

Provo Canyon South Fork Viewing Site

This is a fairly good place for telescope viewing overhead, to the south/south-west, and higher in the north & east. The west has a fair amount of bright sky, but the valley light is partly blocked by mountains. There are mountains to the east, so objects have to be fairly high in the east to be visible. The sky is darker overhead, to the east, and to the south/south-west. The Milky Way is visible, but not bright. There is no phone service once past Vivian Park. The viewing area is a dirt parking area for people riding horses or hiking nearby trails. There is no water, pavilions, or grass. There is a porta-potty.

Directions:

Go to Vivian Park in Provo Canyon
(About 5.8 miles from Orem 800 N and University at the mouth of Provo Canyon.)

Do not stop at Vivian Park; continue up the small road (South Fork Road) that is pretty much straight ahead as you cross the old railroad tracks. Take the left-hand fork as you pass beyond the Park area (you'll pass some houses that sit right on the road on your right).



Follow South Fork Road almost to the end (about 4 ½ miles). Do not take any paved turn off or named road.

Just before the end of the road (about 20 yards or so before the Trefoil Ranch gate) you'll see a dirt road turnoff to the right (the west side of the road). There is a large squarish boulder on the down-canyon side of the turn off and a “Dead End” sign on the other side of turn off. Unfortunately, the signs seem to get removed but it's been there recently. Look at the little map below: boulder is shown in black; sign, yellow. The turn off is very close to the end of the road.

On Google Maps if you look for “Trefoil Ranch, Shingle Mill Canyon Road, Provo, Utah” and then zoom way in, you'll see the turnoff shown as a little road and then a loop. You may be able to mark the loop as Destination.

If you get to the Trefoil Ranch gate, back up about 20 – 30 yards until you see the little dirt-road turn-off on the west side of South Fork Road (on your right if you backed up; left if you turned around).

As you take the dirt turn-off from South Fork Road, stay to the right to get to the parking area. It can sometimes be a bit rutted going from South Fork Road to the parking area, so if you have a low-slung car, proceed carefully.

As you Arrive:

If it's after dark, **please turn down your headlights as you get to the parking area and just use your park lights** (if you let your eyes adjust for a moment, you can see just fine and you won't dazzle anyone who's already there observing).

We'll usually plan to set up the telescope(s) on the far side from the entrance (as indicated by the red arrow on the map). If you do not see us immediately, park, get out, and walk around the parking area. We often set up on the far side of our cars/vans from the entrance. There may be trucks parked with horse trailers.

