



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Prescott Peavine National Recreation Trail

Arizona



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To say that the connected rail-trails of Prescott are oases in sun-baked, north-central Arizona is no exaggeration. Wherever water touches this arid landscape—and it does along the Peavine and Iron King trails—jade cottonwoods cluster, popping out against the desert's pale yellow and burnt brown palette. And, at 5,300 feet above sea level, with cool breezes tempered by hot sunshine, Prescott is an ideal place for trail trips in the late winter and spring.

The 6-mile Peavine Trail begins just south of Watson Lake at the gravel parking lot by the lush Watson Woods Riparian Preserve. The crushed stone and dirt trail runs through a sea of green as it traverses the preserve. Through the trees you may even hear the rush of nearby Granite Creek, swollen after a bout of rain.

A mile in, the trail leaves the preserve and curves around the southern end of Lake Watson to reach the Granite Dells, massive mounds of weather-beaten rock. This natural formation is a big tourist draw, and you'll see the majority of fellow trail users here. It's no wonder: As you pass through the cool cuts in the granite, you're enfolded in a kind of castle of desert stone.

All along this route water leaches from cracks in the rock walls and improbable, hearty flowers—red and yellow—pop from the crevasses. The temptation to scramble up the smooth, stony inclines for a scenic vista is keen, but no sight is more arresting than the perfectly framed view of far-off Granite Mountain over Lake Watson.

Once you've pulled your eyes and your camera away from the view, continue heading northward. The trail follows the former Santa Fe, Prescott & Phoenix Railway corridor that fed into Prescott, once the territorial capital of Arizona and famous for its copper mining. Wooden decking and railroad ties lie scattered along the trail. At mile 3 and the Point of Rocks, the railroad's ghost is impossible to miss. Here the trail passes through a cut made for trains in a tall, sheer rock cluster. A trailside historical marker shows a photo of the identical view, taken some 100 years earlier. In the photo a hulking engine chugs through the pass.

Beyond Point of Rocks, you reach a fork in the trail. Head left to continue on the Peavine Trail to its end point near the Prescott Municipal Airport (Ernest A. Love Field). Along the way, you'll reach a gravel-covered railroad bridge, where a two-lane country road runs beneath you and private property spreads in vast tracts beyond. As tantalizing as the call of the open range might be, don't consider trespassing. Instead, head back to that fork in the road, turn right and hop on the 4-mile [Iron King Trail](#). The two trails were inducted into the [Rail-Trail Hall of Fame](#) together in 2010.



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States: Arizona

Counties: Yavapai

Length: 6miles

Trail end points: South of AZ 89A at Side Road to Prescott Lakes Parkway and Sundog Ranch Road

Trail surfaces: Ballast,Cinder,Crushed Stone,Dirt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Horseback Riding,Mountain Biking,Walking

Parking & Trail Access

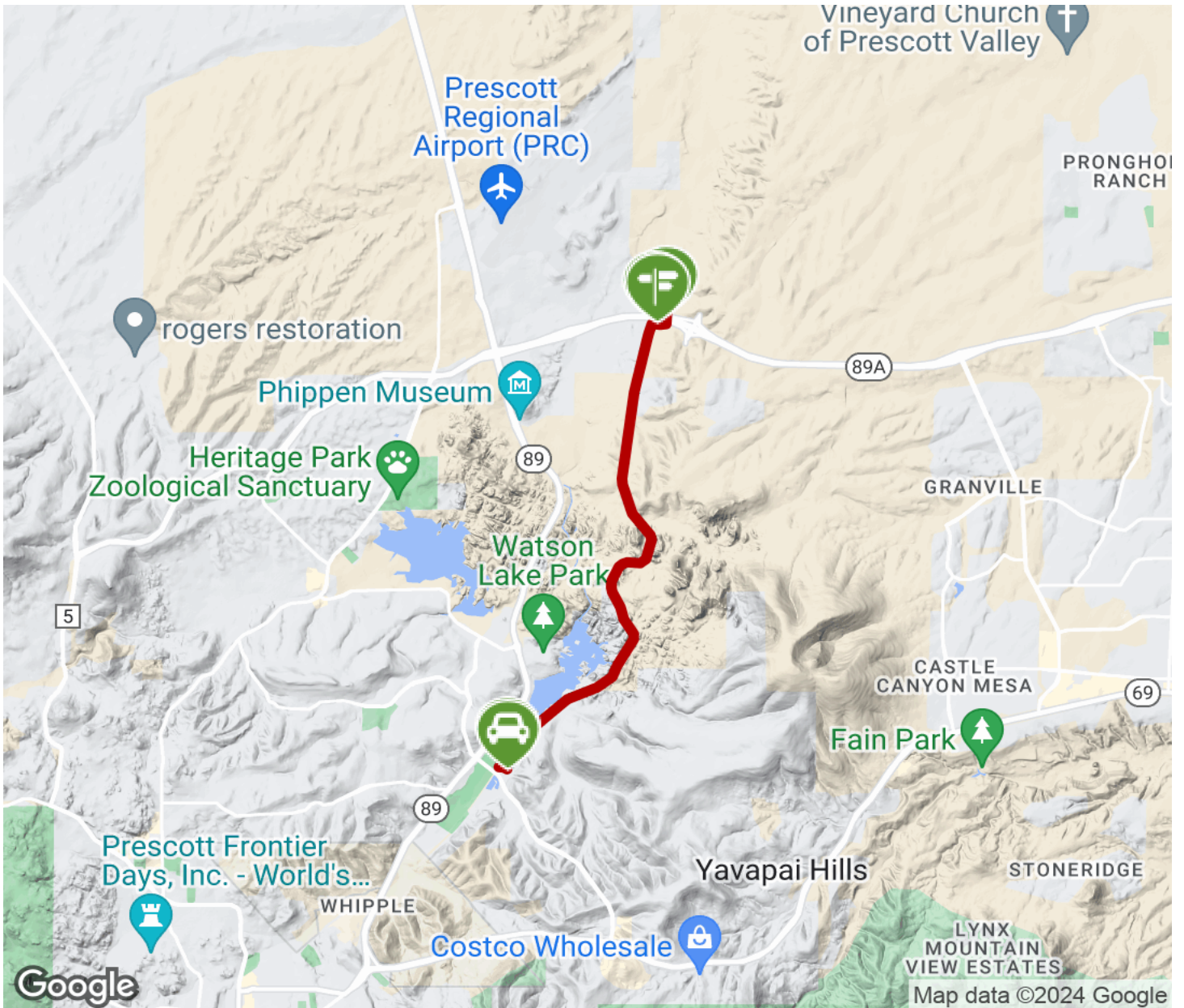
To reach the southern trailhead: From I-17, take Exit 278 for AZ 169. Head west on AZ 169, and go 15 miles. Turn right onto AZ 69, and head north 12.7 miles. Turn right onto Prescott Lakes Pkwy., and go 1.9 miles north to Sundog Ranch Road. Turn right and look for a large parking lot on the left. There is a \$2 fee to park.

To reach the northern trailhead: From I-17, take Exit 278 for AZ 169. Head west on AZ 169, and go 15 miles. Turn right onto AZ 69, and head north 2.4 miles. Turn right onto Fain Road, and follow it 7.2 miles. Merge onto Pioneer Pkwy./AZ 89A, and go 4.5 miles to Exit 319 for Granite Dells Pkwy. Continue on Granite Dells Pkwy. 0.3 mile, and take the first right onto Centerpointe East Drive. In 0.4 mile turn left onto Side Road. The trailhead will be on your left at the turn, and the parking lot is at the end of Side Road. Parking is free.



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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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