

MOUNTAIN DIRECTORY WEST

for Truckers, RV, and Motorhome Drivers



Locations and Descriptions
of over 400 Mountain Passes and Steep Grades
in Eleven Western States

MOUNTAIN DIRECTORY WEST



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The purpose of the directories is to try to eliminate surprises for the drivers of heavy vehicles. Any information that makes mountain driving safer is welcome. If you have such information please write or call:

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Table of Contents

[Acknowledgements, Copyrights and Disclaimer](#)

[How To Use The E-Book](#)

[Introduction](#)

States

[Arizona](#)

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How to Use the E-Book

- Click on the area of the map (yellow markers) you would like information about.
- Click on the Back to Map button to return to the map.

Introduction

There is an old saying among over-the-road truckers. "There are two kinds of drivers - those who've been in trouble on a mountain grade, and those who will be." Unfortunately, this also applies to many RVers. Trucks and RVs have similar problems regarding weight, engine power, and braking in mountainous terrain.

Imagine yourself descending a mountain grade in your RV. You didn't know there was such a long, steep grade on this highway. What a surprise! And things are not going well. You have a white-knuckle grip on the steering wheel. The engine is not holding back all of this weight, the brakes are smelling hot or even smoking, you're pushing harder on the brake pedal but your speed keeps increasing. All you can see ahead is more mountain. Your mind is racing through all of the available options and none of them are good. "I've got to do something," you say "or I'm not going to make it." The options include: run into the rock wall, go over the side, hit those trees, or see if you can make the next curve and ride it out. You choose the last option and, if you are lucky, you make it to the bottom in one piece. You pull over and while you are waiting for your heart to stop pounding, you wipe the sweat from your face and you notice your shirt is soaked, your mouth is dry, and your hands are shaking. You are thinking, "If I had known it was going to be like that....."

Perhaps your rig has difficulty during the steep climbs. The temperature is in the 90's and the grade is so steep that you can barely climb it in first gear. The engine and transmission temperatures are rising. How far to the top of this hill? You don't know if it's one mile or ten. Something smells hot. What to do? Pull over and cool off? But then all momentum is lost. Can you even get started again? You wish you had unhooked the car you're dragging up this hill behind the motorhome. If you are lucky, you can do that next time. You are wondering how many thousand dollars a new engine and transmission will be.

During the last few years we have heard many stories about very expensive repairs to drive train components. Sometimes rigs are lost entirely. A highway patrol officer in Oregon told us that in the summer an average of one motorhome per week burns to the ground while trying to climb Cabbage Hill on I-84 east of Pendleton. If a fire starts, the nearest fire department is likely to be many miles away. By the time they arrive, there is nothing left to do but hose down the ashes.

Since 1993 we have been collecting and publishing information about mountain passes and steep grades. Combined, Mountain Directory West and Mountain Directory East give the locations and descriptions of over 700 mountain passes and steep grades in 22 states. This is vital information for anyone driving a large or heavy vehicle. The Mountain Directory books tell you where the steep grades are, how long they are, how steep (%) they are, whether the road is two lane, three lane, or four lane, if there are escape ramps, switchbacks, sharp curves, speed limits, etc. With this information, one can know ahead of time what a pass is like and make an informed decision about whether to go over or around. If you decide to go over, perhaps the cool morning hours would ease the strain on the engine and transmission during the climb. Unhooking the towed vehicle would make the climb and the descent easier. Knowing what lies ahead is half the battle.

Many people are under the impression that the grades in the eastern mountains are not as serious as the grades in the western mountains. Apparently this is because the elevations are not as high in the eastern states. But elevation alone is not the problem--it is the change in elevation that makes a grade potentially hazardous. If all other factors are equal, a grade that descends from 4000' to 1000' over 10 miles is no different than a grade that descends from 10000' to 7000' over 10 miles. Either way you have a 3000' change in elevation spread over 10 miles. (This example would result in an average grade of almost 6% for 10 miles.)

