## OLD DAD MOUNTAIN 4252 FEET CLASS 2

MILEAGE: 220 miles of paved road, 7 miles of good to fair dirt road

DRIVE: From Interstate 15 at Baker, CA. drive 19.5 miles S on the paved, signed Kelbaker Road to a dirt crossroad signed "Aiken Mine, 7 miles" (For those driving the Kelbaker Road from Interstate 40, the Aiken Mine crossroad is approximately 15 miles N of Kelso). Turn right (SW) and follow this good dirt road for 1.7 miles to a junction. Bear right and drive 2.5 miles (on a road which shows evidence of once being paved) to a fork. Bear right, following the road for 1.0 mile in a wash to a fork, where you'll bear left. Drive 0.8 miles to a fork and bear right, driving 0.5 miles to a road junction. Turn right (N) here and drive 0.5 miles to a fork at the NPS Wilderness Area boundary, en route passing under high voltage power lines. Park.

CLIMB: Hike 1.0 mile NW up the wash (or up the rough dirt track) to the base of the peak. Gain the ridge to the right (N) of the prominent canyon on the E face of Old Dad and follow it on steep but solid rock to the 4000 foot level, where you'll bear left (SW) over easy terrain to the summit.

ROUND TRIP STATS: 1800 feet of elevation gain, 3.5 miles, 3 hours

## **SIDELINES**

1. A worthwhile side trip in the area is to the lava tube located within the Cinder Cones National Natural Landmark area, east of the Kelbaker Road. To get there, return to where you turned off the Kelbaker Road for Old Dad Mountain (at the "Aiken Mine, 7 miles" sign). Cross the Kelbaker Road and drive 4.8 miles NE on the excellent dirt Aiken Mine Road, turning left (NW) onto a good dirt road. Drive 0.25 miles to a cattle corral on the left, where 2WD's will park. 4WD's can go another 0.2 miles. Park.

From the 4WD parking spot, hike NE (uphill) for 50 yards to the first hole, which is about 8 foot in diameter at its lip. Looking down into this hole you'll see the floor of the lava tube 25 feet below. Continue walking another 40 yards uphill to a 20 foot diameter hole, 8 feet deep with a metal ladder leading down into it. Downclimb the ladder and follow the lava tube SW through a narrow passageway (4 feet high) to the main chamber which is 120 feet long x 25 feet wide x 25 feet high. This chamber is lit from above by the sun shining through the 8 foot diameter hole previously mentioned.

2. Old Dad Mountain is located within the Mojave Wilderness of the Mojave National Preserve, formerly the East Mojave National Scenic Area. This wilderness area was created as part of the California Desert Protection Act of 1994, Public Law 103-433, Section 106 (a)(3). The Mojave National Preserve encompasses approximately 1.4 million acres of land and is managed by the National Park Service (NPS).

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