

Boulder Ranger District  
2140 Yarmouth Avenue  
Boulder, CO 80301  
(303) 541-2500  
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United States Department of Agriculture



## Coulson Gulch Trail # 916

**Difficulty:** Easy to Moderate

**Trail Use:** Low

**Length:** Coulson Gulch Trailhead (TH) to: North St Vrain Creek - 2.8 miles; North Sheep Mountain Trail - 4.2 miles; National Forest System Road 118 (a.k.a. Johnny Park Road) – 6.5 miles. Full Coulson/Sheep/Johnny Loop: 9 miles. DISTANCES ARE ONE-WAY

**Elevation:** 7,700 feet at Coulson Gulch TH; 6,800 feet at North Saint Vrain Creek on Coulson Gulch Trail; 7,080 feet at North Saint Vrain Creek on North Sheep Mountain Trail; 8,400 feet at high point on Johnny Park Road.

**Open To:** Hiking

### Access

- From Lyons, drive 9.5 miles west on US Highway 36 and turn onto County Road 47 at the “Forest Access” sign. After approximately three miles, the road curves into a subdivision. Before the curve, there is an intersection between a paved and dirt road.
- At the intersection, take the left fork and continue straight onto a deteriorating gravel road.
- In about 0.5 miles, a small area for parking a 2WD vehicle can be found before the gate and cattle guard on the south side of the road. A short walk up the road and around to the left (south) leads to the TH and another parking area accessible by 4WD.

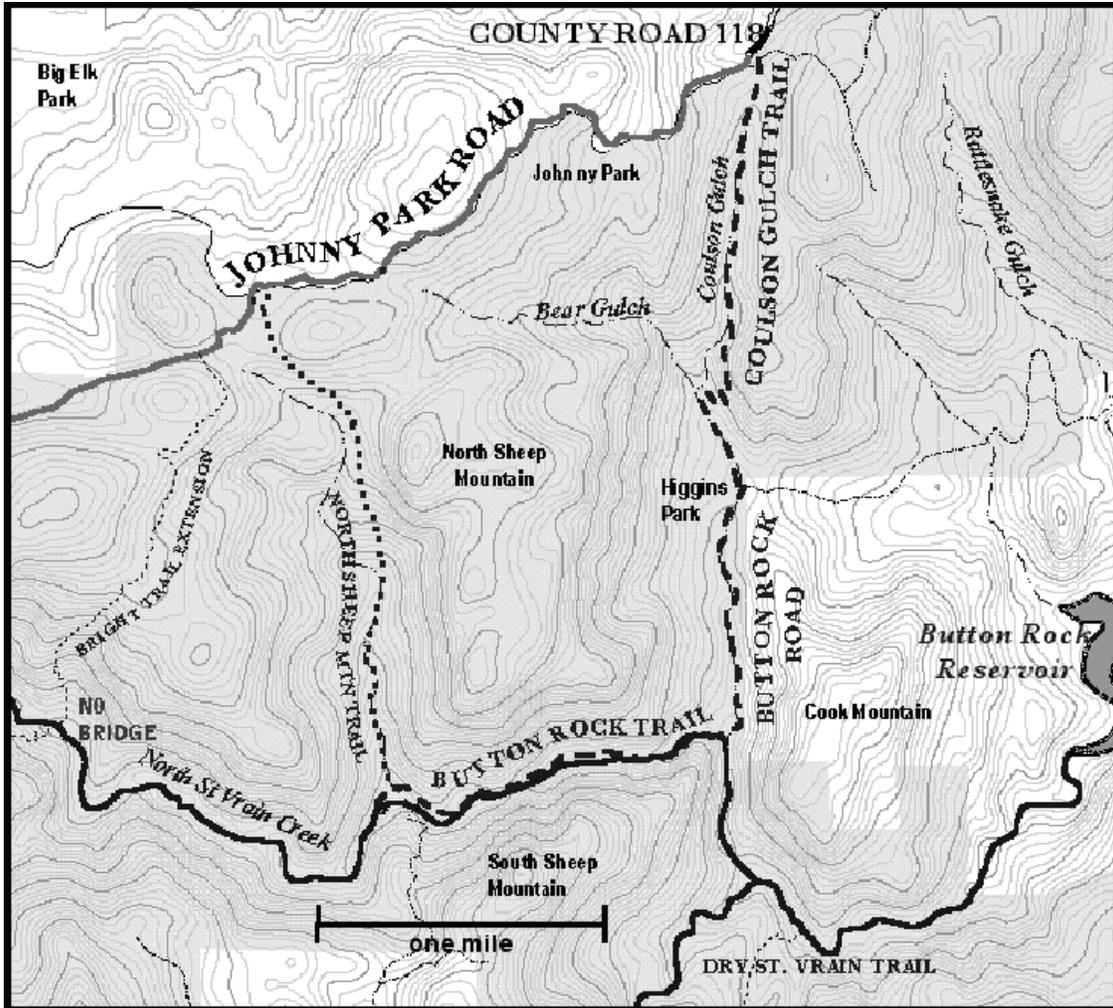
### Trail Highlights

- Coulson Gulch Trail drops south at a moderate grade, crossing back and forth across the dry streambed. At the open meadow area of Higgins Park, it joins the Button Rock Road that comes from Button Rock Reservoir and can be accessed for non-motorized travel. Button Rock Road continues south along the creek one mile until it joins North Saint Vrain Creek.
- The road crosses the creek on a bridge to become the Button Rock Trail. The old roadbed clings to the canyon walls as it follows the North Saint Vrain Creek upstream for 1.4 miles.
- The North Sheep Mountain Trail starts up a side stream on the west side of North Sheep Mountain and climbs to Johnny Park Road. However it is not much used and is more of a navigation exercise than a trail. If you find your way to the top, a return can be made to Coulson Gulch Trailhead by turning right (east) 2.5 miles on Johnny Park Road.

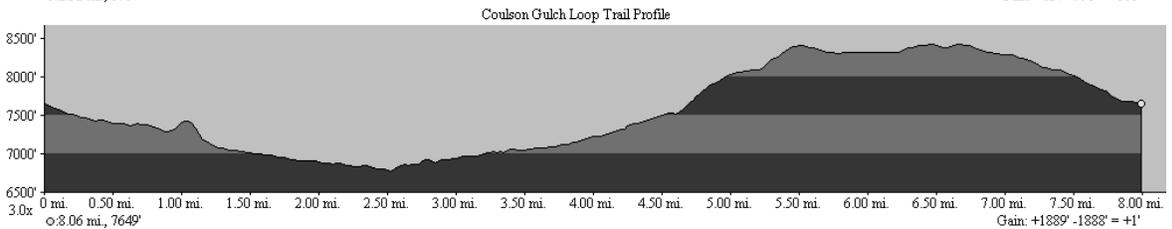
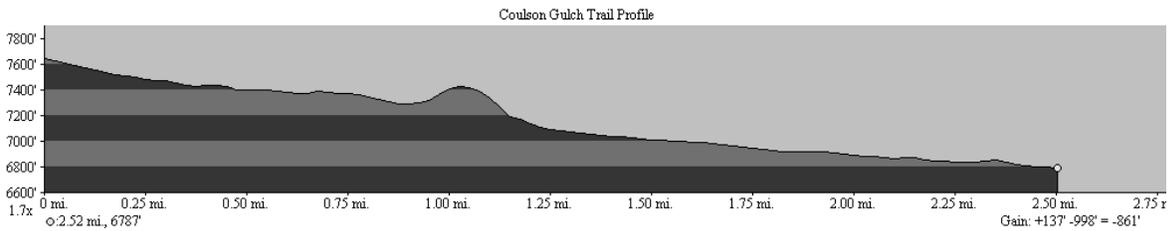
### Important Information

- Permits are not required for overnight camping and campfires are allowed. It is advisable to contact the Boulder Ranger District (303-541-2500) before your trip in regards to possible fire bans during the dry summer months.
- Portions of this trail are located within the North Saint Vrain Research Natural Area: an area of National Forest designated, permanently protected and maintained in natural condition.

# Trail Map & Profile



This map is intended as a general guide only and not for actual land navigation.



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For More Information:

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