

Russell Peak 01K

Lat/Lon 35.673759,-117.95803
UTM 11S 413300E 3948187N

Elevation: 6696'

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Russell Peak on [Peakbagger.com](#)

Current Weather on [NOAA](#)

Location: Kern County, about 45 miles north of Mojave, 140 miles from Los Angeles

Nearby peaks: Backus Peak (see Backus Peak Route 2 for joint hiking instructions.)

Land Manager: Bureau of Land Management, Owens Peak Wilderness (760) 384-5400

USE AT YOUR OWN RISK. CONDITIONS MAY CHANGE, AND UNEXPECTED HAZARDS MAY BE PRESENT.

About the peak

Russell Peak and its neighbor Backus Peak are majestic peaks that are impossible to miss as you travel north on Highway 14 from Mojave. The peak was named in honor of Bill T. Russell and added to the HPS list in 1999. A Triple list finisher (HPS, DPS and SPS), he chaired all three sections and the Leadership Training Committee. He co-authored the Leaders Reference Book, authored the Navigation chapter, and instituted the Navigation Noodle. For years, he conducted classes, led instructional leadership outings, and served as LTC snow climbing chair, rock climbing instructor, and safety examiner. He had an exceptional reputation for leading safe, well-planned and superbly navigated, successful trips and this peak rightly honors him.

Route 1 starts on road near Walker Well, then weaves through a Joshua Tree forest to ascend a steep ridge to summit views of the Sierras, the high desert, and Indian Wells Valley. One can then descend quickly and enjoyably on a great scree slope. It is often combined with Backus by climbing Backus and following the slow-going ridge to Russell, then descending on the scree slope with a short car shuttle.

Alternate routes: This peak has been climbed from Morris Peak.

Special conditions: All car travel is prohibited beyond the Wilderness marker on the dirt road. Do not attempt to hike up the ridge through the cliffs to Russell Peak. You will be in class 2, 3 or higher rock climbing depending upon your route.

Russell Peak has 1 official HPS route:

Russell Peak Route 1

Distance: 6 miles round trip on road and cross-country

Difficulty rating: Class 2, moderate

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Gain: 2700

Time: 4-5 hours round trip

Navigation difficulty: Moderate

Road type: Paved

Driving directions:

- Take SR 14 to Mojave.
- Continue north on SR 14 to the intersection with SR 178 (Freeman Junction).
- Go west on SR 178 4.7 miles to a dirt road on the north side of the highway. Park here. Unlimited parking space. Obscure mileage marker reads 83.50. If you are coming from the west, it is 3.7 miles from Walker Pass summit to the parking location.

Hiking directions:

- From the parking area walk north on the dirt road to Walker Well. Continue north until you meet a ridge coming down to the road on your right (east side of road.)
- Leave the road and walk north up the ridge and pass on the right the class 2/3 rocks that make up the south side of Russell Peak.
- When you reach the saddle, turn left and proceed up to the peak.

Additional Route 1 notes:

