

PCT South of Squaw Valley to Twin Peaks - Squaw Valley Area

Truckee Ranger District - Tahoe National Forest



General Information

Mileage: 14.5 miles one way

Elevation: 6560-8800 feet

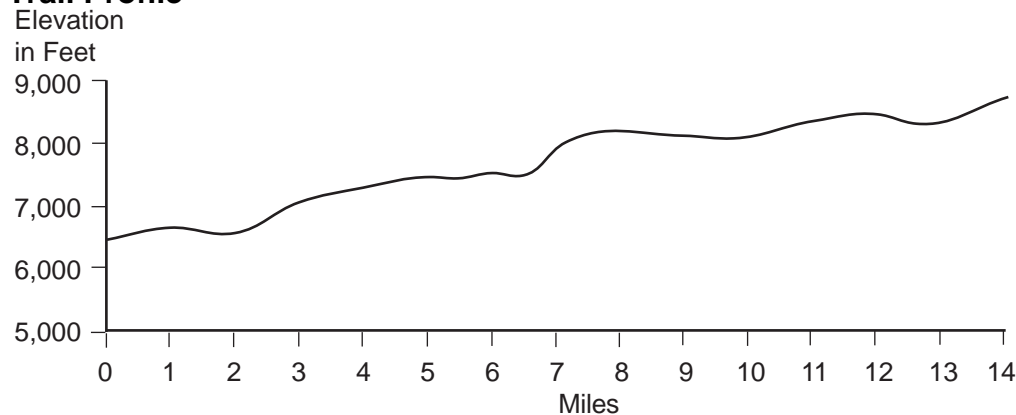
Difficulty:  (Difficult)

Use Level: Light

Season: June-October

Topo Maps: Tahoe City, Granite Chief & Homewood

Trail Profile



Special Note about the PCT:

Congress established the Pacific Crest Trail on October 2, 1968 with passage of the National Trail System Act. The P.C.T. runs for 2,500 miles generally following mountain divides from Mexico to Canada, through California, Oregon and Washington.



Mechanized and Motorized equipment is prohibited, this includes motorcycles and bicycles.

Access

From Interstate 80 west of Truckee, take the South Lake Tahoe exit and follow Highway 89 south for 8.5 miles to the Squaw Valley junction. (If you are coming from Lake Tahoe, take Highway 89 north from Tahoe City for 5 miles.) Turn west on Squaw Valley Road and drive 2.2 miles to the Squaw Valley Fire Station. Hikers must use the large parking area in front of the ski lift buildings and under no condition use any of the parking spaces around the fire station. The trailhead is located on the east (right) side of the fire station and is clearly marked.

Trail Description

Follow the Granite Chief Trail up to where it connects with the PCT. Going south from the Granite Chief Trail junction, the PCT ascends for about a mile to 8600 feet on the

eastern flank of Granite Chief Peak. It then descends to the intersection of the Western States Trail where you can take a short detour to visit the historic Watson Monument at Emigrant Pass, (0.5 mile up the Western States Trail).

One mile south of the Western States Trail intersection, the Tevis Cup Trail veers off to the west. For the next 1.5 miles, the PCT descends down several switchbacks and passes through a meadow paralleling Whisky Creek. Just beyond the meadow is the Whisky Creek Trail junction. From this junction to the Five Lakes Trail junction the PCT crosses 3/4 mile of open slopes which offer beautiful displays of wildflowers seasonally.

The trail then turns south across Five Lakes Creek then climbs up 700 feet in the next 2 miles.

From the crest there are spectacular views of the Granite Chief Wilderness. To the south are massive cliffs of columnar-jointed basalt on the sides of Powderhorn and Little Powderhorn canyons. The trail remains relatively level on or near the crest for the next 3 miles until it reaches Twin Peaks.

At Twin Peaks the trail leaves the crest and traverses west, below the actual peaks. Anywhere along this segment you can climb a short distance to the top of Twin Peaks. Spectacular views of Lake Tahoe, Mount Rose, Tinker Knob, the many high peaks of Desolation Wilderness and the scenery of Granite Chief Wilderness make this extra climb well worth the effort.

Note

Water often is not available along the route. You may wish to carry water with you. Only water from developed systems at recreation sites is maintained safe to drink. Open water sources are easily contaminated by human or animal waste. Water from springs, lakes, pond, and streams should be properly treated before drinking. Another method of treatment is to use a water filter.

Truckee Ranger District
10342 Hwy 89
Truckee, CA 96161-2831
(530) 587-3558