

City of Rocks

National Reserve

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation

Trails



City of Rocks National Reserve
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To venture into City of Rocks is to enter a world of slowly changing granite surrounded by high desert flora and fauna. Access to many or most parts of the reserve is found through 22.4 miles of trail. Many sections of trail pass through fragile soils. Help preserve City of Rocks by using designated trails and leaving natural features as you find them. Many of the trails are rocky and traverse steep terrain. Snow may cover some trails until mid-May. Check with a ranger or visitor center personnel prior to entering the backcountry for latest conditions.

Safety and Backcountry Regulations

- Be prepared for rapid weather changes, bring rain gear and extra clothing.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Hike on designated trails to prevent erosion.
- Backcountry sanitation: to prevent contamination of waterways, bury human waste in a hole 6-8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water. Pack out waste paper.
- Carry plenty of drinking water.
- Pets must be on a leash six feet or less.
- Respect wildlife by observing from a safe distance. Please do not feed wildlife.
- Pack out what you pack in.
- Horses have right-of-way. Step off the trail and remain quiet while horses pass. Bikers yield to horses and hikers.

EASY

MODERATE

STRENUOUS

#1 Bath Rock Trail ▶ 1,800 Feet

This short trail loops Bath Rock beginning at the parking area. The rock is named for large natural pools of water atop this 240-foot formation.



#2 Creekside Towers Trail ▶ .6 Miles

Interesting geologic sculptures are found adjacent to the trail. This short walk that connects to Parking Lot Rock area provides direct access to the “Inner City” and many popular spires. Spring brings a beautiful cascade of water draining into Circle Creek. This trail can also be used to access the Stairways Trail which can loop in conjunction with South Fork Circle Creek Trail.



#3 Window Arch Trail ▶ 300 Feet

Located behind campsite #37, this short walk leads to the impressive Window Arch which spans over 20 feet. Windows, bathtubs, and caves sculpted by forces of erosion, are featured along with spectacular views of the “Inner City”.



WINDOW ARCH

#4 Stripe Rock Trail ▶ 3.1 Miles

One of the more recognizable features in the “Inner City” is Stripe Rock, so named for the aplite dike that divides the east face like a lightning bolt. The round-trip loop to Stripe Rock from Circle Creek Overlook Trailhead offers access to other popular trails: Geo Watt, Site 18, North Fork Circle Creek, Bumble and Box Top. Bikers will find the loop more enjoyable if ridden in a counter-clockwise route.



#5 Flaming Rock Trail ▶ .76 Mile Loop

Popular with many climbers, this trail circles Flaming Rock and provides access into the “Inner City”. Located behind campsite #32, this trail can also be used to access South Fork Circle Creek Trail.



#6 Bumble Wall Trail ▶ .9 Miles

Bumble Wall Trail is the primary connection to Lost Arrow Spire and can be accessed from Box Top, North Fork Circle Creek and Flaming Rock trails.



#7 Geo Watt Trail ▶ 1.15 Miles

The name “Geo Watt” refers to a complex of light bulb-like rock formations that can be seen midway along the trail. This trail is accessed from Stripe Rock Loop trail and Circle Creek Overlook trailhead.



#8 South Fork Circle Creek Trail ▶ 1.7 Miles

This trail serves as main street through the “Inner City.” There are several trails that access the South Fork trail including Box Top and North Fork Circle Creek trails. The woodlands around the creek are home to many species of birds. Varied habitats found along the Circle Creek trails provide excellent opportunities to view a diversity of wildflowers.



#9 Box Top Trail ▶ 1 Mile

Hikers are provided with unobstructed panoramas of Circle Creek Basin. This trail connects to Stripe Rock Loop Trail and accesses Bumble Wall Trail (additional .75 miles), which can be used to create a loop.



#10 Tea Kettle Trail ▶ 2.5 Miles

Whether you start at Elephant Rock or Bread Loaves, the trail passes through varied ecosystems including aspen groves, pinon-juniper forests, and sagebrush flats. Wildlife such as mule deer, yellow-bellied marmots, and sage grouse are often seen along the trail.



#11 Indian Grove Trail ▶ 1.6 Miles

The view of 8,867-foot Graham Peak, the highest point in the reserve, is unobstructed. Legend has it that Shoshone and Bannock Indians observed California Trail emigrants from this grove of aspen and fir. The trail leads to the only designated backcountry camping area in the reserve and is accessed at two locations off North Fork Circle Creek Trail.



#12 Sky Line Connection Trail ▶ 1.3 Miles

This scenic trail climbs Graham Peak via its SW shoulder to a connection with the USDA Forest Service “Sky Line” Trail. The trail provides superior views into City of Rocks and surrounding area. Alpine wildflowers abound in late May and June.



#13 North Fork Circle Creek Trail ▶ 3.25 Miles

Solitude is at a premium as you travel along North Fork Circle Creek. From sagebrush flats to high country aspen groves, this trail takes you deep into the “City.” Lost Horizons Arch of the Shangri La formation is the largest natural arch in the reserve, and is a highlight of the hike. This trail also provides access to Indian Grove Trail (additional 2 miles) and several panoramic vistas. Take the trail from Emery Pass Picnic area or access the trail from Stripe Rock Loop trail or Circle Creek Overlook trailhead.



STRIPE ROCK



VIEW SOUTH OF CITY OF ROCKS FROM GRAHAM PEAK

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