



# Priest Gulch & Lower Calico Trails 645/208/201

San Juan National Forest  
Dolores Public Lands Office  
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Dolores, CO 81323

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[www.fs.fed.us/r2/sanjuan](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/sanjuan)



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<b>Length:</b> Priest-7.8 mi; Lower Calico-13.2 mi;	<b>Hiking level:</b> Moderate to Difficult
<b>Starting Elevation: (P &amp; LC)</b> 8,000 ft. Trailhead located at the Priest Gulch Trailhead.	<b>Facilities:</b> No developed water sources (both trails)
<b>Ending Elevation: (P)</b> 10,900 ft: <b>(LC)</b> 10,400'	<b>Amount of use:</b> Moderate (both)
 <p><b>Use restrictions:</b> ATVs are <b>not</b> permitted on single track trails. Overnight camping at trailhead not permitted. <u>Motorized Travel Rules have changed.</u> Please contact the Dolores Public Lands Office for specific changes.</p>	USGS Map(s): Rico & Wallace Ranch, and Clyde Lake Quads (7.5')

## Trail Description:

- Access for both the Priest Gulch #645 and the Lower portion of the Calico #208 Trails is located at the Priest Gulch Trailhead, located across the highway from the Dolores River. From the town of Dolores, travel northeast for approximately 25 miles on Highway 145. The Priest Gulch trailhead is clearly marked on the north side of the highway; the turn is adjacent to a private driveway.
- For a 3.5-mile loop, take the **Priest cutoff trail #201** at mile 1.25 on the Priest Gulch Trail and mile 1.75 on the Lower Calico Trail.
- The Priest Gulch Trail climbs in elevation alongside Priest Gulch drainage, it passes thru lush meadows and a forest of spruce, fir, and aspen. Common wildlife sightings might include Mule deer, Black bear, coyote, magpies, gray jays, Clark's nutcracker, red tail hawk, and various woodpeckers, to name a few. This trail will terminate at the junction with the Calico Trail.
- The Lower Calico Trail was originally designed as a stock drive into the high country; this trail was built through the efforts of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930's. The trail begins by crossing Priest Gulch Creek via a trail bridge, and starts a fairly steep accent up a red-dirt ridge via many switchbacks. Before leveling out, it will be a steady climb for 1.4 miles through mixed ponderosa pine and aspen forest. The trail continues north past the junction with Priest Gulch Trail where it eventually meets up with the junction of West Fork Falls Creek #640 and the Upper Calico #208 trails.
- It is possible to do a 16-mile loop back to the Priest Gulch Trailhead by using the Priest Gulch and the Lower Calico Trails.

**PACK IT IN - PACK IT OUT!**

**LEAVE NO TRACE!!!**

**SHARE THE TRAILS**

