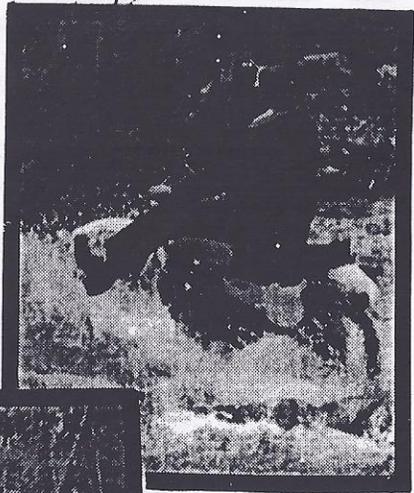


*LaSal*

*Mountain*



*Trail Guide*



MANTI-LASAL NATIONAL FOREST  
MOAB RANGER DISTRICT

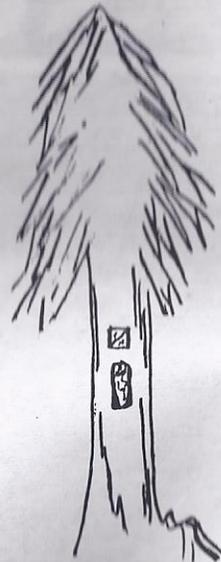
HIKING TRAILS

There are about 18 developed hiking trails on the LaSal Mountains. Many of the trails get little use, but still exist due to the good construction of the trails by the Forest Service, CCC's, and early day miners who were residents of the LaSals 100 years ago. Many of the trails interconnect, as they were the "highways" of yesteryear when access was by foot or horseback.

The Trans-Mountain Trail is one such trail that crosses the entire western side of the mountains, beginning at the end of the oil road in Castleton, and ending at South Mountain. The sections that comprise this trail are: Castleton-Bachelor Basin (includes Bachelor Basin-Miners Basin), Miners Basin-Warner Lake, Warner Lake-Oowah Lake, Oowah Lake-Boren Mesa, Brumley Creek-Squaw Springs, and the South Mountain Trail. Hikers and riders can travel these sections separately.

Because some of the trails get little use, paths are dim and travelers need to be alert for rock cairns and Forest Service trail blazes in these areas. The trails offer a huge diversity of vegetation types and elevation differences which make the LaSal Mountains an interesting place to hike. For more information about trail conditions, contact the U.S. Forest Service, District Ranger's Office at 125 West 200 South, Moab Utah, 84532.

WRITTEN BY SENA TAYLOR  
IN COOPERATION WITH THE  
MANTI-LASAL NATIONAL FOREST,  
MOAB RANGER DISTRICT,  
MOAB, UTAH, 1985



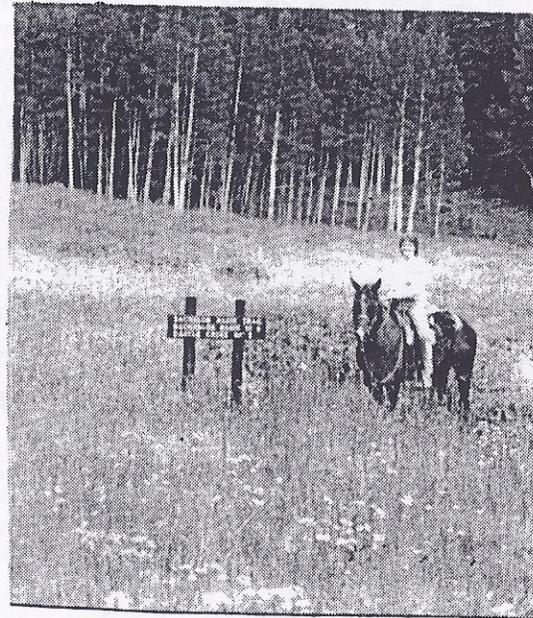
Rock Cairn Trail Marker and Forest Service Trail Blaze

CASTLETON-BACHELOR BASIN TRAIL

The length of this trail is six miles. It begins at the gate at the end of the oil road in Castleton and crosses Castle Creek later ascending slopes up to 20 percent. The path follows first through oakbrush country, which later changes to stands of quaking aspen and conifers. The trail junctions with an old jeep road in upper Willow Basin then, after a short distance, the road ends and the trail continues up the canyon and eventually switchbacks up a mountainside covered with dark timber.

