Third Edition • 100 Trails

GUIDE TO COORAGO & Backroads & 4-Wheel-Drive



EASY



MODERATE



DIFFICULT



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Writing, design, photography and production by Charles A. Wells & Matt Peterson.

Edited by Shelley Mayer

Third Edition

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to everyone with whom we traveled or met on the trails for allowing us to use pictures of you and/or your vehicles. If we published pictures that you took of us, we gave you credit at the bottom of the picture.

We would also like to thank staffers and rangers at the U.S. Forest Service, BLM and other government land agencies for their time and patience answering our many questions.

GUARANTEE OF SATISFACTION

We guarantee you will enjoy the trails in this book. If not, or if you are dissatisfied with the book in any other way, return it to us for a full refund. Or, call our tollfree number during business hours at 1-877-222-7623. We promise to do whatever it takes to make you happy.

DISCLAIMER

Travel in Colorado's backcountry is, by its very nature, potentially dangerous and could result in property damage, injury or even death. The scope of this book cannot predict every possible hazard you may encounter. If you drive any of the trails in this book, you acknowledge these risks and assume full responsibility. You are the final judge as to whether a trail is safe to drive on any given day, whether your vehicle is capable of the journey and what supplies you should carry. The information contained herein cannot replace good judgment and proper preparation on your part. The publisher and authors of this book disclaim any and all liability for bodily injury, death or property damage that could occur to you or any of your passengers.

We have made every effort to update trails to match U.S. Forest Service Motor Vehicle Use Maps (MVUMs) that were available at the time of this writing. We cannot match maps that have not yet been issued or keep up with annual changes to existing maps. We will attempt to report changes on our Web site, but make no guarantee of accuracy. You are ultimately responsible for following the latest and correct MVUM. In addition, OHV laws described in this book change constantly. We do our best to keep up with them: however, you are ultimately responsible to know the correct and latest laws. The publisher and authors of this book disclaim any and all liability for fines or other punishment that could result from being on the wrong trail or breaking the law.

Note: Telephone numbers and Web sites that appear in this book were verified Jan. 2010.

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TRAIL LIST

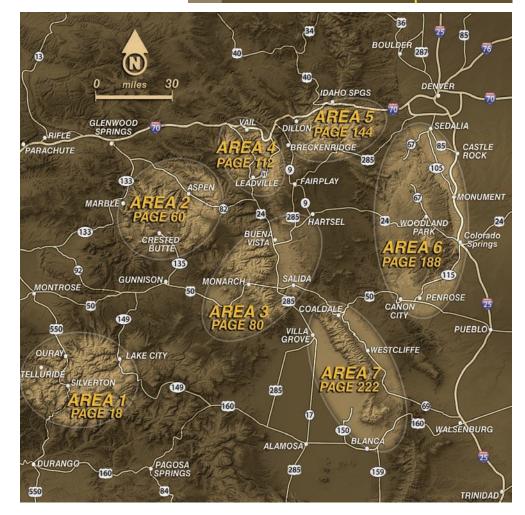
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To find a trail, use list at left and these maps to determine in which area a trail is located, then turn to the page indicated. Detailed area maps will direct you to individual trails.





TRAIL RATINGS DEFINED

Trail ratings are very subjective. Conditions change for many reasons, including weather and time of year. An easy trail can quickly become difficult when washed out by a rainstorm or blocked by a fallen rock. You must be the final judge of a trail's condition on the day you drive it. If any part of a trail is difficult, the entire trail is rated difficult. You may be able to drive a significant portion of a trail before reaching the difficult spot. Read each trail description carefully for specific information.



Easy

Gravel, dirt, clay, sand, or mildly rocky road. Gentle grades. Water levels low except during periods of heavy runoff. Full-width single lane or wider with adequate

room to pass most of the time. Where shelf conditions exist, road is wide with minor sideways tilt. Clay roads, when wet, can significantly increase difficulty. Some trails can be driven in 2WD under ideal conditions. Others will need 4WD and, in some cases, low-range gearing.

Author's Vehicles: (See photos)

 A. 2005 Ford Escape: Stock 4-cyl. 4WD, no low, street tires and no off-road package.
 B. 2002 Grand Cherokee: Stock 4WD, skid plates and tow hooks, A/T tires and CB radio.

C. 2001 Jeep® Wrangler: Equipped with TeraFlex 3" lift with long-arm kit, 9,000 lb. Warn winch, Dana 44 rear axle; 410 gears, Tera Low 4/1 transfer case, ARB lockers front and rear, York on-board air system, Predator skid plates, High-Country rocker panel guards, Curry bumpers, Alumiflex tie rod, Xenon extended flairs, stock 4-liter engine, 33 x 12.50 BFG A/T tires and CB radio.

® "Jeep" is a registered trademark of Chrysler Corporation.



Moderate

Rutted dirt or rocky road. Careful tire placement may be necessary. Some grades fairly steep but manageable if dry. Soft sand possible. Sideways tilt will

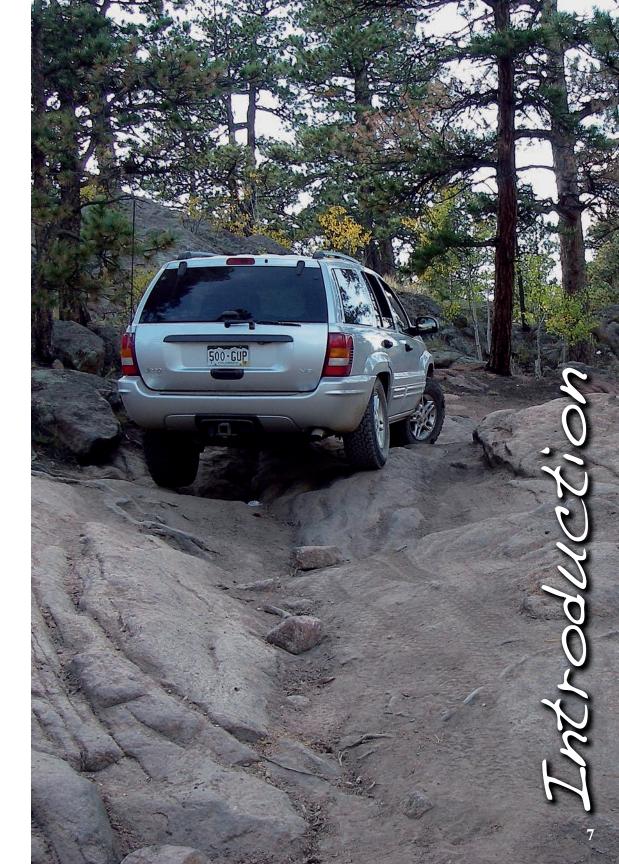
require caution. Narrow shelf roads possible. Backing may be necessary to pass. Water depths passable for stock high-clearance vehicles except during periods of heavy runoff. Mud holes may be present especially in the spring. Undercarriage may scrape occasionally depending on ground clearance. Rock-stacking may be necessary in some cases. Brush may touch vehicle. Four-wheel drive, low range, and higher ground clearance required in most cases. Standard factory skid plates and tow hooks recommended on many trails.

Difficult



Grades can be very steep with severe ground undulation and large boulders. Sideways tilt can be extreme. Sand hills very steep with soft

downslopes. Deep water crossings possible. Shelf roads extremely narrow; use caution in full-size vehicle. Passing may be difficult with backing required for long distances. Brush may scratch sides of vehicle. Body damage possible. Some trails suitable for more aggressive stock vehicles but most trails require vehicle modification. Lifts, differential lockers, aggressive articulation, and/or winches recommended in many cases. Skid plates and tow hooks required.





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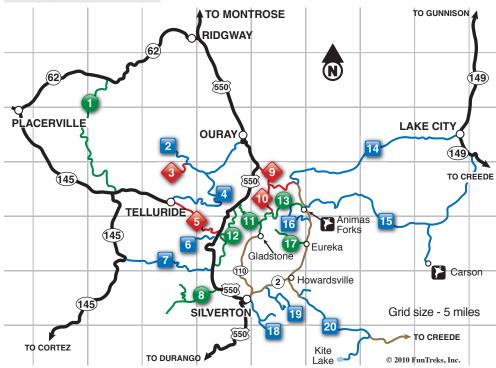
01. Last Dollar Road 02. Yankee Boy Basin 03. Governor Basin 04. Imogene Pass 05. Black Bear Pass 06. Porphyry Gulch 07. Ophir Pass, Alta Lakes 08. Clear Lake. **Bandora Mine 09. Mineral Creek** 10. Poughkeepsie Gulch 11. Corkscrew Gulch. Hurricane Pass 12. Red Mountain Mining Area 13. California Gulch 14. Engineer Pass 15. Cinnamon Pass, Wager Gulch 16. Picayune & Placer Gulches 17. Eureka Gulch 18. Kendall Mountain **19. Arrastra Gulch** 20. Stony Pass, Kite Lk. 58

^{PGI} Ouray, Silverton, Lake City, Telluride

28 Nicknamed "Switzerland of America," the San 30 Juan Mountains of southwest Colorado may be the best place in America to explore in a modern 4-wheel-32 drive SUV. Here, you are allowed to drive deep into 34 the backcountry, visit historic mine buildings, cross 36 high, rugged passes and enjoy views reserved for an adventurous few. Only a few roads require a Jeep or 38 modified vehicle, and we make this clear.

40 All of the trails in this area are open to unlicensed vehicles. However, please note that Area 1 has some 42 unique county laws. Operators must have a valid driv-44 46 er's license and carry proof of liability insurance. This means children cannot ride their own machines. 48

After you've explored the backcountry, take time to enjoy the authentic mountain towns of Ouray, 50 Silverton, Lake City and Telluride. Here you'll find unique shopping, hotels, restaurants, museums and commercial campgrounds.







AREA 1 map on page 18



Family loads up after a great weekend of camping and biking above Telluride (Waypoint 03).



Overview: This scenic ranchland and forest backroad is a great alternative to the paved drive between Ridgway and Telluride. You'll see abundant wildflowers through early summer, great fall color and stunning mountain views. Enjoy camping, hiking and mountain biking. Plan plenty of time to visit Telluride, a great summer destination. Be prepared for congestion in town during frequent special events. Information can be found at the visitor center on the west end of town.

Rating: Easy. Rutted dirt road suitable for high-clearance, 2-wheel-drive vehicles when dry. Slick clay can be

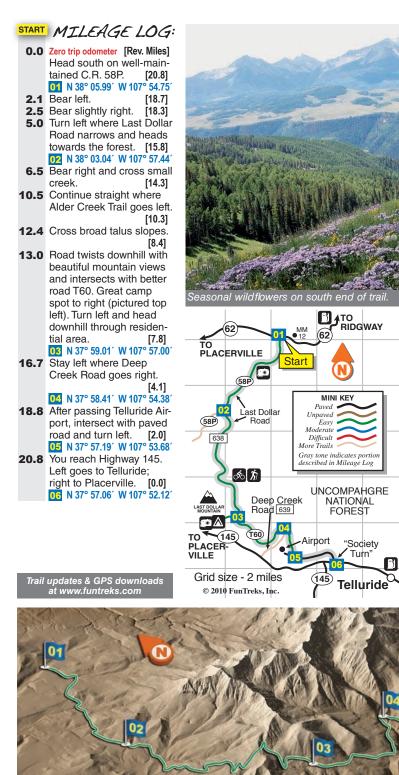
Fouth side descends gradually.

impassable when wet even for 4-wheeldrive vehicles.

Stats: Length: Almost 21 miles. Time: About 2 hours. High point: 10,600 ft. Best time of year: Mid June-Sept.

Current Conditions: Uncompany N.F., Norwood Ranger District. Call (970) 327-4261.

