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United States Department of Agriculture



BIKING

VAIL PASS BIKE PATH

Length: 8.7 miles (one way)

Difficulty: Easy (paved)

Beginning Elevation: 8,772 feet

Elevation Gain: +1917 feet -86 feet = +1831 feet

Trail Use: Moderate to Heavy

Open To: Hiking, Biking

Ending Elevation: 10,603 feet

USGS Map(s): Vail East

Access from Vail: Travel east on I-70 to exit 180 for East Vail. Turn right and travel 2.3 miles east on the south frontage road, passing under the interstate and past the Gore Creek Campground. Park just beyond at the road closure gate.

Attractions/Considerations: The first 3.5 miles of this path was the route that old Highway 6 took over Vail Pass before I-70 was built. But even before that, this route was used by nomad Ute Indians. Today, it is part of a popular paved trail that leads from East Vail to Vail Pass and back down to Copper Mountain. This portion of the path is managed by CDOT (Colorado Department of Transportation) and is usually cleared and opened by late April or early May. Though still discontinuous at this date (4/05), by following pieces of the Gore Valley Trail and frontage roads, the trail can also be started as far west as Edwards. One good stretch that is complete is from Dowd Junction near the Ranger Station to Vail. This stretch is easy and is approximately 4.5 miles one-way.

Trail Highlights: The first 3.5 miles of this path is on old Highway 6. At 3.5 miles, turn right at an intersection to follow the recreation path to Vail Pass. If you continue straight, the old highway ends after an additional 1/4 mile. There are bathrooms and water at Vail Pass. From here, turn around and coast downhill back to East Vail. Or, for the ambitious, ride down to Copper Mountain before turning around.

ETHICS/REGULATIONS: Mountain biking provides the opportunity to “get away from it all.” Careless operation of your bike can cause damage and may result in closing of areas to mountain bike enthusiasts. Respect the environment and other trail users. By using common sense and common courtesy, what is available today will be here to enjoy tomorrow:

- * **Always stay on designated roads and trails;** off-trail riding is not permitted on the White River National Forest.
- * Obtain a map of the area you wish to explore and determine which areas are open for use.
- * Avoid trails that are obviously wet and muddy to avoid trail damage.
- * When descending, apply enough brake to maintain control, but avoid locking your bike's wheels, which can start a rut, leading to erosion.
- * Cross streams at fording points only.
- * Wilderness areas are managed to maintain their primitive character and to provide opportunities for solitude. These designated areas are solely for non-mechanized travel—access is restricted to foot and horseback only. Sorry, no OHVs or bicycles.
- * For tips on techniques and responsible recreation, visit www.treadlightly.org.

This map is intended for use as a general guide only, not for actual land navigation. The White River National Forest strongly suggests purchasing a topographic map and compass prior to your trip.

