 2
Children: No
Waypoints (WGS84): See Page 2
Fee: None
Best season: Summer

Driving directions: From the Mirage Hotel and Casino on Las Vegas Boulevard (the Strip) go north 1.5 miles and turn west (left) onto Sahara. In less than one mile, turn right (north) onto I-15. Take I-15 two miles to US 95. Go north 33 miles on US 95 and turn west (left) on the signed Cold Creek Road. Drive 16 miles until the road dead ends into the Bonanza trailhead ([Waypoint 1](#)). The last two miles is a gravel road. Passenger cars can drive the gravel road, but it will be slow in places.

Comments: Though Bonanza Peak is part of the SMNRA, many locals do not consider it part of the Mt.



Photo 1

Charleston area, because it's past State Route 156. The drive is only a few minutes longer than to Lee Canyon Ski area, and the opportunity for solitude and catching a glimpse of wild horses roaming free makes the few extra miles worth the effort.

The Hike: The well-maintained trail starts at the trail sign with a leisurely pace. (See **Photo 1**.) The trail ascends a series of switchbacks as it winds through ponderosa pines. The grade becomes steeper during the switchbacks, but the view eases the pain. Out to the SW you can see the backside of Mummy Mountain.

You can't help but notice the acres of burned trees from a fire years ago. It serves as a reminder just how dry conditions become in these mountains.

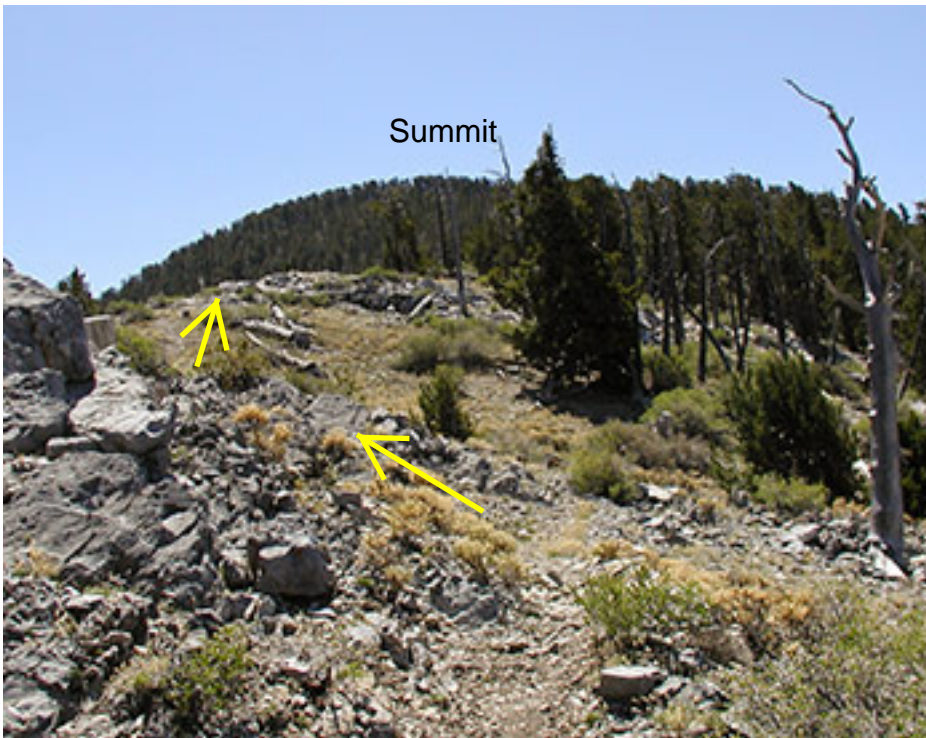


Photo 2

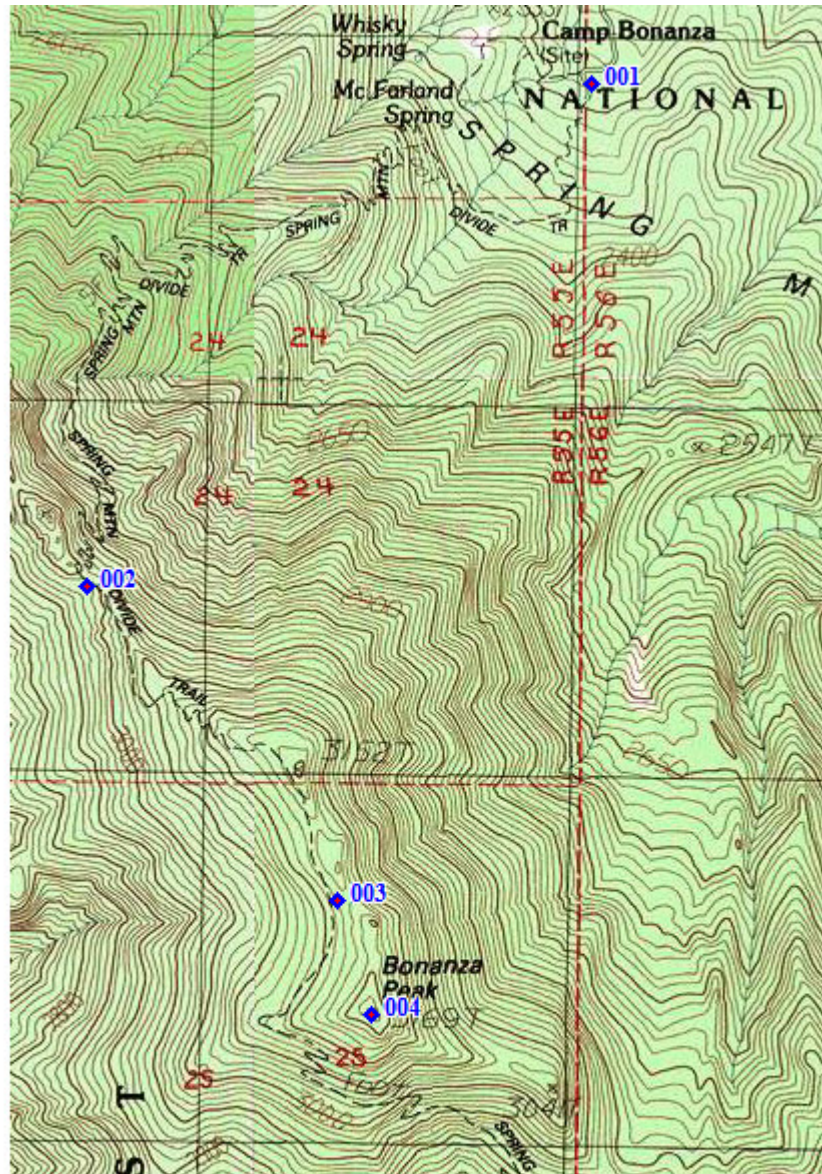
The trail becomes steeper as it switches back among the white firs. In this area many white lupin and bluish phalux flowers grow alongside the trail. After numerous switchbacks, the trail heads SE direction and levels. Looking up toward the ridgeline you'll see a rocky cliff, which indicates you are near the saddle. Once at the saddle (See **Photo 2- Waypoint 2**), take a break and keep your eyes open for wild

horses grazing. The town of Pahrump is visible out to the west.

From the saddle, the trail heads SW staying below the ridge, which is to the east. After a few switchbacks, the trail flattens out into the most enjoyable part of the hike. Pinecones litter the trail. A large rock outcrop indicates the peak is close. Unfortunately the trail does not travel to the peak. [Waypoint 3](#) marks where you leave the trail. There's normally a large cairn here. Ascend to the ill defined ridgeline and hike about 0.25 miles to the peak. (If you do not have a GPS or the cairn is gone, simply continue on the trail until you come to a series of **short** switchback that **descend**. Leave the trail at this point and ascend less than 100 yards to the ridgeline. Once on the ill-defined ridge, head SE (right) a little over 100 yards till you see a large cairn.) The cairn marks the peak. An ammo box contains a sign-in log. Bonanza Peak ([Waypoint 4](#)) is not as prominent as other peaks in the area.

The view from Bonanza Peak is both unique and surprising. The uniqueness comes from seeing the various peaks in Mt. Charleston from this angle, and the surprise is how close you are to them. To the SE stands Charleston Peak. From this angle, it looks unapproachable. Mack's Peak lies almost due east. It is the closest peak and appears to be only a couple of miles away. The rugged-looking McFarland Peak lies to the SW of Mack's Peak.

To descend: The easiest way to find the trail from the peak is to angle down to the right until you reach the trail. Depending where you intersect the trail, you might **ascend** on the trail. This seems wrong, but is correct. (See the topo map. It will clear up any confusion.) Follow the trail back to the trailhead.



Name	Latitude	Longitude	Elevation	Message
001	36.38219° N	115.74071° W	7537 ft.	Trailhead
002	36.36993° N	115.75592° W	9765 ft.	Saddle
003	36.36226° N	115.74834° W	10234 ft.	Leave trail
004	36.35945° N	115.74733° W	10372 ft.	Summit