

Hike: Mt. Wilson via First Creek Canyon — route

Trailhead: First Creek — marked

Distance: 10 miles – up and back

Elevation gain: 3,400 feet

Elevation of Peak: 7,070 feet

Time: 7 to 9 hours (up and back)

Difficulty: 5

Danger level: 3

Class: 3

How easy to follow: 3

Children: No

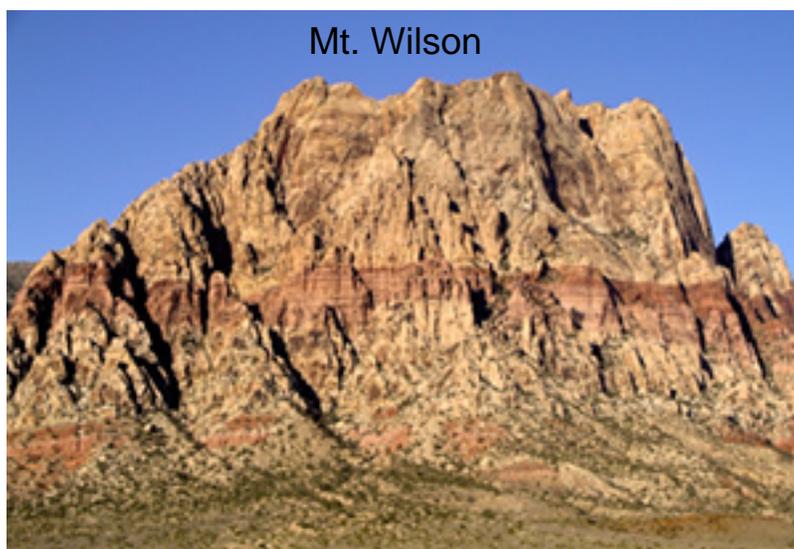
Waypoints: (WGS-84) See Page 7

Fees: None

Best Season: Spring and autumn

Driving directions: From the Mirage on Las Vegas Boulevard (the Strip) go north three miles and turn left (west) onto Charleston Boulevard. Drive 21 miles on Charleston (it becomes State Route 159) to the signed First Creek parking area on the right (west) side of the road. You'll drive past the entrance to Red Rock Canyon. Do NOT turn into Red Rock Canyon. [Waypoint 1](#) is the trailhead. **Photo 1** is Mt. Wilson.

Comments: This is the least technical route to Mt. Wilson, the highest sandstone summit in Red Rock Canyon. The views from Mt. Wilson are the most dramatic in Red Rock. The route through First Creek is in great shape. You shouldn't encounter much brush. There are many ways around, over, or under the house-size boulders in the wash. The route you follow through the canyon depends on the amount of water in the wash, your climbing ability, and the grapevines. Get an early start; you don't want to descend in the dark. Your starting time is not limited to the Scenic Loop hours, since the trailhead is along State Route 159. **Note:** if you know the route into



Mt. Wilson

Photo 1

First Creek, begin reading on Page 3.

The hike: Follow the signed trail toward the mouth of First Creek Canyon. When it forks, take the left (south) fork. Rocks block the right fork. In about a quarter of a mile, the trail goes down a hill and passes under a branch of a 20-foot scrub oak ([Waypoint 2](#)). From this point the trail divides into numerous paths. Follow any path that stays near the creek. You will



Photo 2

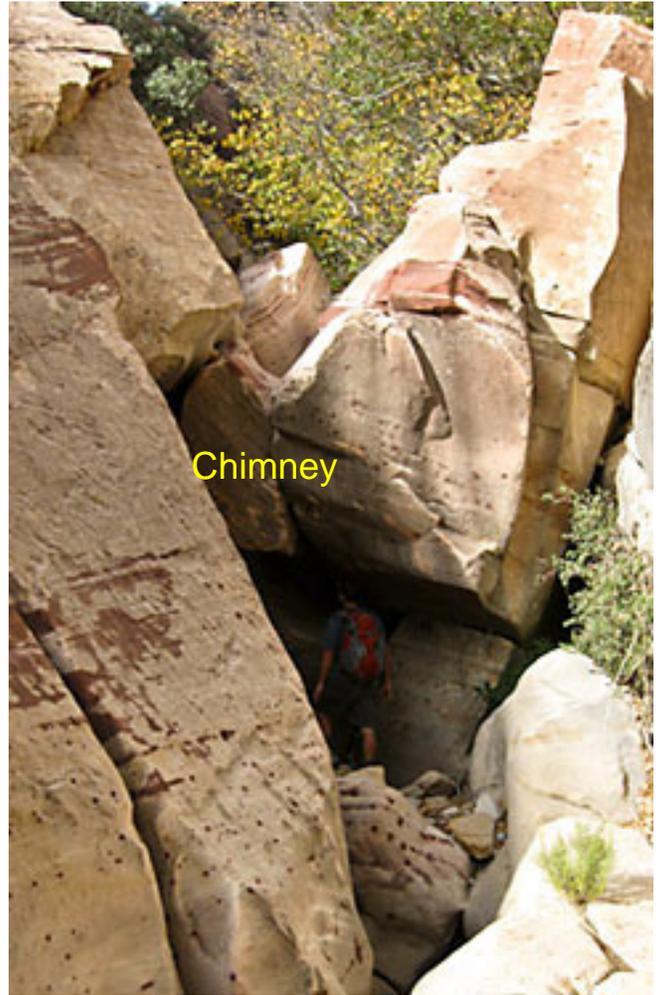


Photo 3

always be to the south (left) of the creek. Just before the path enters the creek, take the south (left) fork, which climbs a hill. ([Waypoint 3](#).) At the top of the hill, the path merges with other paths. Continue west toward the canyon. The path divides at a 20-foot juniper ([Waypoint 4](#)). Follow the north (right) fork down a hill. At the bottom of the hill, a log has fallen across the path. Eventually the path goes across a band of red sandstone. About 15 feet after the path changes back to dirt, it forks. Take the north (right) fork ([Waypoint 5](#)). Actually if you continue straight, you encounter massive brush.

The path weaves between two boulders and then heads west (left) into the canyon. Numerous cairns help keep you on course from here to the wash. Follow the path through the brush to a large low-angled boulder. Scramble up the boulder and continue on the path. A row of rocks outlines the path as it heads north to the wash. Continue on the path to the large Cottonwood tree ([Waypoint 6](#)) in **Photo 2**. The Cottonwood tree can look much different depending on the season. You're finally in the wash.



Photo 4

From here to the end of the canyon, I'll point out key landmarks that you should pass. Look for footprints in the gravel, and cairns to keep you on route. Boulder about 300 yards up the canyon to huge rocks that have formed tunnels. This is called the Maze and it's really a cool place. [Waypoint 7](#) is just beyond the Maze. Continue up the wash another 300 yards to the class 3 chimney in **Photo 3** ([Waypoint 8](#)).



Photo 5

At the top of this chimney a 100-foot, dead tree leans against the north bank of the wash. The canyon divides just past the tree. Hike NW into the right fork of the canyon. Boulder about 50 yards up this fork to the obvious opening through the brush on the



Photo 6

west (left) side as seen in **Photo 4**. ([Waypoint 9](#))

Once through the opening, head west and boulder a couple hundred yards to the start of the "Cascading



Photo 7

Waterfall?”. Climb 40 yards up the steep sandstone wall along north (right) bank. A large ponderosa pine stands at the top of the waterfall ([Waypoint 10](#)). It’s a great place to take a break. The waterfall might be a trickle by early summer.

Continue up the wash. If you get into brush, you are off route. Soon you come to an odd looking piece of conglomerate rock in **Photo 5**. Just



Photo 8

beyond the rock you have a choice: go left and climb the broken face/crack (class 3+) or go right and follow a path that leads back into the wash. Hike to and climb the crack in **Photo 6**. Notice the ponderosa tree ([Waypoint 11](#)) in the photo. This is your landmark.

The route continues and passes to the

right of a huge (20 feet tall) conglomerate boulder. You are now walking on dirt, not sandstone any longer. The north (right) wall is still too steep to try and climb. The wash forks, though it’s not obvious. Just make sure and stay in the main fork. The south (left) fork is the descent fork from First Creek Peak.



Photo 9

[Waypoint 12](#) is the top of a steep slab of sandstone you walk up. The north wall is becoming lower, but you still have about 150 yards to go before it disappears. [Waypoint 13](#) is where you leave the wash. The north wall ends.

Hike the path as it follows the famous Keystone Thrust fault line. **Photo 7** shows



Photo 10

landscape from the path. It's a big change from the wash. Follow the path about a quarter of a mile. Leave the path ([Waypoint 14](#)) and head onto sandstone where the walking is faster and better for sticky rubber shoes. **Photo 8** shows where you leave the path for the sandstone.

