

Highline-Hillside Loop - 2011

Scenic View West Trailhead

4.8 mi

851 Ft Cumulative Elev. Change

2 h 15 min moving time 3 h 15 min total

But using a steep bushwhack connectioning Highline and Hillside, this pleasant loop affords views of the Verde Valley School Road area, Cathedral Rock, and Twin Buttes.

Park at the scenic overlook on the west side of 179 just under the Seven Sisters between Sedona and Oak Creek Village. Start up the fenced off path to the scenic viewpoint, but step over the fence on the left side and catch the bike trail that heads up the mountain. Work your way up, generally heading in the same direction a bit to the left of directly up the slope. Eventually, after about 5 minutes, you will hit a well developed trail (Hillside Trail) that travels along the contours of the mountain. Turn left here and almost immediately turn right where a dead branch blocks the entrance to continue your ascent on the bike trail.

After about another 15 minutes you will again meet a trail that travels across the contours, perpendicular to you. This is the Highline Trail. Take this trail to the right to head toward Cathedral Rock. As you walk along the trail you will have great views of Munds Mountain, Bell Rock, and Courthouse Butte. Then suddenly you turn the corner, and there is Cathedral Rock in front of you in the sunshine. Continue along and you will have a great vista point that will allow you views not only of Cathedral Rock, but also of Turkey Creek and the House Mountain area. The trail turns down off the viewpoint and heads toward Cathedral at the far side of the viewpoint.

At the top of the viewpoint, look down and see the small mound covered with vegetation just below you. This is where you will find a trail that will take you off the spine and down to the Templeton trail. Take the Highline trail down along the switchbacks to this mound. A long switchback will take you way out on a spit before turning and heading back to the spine below Cathedral. At the end of the switchback you will see tire tracks that continue on, but you want to turn around and continue your way down to the spine. At the base of the viewpoint rock continue on the trail past the mound you saw from above. Go just past its highest point and start looking for an open area on the right of your trail. Head over the open area and look for cairns that mark your trail down. You will be able to see the Templeton trail through the trees as you go. Follow these cairns all the way down to the shelves just above the Templeton trail and then work your way down over the ledges to the trail.

At the Templeton trail, turn right and take it almost all the way to its junction with the HT trail (signpost.) Just before the junction, make a right turn on the Hillside trail (not marked, but a

clear trail) and follow this trail all the way back until you are just above your parking lot. Make a left turn onto the bike trail that you took up at the start of the loop to return to your car.