

Wilderness.net's Cottonwood Point Wilderness Fact Sheet



Introduction

The United States Congress designated the Cottonwood Point Wilderness in 1984 and it now has a total of 6,860 acres. All of the wilderness is in Arizona and is managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

Description

On a map, this piñon, juniper, and sagebrush covered wilderness looks like two small "peninsulas" divided by Cottonwood Canyon. Extending south from the Arizona-Utah border, the land rises to 6,322 feet on Cottonwood Point itself, at the lower end of the western peninsula. Craggy pinnacles and 1,000-foot cliffs of multicolored Navajo sandstone cap this irregular plateau. Elevations within the Wilderness boundaries range from about 5,100 to 6,600 feet. Between the crags lie deep and narrow canyons, the wetter ones filled with willow and cottonwood. Mule deer, bobcat, and mountain lions hide in this area, and coyotes lift their voices to splendid moonlit nights. Cottonwood Point Wilderness is a convoluted, rugged country as "reminiscent of the landscapes of Zion National Park." Without trails, Cottonwood Point receives few human visitors. It's a prime opportunity for quiet canyon backpacking, hiking, and horsepacking. Immediately to the north lies Utah's Canaan Mountain Wilderness.

The higher elevations generally receive much more precipitation and much cooler temperatures than lower elevations. This wilderness receives approximately 14 inches of annual precipitation. Summers at high elevations bring warm daytime temperatures with cool nights. Low elevations often experience very hot summer temperatures. Afternoon thunderstorms are common in the summer. The winter and early spring months bring snow and sometimes cold temperatures to the highest elevations but frequent clear, sunny days. Winter temperatures are more moderate at low elevations - a great time to recreate in these snow free areas - allowing both winter and summer type activities within very short distances.

Leave No Trace

How to follow the seven standard Leave No Trace principles differs in different parts of the country (desert vs. Rocky Mountains). Click on any of the principles listed below to learn more about how they apply in the Cottonwood Point Wilderness.

1. [Plan Ahead and Prepare](#)
2. [Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces](#)
3. [Dispose of Waste Properly](#)
4. [Leave What You Find](#)
5. [Minimize Campfire Impacts](#)
6. [Respect Wildlife](#)
7. [Be Considerate of Other Visitors](#)

Location

Cottonwood Point Wilderness is located directly east of Colorado City, AZ on the Utah/Arizona border. The closest services are in Colorado City but the nearest major town is St. George, Utah 45 minutes drive west. Access to this wilderness is limited because of private property that nearly surrounds the wilderness boundaries. Access to the steep slopes and cliffs of the western boundary of this wilderness can be obtained from Colorado City while access from the southwest corner of the wilderness (BLM-administered section) can be obtained off the Cane Beds Road, south of Colorado City. No trailheads or trails exist in this wilderness other than old stock trails.

Area Management

The Cottonwood Point Wilderness is part of the 109 million acre National Wilderness Preservation System. This System of lands provides clean air, water, and habitat critical for rare and endangered plants and animals. In wilderness, you can enjoy challenging recreational activities like hiking, backpacking, climbing, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, horse packing, bird watching, stargazing, and extraordinary opportunities for solitude. You play an important role in helping to *"secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness"* as called for by the Congress of the United States through the Wilderness Act of 1964. Please follow the requirements outlined below and use Leave No Trace techniques when visiting the Cottonwood Point Wilderness to ensure protection of this unique area.

ALL VISITORS

- Unless otherwise specified, no motorized equipment or mechanical transport, with the exception of wheelchairs, is allowed.

Contacts

Arizona Strip District BLM

345 East Riverside Drive
St. George, UT 84790

Phone: 435-688-3200

Fax: 435-688-3258

Restrictions: Visitor Center hours - Monday-Friday 7:45 am - 5 pm; Saturday 10 am - 3 pm; and closed Sunday.

Links to Other Websites

[Arizona BLM Wilderness Information](#)

Arizona Bureau of Land Management Wilderness webpage

[Canaan Mountain Wilderness, Utah](#)

Canaan Mountain Wilderness in Utah, immediately north of Cottonwood Points Wilderness in Arizona

Links on Wilderness.net

[National, Regional and Local Wilderness Organizations \(NGOs\)](#)

A listing of societies, organizations, coalitions and other wilderness-related advocacy and stewardship groups.

[Career and Volunteer Opportunities](#)

A listing of sites providing information about wilderness- and environmentally-related career and volunteer opportunities.

Applicable Wilderness Law(s)

Law	Date	Acreage Change (in acres)
Public Law 98-406	August 28, 1984	6,500
Arizona Wilderness Act of 1984 - Public Law 98-406 (8/28/1984) Arizona Wilderness Act of 1984		

— [download 98-406](#)

General Trip Planning Information

Access to this wilderness is limited because of private property that surrounds the wilderness.

Recreational Opportunities

Hiking and backpacking

Safety and Current Conditions

Cell phone coverage may not exist in most portions of this wilderness