Head for the false peak in **Photo 9**. The sandstone has given way to high desert terrain. [Waypoint 15](#) is where the terrain changes back to sandstone. Keep heading

toward the false peak, although at times you will not be able to see it. The false peak reappears and **Photo 10** shows how you will traverse to the right. [Waypoint 16](#) is just in front of the false peak and near the right (east)



Photo 11

end. **Photo 11** shows a small saddle ([Waypoint 17](#)) you ascend to. Ascend the ridge as shown in Photo 11.

Note: the old route traveled through the wide chute at the top of the saddle. The ridge is faster.

Photo 12 shows another false peak from the top of the ridge you just ascended. **Do not** hike to the false peak, instead hike to the west (left) of it. Your next view is **Photo 13** which pictures the last false peak! [Waypoint 18](#) was taken

from where Photo 13 was taken. Hike to this false summit where you intersect a path. Once at the top of this final false peak, the real peak comes into view the rest of the route is obvious. See **Photo 14**.

Congratulations, you made it. A sign-in book sits in the ammo box. As you can see by the few entries, not many people have made it to this peak. It's over 3,000 feet straight down to the desert floor. Relax and enjoy the view, you have earned it.



Photo 12

To Descend: Retrace your steps.

Descending the route is much faster, because you're able to climb down obstacles you couldn't climb up. To be safe you should have at least four or more hours of daylight left. This means leaving the peak by 12:30 if you're doing the hike in late fall, winter, or early spring.

You have the option of descending the Hidden Bowl and then taking the super

shortcut down into First Creek. This cuts the descent by 33 percent%.



Photo 13

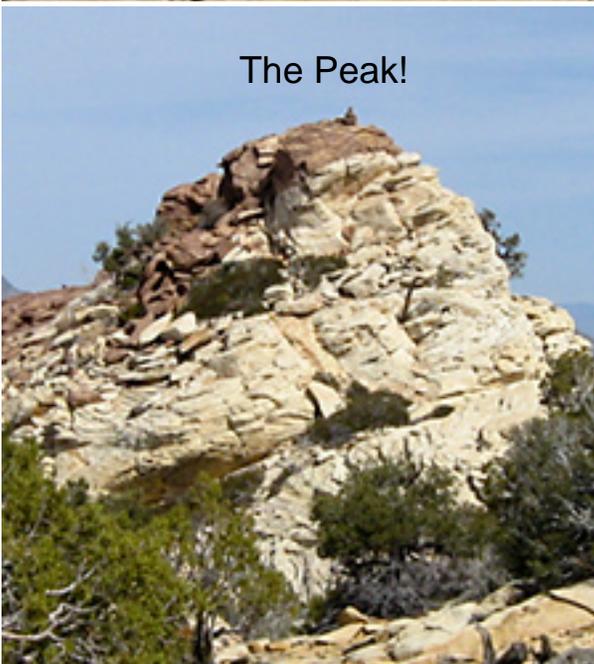
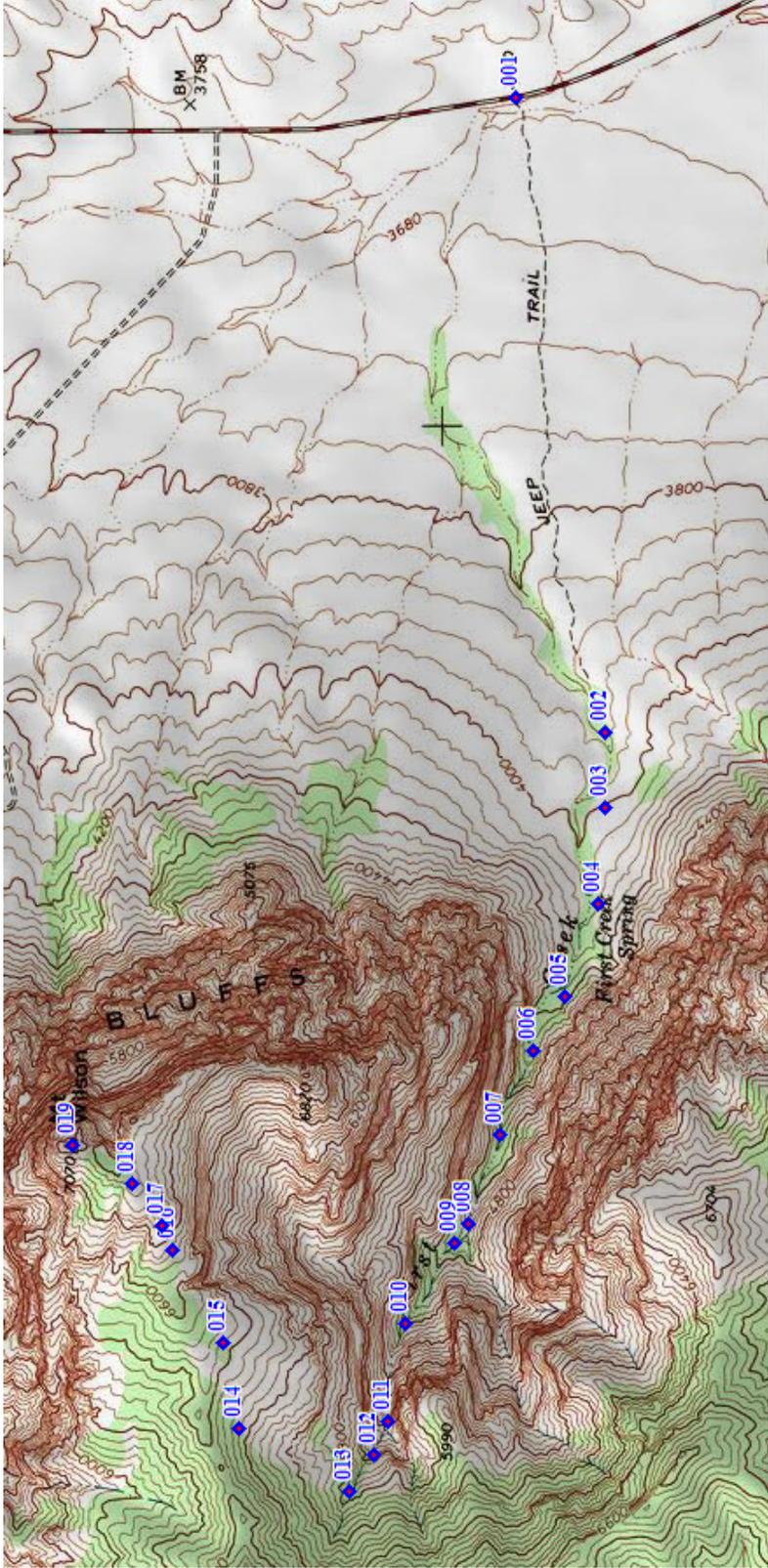


Photo 14



Name	Latitude	Longitude	Ele...	Message
◆ 001	36.08129° N	115.44791° W	344...	24-MAR-10 7:20:33AM Trailhead
◆ 002	36.07876° N	115.46976° W	390...	24-MAR-10 7:48:24AM 20 foot scrub oak
◆ 003	36.07880° N	115.47234° W	398...	24-MAR-10 7:52:28AM Left (south) fork
◆ 004	36.07895° N	115.47570° W	407...	24-MAR-10 7:58:16AM 20 foot juniper tree
◆ 005	36.07988° N	115.47888° W	416...	24-MAR-10 8:04:54AM Right fork
◆ 006	36.08076° N	115.48070° W	424...	24-MAR-10 8:12:53AM Cottonwood tree
◆ 007	36.08170° N	115.48361° W	448...	24-MAR-10 8:35:50AM Far side of the Maze
◆ 008	36.08257° N	115.48670° W	463...	24-MAR-10 8:50:41AM Chimney
◆ 009	36.08296° N	115.48737° W	471...	24-MAR-10 8:58:14AM Opening to wash
◆ 010	36.08434° N	115.49015° W	496...	24-MAR-10 9:17:31AM Top of Waterfall
◆ 011	36.08485° N	115.49347° W	533...	24-MAR-10 10:07:10AM Ponderosa tree
◆ 012	36.08524° N	115.49464° W	553...	24-MAR-10 10:24:39AM Steep slab of sandstone
◆ 013	36.08591° N	115.49591° W	576...	24-MAR-10 11:01:20AM Leave the wash
◆ 014	36.08898° N	115.49373° W	624...	24-MAR-10 11:17:23AM Leave path
◆ 015	36.08944° N	115.49080° W	645...	24-MAR-10 11:26:48AM Terrain changes back to sandstone
◆ 016	36.09085° N	115.48761° W	674...	24-MAR-10 11:42:07AM In front of false peak
◆ 017	36.09114° N	115.48677° W	683...	24-MAR-10 11:46:17AM Saddle/ridge
◆ 018	36.09196° N	115.48530° W	699...	24-MAR-10 11:54:33AM
◆ 019	36.09366° N	115.48397° W	707...	24-MAR-10 12:05:37PM Summit