

Looking for Samson's Pebble

in the Bighorn National Forest

In years long past the trailhead sign at the west end of the Shell Bench Trail (Trail 184) in the Post Creek picnic area indicated that something called Samson's Pebble was 3 miles up the trail. I was curious as to what that was, but did not get around to actually investigating for well over a decade.

The current trailhead sign does not mention Samson's Pebble.

On 02 July 2020 I checked Google Earth and saw a large (over 160 feet horizontally) bare rock directly south of Shell Falls. That day I walked up the trail about 3.5 miles (by GPS track), found that rock, and figured that had to be Samson's Pebble. That rock is about 150 feet south of the trail and is pictured in Image 1 and Image 2 on the georeferenced PDF named [01_Satellite_View.pdf](#). The image names in that PDF occupy the points from where each image was taken and the red lines show the direction. Click on the image names on the satellite view to see the images.

I walked around the rock in a clockwise direction while collecting images. That was a challenge, with deadfall timber on top of rotten deadfall along with shoulder-high mountain ninebark.

Then on 29 June 2024 a group of six of us from Cody walked down the length of that trail east to west. As we got close to what I believed to be Samson's Pebble we passed two boulders quite close to the trail that could have also been given that name. Those are shown in Image 4 and Image 3 in the aforementioned PDF. The boulder shown in Image 3 is estimated to be about twice the volume of the one shown in Image 4. Neither is anything close to the size of the first rock, but since they are much closer to the trail one of them possibly could have been christened Samson's Pebble.

So which of these three rocks was/is the real Samson's Pebble?

If there is a general agreement as to which one it is I will add it to OpenStreetMap, "the free wiki world map".

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