

Pueblo Mountains

DISTANCE: ---

ELEVATION GAIN: ---

ROUTE TYPE: ---

The Pueblo Mountains are truly a land of hidden charms. Located just south of Steens Mountain, this little-visited range appears dry, desolate and barren when first viewed from the Fields-Denio highway. Its green stream canyons and colorful rock formations are concealed within the range's interior, though still easily accessible. It can take a leap of faith for day hikers to leave the highway and venture into these interior canyons, but they will be well rewarded. There are no developed campgrounds in the Pueblos, but dispersed campsites are common, especially at Little Cottonwood Creek, just off the highway. Gas, supplies and water are available nearby at Fields Station.

Though the geology of the Pueblos is continuous with Steens Mountain, it is much more complex, with layers of older mineralized rocks overlain by recent basalts, all uplifted in a massive fault block. The solitary summit of Pueblo Mountain itself rises over 8,600' in the middle of the range and catches most of the rain and snow. It is flanked by low hills, long uplifted ridges, interior wet meadows and stream canyons flowing out of the range to the east. The appeal of the Pueblos lies in this juxtaposition of its dry, treeless rocky slopes with these isolated springs, seeps and streams lined with willow and aspen — which attract most of the wildlife and support diverse populations of birds, small mammals, mule deer and even bighorn sheep.

