

## Bighorn Mountain 24N

Lat/Lon 34.090563,-116.818709  
UTM 11S 516724E 3772212N

Elevation: 10,997'

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Current Weather on [NOAA](#)

Location: San Bernardino County, about 15 miles north-northeast of Banning, 103 miles from Los Angeles

Nearby peaks: Dragons Head, San Gorgonio Mountain, Dobbs Peak, Lake Peak, Grinnell Mountain, Ten Thousand Foot Ridge

Land Manager: San Bernardino National Forest, Front Country Ranger District (909) 382-2851

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

### About the peak

At the southeastern edge of the San Gorgonio complex, Bighorn has wonderful views of East Fork Whitewater River below, the wilderness to the east, Galena to the southwest, above the moon-like landscape of its unique tarn. It is typically hiked in combination with nearby San Gorgonio and/or Dragons Head.

Route 1 starts on the Fish Creek Trail, turning south around Gorgonio, then down to The Tarn and up again. Route 2 is from Dragons Head, from whichever route you used to get there, via The Tarn.

Special conditions: Permits for day or overnight use are required for all routes and have a limit of 12. Permits can be obtained online from the San Gorgonio Wilderness Association at [swga.org](#) up to 90 days in advance or at the Mill Creek Ranger Station, 9 miles from Redlands on SR 38.

Alternate routes:

1) Significant dirt road driving can be saved by hiking from the Aspen Grove Trailhead on 2E05. This saves about 10 miles of dirt road driving, while adding 3 miles and 400' gain to the round trip. It can also be hiked from several other trailheads near the San Gorgonio Wilderness.

2) From the summit of San Gorgonio Mountain, hike down the Sky High Trail, then south to the Tarn and proceed as in Route 1.

3) One may leave the Vivian Creek Trail just north of elevation 10,131' and contour northeasterly, crossing the main wash, then proceeding easterly up another wash to the saddle at 10,640'. This reduces the gain to 5000' including 100' on return and the distance to 14 miles round trip.

Historical Note: The peak was added to the HPS list in December, 2000. Bighorn Mountain is not named on the USGS or USFS maps, but is named on a map prepared by Defenders of the San Gorgonio Wilderness © 1971 to accompany "Guide to the San Gorgonio Wilderness". This map lists the elevation at 11,005'.

Bighorn Mountain has 2 official HPS routes:

## Bighorn Mountain Route 1- Fish Creek Trail

Distance: 18 miles round trip on trail and cross-country

Difficulty rating: Class 1, strenuous

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Adventure Pass may be required

Gain: 4200

Time: 8-10 hours round trip

Navigation difficulty: Easy

Road type: Dirt

### Driving directions:

- Take I-10 east past San Bernardino to the Orange Street exit (SR 38).
- Go one block east, then go north (left) 0.5 mile to Lugonia Avenue. Turn right on SR 38 (east).
- Continue east on SR 38 about 33 miles to 1N02, the road to Heart Bar Campground, on the right. Turn right. Note your odometer and go as follows:
- At 1.2 miles, fork. Go right on 1N05. High clearance may be needed from this point.
- At 2.8 miles, Aspen Grove Trail 2E05 goes west. Alternate parking area. Continue on 1N05.
- At 6.9 miles, fork. Go right.
- At 7.2 miles, fork. The Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) crosses the road here. Go right.
- At 7.6 miles, fork. Go right.
- At 7.7 miles, Fish Creek Trailhead (1W07). Park here.

### Hiking directions:

- From the parking area (8040'), hike trail 1W07 southwest about 1/2 mile to a junction with the Aspen Grove Trail.
- Keep left on 1W07 and continue, passing Fish Creek Camp, 4 miles to Fish Creek Saddle at 9805'.
- Follow the trail for a mile plus to Mine Shaft Saddle (9960'), where it joins the trail from Dry Lake (1E05). Turn left and follow the Sky High Trail (1E07). A sign indicates "San Gorgonio 3 1/2 miles".
- The trail switchbacks up the eastern and southern flanks of San Gorgonio Mountain.
- Past the top of the switchbacks, the trail heads west and the long hogback of Bighorn becomes clearly visible nearby on the your left (south).
- Shortly the Tarn, a wide flat area almost free of vegetation, will also become visible as a depression between you and the peak. Descend south from the trail into the Tarn at a point near the western end of Bighorn's hogback. This is most easily done at around 11,100' where a gully (UTM 166727) has been swept relatively clear of brush.
- Cross the center of the Tarn toward a minor saddle on the west end of the mountain.
- Ascend a steep trail southeast to the top of the ridge and continue about 1/4 mile to the summit.

**Additional Route notes:**

## Bighorn Mountain Route 2- From Dragons Head

Distance: 1 mile one way cross-country from

Dragons Head, 9 miles round trip

Difficulty rating: Class 1, strenuous with

Dragons Head

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Adventure Pass may be required

Gain: 400

Time: 1 hour one way

Navigation difficulty: Easy

Road type: Paved

### Driving directions:

- See the Dragons Head guide.

### Hiking directions:

- From the summit of Dragons Head, hike down the north-northeast ridge to the saddle.
- Hike east about half way across the Tarn and proceed to the summit of Bighorn as in Route 1.

### Additional Route notes: