

Nicolls Peak 02C

Lat/Lon 35.6196762,-118.2981355
UTM 11S 382440E 3942542N

Elevation: 6070'

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Nicolls Peak on [Peakbagger.com](#)

Current Weather on [NOAA](#)

Location: Kern County, about 3 miles south of the town of Weldon, 175 miles from Los Angeles

Nearby peaks: Heald Peak

Land Manager: Sequoia National Forest, Kern River Ranger District (760) 376-3781

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

About the peak

Nicolls and its neighbor Heald Peak are some of the best hikes in Kern County, with stunning 360 degree views of Lake Isabella, pretty Kelso Valley and the distant Sierras.

Route 1 is almost entirely cross country and steep, before scrambling up some easy Class 2 rock to the summit. Many have found the greatest challenge to be simply finding the trailhead. It is usually hiked with Heald Peak, which has been suspended because of heavy poodle dog bush growth. If you plan to continue on to Heald Peak, be aware that extreme Poodle Dog growth will be encountered. Take precautions and do not proceed if you react to this plant. (Note added March 2021.)

Peak combinations: This peak can be combined with Heald Peak. See Route 2 for Heald Peak.

Nicolls Peak has 1 official HPS route:

Nicolls Peak Route 1

Distance: 3 miles round trip cross-country

Gain: 2000

Difficulty rating: Class 2, strenuous, summit area is class 2

Time: 5-6 hours round trip

Navigation difficulty: Difficult

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Road type: High-clearance

Driving directions:

- Start at SR 178 at Kernville Airport Road junction.
- Go 0.2 mile west to Vista Grande Road and turn left. Mark odometers at the intersection of Vista Grande and SR 178.
- 0.0 Go south on Vista Grande.
- In 0.5 mile, pavement ends at Bella Vista. Go straight.
- In 0.3 mile, intersect Hill View Acres Road. Go right.
- In 0.8 mile, intersect Brooks Road. Go left.
- Proceed on Brooks Road past "El Rancho Poco" and several intersections to the "W" ranch.
- In 1.2 miles take left fork at a sign "BLM Access". Follow a fence on the left.
- In 0.1 mile; intersection - turn sharp left on Last Chance Trail. 4WD is probably required for the remainder of the drive.
- In 0.1 mile, go right on Last Chance Trail (avoid taking Miners Gulch trail).
- In 0.1 mile, fork. (Turn off for Heald Peak). Go left.
- In 0.1 mile, fork. Go left.
- In 1.5 mile, end of road just past a fence. Park here (3950').

Hiking directions:

- From the cars observe the saddle just south (right) of the summit. This is the low point between Heald and Nicolls.
- Follow a trail easterly for a short ways until you see a tree on the north side of the wide wash.
- Leave the trail here and proceed northerly until you gain the wash on the north side of the wide wash. Follow this wash until you are just south-southwest of the saddle.
- Head up toward the saddle.
- At the saddle proceed north (left) until you encounter ducks.
- Follow a well-ducked use trail northerly, contouring around the east side of some rocky terrain.
- Follow the ducks, scrambling over or around rocky outcrops to the summit.
- The southernmost summit is the high point.

Additional Route 1 notes:

Note: There are multiple confusing roads. The BLM has added road names that are shown on our latest map. Check your mileages going in and coming out.

