

Rifle Ranger District
0094 County Road 244
Rifle, CO 81650
(970) 625-2371 - Voice
(970) 625-2532 - Fax



United States Department of Agriculture



Mansfield Ditch #2291

Length: 9.5 miles one-way (15.3 km one-way)

Beginning Elevation: 6,720 ft. (2,048 m)

USGS Quad Maps: Rifle Falls, Deep Creek Point

Difficulty: Moderate

Ending Elevation: 8,800 ft. (2,682 m)

Use: Moderate

ACCESS: From New Castle travel north on County Road 245 (the Buford-New Castle Road), starting from the northwest edge of town. Proceed approximately 9 miles to the lower trailhead, located just south of the White River National Forest boundary. The trailhead will be on the right.

To access the upper trailhead, continue on the Buford-New Castle road for an additional 8 miles (past the West Elk Trailhead parking lot), to the intersection with Forest Road 820. Turn right on Forest Road 820 and drive 0.25 miles to the upper trailhead.

TRAIL OVERVIEW: The Mansfield Ditch Trail is accessible from Forest Road 820 and Forest Road 245. The trail is characterized by gentle grades, smooth and wide tread, and expansive views of the surrounding landscape. Beginning from the upper trailhead on Forest Road 820, the trail makes a short initial descent to an intersection with the Last Chance Trail. From there, the Mansfield Ditch trail turns south and follows the contour of the ridge for the next 4.5 miles. Along the way, the trail winds through stands of evergreen trees and offers outstanding views of Deep Creek Canyon.

At 4.9 miles from the top, visitors will arrive at an intersection with a 0.5 mile connector trail to Cherry Creek. From this intersection, the Mansfield Ditch trail makes a steep descent into Calhoun Basin before leveling off for another 3 miles. This section of the trail passes through pinyon-juniper and scrub oak vegetation, with additional outstanding views of Deep Creek Point, Hadley Gulch, and the Clinetop Mesa. At 8 miles from the top, the trail reaches a bench and an intersection with the Main Elk Trail. The trail gradually descends to Forest Road 245 over the final 1.5 miles.

TRAIL OPEN TO THE FOLLOWING USES: Bicycling, hiking and horseback riding

ETHICS/REGULATIONS:

- Please be respectful of other trail users
- Please refrain from littering: Pack It In & Pack It Out!

This information is intended for use as guidance only. We strongly suggest purchasing a topographic trail map prior to beginning any trip on the National Forest.

Remember to check current conditions and "Know Before You Go"