A large percentage of the grades in the western states are in the 6% range. A large percentage of the grades in the eastern states are 8, 9, or 10% and sometimes even more. The eastern grades are often shorter but this is not always so. A quick glance through this book will reveal over 50 grades that are between 7 and 10% and from 4 to 7 miles long. There are others that are even more challenging. The road to the top of Whiteface Mountain in New York is 8 to 10% for 8 miles. There would be no need for truckers to use this road but RVs are allowed. Near Cumberland, Maryland there is a hill on I-68 that is posted as 6% for 13 miles. In North Carolina highway 181 crosses the Blue Ridge Parkway and the southbound descent is 11 miles of grade that varies from 6 to 10%. Much of it is 8 to 9%. These grades are just as hazardous as the grades in the western states.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the maps included in this book, it is nearly impossible to include all necessary detail on such small pages. We recommend that these maps be used in conjunction with larger, more detailed road maps.

In most cases the passes and hills are described as descents. In other words, a pass will be described from the summit down in one direction and then from the summit down in the other direction. This directory does not claim to include every steep grade. In fact, because of the enormous area we have tried to cover, we can guarantee that we have probably missed some. Sometimes the percentages quoted are estimates and many times they are based on road signs or information provided by highway departments. This book does not attempt to rate passes or grades according to difficulty. There is an enormous variety in vehicles and equipment. A hill that is very difficult for one vehicle may be no problem at all for a similar vehicle that is equipped differently. Driver judgment is critical in deciding which hills should be avoided.

The purpose of this book is not to discourage drivers from going where they please. It is only to inform them of the conditions they may encounter and to encourage them to make sure their equipment is in good repair. Brakes must be in good working order and properly adjusted and the engine and transmission should be used to slow the vehicle whenever possible, thus saving the brakes and keeping them cool enough to retain their stopping power. The engine's cooling system should be in good repair to prevent overheating during the climbs. Turning off the air conditioner during climbs may help, and if necessary, turning on the heater will help dissipate

heat from the engine.

There are many aftermarket devices that can help heavy vehicles in the mountains. Some will help by increasing horsepower for the climbs. These include turbos and exhaust systems. Other devices, such as engine braking systems can help during the descents. Some products, like gear splitters and auxiliary transmissions can help during the climbs and the descents. Many of these products also improve fuel economy (while delivering more horsepower) and reduce wear and tear on the drive train.

The main ingredients involved in overheated brakes are the length of the grade, the steepness of the grade, and the speed and weight of the vehicle. Reducing any of these will improve the chances of getting down the mountain without overheating the brakes. Most of the time, the only one the driver can change is speed. Reducing speed may keep you alive. Remember the old phrase, "You can go down a mountain a thousand times too slowly, but only once too fast."



Higher elevations	
Middle elevations	
Lower elevations	
Pass or grade locations	
Interstate highways	
US highways	
State highways	

1 ARIZONA HIGHWAY 89 ALT.

(between AZ 89 and Cottonwood, AZ)

Trucks over 50' in length prohibited. This road is narrow and winding with sharp curves and very tight hairpin turns.

About 7½ miles south of Jerome Arizona 89 Alt. comes to a summit. The southbound descent from the summit is about **4½ miles of 6-7% grade** with many 20 and 30 mph curves and a 15 mph hairpin near the top. There are about 2 miles of 4% grade after the steep section.

The northbound descent is about **12 miles of 6% grade** with narrow road and many 20 mph curves and several 15 mph hairpin turns. The town of Jerome is about 7 miles down from the summit. Jerome is perched on the side of the mountain and the road is very narrow through town and includes a **very sharp 10 mph hairpin turn and a short section of very steep (10-12%) grade**. After leaving town there are **3½ miles of 6% grade** with sharp turns. The grade eases when AZ 89 Alt. turns southeast toward Cottonwood. **Use caution on this hill.**

2 US HIGHWAY 89

(North of Flagstaff, AZ)

About 10 miles north of the Flagstaff city limit there is a northbound descent on US 89. Near milepost 431 there is a sign for northbound traffic – “**6% grade next 4 miles.**” The last mile or so may be less than 6%.

