



HIKING

FOREST SERVICE

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

NATIONAL FOREST – San Juan
RANGER DISTRICT - Columbine

Date: February, 2003

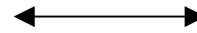


Highline Loop National Recreation Trail

Length: 17 miles (27.4 km.)

Recommended Season

Spring Summer Fall Winter



Use: Light

Difficulty: Moderate to Difficult

USGS Map (s):

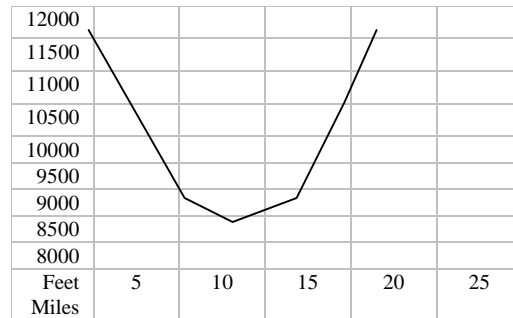
Orphan Butte and La Plata

Starting Elevation: 11,600'

Kennebec Pass (Forest Road 571)

Ending Elevation: 11,600'

Kennebec Pass (Forest Road 571)



Recommended Season: Summer/Fall



Access # 1: (Kennebec Pass) Go 14 miles north of Hesperus on Forest Development Road 571. (Hesperus is about 17 miles east of Mancos, or 10 miles west of Durango, on U.S. Highway 160.) Drive about ½ mile northwest of Hesperus on U.S. 160 to reach the beginning of Forest Development Road 571.

Access # 2: (Gold Run and Bear Creek Trails) See the write-up on the Gold Run Trail for directions to that trailhead. District personnel can direct you to the access via the Sharktooth Trail #622.

Attractions & Considerations: This trail was designated a National Recreation Trail in 1979 because of its scenic recreational values.

Elevations vary from 9,200' in the Bear Creek drainage to over 12,000' along the "Highline." Aspen, spruce-fir, and alpine areas are traversed by the trail, as are scattered mountain parks. The beginning of the trail is at Kennebec Pass. Four-wheel drive is recommended to reach the pass. This access is at nearly 12,000 feet elevation. It is then necessary to descend to 9,200' on the other side of the Highline divide into Bear Creek, and then climb back out to the point of beginning.

This trail is open for use by horses and hikers. Portions of the trail can also be used by trail bikes. The portions of the trail closed to trail bike use are shown on the Forest recreation map.

Scan of the San Juan National Forest Map

Forest Service maps and other publications are available at the Public Lands Center, in the Durango Tech Center, ½ mile west of Durango off Highway 160, or by calling (970) 247-4874. www.sjma.org