

## **Honanki - Loy Butte**

### **Honanki Ruin Trailhead**

**3.9 mi**

**1287 ft. Cumulative Elevation Change**

**3 h travel time      5 h total**

**Counterclockwise**

Difficult to find and at times a tedious, painful bushwhack, this hike eventually looks down on the Forest Service Loy Canyon Trail and affords views of Surprise Canyon and the mass west of Hartwell Canyon. Fossil tracks and are encountered. The intrepid may wish to continue beyond the description to the top of Loy Butte. The track is here described as a counterclockwise loop but can as well be traversed either hugging Loy Butte both ways or approaching from the west along the road.

Start at Honunki ruins. Walk through ruins and keep going when path heads down and back to parking lot. Hug the red rocks as closely as possible for forty minutes or so. Occasionally you need to bypass obstructions and bushwhack a bit, but generally you can make your way right along the rock face. When you are up near the top the rock face will disappear and you will be facing a rock outcropping. Work around that outcropping and climb a bit. Follow along that level until a faint trail heads up rock face. Head left and climb steeply to higher level. As you climb rock face you will get to ledge level where there is a man-made rock bench, etc. Turn right at that level and head up to the next level.

Trail continues in your general direction across level ground. You will climb a small hill and cross a rock wall and eventually you will see your destination, the saddle between a capitol dome-like rock and the highest point of Loy Butte. Continue along in that direction until you reach a large level rock area covered with rock debris. Trail turns right and heads up to saddle.

From saddle you can see the Ponderosa pine to your right. There is an alcove just before it at that level along the ledge. To your left is the promontory with animal tracks. To go in either direction head down from the saddle through the Manzanita until you reach ledge level. Turn right and continue along ledge level to go to dwelling and to continue climbing up Loy Butte. Turn left to head toward promontory. There is a path through the manzanita just over a big flat boulder on your left.

To return from saddle look for cairns at north edge of saddle (right edge) to find trail leading down. Work your way back down to small rock strewn large rock and turn left. Follow that level around near edge until you see rock wall ahead of you. Shortly after passing over rock wall turn right and go down along a small rock outcropping. On the way down rock face head to right to find easy path down and then back to left to find trail that heads down alongside a smaller rock face. Turn left just after crossing trunk of dead

tree across path. This will lead you back to the rock face that you follow back to Honanki ruins.

Alternately, don't turn but continue straight ahead on path down. At first, head toward the open flat rock outcropping you can see in the brush ahead of you. Then turn left and head in the direction of the road. You will see telephone wires that follow the road. Once you are at the road, turn left to head back to Honanki.