3 ARIZONA HIGHWAY 177

(between Kearny and Superior, AZ)

There are rolling hills between Superior and Kearny, but none of them last very long. There are 10% grades posted for both northbound and southbound traffic, but none over 2 miles in length.

About milepost 161 there is a hill posted “**10% next 2 miles**” for southbound traffic and “**10% next 1 mile**” for northbound traffic. About milepost 158 there is a hill posted as “**10% for 1 mile**” in both directions. About milepost 154½ there is a hill for southbound traffic that is posted as “**10% for 2 miles.**” There is almost no descent on the north side.

4 ARIZONA HIGHWAY 260

(between Heber and Payson, AZ)

There are two descents of some length for westbound traffic on this part of 260. At milepost 282 there is a brake check area and warning sign – **“Trucks – vehicles pulling trailers check brakes and equipment.”** This is about 22 miles west of Heber. The grade is **steady 6% for 5 miles** with 45 mph curves. The road is four lane during the descent.

The other long hill starts at milepost 265 and is **3½ miles of 6%** grade. There are some places where the grade eases for short stretches. There are 40 and 45 mph curves and the road is two lane. There are plenty of other 5 and 6% hills along this road but they are usually short.

5 I-40

(near Ash Fork, AZ)

About 10 miles east of Ash Fork there is a brake check area for westbound traffic (near milepost 155½ and some warning signs—**“Trucks—vehicles pulling trailers check brakes and equipment—use lower gear”** and **“6% grade next 6 miles.”** **The first two miles are 6%** followed by about 1½ miles of 4-5%, then 1½ miles of 6% grade.

6 ARIZONA HIGHWAY 260

(between Arizona highway 87 and Camp Verde, AZ)

About 14½ miles west of the junction of highways 87 and 260 there is a sign—**“6% grade next 9 miles.”** The westbound descent begins ¼ mile later at milepost 238. **The first 3¼ miles are steady 6-7% grade** with 45 and 50 mph curves. The grade eases for about ¾ mile and then goes back to **6-7% for almost 5 miles** and then eases to 3-4% for 1 mile. The grade then goes back to 6% for 1 mile and flattens out about milepost 227, which is 11 miles down from the top. There are 45 mph curves all the way down. It is a good two lane road.

This hill is long and steep—use caution in large or heavy vehicles. There are no escape ramps on this hill. This descent is as dangerous as many hills that do have escape ramps.

7 ARIZONA HIGHWAY 89

(between US 93 and Prescott, AZ)

Not recommended for trucks pulling trailers over 40' long.

Just south of Yarnell, Arizona there is a descent for traffic going south on 89. The descent is about **5½ miles of 5-6% grade** with many 25 and 30 mph curves and a couple of 20 mph hairpin turns. The road is four lane at the top but soon splits—northbound and southbound are at different elevations—and the downhill side becomes one lane until the bottom of the hill.

Farther north on 89 is the town of Wilhoit, Arizona. From Wilhoit to Prescott the road has **many curves that are too tight for large trucks. The guardrail is damaged at almost every curve** (where there is a guardrail.) The grade is up and down for the entire 15 mile stretch. Some of the grade is in the 6% range—both up and down—but it never does last for very long. The curves do last—all the way across there are 20 and 25 mph curves—hardly a straight stretch at all. We are advised that the local road through Kirkland, Skull Valley, and Iron Springs is a good road with fewer curves and lighter traffic.

8 ARIZONA HIGHWAY 78

(between Threeway, AZ and Mule Creek, NM)

This road is posted—**“Curves—mountain grades—trucks not recommended.”**

Highway 78 is a narrow, winding road with 15 mph hairpin turns and many 20 to 30 mph curves. The summit of the hill is about milepost 168½ (about 5½ miles west of the state line.) The westbound descent starts with about **4 miles of steady 7-8% grade** with 25 mph curves. After that it's a roller coaster descent for about 7 miles with grades that vary from 4-7% and almost constant 25 mph curves. The eastbound descent rolls up and down with short 5 and 6% grades and numerous 20 and 25 mph curves.

