

Rock Creek Hike and Swim

By Graham Meese



4 stars

History: Rock creek is located near the Rock Creek Powerhouse, which is on the North Fork of the Feather River. It has long been known as a locals hang out spot because of its location off of the road.

Description: Rock Creek is a beautiful narrow canyon filled with large granite slabs and boulders. The creek will have seasonal flows and is best when visited during the summer or the beginning of fall.

Location: Rock Creek is located 42 miles out of Quincy, traveling west on highway 70. The turnout on the right can be found by driving one mile past the Rock Creek Powerhouse. There is a bridge right after the turn out, so if you have gone under the powerhouse and then crossed a bridge, you have gone too far. If you have a 4 wheel drive vehicle, you can drive up three switch backs, and park at the trail leading off the left side of the road. This trail is less than a quarter mile up the dirt road.

Time needed: The drive will take 50 minutes each way, and you can spend all day boulder hopping, lounging in the sun and swimming.

Sun Exposure: The Rock Creek canyon runs north by north-west, so to get sun, the middle of the day is best.

Elevation: The elevation of Rock Creek is 1,840 ft. and if you hike to the highest swimming hole you will be around 2,100 ft.

Difficulty Rating: The hike up from the roadside pullout has one class 4 section where a rope is highly recommended, but the rest of the boulder hopping is class 2-3. You can access the main swimming hole easier by walking, or driving up the switchbacks and walking out along the trail, with is very easy.

Gear Needed: A throw bag or climbing rope is needed if you are to hike from the bottom pull out. Otherwise, pack yourself plenty of water, and a nice lunch to enjoy on the warm rocks.

Directions and descriptions from the parking lot off of highway 70: At the far end from the road, there is a trail which leads down to the creek. You will then start to find your way up the creek; making sure the way you are taking is possible up river. There will be a large pool with a granite slide only fifteen minutes up the canyon. You can butt slide down the algae, try it! Its awesome! There will be a rope on the left side of the river as you walk up above the first pool. You can use this to scale the granite slide and continue upstream. The large swimming hole is another 20 minutes past the first swimming hole and can be recognized by a large flattish rock slab on the left side which can be jumped off of into the pool. From here, go and explore up the river. Climb the boulders and work your way to the highest pool accessible by foot. This pool can be recognized by sheer 80-120 foot walls on either side.

Directions and descriptions from the top of the switchbacks: After three switch backs or so there should be a visible trail leading off the left side of the road. Park and walk along the hillside for around ten minutes, and it will take you directly to the large swimming hole.

Cautions: Wet rocks can be very slippery and shoes with good gripping rubber soles are highly recommended. It is in rattle snake habitat, so be cautious and step on top of logs, and small rocks in sunny areas. Dehydration is always an issue on hiking trips, so don't forget to bring at least one liter of water.