

## #28 Polecat Gulch Finger Ridge Loop

**Location:** NW Boise Foothills

**Difficulty:** Easy to moderate

**Distance:** 4.75 miles

**Tread:** Singletrack

**Hiking time:** 2 hours

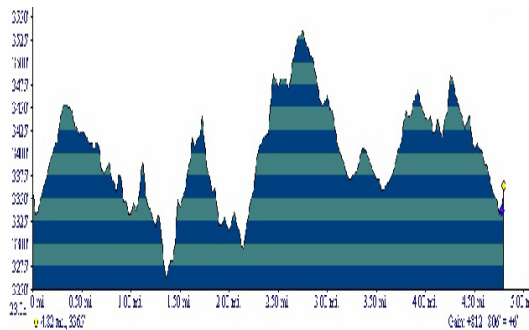
**Running time:** 55 minutes

**Vertical gain/loss:** 812 feet

**Watch out for:** Mountain bikers

**Water:** None

**Season:** March - October; winter use may be feasible when trails are frozen.



**Getting there:** Follow Hill Road west of Bogus Basin Road to Pierce Park. Turn right and go to the junction with Cartwright Road. Bear right on Cartwright and proceed to the Polecat Gulch Trailhead on the right. The hike/run starts here.

**General notes:** Trails in the Polecat Gulch area were a new addition to the Ridge to Rivers Trail System in Fall 2007. Funds from the \$10 million Foothills levy were used to purchase the Polecat Gulch Reserve and establish a new trail system in it. The description here provides a full tour of Polecat Gulch.

**Directions:** Head up the Polecat Gulch Loop Trail, heading east (left). The trail climbs at a moderate pace for a quarter-mile to a ridge overlooking the Stewart Gulch Valley and the Terteling Ranch. Go left at the junction with Doe Ridge, and stay with the Polecat Loop Trail. The trail descends to the toe of a ridge, before climbing again to the main ridge overlooking Polecat Gulch. Follow the loop trail into the gulch, and then climb Quick Draw back to the ridgetop. Bear left on Doe Ridge to keep your elevation and then go right on Polecat Loop trail. Now trail bobs up and down over four finger ridges before returning to the trailhead. If you take Polecat Loop instead of Quick Draw in the bottom of the gulch, it will add another mile to the trip. All of the trail junctions are well-signed and marked.

**The Hike:** This is an easy-going moderate hike on the ridge fingers that overlook Polecat Gulch. Even though the vertical gain chart makes it look as though the climbs and descents are steep, they are quite moderate. Hikers might even get a bit frustrated that the trail doesn't get to the high points faster than it does.

**The Run:** The Polecat Gulch loop provides a great tour of the gulch while providing an excellent workout over 4+ miles. The contour-nature of the trail makes the trail-running

