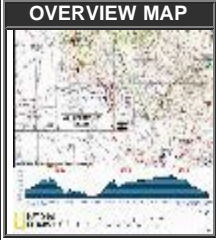
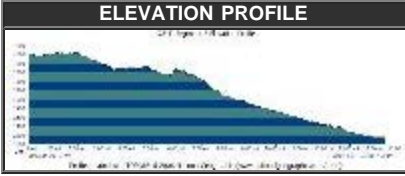


G.E.T. Guidebook

Segment 5: Antelope Peak 16.3 miles

Segment Length	Segment Status	Season
16.3 mi.	finalized & accessible	fall, winter, spring
Resources		
 <p>OVERVIEW MAP</p>	 <p>ELEVATION PROFILE</p>	<p>Additional maps: Mammoth 1:100K (BLM)</p> <p>Trail managing agency: Arizona Trail Association</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ G.E.T. Topo Maps 12-14 ▶ Town Guide: Mammoth ▶ Water Chart ▶ Image Gallery: Album 2 		

Beginning access point

Arizona Trail at Freeman Road. From AZ 77 at Dudleyville, head west on dirt 2WD Freeman Road 12 miles, crossing a cattle guard just before Arizona Trail tread meets the road at right by a carsonite post. Park here off the road, or turn right (north) onto a rough track that leads about 0.3 mi. to an impromptu, more secluded parking/camping area at left.

Ending access point

AZ Hwy 77 at Old Camp Grant Place. The GET crosses the highway without vehicle parking amenities nearby. Instead follow Aravaipa Road 0.5 mi. east to the small **Central AZ College Aravaipa Campus**, where short-term parking should be permissible (note the entrance gate may be closed at night & on weekends / holidays - inquire within). For alternative parking, continue on Aravaipa Rd (via the GET in Seg 6) an additional 1.8 mi. and turn left at a "no dumping" sign onto a primitive dirt road (cars ok with care). This road passes through a clearing then shortly reaches a gate. Park off the road before the gate.

SEGMENT OVERVIEW

The lone profile of tawny Antelope Peak presides over the first half of this enjoyable segment. Eastbound hikers have been eyeing this eroded volcanic cone for miles, and now finally get to inspect it at close range. The rolling, well-graded Arizona Trail hiking experience is more cohesive here than in Segment 4, with less roadwalking and more continuous treadway. Finally, though, the GET parts company with the southbound-trending Arizona Trail, slabbing east in order to begin its approach toward spectacular Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness (Segment 7). In the process our route - a straightforward cross-country-via-wash experience now - passes near perennial Putnam Spring, by far this segment's best (and other than the San Pedro River, its only reliable) water source. Here the GET returns to a saguaro-studded Lower Sonoran desert environment, and threads a picturesque, red-walled box canyon on its way toward the lush, tree-lined oasis of the San Pedro River, which it then follows for a serene and contemplative mile. Extending over 100 miles from its source in Sonora, Mexico to the Gila River near Winkleman, the San Pedro is one of the Southwest's finest remaining examples of a low-desert riparian-riverine community. It is also a fragile and highly endangered ecosystem, due to long-term regional drought compounded by unsustainable agricultural use of groundwater along its length.

ROUTE DETAILS

From a carsonite signpost junction of the Arizona Trail and wide, graded 2WD Freeman Road, a 2010-completed section of singletrack initially parallels the road eastbound, remaining on its north side. In 0.3 or 0.4 of a mile the winding trail returns to Freeman Road and crosses it, just east of a cattle guard, then continues south on a narrower

dirt road. The tri-humped profile of Antelope Peak is straight ahead, and the Santa Catalina Mountains near Tucson soon appear on the horizon.

Ignore occasional roads heading off at left. At an AZ Trail signpost at **1.5** (mapset waypoint 05030) turn left (east) onto a lesser 2-track. The 2-track bends toward the south, leading to constructed trail tread on the left in a short ways (waypoint 05040).

Marked at intervals by cairns, the trail descends through a shallow gully then contours along the northeast side of Antelope Peak. At an elevation of 4000 feet, the plant community here is Upper Sonoran, with mesquite, acacia, barrel cactus, prickly pear, and especially chain-fruit (jumping) cholla on display.

The GET/AZ Trail undulates southward, negotiating via switchbacks a couple of minor canyons. Camps could be made in the sandy washes here during dry weather. Beyond, ascend to cross a faint ridgeline 2-track at **4.6**. The 2-track rejoins at **5.1** by a wire gate. Pass through the gate to find the continuation of trail on the left.

Enter a cattle-impacted area, with numerous stock paths crossing the constructed trail. Proceed carefully ahead a short ways to a 4WD crossing at **5.6** (waypoint 05090). **Antelope Tank**, an undependable and polluted stock pond, lies 0.3 northeast along the road.

Cross the 4WD road and follow cairns, soon crossing a minor wash, then climb via constructed switchbacks to a viewful ridge, at **6.0**. The Catalina Mountains draw ever nearer to the south above Oracle, while to the east the seemingly unbroken wall of the Galiuro Mountains belies the splendor of still-hidden Aravaipa Canyon. Continue along the ridge complex to a switchback at **7.1**, where the trail begins a descent.

