

Community Hiking Club
April 2017 Camping Trip



**MID HILLS CAMPGROUND
MOJAVE NATIONAL PRESERVE**

April 6-9, 2017

Latitude: 35°07'388" N
Longitude: -115°25'967" W
Elevation: 5,600 feet

Introduction: Mid Hills Campground is located in the Mojave National Preserve. The Preserve was established by Senator Dianne Feinstein's 1994 California Desert Protection Act. The 1.6 million-acre park encompasses much of the Mojave Desert, as well as transitional elements of the Great Basin and Sonoran deserts. About half of the park is congressionally designated Wilderness. Sand dunes, volcanic cinder cones,

Joshua tree forests, pinyon-juniper woodlands, desert bighorn sheep, desert tortoise, and many other species of plants and animals can be found here.

One-way mileage to the campground from the intersection of the 5 and 14 freeways, is about 235 miles, with an approximate travel time of 3 hours 30 minutes.

Directions: From Santa Clarita, take the 14 Freeway north about 25 miles to Exit 30 for Angeles National Highway, Pearblossom Highway. Almost immediately after exiting, there will be a fork in the road. Stay to the left. Continue on Pearblossom Highway for about 6 miles. When you get to Four Points, make a right at the light (direction Highway 138). Continue on 138 for about 18 miles, passing through Littlerock and Pearblossom.

You will then reach another fork in the road, where you would normally turn left onto Highway 18 (direction Victorville). However, that Highway has been blocked off to through traffic for quite some time due to construction. If it is still blocked off, *****. If it is not blocked off, turn left and travel another 24 miles or so on Highway 18, until you reach I-15 in Victorville. When you reach I-15 in Victorville, take the ramp to I-15 North (located on your right after you cross over I-15). Travel north on I-15 for about 25 miles, when you will reach the Barstow city limits. You may want to consider filling up your gas tank in Barstow, because the prices are much higher in Baker and other remote areas closer to the Preserve.

Continue on I-15 for about 69 more miles, when you will reach the town of Baker. You may also want to consider filling up your gas tank here – prices are higher than in Barstow, but cheaper than at Cima Road exit. Continue on I-15 for an additional 34 miles. Then, take exit number 272, Cima Road. This will be shortly after you pass Valley Wells Rest Area. There is a small store and gas station at the exit. Although the price will be high, you may want to consider filling up your tank before entering the Preserve. There are no gas stations at all in the Preserve. **Please note: you will pass two exits that will mention Mojave National Preserve. Do NOT take them. Wait until you see the Cima Road exit sign before you exit.**

There is no fee to visit Mojave National Preserve.

Almost immediately upon entering the Preserve, you will see a sign reminding you to watch for desert tortoise. Please do! Also, you will soon enter a Joshua tree forest – it is the largest Joshua tree forest in the world – even larger than is found in Joshua Tree National Park.

Continue on Cima Road for 18 miles. You will then come to the intersection of Morning Star Mine Road and Kelso-Cima Road (and railroad tracks). Make a right onto Kelso-Cima Road. Travel another 5 miles, and then make a left on Cedar Canyon Road. Cedar Canyon Road is paved when you first turn onto it, but it turns into a dirt road after a short distance. Continue on Cedar Canyon Road for 6 miles, when you will see the sign below. Turn right at the sign.



Continue on this dirt road for 3 miles. You will then see the sign below. Make a right at the sign.



Travel 2 more miles on this dirt road. Then you will come upon the sign below. Turn right, and proceed into the campground.



As mentioned above, you will need to drive on some unpaved roads to get to the campground. The National Park Service grades the roads, in an attempt to keep them accessible to all vehicles. However, keep in mind that rainfall immediately before our camping trip may make these roads difficult for vehicles that are not 4x4 or all-wheel drive, in addition to low clearance vehicles.

Description: Mid Hills Campground is surrounded by pinyon pine and juniper trees. Some of the trees in the campground were burned in a 2005 fire, but the overall, the campground is fairly well shaded. The access road to the campground is not paved and is not recommended for motor homes or trailers (unless they are built for off-road use). However, we have seen motorhomes and trailers there when we have camped.

Fees, Amenities and Rules: The fee to camp is \$12.00 per night per site. America the Beautiful Senior/Access Pass reduces the fee to \$6.00 per night. As you enter the campground, stop at the kiosk pictured below to get your envelope to pay your camping fee. Place the completed envelope and payment in the iron maiden pictured below (unless Dianne has agreed in advance to take care of this for you).



The campground consists of 26 campsites. Each campsite has a picnic table, fire ring, grill, and trash can. There are several pit toilets throughout the campground. There is only one water spigot for the entire campground, so it would be smart to bring all of your own water for the trip: both drinking water and shower/dish water..



Each campsite is limited to eight people and two vehicles (including a separate trailer). Quiet hours are 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.

While pets are allowed in the Preserve, they must be leashed at all times and never left unattended (including in a vehicle). Pet excrement must be collected and placed in garbage receptacles, no exceptions.

Reservations are not accepted. Sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis. If we run out of available sites at Mid Hills Campground, there is another campground about 7 miles away (Hole in the Wall Campground), which has 35 campsites.

Weather: The average temperatures at the campground in April are highs around 65 degrees and lows around 45 degrees. Keep in mind that a majority of the Preserve is typically 10 to 20 degrees warmer than the campground, due to the much higher elevation at the campground. Dressing in layers is advised. Bring a variety of clothing as we will be adventuring in the lower climates. Temperatures in one day can vary from 45-85 degrees, depending upon where we are.

Hikes: Some of the hikes/adventures that we are considering for this trip include: Teutonia Peak Trail (2.4 miles RT easy or 4.6 miles RT moderate), Eagle Rocks Loop Trail (2.1 miles moderate with scrambling) Hole in the Wall Nature Trail (1/2 mile easy), Rings Loop Trail (1.4 miles easy), Barker Peak Loop Trail (5.1 miles easy), Kelso Depot Visitor Center (museum and gift shop – **no services**), Kelso Dunes (**bring your snow disk**), and the lava tube in the Cinder Cone National Natural Landmark area of the Preserve. We will also have a BUG EVENT one evening in the campground where we will be looking for scorpions with black lights. **Bring a black light if you have one.**

RSVP: To sign up for this camping trip, contact Dianne by email at zuliebear@aol.com. Please note that by reserving early with Dianne, and giving her the camp site fees, she will do her utmost to get you a camping site. However, campsites cannot be guaranteed for any of us, due to the first-come, first-served rule enforced at the campground. Unused camp site fees will, of course, be refunded, unless they have been deposited on your behalf. If you pay in advance and do not show up, your fees will not be refunded. (They will have already been deposited at the campsite check-in on your behalf.)