

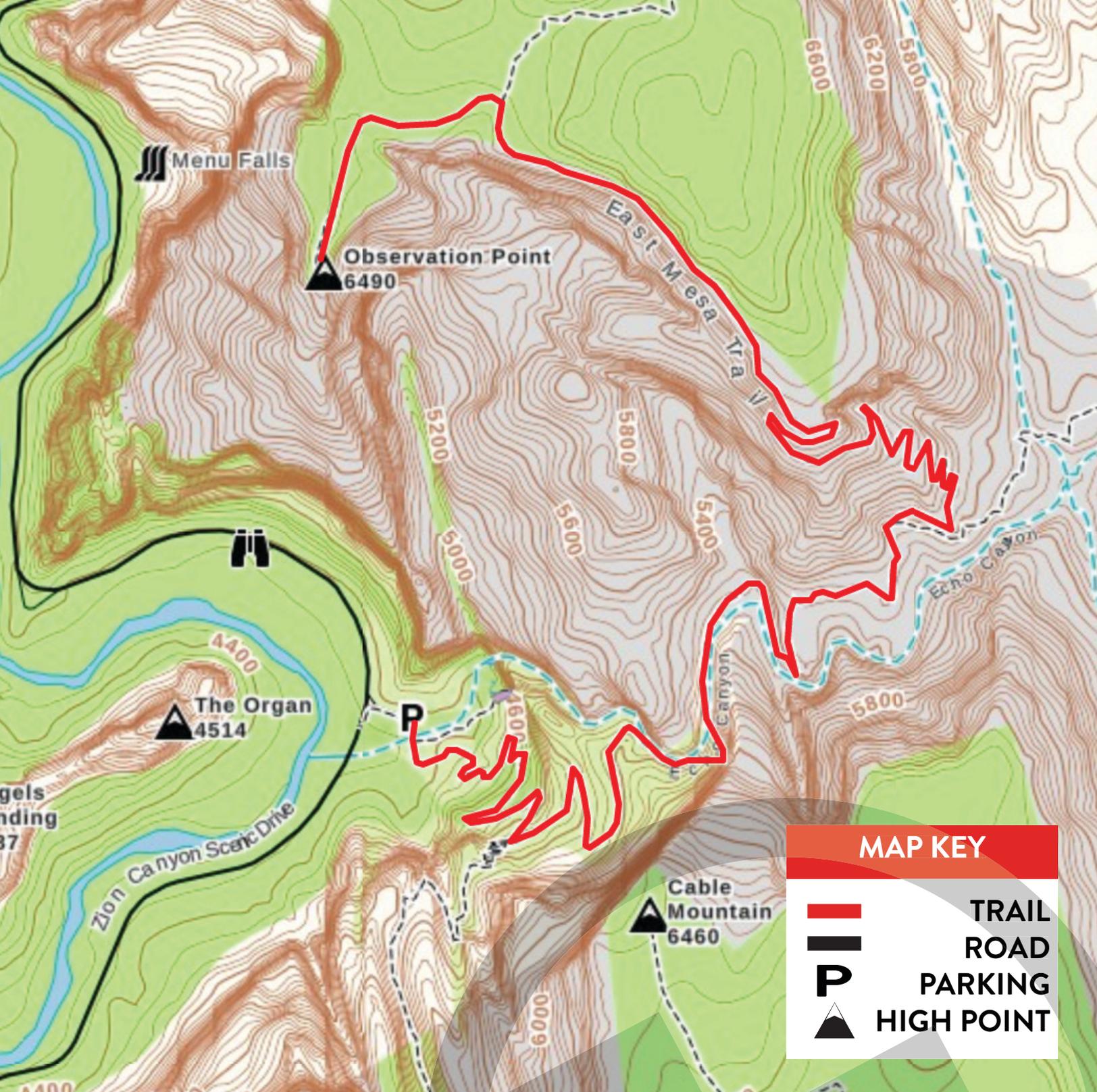
**TBIRD
TRAILS**

**HIKING
GUIDE**

OBSERVATION POINT

ZION NATIONAL PARK





Distance from SUU:

65 miles

Hiking Distance:

8 mile (round trip)

Average Hiking Time:

4 to 6 hours

Difficulty:

Moderate to strenuous

Equipment:

Food, water, and sun protection

Best Season:

Spring, Fall

We hope you enjoy your hiking experience in southern Utah. For more information or equipment rentals please contact:



Hours: Monday - Friday 9 am to 6 pm

Website: www.suu.edu/outdoors



SUU Outdoors



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(435)865-8704

Hazards:

Observation Point is a tough hike. The trail ascends from the valley floor to the top of the canyon — over 2,000 feet — in four miles. The trail coming back can be just as grueling.

For most of the trail, hikers are in the sun with little shade. Sun protection, such as sunscreen and a hat, is important for hikers to carry.

Because of the sun exposure, hikers should drink water regularly along the trail.

The trail traverses along several cliff edges. Hikers should be aware of the edges and take caution along the trail, especially when the trail is narrow (about 5 feet across).

Getting there:

Hikers can reach the Observation Point trailhead, which is the Weeping Rock parking area, by going to Zion National Park. Zion is about an hour and half drive from Cedar City.

Hikers should head south on I-15 toward St. George. After 31 miles, hikers should exit at Exit 27 for U.S. Highway 17.

Turn left and follow HWY 17 for about six miles to the city of La Verkin. In La Verkin, hikers should turn left at HWY 9 toward Springdale and Zion National Park.

Hikers should follow the highway for 20 miles. This is the entrance to Zion National Park.

There is a \$25 fee to enter the park.

During the busy tourist season, March to November, there is a mandatory shuttle to drive farther on the Zion Scenic Road. Hikers can park at the Zion Visitor Center for free.

Those looking to hike Observation Point during this time should park their vehicle and get onto a shuttle bus heading up the canyon. Weeping Rock is the seventh stop the shuttle will make along the road.

If hikers are visiting during the other months, they can continue driving on HWY 9. The Zion Scenic Road is about a mile past the entrance station of the park.

Turn left on the Zion Scenic Rd. and follow it for about four miles to the Weeping Rock parking area and trailhead for Observation Point.

The Trail:

There are several other hikes at the Weeping Rock trailhead, and most share the beginning portion of the Observation Point trail. Follow the signs for Observation Point, Hidden Canyon, East Rim and East Mesa trails.

The trail quickly starts to climb up the cliff. The first mile and a half are a series of switchbacks that even out when the trail follows along the rim of Lower Echo Canyon.

The junction with the Hidden Canyon trail is along this first section of switchbacks. Hikers going to Observation Point should stay to the left at the fork.

After the trail evens out and follows Lower Echo Canyon, hikers will enter Echo Canyon for a brief bit of the trail. Shortly after entering Echo Canyon and crossing the stream-bed, the canyon narrows up into a dark slot canyon and the trail ascends along the left side of the canyon.

The junction with the East Rim trail is a mile past Echo Canyon. This trail cuts around Echo Canyon and heads toward the East Entrance of Zion; along the way is Deertrap Mountain and Cable Mountain.

The Observation Point trail is to the left. Hikers should prepare for almost 2 miles of uphill trail as the trail works its way back around the mountain. This section of the trail is cut into a cliff along the top of Zion Canyon.

After the trail evens out atop Zion Canyon, there is another junction with the East Mesa trail. This trail allows access to the technical canyoneering route of Mystery Canyon and an alternate entrance to the park.

From this last junction, it is 0.3 miles to Observation Point. Much of Zion National Park is in view from Observation Point. The return trip is back down the trail to Weeping Rock, unless the hiker has made other arrangements to exit out the East Mesa trail or East Rim trail.