Reach wide, sandy Putnam Wash at **7.8** and turn left, east in this often "OHV-improved" wash. (*Westbounders look for an AZT carsonite post, cairn, and/or flagging at the junction.*) The pock-marked cliff ahead vaguely resembles a giant beehive. Just beyond it, at **8.2**, a 4WD road leaves the wash heading south. Welcome to **Beehive Well**, a windmill-tank-corral affair that often has some water. The windmill is inoperable and its well only produces when the rancher turns on a gas-powered pump, but the large tank may hold a supply regardless - don't expect AquaFina though! The small trough within the corral is another possibility, sometimes with better water. As the sign says, "no camping allowed" here, the standard rule near developed water sources in cattle country.

Here the GET & AZT at last part company, some 70 miles after merging in the Superstitions. The Arizona Trail now turns south along the 4WD road and remains a non-singletrack affair for a number of miles, while **the GET remains eastbound in Putnam Wash**. Continue easily if uneventfully to the confluence with Camp Grant Wash at **11.7**. (You may spot a windmill off to the right en route, likely non-functional.) The surrounding dark, volcanic slopes of the Black Hills are populated by an impressive density of saguaros, heralding the GET's return to the Lower Sonoran desert.

At the confluence our route turns left, east, still in Putnam Wash. First, though, you may want to turn right to visit **Putnam Spring** (in Camp Grant Wash) in 0.3 of a mile (waypoint 05150). Water sometimes flows down the wash a ways, but the spring's source seems to be perennial - impressive given its setting directly in the sandy wash, and likely a fault-controlled hydrologic feature. The shallow spring flow - most easily collected by means of a pump filter - tastes excellent and is a good alternative to Beehive Well, but be sure to treat it since cows and OHVs have ready access to it. For the same reasons, you may want to avoid collecting water downstream of the source. A leave-no-trace camp could be made nearby, out of the wash.

From the confluence of washes at **11.7**, follow Putnam Wash east below the steep, narrow cliff walls, passing occasional cottonwood groves (and on weekends, the odd off-road vehicle enthusiast, a popular passtime among the small-town locals). Eventually the canyon widens with views of the San Pedro valley ahead.

Reach a railroad bridge spanning the wash at **13.8**. Pass beneath the bridge at its south end, following 2-track as it curves right, leaving the wash. Almost immediately arrive at an offset 4-way road junction (waypoint 05155). Continuing south here would lead a pleasant, mostly traffic-free 8.5 miles into the outskirts of Mammoth - the best option for walkers looking to resupply in town (as opposed to hitchhikers, who instead would continue along the main GET to AZ 77, which carries plenty of high-speed traffic). The Mammoth-bound walking route is also the way to go if following the **Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness bypass route** described in Segment 6 (not preferable unless you can't get a permit for ACW; there's also another detour option around Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness on the north side, staying closer to the main route in Segment 6 and 7, that you can use if you don't want to walk south through Mammoth). **The main GET route instead turns left at the 4-way junction**, east, and follows a dirt road among mesquite trees one tenth of a mile to a T-intersection. Turn left at the T, north, passing through a gate in a wire fence. In a short distance reach another T-intersection back in Putnam Wash. (GPS here: 32 50.244 110 43.100)

Turn right (east) down the wash, reaching an opportune ford of the normally gentle, ankle-deep San Pedro River just north of its confluence with Aravaipa Creek, at **14.2**. Although often dry a few miles upstream, the San Pedro typically

flows in this area, nourishing a riparian community of cottonwoods, ashes, and willows. The scene, especially continuing north, is very attractive - a wonderful respite from the open desert - but it's best not to drink from the river here, due to agricultural and ranching concerns upstream.

The recommended route of the GET now follows the San Pedro River north for about a mile, rather than fording and continuing east into Aravaipa Creek's wash (which has public access concerns where Highway 77 crosses it, as well as beyond). From **14.2**, proceed north along the banks or else slosh up the normally shallow creek where easiest. The riparian corridor becomes markedly more extensive just upstream and is a wonder to behold. Plan to linger for a bit in this area, especially eastbound hikers after miles of open desert travel without much access to water or shade. Around **14.6** the wide, shallow drainage bends sharply east and narrows; follow near the banks here as convenient, keeping the creek close at hand to avoid the pervasive flood debris from 2006 deposited farther back in the woods.

Approaching **15.1** leave the creek and walk east to the edge of the flood plain, where a primitive use trail climbs the embankment, (waypoint 05165) soon leaving the riparian corridor behind. The trail appears to be used mainly by feral horses and continues out to graded dirt PZ Ranch Rd, which we join at **15.6** (waypoint 05170) just south of a cattle guard. (The horse trail diverges occasionally; keep right at junctions, avoiding any old 2-track roads as well as a private-posted fenceline en route. The last part of the trail follows along the top of what appears to be an old railroad grade.)

Follow PZ Ranch Rd south to Old Camp Grant Place at **16.1**, then turn east to segment's end at 2-lane, high-speed AZ Highway 77 at **16.3** (waypoint 06010). Cross the highway with care if continuing on to Segment 6 from here.