The route travels through open meadows and timber stands as it heads up the canyon, later passing through Bachelor Basin at 10,000 feet in elevation. Leaving the basin, the trail follows an old road, switchbacking and breaking sharply up to the pass between Bachelor and Miners Basins. The trail then descends into Miners Basin, dropping into some spruce-fir trees on a 14 percent switchback. The route then follows into the basin, passing through steep grassy hillsides and quaking aspen on a 20 percent slope.

From the edge of the quakies, the trail travels through a grassy open meadow and ends in Miners Basin near some old mining cabins at 9,300 feet in elevation. The trail is well defined but may be difficult to locate in the Miners Basin meadow. It is 6 1/4 miles long. This is one segment of the Trans-Mountain Trail.



Miners Basin

## MINERS BASIN-WARNER LAKE TRAIL

The length of this trail is two miles. It begins in Miners Basin at 9,300 feet in elevation and follows a reclaimed road until the route breaks away from the old road, heading in a western direction and switchbacking at the edge of a meadow. The trail is well defined as it passes through dense timber on a steep 30 percent grade until it reaches the pass.

From here, the trail descends through grassy hillsides and timbered slopes. About halfway between the pass and Warner Campground the trail passes Schuman Gulch—an old mining community. Miners lived here close to 100 years ago, as can be seen by the remains of the old cabins. Also, at this point, a small stream called Schafer Creek begins flowing down the canyon.

After leaving the Schuman Gulch meadow, the trail crosses the stream and descends sharply on a 25 percent slope through dark timber until it reaches a walk-through gate. The route then follows a maintenance road for a short distance until the trail breaks away from it in a southern direction, leading to Warner Campground. This trail is steep, but is a good short hike and can be used by both hikers and riders. This is one segment of the Trans-Mountain Trail.



Old cabins at Schuman Gulch



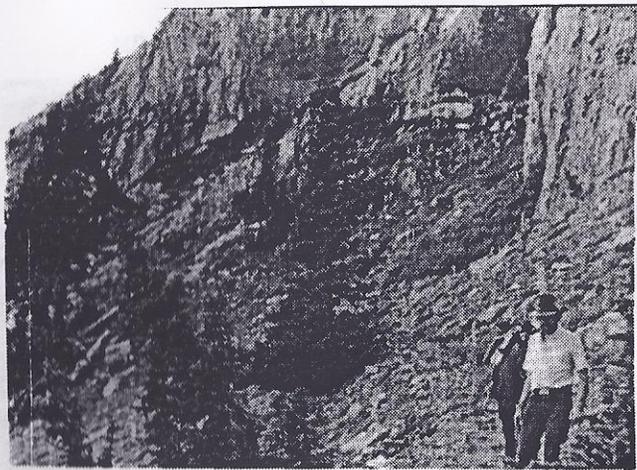
Trailhead at Warner Lake

## WARNER LAKE-OOWAH LAKE TRAIL

The length of this trail is two miles. It begins at Warner Lake at 9,200 feet in elevation and ends at Oowah Lake at approximately 8,800 feet in elevation. The trail crosses a meadow and follows along the dam of the lake, passing a walk-through gate and coming to the junction with the Burro Pass and Dry Fork trails on an old road. The Oowah Trail does not follow the Burro Pass or Dry Fork trails which head easterly, but instead takes a turn to the right, following the road that heads down hill.

The trail follows the road for about an eighth of a mile, and then turns southerly. Within a few hundred feet it crosses a small stream and again crosses a dirt road. After crossing the road, the path enters an oakbrush area and descends a 15 percent slope. A few small springs cross the trail as it descends down into the Mill Creek drainage.

The trail is moderately steep as it follows a dense cover of scrub oak on the south slope. After the trail reaches the Oowah Lake road, it follows up the road for one-quarter of a mile until it reaches Oowah Lake. This trail is one of the most used on the LaSal Mountains and is in very good condition. It is an excellent short hike for beginning hikers. The route is well marked and defined. This is one segment of the Trans-Mountain Trail.



Dry Fork-Beaver Basin Trail

#### BOREN MESA TRAIL

This trail begins at Owah Lake and is about 3 1/2 miles long. It follows across the dam of Owah Lake and climbs the south hillside on a 20 percent grade. The path crosses a Forest fence before it levels out in the aspens of Boren Mesa.

Travelers should be careful to follow the trail that contours the edge of the aspens and the meadow in a southern direction, following trail signs and blazes. Soon a directional sign points in a western direction and travelers should leave the edge of the trees and cross the open ridge top. The trail is difficult to find here, but it basically heads towards the northern most small clump of quakies where the trail blazes and signs begin again.

Having passed by this clump of trees, travelers should look for a large rock cairn which marks the point where the trail descends into Horse Creek. The trail drops to the creek on a 30 percent slope on an oakbrush hillside, switchbacks toward the bottom, and reaches the drainage. The trail then crosses Horse Creek and ascends the opposite hillside on a 10 percent grade heading south.

The route continues to the Geyser Pass Road on Brumley Ridge about three miles above the LaSal Mountain Loop Road. The trail ends at the road, having left Owah Lake at the 8,800 foot elevation, and reaches the Geyser Pass Road at the 9,000 foot level. The trail follows through varied vegetation types with aspen, spruce, fir and snowberry on north slopes, and oakbrush on ridge tops and southern faces. This is a segment of the Trans-Mountain Trail.

#### BRUMLEY CREEK-SQUAW SPRINGS TRAIL

The length of this section of the Trans-Mountain Trail is four miles, and it begins on the Geyser Pass Road across from the Boren Mesa Trail segment. It heads in a southerly direction at a 9,000 foot elevation and runs along the cross drainages of Brumley Creek and Dorry Canyon, reaching the Pack Creek-LaSal Pass Road at an elevation of 9,400 feet.

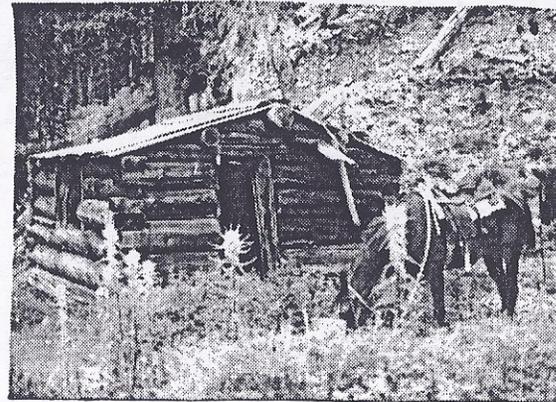
The trail descends into Brumley Creek on a 17 percent slope. After crossing Brumley Creek, a 23 percent slope carries the trail up the south hillside of Brumley Creek, and the path tops out on a ridge.

After this, the trail descends a draw on a 12 percent slope and leaves the draw on a 25 percent slope. Travelers should be careful to follow the trail blazes and signs, as they may become confused where cattle have created trails through the aspen stands.

The route passes through a snowberry park before it descends into Dorry Canyon on a 14 percent slope, where the trail becomes muddy for a short distance. The trail then crosses a meadow before it tops out on the ridge above the south side of Dorry Canyon.

After this, the path crosses and descends an oakbrush hillside on an 18 percent slope and makes a sharp bend as it goes down a draw. Soon after, the trail ties into an old road along a fence near Squaw Spring and an old cabin. The trail follows the road southerly to the LaSal Pass Road. At this point, this section of the Trans-Mountain Trail ends.

Vegetation along the trail is various, consisting of oakbrush on southern well-exposed slopes, with aspen and snowberry in the drainages and on the northern-faced slopes.



Old Mining Cabins

The length of this section of the Trans-Mountain Trail is five miles. It is one of the most scenic trails on the mountain, as the route passes through a variety of terrain and offers many different views as it travels around the southern most peak of the LaSals.

It begins on the LaSal Pass Road about 1/4 mile up from the Brumley Creek-Squaw Springs Trail. At this point, it descends an oakbrush hillside to the south on an 18 percent slope. The path crosses an old pole fence and passes a water trough before it crosses an old mining road.

