

**Full  
Color**

30  
Trails,  
with 32 Maps,  
190 Color Photos  
Plus GPS Waypoints

# ATV Trails Guide Colorado

**Silverton, Ouray, Lake City, Telluride**

*By Charles A. Wells & Matt Peterson*



**Easy • Moderate • Difficult**  
**ATV Riding Adventures**






Leaving Mineral Point ghost town south of Trail #17, rated moderate.

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# Trail List

UTVs: See note at bottom of page. 

No.	Trail	Page	Rating
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## TRAILS OUT OF SILVERTON:

1.	Eureka Gulch	30	Easy
2.	Picayne & Placer Gulches	34	Moderate
3.	California Gulch	38	Easy
4.	Burns Gulch	42	Moderate
5.	Maggie & Minnie Gulches*	46	Easy
6.	Stony Pass*	50	Moderate
7.	Kite Lake	54	Moderate
8.	Lost Trail Creek*†	58	Difficult
9.	Arrastra Gulch	62	Moderate
10.	Kendall Mountain	66	Moderate
11.	Prospect Gulch, Gladstone	70	Easy
12.	Clear Lake, Bandora Mine	74	Easy
13.	Ophir Pass	78	Moderate

## TRAILS OUT OF OURAY:

14.	Yankee Boy Basin*	82	Moderate
15.	Governor Basin*	86	Moderate
16.	Imogene Pass*	90	Difficult
17.	Mineral Creek (to Alpine Loop)	94	Moderate
18.	Poughkeepsie Gulch*	98	Difficult
19.	Engineer Pass (Alpine Loop)	102	Easy
20.	Schafer Gulch	106	Moderate
21.	Cinnamon Pass (Alpine Loop)	110	Easy
22.	Corkscrew Gulch, Hurricane Pass*	114	Easy
23.	Gray Copper Gulch*	118	Easy
24.	Red Mountain Pass	122	Easy
25.	Black Bear Pass, Porphyry Gulch*	126	Moderate

## TRAILS OUT OF LAKE CITY:

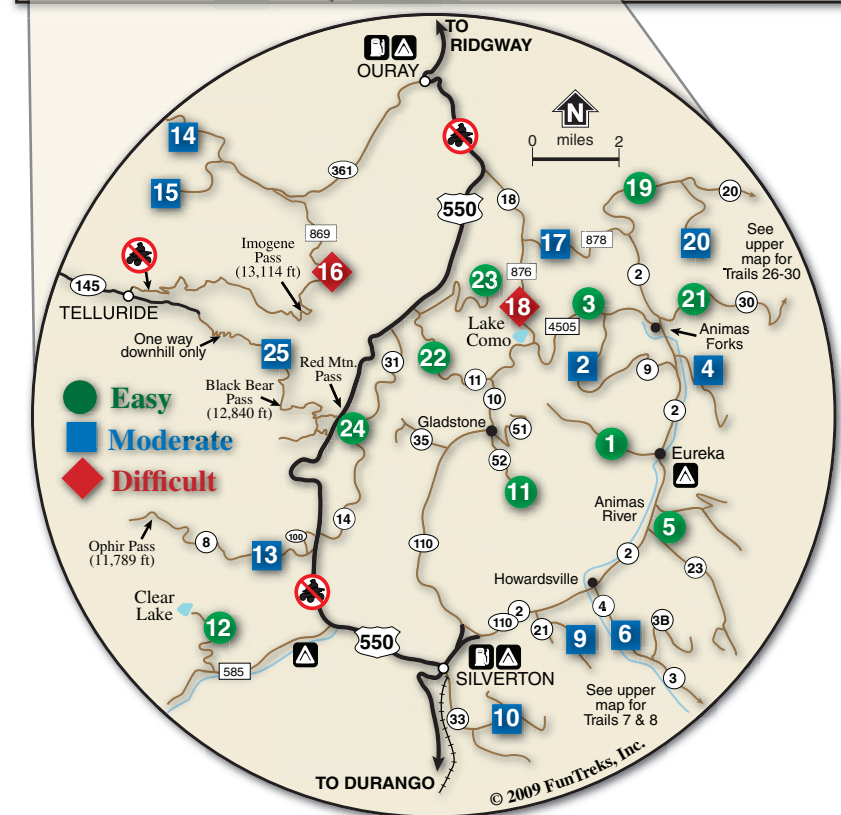
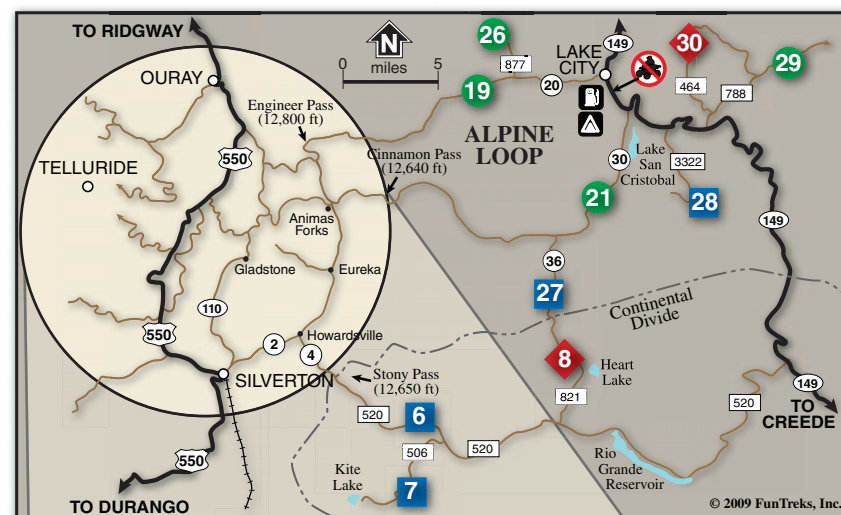
26.	Nellie Creek	130	Easy
27.	Wager Gulch, Carson	134	Moderate
28.	Hill Seventyone	138	Moderate
29.	Mill Creek Road	142	Easy
30.	Cannibal Plateau†	146	Difficult

\* Author's Favorites

† Trails #8 and #30 not recommended for 60"-wide UTVs.

*Please note: Trails are interconnected and most can be reached from any of the three towns shown above. You may find Lake City more convenient to ride the Alpine Loop (Trails #19 and #21).*

# Trail Locator Map





# Trails Listed by Difficulty

Although trails are grouped into three major categories, there are still differences in difficulty within each group. For example, Mill Creek Road is easier than Corkscrew Gulch even though both are rated easy. Trails are progressively more difficult as you pan down the list, although you may have to skip several trails to see any significant difference.

No.	Trail	Page	Rating	Highest Pt.
29.	Mill Creek Road	142	Easy	11,324 ft.
23.	Gray Copper Gulch	118	Easy	12,262 ft.
24.	Red Mountain Pass	122	Easy	12,103 ft.
1.	Eureka Gulch	30	Easy	12,390 ft.
11.	Prospect Gulch, Gladstone	70	Easy	12,340 ft.
26.	Nellie Creek	130	Easy	11,343 ft.
5.	Maggie & Minnie Gulches	46	Easy	11,870 ft.
12.	Clear Lake, Bandora Mine	74	Easy	12,078 ft.
3.	California Gulch	38	Easy	12,930 ft.
19.	Engineer Pass	102	Easy	12,800 ft.
21.	Cinnamon Pass	110	Easy	12,640 ft.
22.	Corkscrew Gulch, Hurricane Pass	114	Easy	12,407 ft.
6.	Stony Pass	50	Mod.	12,650 ft.
2.	Picayne & Placer Gulches	34	Mod.	12,960 ft.
17.	Mineral Creek	94	Mod.	12,061 ft.
28.	Hill Seventyone	138	Mod.	12,267 ft.
13.	Ophir Pass	78	Mod.	11,789 ft.
10.	Kendall Mountain	66	Mod.	12,809 ft.
25.	Black Bear Pass, Porphyry Gulch	126	Mod.	12,840 ft.
9.	Arrastra Gulch	62	Mod.	11,994 ft.
14.	Yankee Boy Basin	82	Mod.	12,404 ft.
27.	Wager Gulch, Carson	134	Mod.	12,270 ft.
15.	Governor Basin	86	Mod.	12,130 ft.
4.	Burns Gulch	42	Mod.	12,120 ft.
20.	Schafer Gulch	106	Mod.	12,611 ft.
7.	Kite Lake	54	Mod.	12,098 ft.
30.	Cannibal Plateau	146	Diff.	12,565 ft.
16.	Imogene Pass	90	Diff.	13,114 ft.
8.	Lost Trail Creek	58	Diff.	12,270 ft.
18.	Poughkeepsie Gulch	98	Diff.	12,535 ft.

# 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 ride it. If any part of a trail is difficult, the entire trail is rated difficult. You may be able to ride a significant portion of a trail before reaching the difficult spot. Read each trail description carefully for specific information. Turn around when in doubt. Always wear a helmet.

## Easy Trails

Gravel, dirt, clay, sand, or mildly rocky trail or road. Gentle grades. Water levels low except during periods of heavy runoff. Adequate room to pass. Where shelf conditions exist, trail is wide and well maintained with minor sideways tilt. Most trails are passable when wet; however, certain types of clay can become impassable under wet conditions. Smaller, two-wheel-drive ATVs are usually adequate in good weather. Easy trails are best suited for novice riders.

## Moderate Trails

Rougher and rockier surfaces require slower running speeds. Some riding experience is needed for steeper climbs and descents. Rock-stacking may be necessary to get over the worst spots. Considerable weight shifting may be necessary to offset sideways tilt. Mud can be deep and you may get stuck. Certain types of clay can become impassable when wet. Sand can be soft and steep. Water may be too deep for smaller ATVs. Larger ATVs can usually get through except during periods of heavy runoff. Aggressive tires needed for two-wheel-drive machines. Four-wheel-drive is usually best.

## Difficult Trails

Very rough and rocky surfaces require careful tire placement. Slopes may be extremely steep with scary sideways tilt. Skillful riding is necessary to avoid tipping or flipping over. Rock-stacking may be necessary in places, and the worst spots could require assistance from other people. Sand can be very soft and steep. Shelf roads can be very narrow with daunting cliffs. Water and mud can be very deep. Wet clay surfaces can be impassable. Some powerful two-wheel-drive ATVs may get through under good weather conditions, but four-wheel-drive with low-range gearing is highly recommended.



Water crossing on lower section.



Tippy spots have bypasses.



Be careful. It is easy to be distracted by the fabulous views as you climb.



Seasonal wildflowers below Virginus Mine.



Boarding house at Mountain Top Mine.

**Getting There:** Head south from Ouray on Highway 550. Just 0.4 miles from the Beaumont Hotel, turn right on Camp Bird Road following sign to Box Canyon. Continue southwest 2 miles to staging area.

**Staging/Camping:** Turn right into main staging area after bridge (see top photo Trail #14). Dispersed camping is allowed in designated fee sites only. No camping at higher elevations. Forest Service campground is located 0.7 miles past staging area. Obey all signs.

**Difficulty:** Road is easy before the turn to Governor Basin at Waypoint 03. After that, it gradually narrows and becomes steeper and rockier. In spots, it is quite tippy for Jeeps, but ATVs can find moderate lanes. Stay off side roads to mines. Not only are they closed to motorized traffic, but they are washed out and dangerous.

**Highlights:** Very historic mining area with large structure to see at the end. Great views and incredible seasonal wildflowers.

**Time & Distance:** One-way trip to Mountain Top Mine is 7.7 miles from staging area. Allow 2-3 hours for round trip. Combine with Trails #14 and #16 for a full-day adventure.

**Trail Description:** See Yankee Boy Basin, Trail #14, for description of first half of route. As you start up Governor, the road crosses a wooden bridge and zigzags uphill. Don't let views distract you as you climb; tippy spots require close attention. The trail levels off and gets easier between the Virginus and Mountain Top Mines.

**Services:** Full services in Ouray. Vault toilets and portable toilets along lower route. Nothing once you start up Governor Basin.

**Historical Highlights:** The Virginus Mine was highly profitable and managed to stay in operation after the silver crash in 1893. A fire in 1906 seriously damaged the mine, but it was repaired and continued to operate until 1909. The Revenue Mill serviced the Virginus Mine until the Revenue Tunnel was built and ore was shipped to the Tomboy Mill over Imogene Pass. The Revenue Mill was destroyed by fire 10 years after it ceased operations.

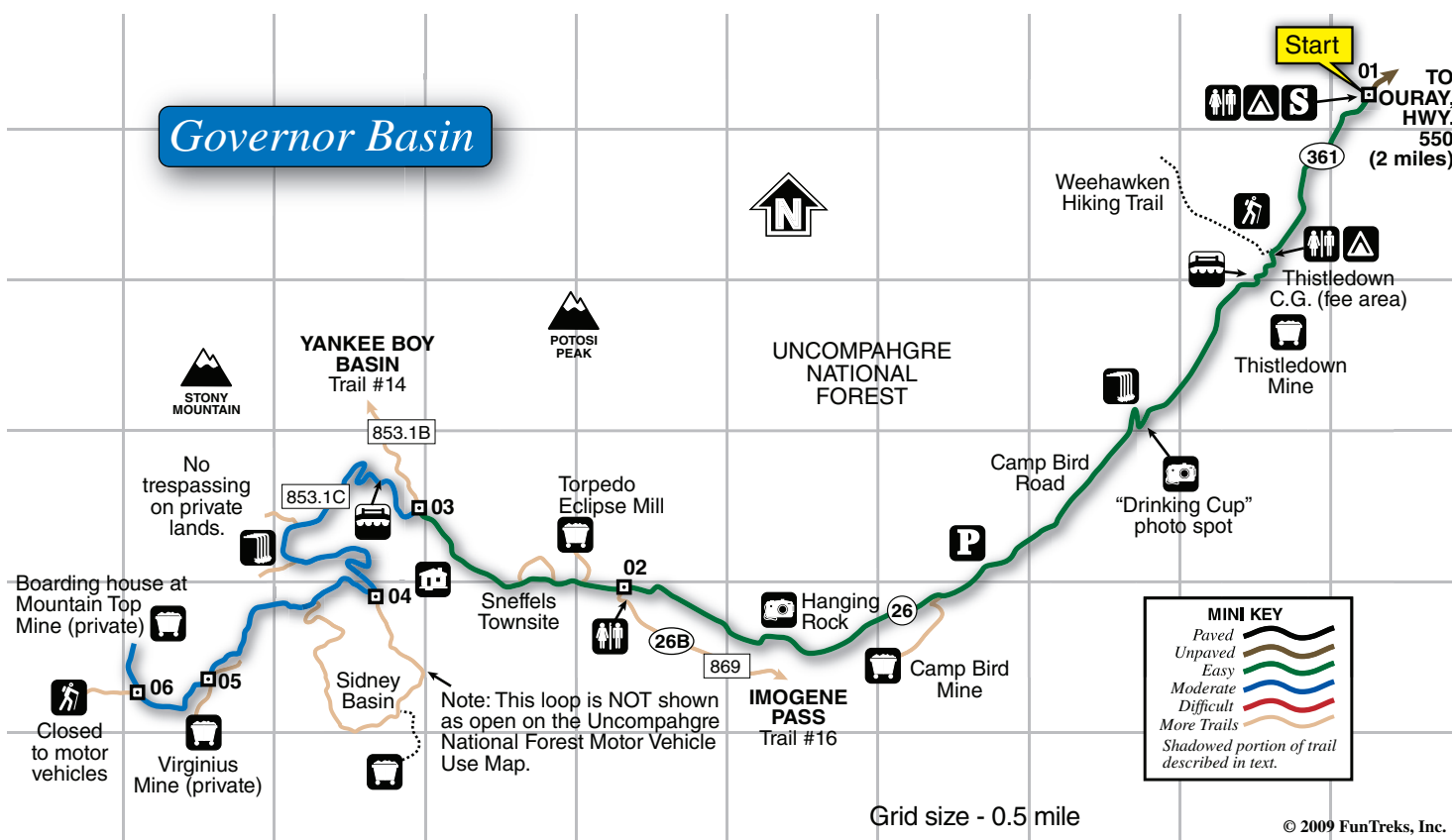
The boarding house, still standing at the Mountain Top Mine, is a more recent structure than other mines in the area. It was first constructed in 1912 to house 30 men and later expanded to three stories to accommodate 50 men. In 1922, this mine was the largest employer in Ouray County, but went bankrupt just two years later. The mine has been worked sporadically as late as 1996 and there is still a slight chance that it could be opened in the future. Do not enter the boarding house; it is private property. It is also designated a Ouray County Landmark. (Source: Nov. 7, 2008, story in *The Hub* by Don Paulson.)



**Directions:** (Shadowed portion of trail is described here.)

WP	Mile	Action
01	0.0	$N38^{\circ} 00.11' W107^{\circ} 41.66'$ From large staging area, located 2 miles southwest of Highway 550 on Camp Bird Road, unload and continue southwest.
	0.7	Continue straight. Weehawken Hiking Trail on right is across from Thistle-down F.S. Campground (fee area).
	1.6	Drinking Cup (dramatic photo spot).
	2.7	Bear right uphill. (Road to left goes to Camp Bird Mine.)
	3.4	Pass under Hanging Rock along high shelf road.
02	4.0	$N37^{\circ} 58.52' W107^{\circ} 44.72'$ Continue straight. (Left on County Road 26B goes to Imogene Pass, Trail #16.)
	4.1	Continue straight. (Lesser road to right goes to Torpedo Eclipse Mill.)
	4.3	Pass through Sneffels townsite. (Not apparent from main road.)

WP	Mile	Action
03	4.9 <i>Reset</i>	$N37^{\circ} 58.76' W107^{\circ} 45.54'$ Bear left towards Governor Basin on Forest Road 853.1C. (Right is Yankee Boy Basin.)
	0.2	Cross wooden bridge.
	0.8	Continue on main trail. Ignore lesser trails.
04	1.5	$N37^{\circ} 58.51' W107^{\circ} 45.68'$ Stay right. (Straight is ATV route that goes to Sidney Basin. This route is NOT shown as open on the Uncompahgre National Forest Motor Vehicle Use Map.)
	1.8	Continue straight. (Road on left returns from Sidney Basin.)
05	2.3	$N37^{\circ} 58.24' W107^{\circ} 46.34'$ Continue straight. (Roads to left, including one to Virginus Mine, are closed to motor vehicles.)
06	2.7	$N37^{\circ} 58.21' W107^{\circ} 46.62'$ Bear right.
	2.8	Trail ends at Mountain Top Mine.





**Ride the spectacular San Juan Mountains of southwest Colorado. Cross high passes, visit mines and explore ghost towns. Learn where to camp and unload. Precise directions, custom maps, color photos and GPS waypoints. Fun rides for all skill levels. Great trails for UTVs and dirt bikes, too.**



Great for 60"-wide UTVs. (See page 6.)



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