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 SHOOT KUBO
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Hiking: Angeles National Forest

Stoddard Peak's Peek at L.A.

By JOHN MCKINNEY

For most of the winter and early spring, 4,624-foot Stoddard Peak seems strategically positioned just below the snow line and just above the smog line. Its summit offers great clear-day views of Claremont and the San Gabriel Valley below, and of Mt. Baldy and its neighboring peaks.

The hike to Stoddard Peak is along a dirt fire road for most of its length.

Directions to trail head: From Interstate 10 (San Bernardino Freeway) in Upland, exit on Euclid Avenue and follow it a few miles, first through a commercial district then on a winding climb through the residential district of San Antonio Heights to Mt. Baldy Road. Turn right and follow it to the signed junction with dead-end Mountain Avenue and turn right. (The turnoff is also indicated by road paddle 1.07.) Descend a short paved road to a small parking area.

The hike: Ignore the old paved road heading south into the canyon and instead join the dirt road that heads east past a teensy-tiny hydroelectric plant.

The road crosses the creek at the bottom of San Antonio Canyon. Three-quarters of a mile from the trail head, you'll reach a couple of private cabins. Step over or duck under a vehicle gate, and enjoy the mellow ascent through an oak woodland.

The path rounds Cascade Canyon and climbs to a saddle, a fairly level area called Stoddard Flat.

Stoddard Peak Trail

WHERE: Base of Mt. Baldy, Angeles National Forest.

DISTANCE: 6 miles round trip; 1,000-foot elevation gain.

TERRAIN: Oak-shaded, chaparral-covered hills.

HIGHLIGHTS: Convenient getaway, metropolitan views.

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: Moderate.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: For more information: Mt. Baldy Ranger District, Angeles National Forest, 110 N. Wabash Ave., Glendora, Calif. 91740; tel. (818) 335-1251. Main Angeles National Forest office is (818) 574-5200.

HELENE WEBB / Los Angeles Times

Just as the dirt road reaches the flat, look sharply right for the unsigned path to Stoddard Peak.

The brushy trail plunges west into the chaparral, ascending to a ridge top and turning south. You'll gain one false summit, then a

second, before reaching the true Stoddard Peak.

Enjoy the panorama from Stoddard summit, which includes San Antonio Canyon, Mt. Baldy, San Gabriel Valley, Pomona and the Chino Hills.