

LEOPOLD PEAK

Leopold Peak is located in the Catalina Mountains between Kellogg Mountain and Barnum Rock and is accessed by the Incinerator Ridge Trail that goes between Incinerator Road and the San Pedro Overlook. Although most topographic maps do not identify the peak by name, it is generally known as Leopold Peak and is named for Aldo Leopold, the famous forester and environmentalist.



Leopold Peak

Photo from Incinerator Point by T. Johnson in April 2014

Rand Aldo Leopold was born on 11 January 1887 in Burlington Iowa. Much of his early life was spent learning about the outdoors. His father taught him woodcraft and hunting and Aldo devoted much of his leisure time to exploring the surrounding countryside. As a teenager he decided to pursue forestry as a vocation. After completing high school, he attended the Lawrenceville School (a college preparatory school) in New Jersey for a year (1904 – 1905) before enrolling in the Yale Sheffield Scientific School. In 1906 he changed to the Yale Forest School and was awarded a Master of Forest degree in 1909.

After graduating from Yale he started his career as a forester and in 1909 was assigned to the Forest Service's District 3 in the territories of Arizona and New Mexico. His first assignment was as a forest assistant in the Apache National Forest in Arizona Territory. Then in 1911 he was transferred to New Mexico where he was initially assigned as Deputy Supervisor and then later on as Supervisor of the Carson National Forest. In 1914 he was transferred to the Forest Service District Headquarters in Albuquerque. He was initially assigned to the Office of Grazing and then in 1915 was placed in charge of recreation, game, fish and publicity. From 1918 to 1919 he temporarily separated from the Forest Service to take a position as secretary of the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce. After rejoining the Forest Service in 1919 he was assigned as Assistant District Forester in Charge of Operations. Some of his achievements while assigned to the Forest Service in New Mexico were the development of the first comprehensive management plan for the Grand Canyon, the preparation of the Forest Service's first game and fish handbook and the establishment of the first wilderness area in the Forest Service system (the Gila Wilderness Area). While working as a forester on New Mexico, one of his jobs was predator control which meant hunting and killing bears, wolves and mountain lions. It did not take long for Aldo to come to the conclusion that the extermination of predators was detrimental to the balance of nature. This realization was a major step in his journey of becoming one of the leading environmentalists of his era.

In 1924 he was transferred to the U.S. Forest products Laboratory in Madison Wisconsin as Assistant/Associate Director until 1928 when he separated from the Forest Service to

conduct game surveys of the Midwestern states. He became chairman of the Game Policy Institute and was instrumental in the formulation of the American Game Policy in 1930. He commenced a relationship as an educator with the University of Wisconsin in 1933 when he accepted a position as chair of game management in the Department of Agriculture Economics. He continued this relationship when he also became chairman of the Department of Wildlife Management in 1939.

He played a role in the founding of the Wilderness Society in 1935 and in the Wildlife Society in 1937. In 1943 he was appointed to a six-year term with the Wisconsin Conservation Commission. He died in 1948. He was considered to have been the most influential conservation thinker of the 20th Century. Although Aldo Leopold spent only a very small portion of his career within the Territory of Arizona, his lifetime accomplishments as a forester, wilderness advocate, environmentalist and author make it natural that a mountain peak in Arizona should bear his name.

Summary by T. Johnson in 2014 from the Wilderness and Wikipedia web sites.