

T90V Moonshine Trail

Sacramento Ranger District

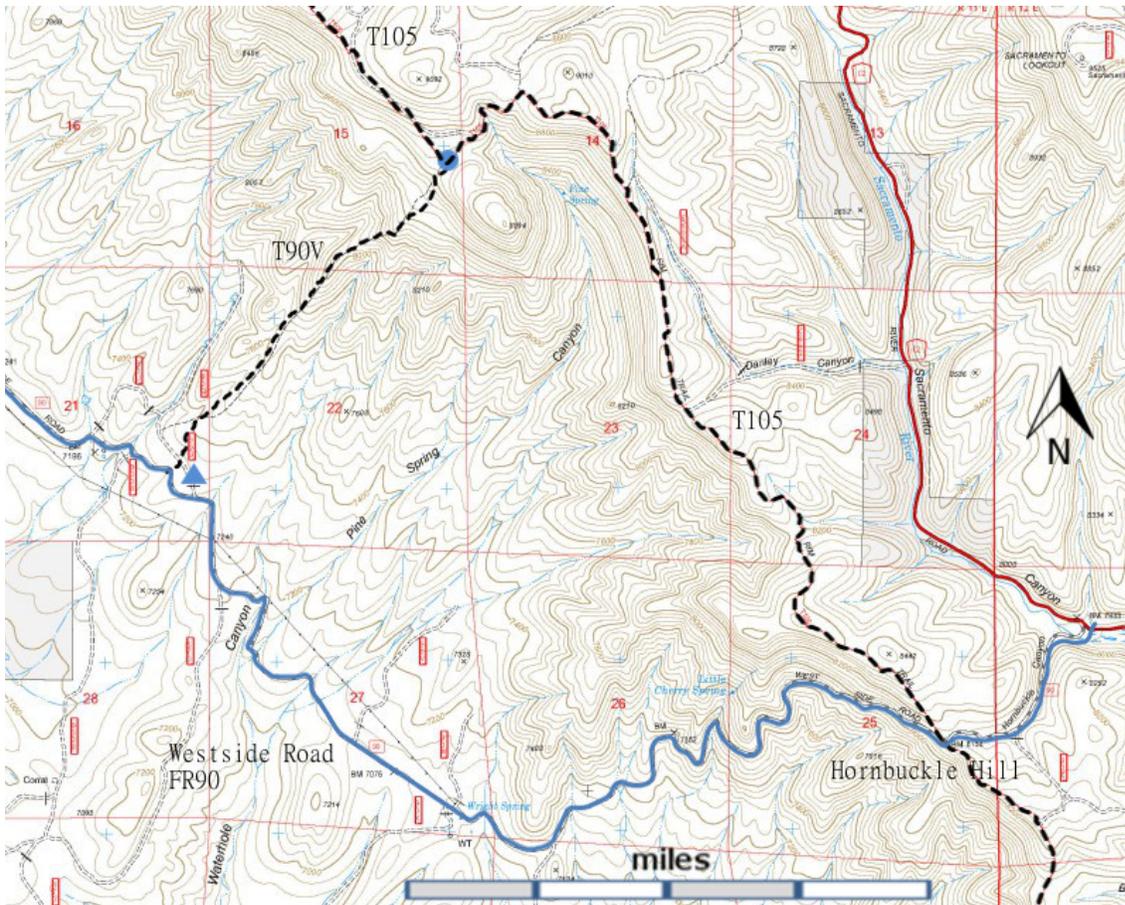


T90V
GPS Track (as .GPX)

Left click to open in your browser; then save from browser.

LENGTH	ELEVATION	DIFFICULTY	SCENERY
1.6 miles	7,340-8660 ft 1320 ft difference	Difficult	3

Allowed Usage				



[Link to map color/symbol codes](#)

T90V and T105 (partial) are shown as black dashed lines on the map.

DESCRIPTION: Several years ago, I asked a friend to hike T106 Dog Canyon Trail with me. He declined, and said, "My lungs won't do it going up, and my knees won't do it coming down." He might have been speaking of T90V Moonshine Trail -- T90V runs straight toward the top, without switchbacks to relieve the grade. The average grade is 16%, with a 12% average grade on the first half and a 20% average grade on the second half. At the lower and upper ends of the trail, there are many ponderosa pine and fir trees. In the middle 70% of the trail, the coverage is mostly bushy, and this lower coverage provides the saving grace for the Moonshine Trail. The views to the west of the top of the lower escarpment and the Tularosa Basin are probably the finest available on designated trails in the Sacramento Ranger District. One can see from Orogrande on the south to the White Sands on the north, and to the Organ Mountains on the west.

ACCESS: The lower T90V trailhead is on Westside Road (FR90), which particularly in the rainy season [July-September] is often very muddy and rutted. Access from the south end of Westside Road is likely to be dryer. Consider taking a high clearance vehicle, and in the rainy season 4WD is probably necessary.

Begin in Cloudcroft at the intersection of US82 and NM130. Drive NM130 south 1.8 miles and turn right on NM6563, Sunspot Highway; follow the pavement 14 miles to milepost 14. Drive another 0.2 mile to the Sunspot junction, the turnoff for the Sunspot Highway (ending at Sunspot), and the beginning of paved County Road C002 (same as Sacramento Canyon Road and FR537). Proceed 6.4 miles along Sacramento Canyon Road (County C002) and turn right onto Westside Road (same as FR90 and County D003). Follow Westside Road 0.8 miles to the top of Hornbuckle Hill and the intersection with T105. Proceed 4.6 miles further along FR 90, with its spectacular view of the upper portion the escarpment. The carsonite sign for T90V is on the right, parallel to the road and difficult to see until you are opposite it. Turn in and park in the open area just off FR 90. The trail runs directly up the slope. Look for a charred stump -- 2 feet diameter -- and a cairn. The lower part of the trail may be difficult to follow. Look for the yellowish stubs of recently cut branches and for the occasional slash marks on trees beside the trail. In about 0.4 mile a barbed wire fence appears on the right. Keep this fence in sight on your right; it is a good guide until you reach the well-defined portion of the trail.

The lower trailhead for T90V can also be accessed by driving approximately 25 miles along Westside Road from its intersection with US 82 in High Rolls, near the convenience store. This portion of Westside Road is often rutted and/or muddy. A high clearance 4WD vehicle may be necessary.

The upper end of T90V can be accessed from T105 rim Trail. Follow the instructions above to reach the top of Hornbuckle Hill. Park, and follow T105 for 3.8 miles to the large sign that marks the upper trailhead for T90V. A short 0.2 mile hike down from this point to the end of the tree cover, a descent of about 160 feet, provides access to the fine views of the lower escarpment and the Tularosa Basin.

GPS Coordinates for Key Points

NAD83	Lat/Lon hddd mm ss.s	UTM (13 S)
Junction of T90V and T105	N32 44 28.3 W105 48 02.2	424992 3622879
Trailhead	N32 43 29.0 W105 49 02.4	423411 3621067

Links to Other Resources

[Full Topo Map](#)

[Rim Trail and Associated Trails](#)

Last Hiked: July 31, 2013

1/16/2016