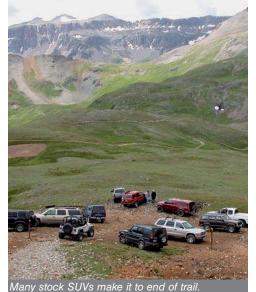
Getting There: Head west on Highway 62 from Ridgway about 12 miles. Turn left on well-marked Last Dollar Road 0.8 miles west of mile marker 12. Follow signs to airport if starting in Telluride.



orth end of trai



AREA 1 map on page 18





Narrow spot under rock overhang.

Overview: One of the most popular destinations in the Ouray area due to its stunning natural beauty, rich history and colorful wildflowers. At the height of spring color, photographers flock to the area. Popular landmarks include the Drinking Cup, Twin Falls, Atlas Mill, Camp Bird Mine and the rock overhang. Because the area is used so heavily, camping is restricted to designated areas and a fee is charged to camp.

Rating: Moderate. The lower portion of the trail is easy. Beyond the toilet, the trail gets rocky, narrow and steep, but is suitable for aggressive, high-clearance,



lildflowers below Twin Falls.

Historical Highlight: You'll pass tailings of Camp Bird Mine as you climb. In its heyday, this mine had advanced creature comforts, including hot running water, electric lights and steam heat. It was discovered in 1896 by Tom Walsh, who felt that the 400 miners who worked there should be treated to a decent lifestyle. He required only eight hours of work per day rather than the standard 12. He sold the mine in 1902 for \$5.2 million. The mine continued to operate until 1911 and made over \$26 million.

stock SUVs. A gate for the upper portion of the trail is closed until the snow melts, usually in late June or early July.

Stats: Length: 9.3 miles. Time: 3 to 5 hours. High point: 12,400 ft. Best time of year: Mid July-Sept.

Current Conditions: Uncompany N.F., Ouray R.D. Call (970) 240-5300.

Getting There: Head south from Ouray on U.S. 550. Just 0.4 miles from the Beaumont Hotel on Main Street, turn right on Camp Bird Road 361.

START MILEAGE LOG:

- 0.0 Zero trip odometer [Rev. Miles] Follow wide gravel road uphill. Be cautious of high cliffs on left. [9.3]
- N 38° 01.06' W 107° 40.48'
 Bopular photo spot called the "Drinking Cup." Look for natural spring nearby.
- [5.7] 4.6 Stay right as road becomes C.R. 26. (Camp Bird Mine is left.) [4.7]
- 5.4 Traverse narrow shelf road and pass under dramatic rock overhang.
- 5.9 Continue straight. (Imogene Pass, Trail #4, is left.) Watch for remains of Sneffels Townsite as you continue. [3.4]
- 6.8 2 N 37° 58.52' W 107° 44.71' Stay right on F.S. 853.1B. (Governor Basin, Trail #3, is to left.) Road gets steeper. Watch for Twin Falls on left. [2.5]
- N 37° 58.76′ W 107° 45.53
 Public toilet and parking to left. Driver's choice after toilet. I went right.
- [1.6] 8.3 Seasonal gate. You may proceed if open. Best and most adventurous part of trip remains. [1.0] 10 N 37° 59.34′ W 107° 46.63′

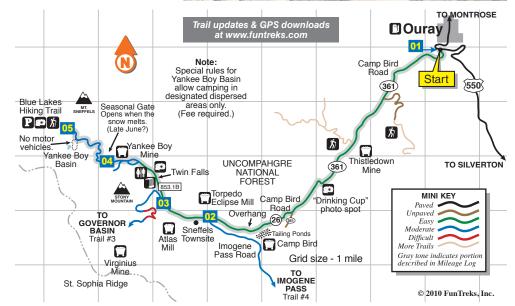
9.1 Stay right. (Road to lake on left is closed to motorized vehicles. [0.2]
9.3 Trail ends at small parking area for Blue Lakes Hiking Trail. No motorized vehicles beyond this point. [0.0]
15 N 37° 59.70' W 107° 47.08'





Reclaimed tailings of Camp Bird Mine as seen from Trail #4.







AREA 1 map on page 18





Overview: Gorgeous high-elevation scenery, incredible wildflowers and standing mine buildings. Trail accesses historic mines including the massive Virginius Mine and the Mountain Top Mine. Mines are on private land, so you may not be able to drive all the way to them. View from a distance and stay out of buildings. Popular trail for Jeep tours.

Rating: Difficult. Rocky, narrow and tippy in spots, but the main trail is suitable for high-clearance, aggressive stock SUVs. Side trails are more difficult. Experienced drivers only. Verify legality of routes using latest MVUM.



Historical Highlight: The boarding house, still tanding at the Mountain Top Mine, is a relatively recent structure compared to other mines in the area It was first constructed in 1912 to house 30 men and The mine has been worked sporadically as late as 1996 and there is still a slight chance that it could b opened in the future. It has been designated a Ouray County Landmark. (Source: Nov. 7, 2008, story in

Stats: Length: 2.8 miles one-way. Time: 2 to 3 hours. High point: 12,020 ft. Best time of year: Mid July-Sept.

Current Conditions: Uncompany National Forest, Ouray Ranger District. Call (970) 240-5300.

Getting There: Head south from Ouray on U.S. 550. Just 0.4 miles from the Beaumont Hotel, turn right on Camp Bird Road, C.R. 361. Bear right after 4.6 miles past the Camp Bird Mine on C.R. 26. The turn for Governor Basin is a total of 7.0 miles from 550.

START MILEAGE LOG:

0.0 Zero trip odometer [Rev. Miles] Bear left off Yankee Boy Basin Road, Trail #02. After crossing small bridge, stay right. [2.8]

01 N 37° 58.76′ W 107° 45.53 **0.7** Stay left and go by a

- waterfall. Climb steeply on a narrow, rocky road with several tippy spots. [2.1]
- 1.5 Stay right. Left goes to Sidney Basin. [1.3]
- 1.8 Bear right at T intersec-[1.0] tion.

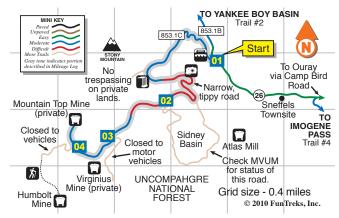
02 N 37° 58.49′ W 107° 45.93

- 2.3 Road levels out briefly. Great spot for lunch with large boulders to climb. Incredible views and seasonal wildflowers. (Closed road going steeply uphill behind boulders goes to Virginius Mine.) Main trail continues to right. [0.5] 03 N 37° 58.27' W 107° 46.34' 2.7 Bear right to reach Mountain Top Mine with large,
- standing boarding house. Left is closed to Humbolt Mine. [0.1]

04 N 37° 58.21′ W 107° 46.62′

2.8 Large flat area at Mountain Top Mine. Plenty of space to park and turn around. Private property. Do not enter buildings or remove artifacts. [0.0]















FunTreks exclusive 'Aerial Terrain" 02 View 04

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The 100 trails in this book may be the best batch ever put together in one place. Whether vou are a newcomer to 4-wheeling or an experienced veteran, you are sure to have fun. In fact, we guarantee it. (See page 2.)

The trails are grouped into seven key areas in the heart of Colorado's most beautiful high country. Most are convenient to Denver and the Front Range. (See pages 4-5 for complete Trail List and Trail Finder.)

A color format makes planning your next adventure simpler than ever. Easy, moderate and difficult routes are color coded. while symbols quickly show kinds of vehicles allowed on each trail. This includes unlicensed UTVs, ATVs and dirt bikes. (See pages 8-9.)

A separate mileage log ties numbered locations along the route to a custom map and "Aerial Terrain" view. GPS coordinates are provided for each numbered location. Included are reverse mileages for all trails and historical highlights.

All this is supported by an active Web site, which includes free trail updates, GPS downloads and an e-mail newsletter.

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Guidebooks

Adventure Responsibly

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