

## Hiking

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest Service  
White River National Forest  
Sopris Ranger District

Date-1999  
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### MOUNT SOPRIS TRAIL, #1958 IN MAROON BELLS/SNOWMASS WILDERNESS

Length: 7.0/11.2 mi/km  
Elevation Gain: 4,253 ft.  
Beginning Elev: 8,700 ft.  
USGS Map(s): Sopris

Difficulty: more difficult  
Use: heavy  
End Elev: 12,953 ft.

Trailhead starts at LAT/LONG: 39.18.24.8N/107.07.47.0W  
UTM: 0316818E, 4352679N

**ACCESS:** From Carbondale travel south on Hwy 133 for 1.4 miles to the Prince Creek Road and take the left turn. Follow the road for 6 miles to a fork. Take the right fork and drive 2 miles to the trailhead of Thomas Lakes. The first three miles of this trail are easy.

**NARRATIVE:** If you plan to climb Sopris, allow 2 days. The first day, hike to the lakes, set up camp in a designated site and explore, fish, or just enjoy the scenery. On the second day, get up early and begin climbing in order to finish the hike before the afternoon thunder storms. The easiest route is up the east ridge. From the upper lake, walk to the base of the steep slope to the southeast part of the lake. Ascend this slope on the new hiking trail to the ridge and continue up across the high, sparsely timbered slope to the southern ridge. Follow this ridge up the mountain. You will come upon one stretch of fairly steep, loose rock, but should have no problem if you use care. Soon you will be on the main ridge to the summit. Enjoy the view. You may want to cross the 1/2 mile saddle to West Sopris Peak, which is the same elevation as the East Peak. Both peaks offer a superb view of the Crystal River Valley and Avalanche Creek. Keep in mind if you plan to do the entire trip in two days you will hike back to your car the same day you climb the mountain. This trail is in the wilderness, so keep dogs on leashes at all times. Impassable by horseback.

**ETHICS/REGULATIONS:** Wilderness areas are in a delicate state of natural balance, they are not a renewable resource. Any careless act can upset this natural balance and result in destruction. By following these ethics and regulations you can help protect and preserve the natural features of the Wilderness for future visits. **Please respect the land and rights of others!**

- Out of consideration for others and wildlife - **DOGS MUST BE ON A LEASH.**
- Trash - **PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT!**
- Limit group sizes to 10 people and 15 stock/pack animals.
- **Sanitation** - Bury human waste 100 feet from water and 6 - 8 inches in the soil.
- Lightweight campstoves are recommended and required above the timberline.
- Camp 100 feet from water and trails, and use existing sites when possible.
- Do not wash or bathe in lakes or streams. Use biodegradable soap far from water source.
- Stay on trail and do not shortcut switchbacks, which cause erosion.