The trail continues, passing another water trough, after which it junctions with the Hell's Canyon Trail near a cabin. The route makes a sharp left turn, and soon thereafter, the trail turns sharply to the south. At this point, travelers should be wary to stay on the trail instead of going to Bear Park. Two small natural ponds and a meadow are passes before the trail turns east and heads up a bare ridge on a 25 percent slope where it tops out. This general area is referred to as Moore's Range.

Soon the trail drops down to the south and passes a meadow and small spring. A short distance later, the trail crosses Pack Creek and enters a dense area of timber. The trail continues to follow through dark timber, fir and spruce, with periodic patches of aspen and slide rock as it winds its way around the north side of South Mountain.

A rocky avalanche chute is crossed before the trail enters dark timber on a 15 percent grade where it soon junctions with the Pack Creek Trail. The path continues to be rocky, crossing a small rockslide and another avalanche chute on a 20 percent slope.

The hillside becomes steeper, so the trail switchbacks at a rockslide and continues to do so until it reaches the top of a ridge where an old sign marks the trail. At this point, the trail has broken into Carpenter Basin where it follows through aspen trees and brush patches until it drops down a grade of 12 percent into the upper part of Lackey Basin.

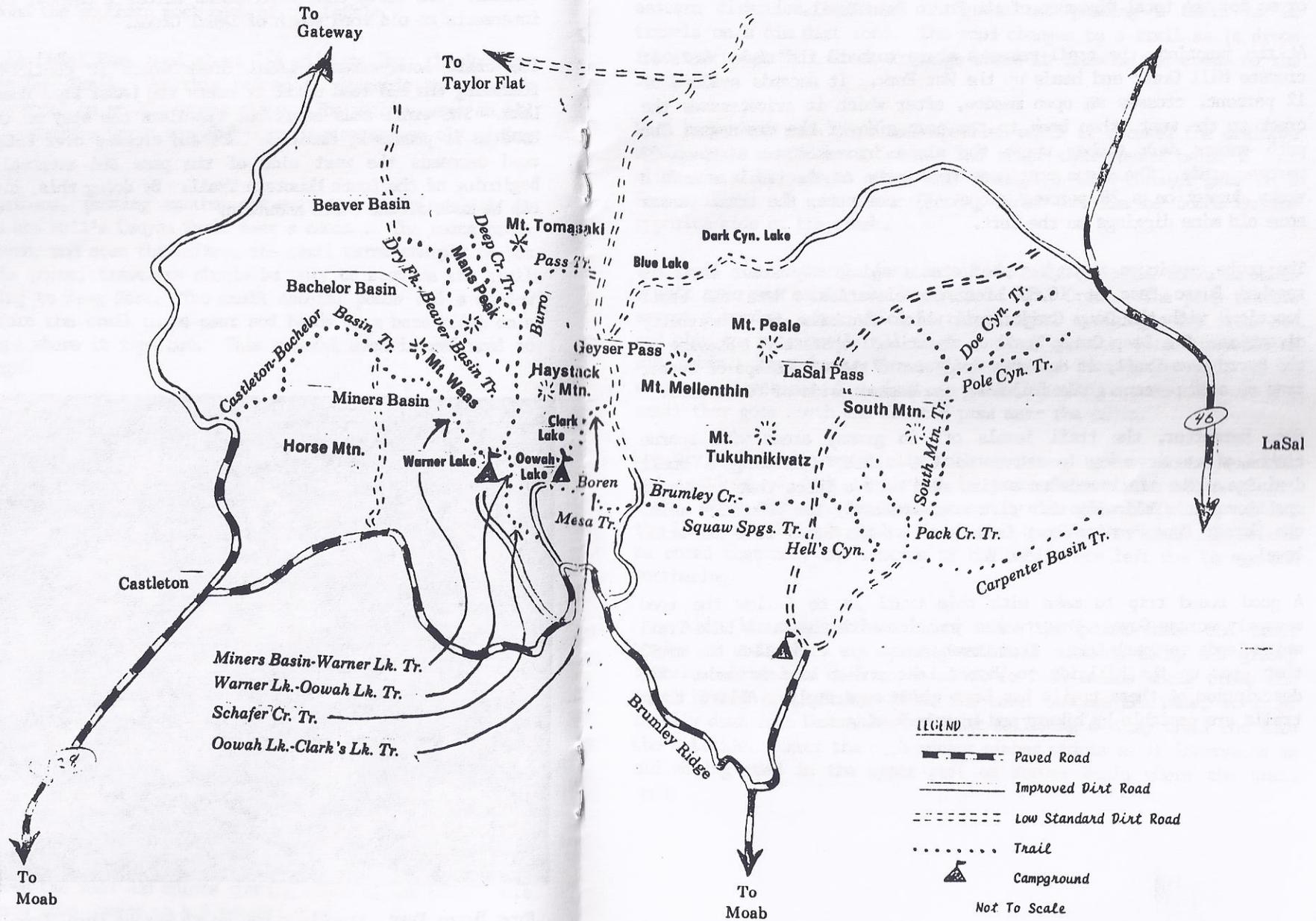
In Lackey Basin, the trail contours around a rocky drainage until it hits an old mining road which it follows for a short distance. The route soon leaves the road and enters quaking aspen to the left. Here it climbs towards Pole Canyon on a 3 percent grade.

