

**3/5/18: Marcus Landslide/East End/Tom's Thumb Loop (McDowell Sonoran Preserve) Rating B.** This hike combines multiple trails into a "B" level loop of approximately 10.6 miles with 2,100 ft. elevation gain. It first climbs from the north to Tom's Thumb on a short but steep trail and then proceeds south on East End (very steep)-Windmill-Coachwhip-Pemberton-Boulder-Marcus Landslide in a CCW loop, eventually passing in front of the Marcus Landslide area. There are great views to the east and north including the Superstitions and Four Peaks areas, plus views of impressive granite boulders. No park fee. Restrooms are at the trailhead (no water). Driving distance is 108 miles RT.  
<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/McDowellSonoranPreserve/Toms-Thumb-Marcus-Landslide>

**3/12/18: Governors Peak/Hells Canyon (Lake Pleasant). Rating B.** A short 5 mile round trip hike with an elevation gain of 1,700 ft. From the trailhead you immediately drop down into the huge wash. Which, in fact, is Castle Creek. It's interesting to imagine what type of thunderstorm it takes to fill this broad swath. If you have really good eyesight you can just make out the white login podium across the wide creek bed. If not just remember it's north of the fence by maybe a tenth of a mile. The trail starts on the north side of the low-lying mesquite filled canyon dumping into Castle Creek.

The Spring Valley Trail takes off up a small rise then heads fairly flat in a west-southwestern line. It's well maintained but you will only be on this trail for a short distance. Be on the lookout for the Hermit Trail slanting out to the right. It's less noticeable and the junction is not signed. As of this writing it was cairned. If you miss the junction, the Spring Valley Trail soon dips through a wash so you shouldn't lose much time.

On the Hermit Trail you appear to be headed for the steep ridge ahead. Fear not as the trail slowly curves northeast gently rising you to the first of three saddles. Prior to the first saddle be sure to peek over your shoulder and catch a view of Lake Pleasant.

Continue over the saddle. The trail drops into a tight/deep ravine and back up quickly. In fact it keeps raising a bit more to yet another saddle. This area is simply awesome. This ravine is larger and is named Four Tanks Canyon. The Hermit Trail ends at this saddle. The Bell Trail continues on. Why the change in trails? Well the Bell Trail is an older trail that used to quickly gain this ridge. Private property changed all that good stuff and the Hermit Trail was blazed to accommodate.

A few steps down into Four Tanks Canyon and you'll soon realize this trail is definitely older and overgrown. If only it was that good! Upon reaching the bottom you're faced with a hearty ascent. Bad news being the trail is more or less gone. The good news being it's not much further to Governors Peak. Peak 2992 looms sharp to your right and its slopes are plastered with healthy Saguaros. It's a stunning view!

With basically no trail to follow you need to study the map. The old trail is cairned but I wouldn't waist much time on the scattered mix of cairns. Here's what it boils down to. You have Peak 2992 on your right. The peak ahead of you is a false peak to Governors Peak, but it can be conquered inline if you so desire. The route of choice is to gain a saddle, jag left and then ascend Governors Peak. Which is easy but you will want to watch your footing.

The views are magnificent in all directions. If this is your first trip in the area you will likely be salivating at the options in the western range of Hells Canyon Wilderness! No restrooms and no park fee. Driving distance is 97 miles RT.

**3/19/18: Hiline, Made in the Shade, and Slim Shady Trails (Sedona). Rating C/B.** This is a 6-9 mile hike with an elevation gain of 600-1000 ft. This is a very scenic hike with views of many named red rock formations. Trail Condition - Most of the trails in this area are good trails; the Hiline trail is listed on the map as ledgy and steep (for bikers). There are restrooms at the trailhead. A Red Rock Parking Pass (\$5.00) or a Golden Age Pass is required. Driving distance is approx 240 miles RT.  
<http://pchikingclub.smugmug.com/Category/Hiline-Trail>

**3/26/18: Mule Deer/Old Saddle/Bajada/Goat Camp Overlook/South/Mule Deer (White Tanks). Rating B.** This is a 8.1 mile loop hike with an elevation gain of 800 feet. Start at the White Tanks Library and turn right onto the Mule Deer Trail. About a mile later turn left on to the Old Saddle for a short connector to the Bajada Trail. Near another mile is the Goat Camp Trail. Again turn right and climb to the top of the steep Goat Camp hill. Just past the top is an unmarked trail to the left. Follow this unmarked trail for about .2 mile to the hill top. At this point turn around and take the Goat Camp Trail back to the South Trail. Turn right and in about .8 mile you will see the junction with the Mule Deer Trail. Turn right and follow the trail back to the library.