Great Western Trail (GWT)
Bear Creek Section TR. NO. 001.8
Dixie National Forest, Escalante Ranger District

**General Description:** The Great Western Trail is a continuous trail system that extends from Canada to Mexico and crosses through Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho. The trail is marked by the Great Western Trail symbol and has sections open to hikers, bikers, horseman, and Off Highway Vehicles (OHVs). Approximately 80 miles of the Great Western Trail traverses the Escalante Ranger District, utilizing existing trail systems.

**Mileage:** 6.6 miles

**Difficulty:**
- Foot: Moderate
- Bike: Difficult
- Horse: Moderate
- OHV: Not Permitted

**Trailhead access:** Graded dirt road

**Elevation loss / gain:** 520 feet

**Water availability:** Water is available in West Fork and Bear Creek. Bring your own water for day hikes. All water should be filtered or treated before drinking.

**Hazards / obstacles:** Sections of the trail can be difficult to follow. Look for cairns and blazes marking the trail. Mosquitoes are prevalent in spring and early summer. Wear a long sleeve shirt and pants and use insect repellent. Weather can change quickly. Be prepared for cold weather year round.

**Topo maps:** USGS 7.5 minute quads: Jacobs Reservoir, Deer Creek Lake

**The Trailhead:** From Escalante, turn north on the Hells Backbone Road. At 0.7 miles the road will fork, stay right. After 3.5 miles the road will turn to dirt and is now called Forest Road 153 (FR 153). At 13.6 miles the road will fork, turn right following the sign to “Hells Backbone Bridge” (FR 153). At 29.4 miles turn left (north) on FR 566 and follow signs to the Boulder Swale ATV Trailhead.

**The Trail:** Trail is described from west to east. From the Boulder Swale ATV trailhead the trail leaves the parking lot to the northeast then heads east through open meadows on an old 2-track road. At 1.3 miles the trail turns left into the woods and descends into Bear Creek. After climbing out of the Bear Creek drainage the trail will flatten out and can be a little difficult to follow. Be sure to look for blazes on trees and rock carins in meadows. At 3.4 miles the trail will cross Durfey Creek. After climbing a short distance out of Durfey Creek the trail will pass through a fence. At 3.8 miles the trail crosses the West Fork of Boulder Creek. While climbing out of the West Fork be sure to keep an eye out for blazes because the trail will make a sharp right turn. At 4.2 miles turn right on the Kings Pasture Road. Continue on the road, at 6 miles the trail reaches a gate across the road. The East Boulder Creek Loop Trail no. 019 turns left here and the Bear Creek Section of the Great Western Trail turns right. The trail ends at the Kings Pasture trailhead at 6.6 miles.