9 US HIGHWAY 89

(between Page and Bitter Springs, AZ)

Southbound traffic out of Page, Arizona will encounter some warning signs near milepost 528—**“Trucks—vehicles pulling trailers check brakes and equipment”** and **“use lower gear next 5 miles.”** About ½ mile later there is a brake check area and the grade starts down at about 6% with 45 mph curves. The grade is **4 miles of steady 6%**.

There is a **runaway truck ramp** about milepost 524½ which is about ¾ miles down from where the 6% grade started. The escape ramp exits to the right and goes slightly downhill. The grade eases about ½ mile past the escape ramp near the junction of highways 89 and 89 Alt.

10 CAMP VERDE GRADES and I-17

(between Flagstaff and Phoenix, AZ)

Camp Verde, Arizona is in a valley and the descent is long and steep from both north and south on I-17. **There are runaway truck ramps on both of these hills.** There is also a steep descent for southbound traffic near Black Canyon City between mileposts 251 and 244 on I-17.

FROM THE NORTH INTO CAMP VERDE:

About 26 miles south of the junction of I-40 and I-17 at Flagstaff there is a sign for southbound traffic—"6% grade 2 miles ahead." About ½ mile later there is another sign—"Trucks—vehicles pulling trailers check brakes and equipment—use scenic view." At milepost 312 a sign warns—"6% grade next 13 miles" and ½ mile later the 6% begins. The **first 3 ½ miles are fairly steady 6% grade.**

There are several breaks in the descent where the grade eases. The first two breaks are only ¼ to ½ mile long and then between mileposts 306 and 304 the grade is about 4%. **Between mileposts 304 and 298 the grade is pretty steady at 6% (almost 6 miles.) There is a runaway truck ramp just before milepost 300.** The ramp goes off to the right and is almost level. There are several warning signs as you approach it.

About milepost 298 the grade goes uphill for a short distance and then flattens as you approach the rest area. If your brakes are hot this may be a good place to cool them because it is still 9 miles to the bottom of the hill at Camp Verde. Not all of the 9 miles are downhill—in fact there is a mile of uphill included—and most of the downhill is 4-5% from the rest area to Camp Verde.

FROM THE SOUTH INTO CAMP VERDE:

At milepost 280½ on I-17 there is a brake check pullout and then a sign for northbound traffic—"6% grade next 7 miles" and "**Runaway truck ramp LEFT 2¼ miles.**" The **6% grade starts down at milepost 281 and is steady for all but a little of the 7 miles.** The **runaway truck ramp is at milepost 283.** The road curves to the right and the escape ramp goes straight from the left lane and uphill. The grade eases to 4-5% for the last mile into Camp Verde.

FROM THE NORTH INTO BLACK CANYON CITY:

At milepost 253 there is a sign for southbound traffic—"Trucks—vehicles pulling trailers check brakes and equipment—use rest area." After coming out of the rest area there are signs stating—"winding road" and "**6% grade next 5 miles.**"

At milepost 251 the 6% grade begins with 60 mph curves. After 2½ miles the grade eases for ½ mile and then goes back to 6% for 2 miles. It eases again for about ¾ mile and then is 4-5% for another mile or so to the exit for Black Canyon City.

11 HOUSEHOLDER PASS and BOULDER DAM AREA

(on US 93 between Kingman, AZ and Boulder Dam)

US 93 between Kingman and Boulder Dam has been improved to an excellent four lane highway. There is a 2 mile 6% northbound descent beginning about milepost 6, which is 6 miles south of the dam. Since the new bridge was built just below the dam, normal traffic is not allowed to go over the dam and must use the bridge. Evidently, wind is a problem on the bridge because as you approach it there are signs saying: “**High profile vehicles not advised**” and “**High profile vehicles use left lane 1 mile ahead**” and “**High profile vehicles use left lane next 2 miles.**”

12 EL CAPITAN PASS elev. 4983'

(on Arizona highway 77 between Globe and Winkelman, AZ)

The summit of El Capitan Pass is about 8½ miles south of the junction of US 70 and Arizona 77 (about milepost 162½.) There is a brake check area at the top. There are warnings posted for traffic in both directions—**"Trucks—vehicles pulling trailers check brakes and equipment."**

The northbound descent begins with a sign—**"8% grade next 3 miles."** The grade eases some after 2 miles but starts down at about 6% a mile later. The 6% lasts for about a mile for a total descent of about 4 miles. The road rolls along the top of the pass for about 1½ miles and the southbound descent begins about milepost 161. There is a brake check area following the usual warnings about checking equipment.

