

Elk Basin Trail #854



*Curecanti Rims from the Elk Basin Trail
Photo by Vic Ullrey Paonia R. D.*

Beyond the intersection with the Peter Creek Trail #856, the Elk Basin Trail switchbacks down a steep ridge through dense stands of aspen and interspersed parks. Several small creeks are crossed before descending into Elk Basin, a large park with two beaver ponds and a creek which makes an ideal camping site. The trail then begins climbing, steep at times, through stands of spruce-fir and parks with abundant wildflowers before reaching the top of Haystack Mountain. Excellent views are afforded in all directions encompassing a large area of wilderness. After a quick, steep descent and the ascent of Kaufman Ridge, the trail ends at the Kaufman Creek Trail #852 with views of the Coal Basin and Mount Gunnison. This trail offers a variety of terrain and excellent views, however, there are a lot of cattle trails that can confuse the route so it can be hard to follow and it is often steep with an average slope of 11%.

Trail Ethics:

The Elk Basin Trail is maintained for foot and horse travel. Please don't cut across switchbacks or create new trails.



Motors & Machines:

Motorized vehicles and bicycles are not allowed on the Elk Basin Trail or in Wilderness areas.



Drinking Water:

DO NOT drink water directly from a river or stream. Water needs to be treated first by either filtering, boiling for at least 10 minutes or treated with iodine tablets.



Multiple use:

As you use this area you may notice that the Forest is managed for a broad range of uses. Recreation use alone includes hiking, horse-back riding, hunting, and sightseeing. In addition, the vegetation in the Forest requires some form of management. Livestock grazing is a form of land management you may encounter while using this area. The livestock grazing on this area is managed in a very progressive and specific manner. The fences and gates that you may see are critical to managing the livestock and meeting the resource objectives that are planned for this area. Please close all gates that you open as you travel through the area. Controlling the livestock in the manner that we have planned is important.



Be prepared for inclement weather at all times.

Familiarize yourself with the area.



Please don't litter!

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Length 6.1 Miles



*Sheep Mountain and Mount Guero
Photo by Vic Ullrey Paonia R.D.*

Gunnison National Forest
Paonia Ranger District



For any questions or comments please contact:
Paonia Ranger District
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E-Mail: lbroyles@fs.fed.us or vullrey@fs.fed.us



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Trail Beginning: At the intersection with the Peter Creek Trail #856.

Trail Ending: At the junction of the Kaufman Creek Trail #852.

Access #1: Via the Little Robinson Trail #850 to the Peter Creek Trail #856.

Access #2: Via the Kaufman Creek Trail #852.

Use: Foot and Horse

Recommended Seasons:



USGS quad maps: Big Soap Park & West Beckwith Mountain

Dispersed Camping

Dispersed camping is permitted in most areas of the Forest. Recreation maps are available at all local Forest Service offices and personnel can answer questions on specific sites. Camping in undeveloped areas requires more from the camper to help keep the site in the condition in which it was found. If you Pack it in-Pack it out!

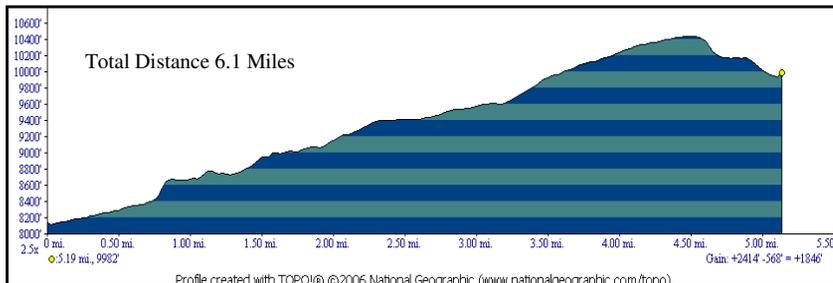


Fire Safety:

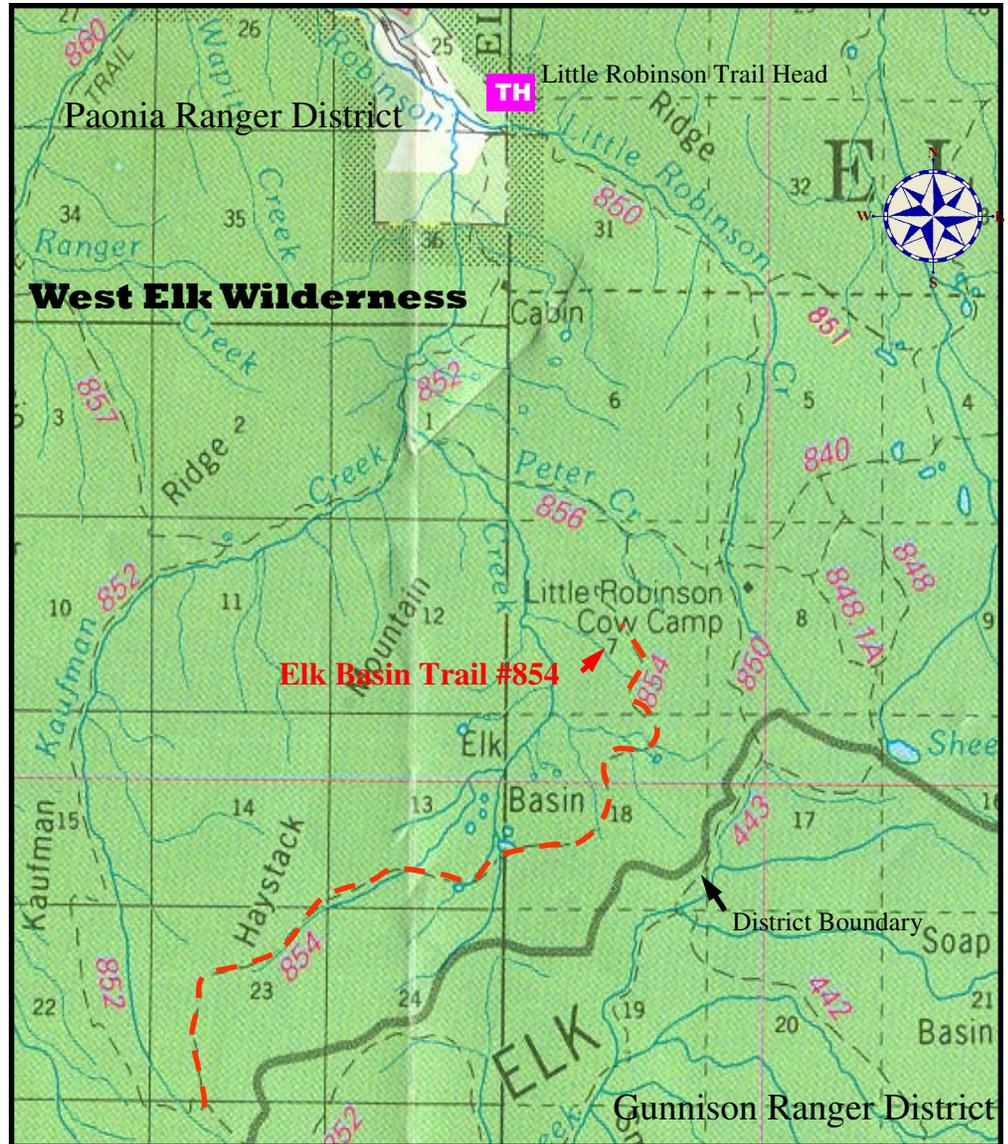
Check in with your local Forest Service office to see if fire bans are in effect.



Elevation Profile:



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Don't forget your camera!



Principles of Leave No Trace:

1. Plan Ahead & Prepare
2. Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors