Ruta Escénica Pico del Toro
EL TORO PEAK SCENIC BYWAY

Welcome to the Rio Espíritu Santo Watershed area, also known as El Verde.
At the center of El Yunque Silviculture, Preservation and Research

Rich in Scientific History
El Yunque is one of the most studied forests in the world and the El Verde area is the home of hundreds of scientific studies in a wide range of fields. Some of the research plots here are the oldest in the hemisphere dating back to the 1940s with continuous growth records on over 50,000 trees. Much of what we know today about tropical forests comes from research done here in El Verde. It continues to be a leader in scientific research and is the current home to El Yunque’s first Citizen Science vegetation monitoring program.

Ridge to Reef: The Rio Espíritu Santo Watershed
Trace the meanderings of the Espíritu Santo (Holy Spirit) River and observe its watershed as you drive along Road 186. Everything you see is linked through this common water source; shaping the landscape and communities of El Yunque and Puerto Rico by supporting matchless habitats and sustaining life from the ridge-top cloud forests to the colorful coral reefs found as it drains into the Atlantic at the Espíritu Santo River Natural Reserve. Even San Juan is connected - receiving 25% of its water from this El Yunque watershed!

El Toro Wilderness and Trail
Explore this natural and wild place by hiking the historic trail built by the CCC in the 1930’s. Containing four major forest types: Tabonuco, Palo Colorado, Sierra Palm, and Cloud Forest; it provides habitat for the endangered Elfin Woods Warbler, Puerto Rican Boa, Desmarest’s fig eating bat, five species of Coqui frogs, and the Puerto Rican Parrot. El Toro offers solitude, serenity, and an opportunity for challenge and adventure. After an approximately three hour hike you will be one of the few who has reached the highest peak in the Luquillo Mountains: El Toro Peak.

Tips: Wear long pants and good shoes; Bring water and snacks; Limited cell phone service; No trash cans.
Distance: 2.3 miles (3.8 km)
Elevation: 2132 - 3533 feet (650 - 1074 meters)
Time: 3 hours one-way
Difficulty: Difficult

What is “Wilderness”?
This area was designated a National Wilderness Area in 2005 and is the only tropical wilderness in the U.S. National Forest System. It ensures clean air, water, and habitat critical for rare and endangered plants and animals, leaving it in its most primitive state. Please follow stated guidelines and use Outdoor Ethics when visiting El Toro Wilderness to ensure protection of this unique area.