

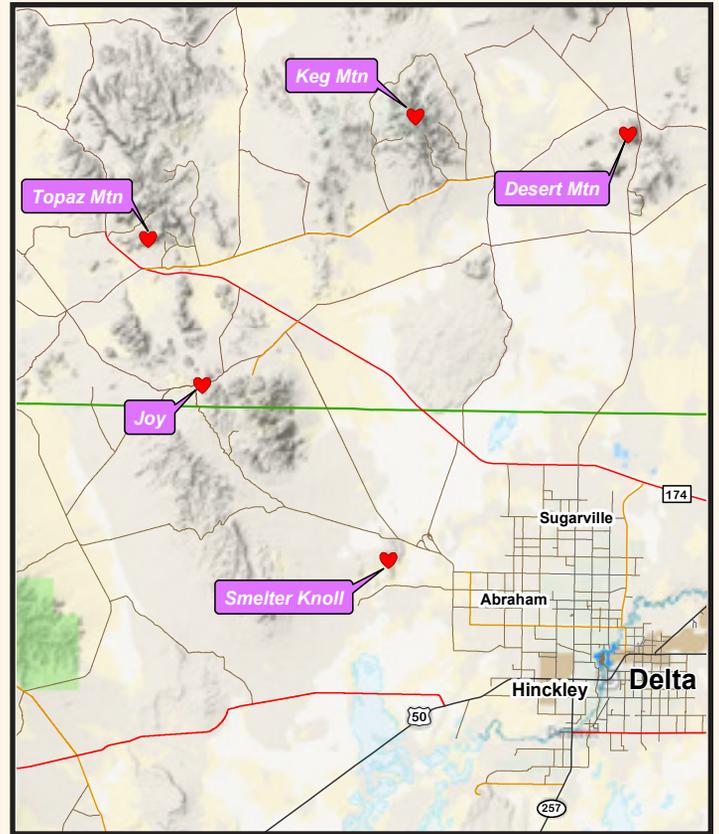
ADVENTURE 7

Topaz Mountain Rockhounding Site

GPS N 39.712721 - W 113.107856

Accessible by: Family Car, Four-Wheel Drive, ATV, Foot
Topaz, Red beryl, Apache tears, bixbyite, pseudobrookite, hematite, spessartite garnet, chalcedony amethyst.

How to get there: Starting in Delta, follow US 6 north about 11 miles to the Brush Wellman Road. Turn west and travel 38 miles until you reach the Topaz Mountain sign. Turn north on the dirt road and drive about two miles, then turn west toward Topaz Mountain. Topaz, Utah's state gem, is a semi-precious gemstone occurring as a very hard, transparent crystals in a variety of colors. The crystals at Topaz Mountain are naturally amber colored, but become colorless after exposure to sunlight. The crystals formed within cavities in the rhyolite, a volcanic rock which erupted approximately six to seven million years ago during the Tertiary period. Caves along the east side of Topaz Mountain contain garnets and other crystals. Apache tears (obsidian nodules) can be found off the southwest side of Topaz Mountain.



Smelter Knoll Desert Mountain Keg Mountain Joy Mining District Apache Tears Rockhounding Site



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North and west of Delta are five areas of remote geologic sites. Rhyolite formations at Smelter Knoll offer pitted rock suitable for aquariums and flower pots. The remaining four places are located just above Millard County line in Juab County. Keg Mountain and Desert Mountain are composed chiefly of extrusive and intrusive igneous rocks of Tertiary age. Lacustrine and alluvial deposits of Quaternary age cover the older rocks and fill in the valleys. Topaz, pseudobrookite, specular hematite, and bixbyite occur in cavities in the Keg Mountains Rhyolite. Drive to the west end of the pavement passing Topaz Mountain. A gravel road will branch off of the main route to the left. Near this intersection Apache Tears (round nodules of obsidian) can be found scattered on the surface of the ground. Apache Tears form if water is present during the cooling of obsidian lava. Curved, onion-like fractures may form. If the central core does not get hydrated, the fresh obsidian core ends up being an Apache Tear.

