

CDT Highway 90 to Coop Mine

Round Trip: 8.6 miles

Interactive Map: <https://caltopo.com/m/U28MA>

Geospatial PDF: <https://caltopo.com/p/8FL10>

Geologic features, outstanding mountain views, and an old mine are highlights of this easy-going hike/equestrian ride on the CDT #74 south of HWY 90.



The roundtrip is about 8.6 miles with approximately 1,100 overall elevation gain. This trail is nice in cool weather, even in winter, but isn't recommended in high temperatures.

The first 2.9 miles skirt along the foothills of Hornbrook Mountain, passing through pinyon/juniper woodlands and shallow, sandy washes. It's well-marked with CDT trail markers and cairns.

At 2.9 miles, it has a T-intersection with a rough powerline road. Go right and follow the road up for about 2 tenths of a mile. Look for cairns to stay on track when the trail leaves the powerline road on the left and switchbacks up to a ridge. The Burro Mountains, Black Range, and Cooke's Peak come into view.

It's about .6 miles to the top of the ridge, the highest point in the hike. From here, there is a grand view of Apache Mountain to the northwest and the Chiricahua Mountains and basins to the west. There are 3 distinctive pegmatite knobs of white quartz on the ridgeline. The trail has a T-intersection with an old mining road that serves as the designated CDT trail. Going left the road passes the south most quartz knob and descends to the old Coop Mine foundations and workings. The Coop Mine is a good turnaround point for this hike.



Other options: A good turnaround point for a shorter hike of about 7 miles roundtrip, is to go right at the T-intersection at the high point. It's about a quarter mile to the middle white quartz knob that projects from the ridge. This is also a good lunch break. When the area was mined, the earth was blasted away to reveal the solid quartz core, and the slopes surrounding the knob are littered with large chunks. The road will continue to the north for about a half mile to the third knoll if you want to explore further.

A loop can also be done by following forest roads on the way back to the trailhead. These can easily be seen on the map. The milage is about the same.

For those who want to go further, continue following the CDT south.

Getting to the trailhead. From Silver City, at the intersection of Hwy 180 and 90, go 26 miles south on Hwy 90 and turn left onto the C-Bar Road. After crossing the cattleguard, there's a large dirt parking lot on the right with plenty of room for several vehicles and horse trailers. Look for the CDT marker at the trailhead.



Thanks to Jackie Burton for the trail write-up and photos.