The southbound descent begins with a sign—**"7% grade next 7 miles."** The last 2 miles of this hill are posted at **8% grade**. The descent is fairly steady with 45 mph curves. **There are two runaway truck ramps. The first is at milepost 156 and the second is 1½ mile farther down the hill.** They are 4¾ and 6¼ miles down from the top of the pass. In both cases the road makes a curve to the left and the escape ramp exits straight ahead. **The 8% grade continues for about 1 mile after the second escape ramp.** There are some rolling hills after that with a few short 5-6% descents.

13 SALT RIVER CANYON

(and US 60 between Show Low and Globe, AZ)

The northbound trip from Globe to Show Low on US 60 includes several long uphill grades and one long descent. There are many short hills scattered along the way.

The long northbound descent is into Salt River Canyon. It begins at milepost 284 with a sign—**"6% grade next 3 miles."** **What the sign doesn't tell you is that after a one mile break in the grade there is another sign—"6% grade next 5 miles."** So you have a total of **8 miles of 6%** grade going into the canyon. The grade is steady except for the one mile break and there are 50 mph curves during the first 3 miles and 25 and 35 mph curves during the last 5 miles.

The southbound trip from Show Low to Globe has four long, steep descents and the long pull out of Salt River Canyon. About 32 miles south of Globe at milepost 307½ a **7 mile descent begins**. The grade is mostly 5-6% and is not steady. The grade stair steps down with short flat spots or sections of lesser grade. **You want to avoid overheating your brakes during this section because about 2 miles after it bottoms out the descent into Salt River Canyon begins.**

About milepost 298½ there is a brake check area and the **5½ mile 6% grade** into the canyon begins. It is **steady 6%** except for a ½ mile section of 3-4% in the middle. There are many 25, 30, and 35 mph curves. After you have climbed out of the canyon on the south side there are two more long descents before reaching Globe. Near milepost 279 there is a sign for southbound traffic—**"6% grade next 8 miles."** There are three short sections where the grade eases. The longest is about a mile of 4-5% in the middle of the grade.

The last long hill begins about milepost 262 where there is a sign—**"6% next 3 miles."** The grade is closer to 5 miles long but is not steady. The grade stair steps down with 6% alternating with 4%.

14 ARIZONA HIGHWAY 87

(between Phoenix and Long Valley, AZ)

The community of Payson is about milepost 253 on highway 87. Just south of Payson at milepost 250 a descent begins for southbound traffic. There are two short sections of 6-7% grade during the next 2 miles and at milepost 248 there is a sign—**“Trucks—vehicles pulling trailers check brakes and equipment ¼ mile.”** There is a brake check pullout and then 5 ½ miles of 6-7% grade with only a couple of short breaks in the grade. There are 45 mph curves. After the steep section a mile or so of 3% grade takes you into Rye, Arizona.

Between Rye and Phoenix there are many 5, 6, and 7% grades with climbs and descents whichever way you are traveling. There is a 3 mile 7% hill and a 4 mile 6% hill and a 2 mile 7% hill and everything in between. It is a good two lane road with passing lanes on most of the climbs. The road is four lane for about 30 miles south of Payson.

There is another long descent on this road. About 24 miles north of Payson is the junction of 87 and 260 highways. About 1½ miles south of the junction a descent begins for southbound traffic. The first 2½ miles are mostly 3-4% downhill. At this point (milepost 274 ½) there is a brake check pullout. Then the grade starts down at about **6% for 4 miles** into the town of Strawberry. There are 20, 30, 35, and 40 mph curves. After passing through Strawberry **the grade resumes for another 3 miles** to the town of Pine. Between Pine and Payson there are short ups and downs in the grade—some steep but short. There are also some short and steep hills for about 10 miles north of the junction with 260.