The path soon comes to a junction with the Pole Canyon Trail where it is marked with a sign. The pass is then reached between Pole Canyon and LaSal Creek where the trail enters dark timber and descends into quakies. The route then switchbacks across a meadow, after which it intersects an old road south of LaSal Creek.

The trail soon crosses LaSal Creek where it continues northerly, following the old road until it meets the LaSal Pass Road near Beaver Lake. The trail ends here, but travelers can stay on the LaSal Pass Road as it passes by Medicine Lake and crosses over LaSal Pass. The road descends the west side of the pass and eventually meets the beginning of the South Mountain Trail. By doing this, a complete loop can be made around South Mountain.



From Burro Pass, travelers can go to Warner Lake, Deep Cr. or Geyser Pass



The length of this trail is four miles from the junction of the Wet and Dry Fork Trails of Mill Creek. A description of how to get to this junction is given for the Dry Fork-Beaver Basin Trail. From Warner Lake to the junction, travelers should allow for another mile or so for the total distance of the Burro Pass Trail.

At the junction, the trail makes a sharp turn to the right where it crosses Mill Creek and heads up the Wet Fork. It ascends a slope of 12 percent, crosses an open meadow, after which it crisscrosses the creek to the west, then back to the east side of the drainage. The path enters dark timber where the slope increases to a steep 22 percent grade. The slope continues to steepen as the trail ascends a rocky dugway on a 28 percent slope. On the path, the trail passes some old mine diggings on the left.

The route continues through timber stands and grassy areas until it reaches Burro Pass at 10,800 feet in elevation. Here the trail junctions with the Deep Creek Trail which continues in a northerly direction. The Deep Creek Trail is described separately. Staying on the Burro Pass Trail, it descends down toward the east slope of Geysers Pass on a 20 percent grade following the eastern side of Burro Pass.

Soon hereafter, the trail levels off in grassy areas with sparse timber where it makes a curve to the south, following a small drainage. The trail ends on a dirt road near a fence that crosses a small canyon. Following this dirt road southerly for about 3/4 mile, the Geysers Pass-Paradox Road is reached at the 9,800 foot elevation level.

A good round trip to make with this trail is to follow the road westerly across Geysers Pass to the junction with the Clark Lake Trail which leads to Oowah Lake. From Oowah, travelers can follow the trail that goes up the hillside to Warner Lake and a loop is made. The description of these trails has been given separately. All of these trails are passable by hikers and horseback riders.

Beginning at 9,200 feet in elevation, the trail from Warner Lake through Dry Fork to Beaver Basin is five miles long. It follows across the Warner Lake dam then proceeds through aspen stands in an eastern direction, crossing two gates and passing a cabin as it travels on a dim dirt road. The road changes to a trail as it drops into the upper Mill Creek drainage where it crosses the creek to the south side.

From here, the path continues upstream until it crosses the drainage again, back to the north side. The trail then passes below a rock slide on a 15 percent slope and through a walk-through gate on a Forest fence. A gate accommodating rider use can be found on the opposite side of the creek.

The trail soon meets the junction of Wet and Dry Forks, where it makes a left turn and enters the Dry Fork of Mill Creek. The path travels across a meadow, after which it turns right, crossing a dry creek bed and climbing up a small hill to an area of quakies which surrounds an old cabin. From here, the trail continues behind the cabin in an easterly direction. Travelers should be careful not to take the dim trail that goes south and doesn't pass near the cabin.

The Dry Fork Trail essentially follows through grassy areas, quakies, and sections of dark timber as it proceeds into the basin of Dry Fork. Along the way, the trail passes by two other old mining cabins, the last cabin being a rather large building for its time. It should be noted that only the remains of the cabins are left due to age and weathering.

Near this location, a rock cairn marks the point where the trail begins to switchback up a steep mountain side on rocky and grassy terrain. Travelers need to be alert to rock cairns where trees and trail blazed are sparse. After the trail reaches the pass, it drops quickly down into Beaver Basin, first following a rocky trail cut into the hillside. Later the path enters timber stands as it intersects an old mining road in the upper part of Beaver Basin where the trail ends.

This trail begins at the junction of the Warner-Oowah segment of the Trans-Mountain Trail near Warner Lake. Instead of following to Oowah Lake the trail heads in a western direction, entering an aspen forest. It is about two miles long and is good for hiking and horseback riding.

After following through quaking aspen, it travels around the south side of Warner Campground, below the hill where the campground is located. The trail meets a dirt road and follows it in a northerly direction for a short distance until meeting a fence where the trail breaks off to follow the fenceline in a westerly direction. The trail crosses the fence and turns south where it continues through quaking aspen until it crosses a snowberry park and back into the aspen trees.

The trail descends into Schaffer Creek where it switchbacks down a short but steep slope. From here, the trail essentially follows the drainage bottom until it meets Mill Creek and the Oowah Lake Road. Schaffer Creek is crossed once before the trail descends about a 20 percent slope into Mill Creek. The trail meets a ditch before coming to Mill Creek, after which it ascends a hillside on a 24 percent grade and reaches the Oowah Lake Road.

From this point, the Oowah Lake Road can be followed 1 1/2 miles down to the LaSal Mountain Loop Road. This trail is a good hike and not too difficult, especially if it is traveled downhill from Warner Lake to Mill Creek.



A Forest Service trail blaze marks an aspen tree on the Schaffer Creek Trail

This trail is three miles long and goes from 8,800 feet to 10,000 feet in elevation. It begins on the northeast side of Oowah Lake and continues directly uphill to the east, passing through a walk-through gate which also accommodates livestock use.

The trail follows along a ridge, at first passing through forests of spruce and fir, then topping out on Island Mesa where there are grassy areas interspersed with quaking aspen. The path crosses a meadow on a 3 percent slope, and later crosses a small creek. Before the trail drops down to Clark's Lake, it forks, and the upper trail continues on to the Geyser Pass Road. The lower trail gradually drops down to Clark's Lake which is 1 1/2 miles from Oowah Lake.

The upper trail continues on, crossing a fence once more, and follows along a fairly level grade near the Mill Creek drainage. It passes through stands of aspen and fir. The trail also crosses the creek several more times, as well as passing by another small lake.

Before reaching the site of an old cabin near the Geyser Pass Road, the trail crosses the creek to the south and switchbacks up a steep hillside covered with stands of spruce and fir trees. Travelers should make sure to go in a southern direction here because cow trails may mislead them into the grassy meadows in an easterly direction.

From atop the hill which is climbed, the site of the cabin can be seen. An old road at this location leads to the Geyser Pass Road that is about a quarter of a mile from where the trail ends.

This trail is in fairly good condition, and although the steep hillside near Clark's Lake has undergone some slippage, the trail has been maintained and receives a fair amount of traffic. This path is an excellent hike and is especially enjoyable and easy if one is hiking downhill from the Geyser Pass Road to Oowah Lake.

#### PACK CREEK TRAIL

The Pack Creek Trail is about four miles long and begins at the junction with the Pack Creek Road at 6,800 feet in elevation. Eventually, the trail leaves the road, after which it crosses a rocky ledge on a cliff face above the drainage and continues up the south side of Pack Creek.

The trail climbs a steep hill on a 30 percent grade, and later crosses the foot of a large rock slide. The path then crosses a snow avalanche area after which it enters a small meadow where an old mining cabin is located.

The trail forks at this point. The right fork heads up through the avalanche slide area, then switchbacks to a junction with the South Mountain Trail. The left fork continues up the south side of Pack Creek where the trail junctions with a different section of the South Mountain Trail. The South Mountain Trail is described separately.

#### HELL'S CANYON TRAIL

This trail begins at the junction with the Pack Creek Trail, which is described separately. It is about three miles long and begins by following up an old road for about 1,500 feet to the mouth of Hell's Canyon. Here the trail leaves the road and climbs a ridge on a 25 percent slope, switchbacking through pinyon trees.

The trail leaves the pinyon and enters oakbrush vegetation before it tops out on a ridge and later enters quaking aspen trees. The path crosses a meadow and travelers should be careful to stay on the trail through this meadow, before again entering the aspen and ascending a 20 percent slope.

The trail continues through quaking aspen and dry meadows past a cabin where it junctions with the South Mountain Trail. This is the end of the Hell's Canyon Trail. The South Mountain Trail is described separately.

#### DOE CANYON TRAIL

The length of this trail is two miles, and it begins where the Deer Springs Road crosses Doe Canyon. It passes through an old quakie stand with many dead trees, then it crosses below a rockslide. Here the path enters dark timber on a 20 percent slope.

#### DOE CANYON TRAIL (CONTINUED)

The trail later enters another quakie stand where the slope reduces to 10 percent. Soon hereafter the trail tops out on a ridge near a let-down range fence where the path crosses through a gate that is adequate for both hikers and livestock use. After this, the trail drops over the ridge into Pole Canyon on a 30 percent slope, and later junctions with the Pole Canyon Trail, which is described separately. The Doe Canyon Trail is almost two miles long.

#### CARPENIER BASIN TRAIL

This trail, four miles in length, begins at a junction with the Pack Creek Trail and is a jeep road at this location. The road reaches the top of the Amasa's Back ridge and after making a turn to the left, the road ends and becomes a trail.

The path climbs to the top of the next ridgeline then descends into Pole Canyon on a 25 percent slope. Soon hereafter, the trail ascends the south side of the ridge on a 15 percent grade until it reaches the ridgetop.

At this point, the trail begins to intersect a long series of oakbrush draws until it starts into pinyon and juniper vegetation. The route eventually becomes the Carpenter Basin jeep road where the trail ends.

This trail is of historical significance, as it was once part of the old mail route between Eastern Utah and Western Colorado. It was constructed in the 1870's.

#### POLE CANYON TRAIL

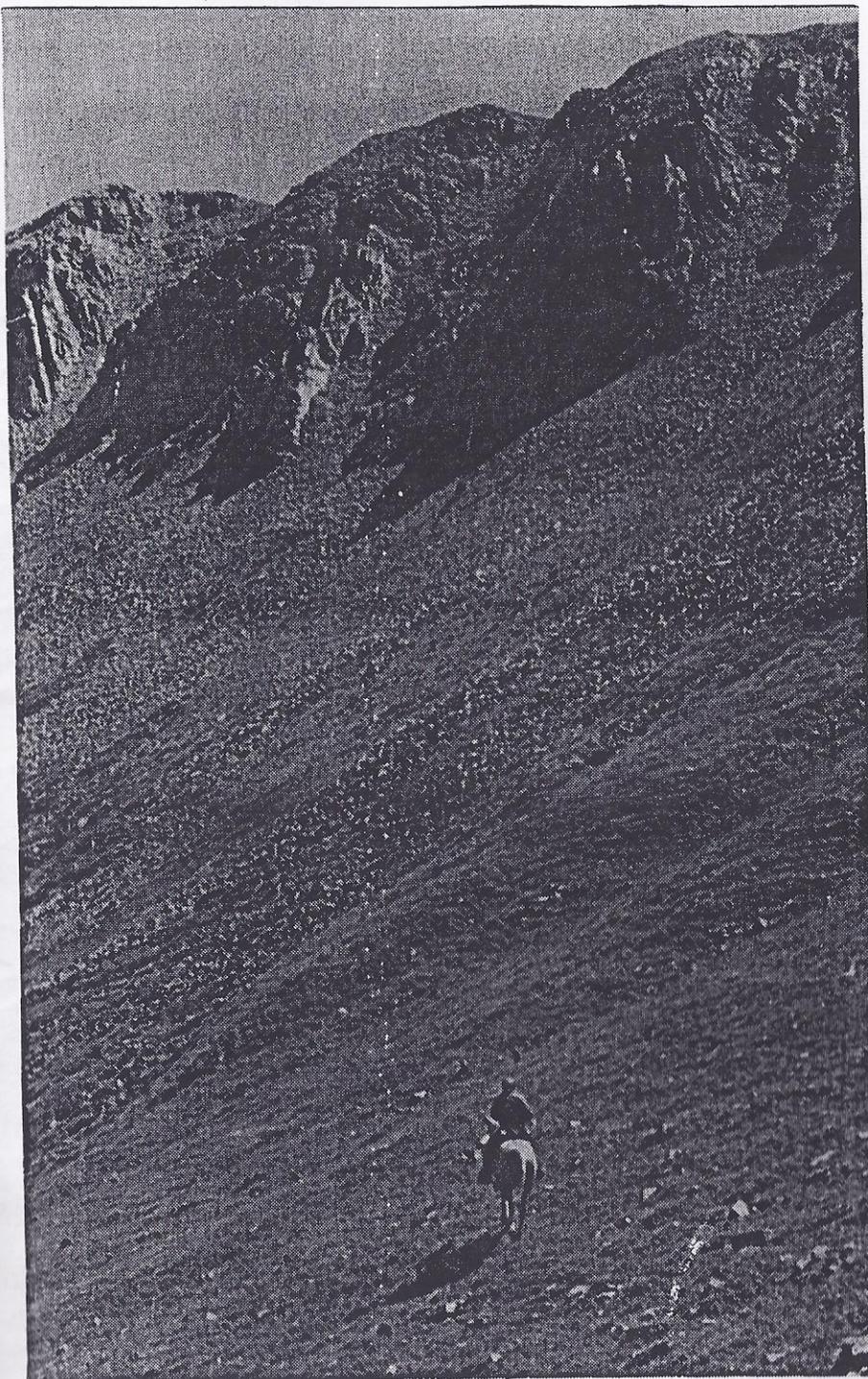
The beginning of this trail is on the Deer Springs Road just west of the Deer Spring fence. It follows an old road up Pole Canyon for about one mile, until the road is washed out. Here the trail leaves the road and follows near the bottom of the canyon on a 15 percent grade.

The trail continues, passing by aspen trees and junctioning with the Doe Canyon Trail. The path crosses Pole Canyon to the left side and later crosses back to the right side. After crossing a large open meadow, the trail switchbacks up to the top of the ridge. Soon hereafter, the trail comes to a junction with the South Mountain Trail, which is described separately. At this location, the Pole Canyon Trail terminates. It is three miles in length.

The Deep Creek Trail begins at Burro Pass, and the trail to Burro Pass is described separately. The Deep Creek Trail itself is about 4 1/2 miles long from Burro Pass to the private road where it ends. Where the trail begins, it heads in a northeastern direction, crossing slopes dotted with conifers. Where the trail crosses the head of the canyon, it passes through a meadow. A couple of hundred yards below the trail there is an old cabin and a spring. The trail switchbacks at 10-15 percent grades up the slope until it reaches the pass at about 12,000 feet in elevation. At this point, the trail is in the saddle between Manns Peak and Mt. Tomasaki.

Here the trail begins to drop down into Deep Creek on switchbacks that reach the canyon floor. From this point, the route basically follows the bottom of the canyon, passing through an alpine meadow until it reaches tree line. Here the trail turns to the left and dugways down a steep side canyon. After passing through dense stands of spruce and fir, it once again enters into grassy meadows that are exceptionally beautiful. At this point, the trail is difficult to follow but it stays north of the canyon bottom, passing the foot of a large rock slide. After passing through mixed conifers and aspen, the trail ends in the canyon bottom on a private property road.

The Deep Creek Trail is one of the lesser traveled trails on the LaSal Mountains. Since there are no roads into the canyon, the area is remote. It should be kept in mind that the trail essentially follows the canyon downward. Also, there is not any running water in the head of the canyon as the canyon name may suggest. Vegetation along the trail is diverse with alpine meadows, dark timber stands, quaking aspen, and grassy pastures.



Upper Deep Creek