15 TELEGRAPH PASS elev. 800'
(on I-8 east of Yuma, AZ)

The eastbound descent from the summit (milepost 19) of Telegraph Pass is **6% grade for 2 miles** with a truck speed limit of 45 mph. There are 45 mph curves. The westbound descent from the summit is also about **2 miles of 5-6% grade**.

16 **UNION PASS** elev. 3600'

(on Arizona highway 68 between Kingman and Bullhead City, AZ elev. 675')

Arizona 68 is now a very good four lane highway all the way from Kingman to Bullhead City, but the grade remains long and steady.

The westbound descent from the summit of Union Pass is **almost 12 miles of 6% grade** with a 45 mph curve at the bottom that is on the outskirts of Bullhead City. **Use caution on this hill.** At the top of the hill there are signs saying: **“Trucks – vehicles pulling trailers – Use lower gears”** and **“Truck escape ramps 6 miles ahead and 10 miles ahead”** and **“Stop light at end of grade 11 miles ahead.”** **The grade continues another 1¼ miles past the last escape ramp** and begins to flatten out about the time you go through the 45 mph curve. **(There is a drop in elevation of almost 3000' from Union Pass summit to Bullhead City.)**

The eastbound descent from Union Pass summit is about 1 mile of 6% grade followed by about 4 miles of 4% grade.

17 ARIZONA HIGHWAY 89 ALT.

(between Flagstaff and Sedona, AZ)

“Trucker’s notice—AZ 89 Alt. not recommended for heavy trucks.” (Some signs designate this road as a US highway, some as a state highway.)

From the junction of I-17 and AZ 89 Alt. just south of Flagstaff, the road rolls up and down and descends gradually for about 8½ miles. At this point (about milepost 390½) there is a sign for southbound traffic—**“7% grade next 3 miles.”** There are many curves, including several 15 mph hairpin turns. The road is also very narrow. After the 3 miles of 7%, the grade is variable and rolling but continues to descend gradually for about 11 miles. There are some 5 and 6% sections but they are usually short. The road continues to be narrow and winding.

18 US HIGHWAY 191 – formerly known as US 666
(between Clifton and Alpine, AZ)

From 5 miles south of Hannagan Meadow to the north side of Morenci is **prohibited to trucks over 40' in length**. There is also a tunnel just north of Morenci with a **12' 7" vertical clearance**. **This road is not suitable for large vehicles from Morenci to just south of Hannagan Meadow**. The grades can be as steep as **8 or 9%** but they are usually short. The road is extremely narrow in many places with an incredible number of 10 and 15 mph hairpin turns, not to mention many 20 and 25 mph curves. The first 20 miles north of Morenci takes over an hour in a car.

About 6½ miles south of Hannagan Meadow there is a **steady 6% southbound descent for about 5 miles** with 20 mph curves. There is a short 6% descent from Morenci to Clifton and a 2 mile 6% climb out of Clifton going south.

19 US HIGHWAY 60

(between Miami and Superior, AZ)

There is very little flat road between Miami and Superior. There are **6 and 7% descents for traffic in both directions**. There is a tunnel with 14' 0" vertical clearance about 2 miles east of Superior. About milepost 236 there is a sign for eastbound traffic—"6% grade next 7 miles." This descent toward Miami is not steady 6%. There are several places where the grade eases and there is a 1 mile uphill stretch. There is still enough 6% descent to require caution on this road. There are 45 mph curves and heavy traffic. The town of Miami is at the bottom of the hill.

The westbound descent from milepost 236 starts with about 2 miles of 3-4% grade and then 2 miles of 6% grade. At this point there is a ½ mile 6% climb before beginning a descent of **1 mile of 5% followed by 3 miles of 7% grade**. There are 50 mph curves all the way down and a **runaway truck ramp at milepost 228**. It exits to the right and goes uphill. About 1¼ miles of 7% grade remain after the escape ramp. This brings you to the edge of Superior where the grade goes to 4% right through town.

NOTE: If you are traveling eastbound there is a sign near milepost 231½ that says—"6% next 12 miles." Evidently this includes uphill grade as well as down because after going downhill for about ½ mile the grade is uphill for 4½ miles and then downhill for 7 miles into Miami.

20 US HIGHWAY 93

(south of I-40 in western AZ)

There is a great deal of traffic on this road—including a lot of truck traffic. Between I-40 and Wikieup, Arizona there are rolling hills. From Wikieup, about milepost 123, south to milepost 160 there are many 5-6% grades both uphill and downhill. These grades are not usually steady but stair step up or down and can add up to a considerable length—as much as 5 or 6 miles. This section is also quite curvy. **The state of Arizona has marked fatal accident sites with white crosses and there are a number of them on this road.**

From milepost 161 to milepost 172 is a long straight pull for southbound traffic or a long descent for northbound traffic. Most of the grade is 3-4%.

21 ARIZONA HIGHWAYS 88 and 188

(near Lake Roosevelt, AZ)

If you want to go to Lake Roosevelt, the best road with least grade is 188 from the north. From the junction of highways 188 and 87, highway 188 descends gently for 6 miles to the valley floor north of the lake.

Between Apache Junction and Lake Roosevelt, highway 88 includes 24 miles of gravel road that is steep, narrow, and winding. It is not recommended for vehicles over 22' in length.

If you approach the lake from Globe, highway 88 is paved but includes a summit a few miles south of the lake. The descent toward the lake is **6 miles of 9% grade** with 25 and 30 mph curves. The descent toward Globe is **3 miles of 9%**, a short break and then **2 more miles of 9% grade** with 25 mph curves. This is a mediocre road that is rough in places.

22 US HIGHWAY 89 ALT

(north of the Grand Canyon)

The area around Jacob Lake is an oasis of pine forest surrounded by treeless desert and remarkable changes in terrain. The northbound descent from Jacob Lake begins with several miles of rolling hills and then about **6 miles of 6% grade**. It is a curvy road but the curves aren't terribly sharp.

The southbound descent is nearly **10 miles of 5-6%** grade with 35 mph curves and several 30 mph switchbacks near the bottom. There are some long drop-offs but it is generally a good road.

23 SITGREAVES PASS elev. 3600'

(on old Route 66 west of Kingman, AZ)

“Trucks over 40’ in length prohibited.” It is hard to believe this was once a major highway. The top of Sitgreaves Pass is about 4 miles east of Oatman. The westbound descent toward Oatman includes **7-11% grades, extremely narrow road, extremely sharp switchbacks, long steep drop-offs with little shoulder, vertical rocks right at the edge of the road, and rough surface.** The eastbound descent is similar except the grade is 6-8% for about 3 miles.

As the “highway” passes through Oatman it is very narrow and very congested with tourists, vehicles, burros, etc. so go very slowly. To avoid Sitgreaves Pass, one can reach Oatman from the west or south. From the west, Boundary Cone Road (just north of Needles) is a long mild climb to Oatman. From the south, Old Route 66 is a long mild climb from Topock, AZ. Earlier versions of this book described this part of Old Route 66 as gravel but it is paved from Topock to Oatman.

24 ARIZONA HIGHWAY 80

(near Bisbee, AZ)

This summit is just west of Bisbee. The west side is **4 miles of 5-6%** grade with mild curves. The east side is **5 miles of grade that is mostly 5-6% but does include 1 mile of 8-9%**. The grade continues past the main part of Bisbee and ends at a traffic circle on the edge of town.

25 ARIZONA HIGHWAY 77

(north of Tucson, AZ)

About 35 miles north of Tucson there is a northbound descent on highway 77. It is posted “**7% next 12 miles**” but it is not a steady grade. The 7% sections alternate with sections of mild grade. Even so, heat can build up in brakes on such a grade so use caution. It is a good two lane road with occasional climbing lanes and mild curves.