

Benson Ridge Trails



Attractions

Located between Benson Ridge and the Rio Penasco this system of trails offers many motorized and non-motorized recreation experiences. Tall timber, springs and running water make this a very attractive area to begin your hikes.



Figure 1 – One of the beautiful Benson Ridge Trails

Access

The overall area can easily be reached by traveling south of Cloudcroft via NM130 1.8 miles, then turning right on NM6563 (Sunspot Hwy). Approximately 6 miles further turn left onto Benson Ridge Road (FR223). You can access the lower portions and trailheads by traveling 2 miles further along NM6563 and turning onto the Rio Penasco Rd. (CR17)

Use

The area is open all year but access via FR223 may be very difficult in snowy conditions. Many of the trails are motorized allowing for both motorcycles and ATV's (vehicles <50" in width). Non-motorized use such as horses, bikes, and hikers are also permitted.

Facilities

Restrooms are available at Bluff Springs along the Rio Penasco. No other developed features are available in the area. Be sure to **PACK OUT WHAT YOU PACK IN** to leave your public lands better than found them.

Narrative

This trail system is generally rated excellent by all users for scenery and interest. Heavily forested in many parts and lovely open meadows, running springs and abandoned log cabin ruins can be found along the way.

Many of the trails are abandoned railroad grades from the 1930's and as such make for relatively easy hikes. Please keep in mind that your average elevation is above 9,000' so this can make for a greater hiking challenge.

As always, let someone know before you go.

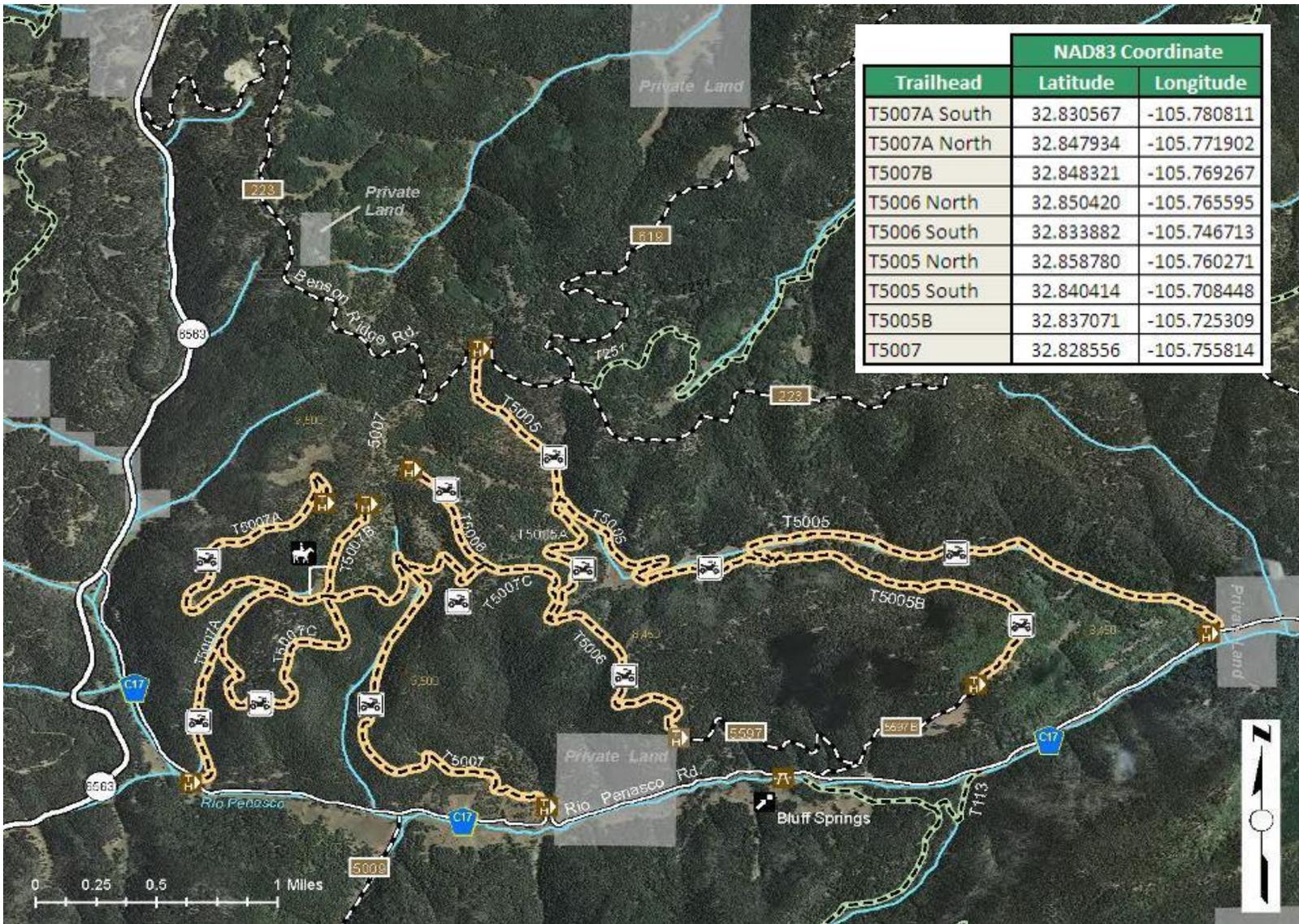


Figure 2 – Benson Ridge Trail leading into heavily forested area

Please call or visit the Sacramento Ranger District in Cloudcroft at (575) 682-2551 for more information.



Map of Benson Ridge Trails and surrounding features



| Trailhead | NAD83 Coordinate | |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|
| | Latitude | Longitude |
| T5007A South | 32.830567 | -105.780811 |
| T5007A North | 32.847934 | -105.771902 |
| T5007B | 32.848321 | -105.769267 |
| T5006 North | 32.850420 | -105.765595 |
| T5006 South | 32.833882 | -105.746713 |
| T5005 North | 32.858780 | -105.760271 |
| T5005 South | 32.840414 | -105.708448 |
| T5005B | 32.837071 | -105.725309 |
| T5007 | 32.828556 | -105.755814 |

| Trail Name | Trail # | Length (mi) |  |  |  |  |  |
|--------------------|---------|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Benson Can | T5005 | 3.9 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Benson Can Spur | T5005A | 2.4 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Benson Can Spur 2 | T5005B | 1.5 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Benson Ridge/Bluff | T5006 | 2.1 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Taylor Canyon | T5007 | 1.9 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Schofield Canyon | T5007A | 2.7 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Shortcut | T5007B | 0.5 | ✓ | ✓ | X | X | X |
| Schofield/Benson | T5007C | 2.6 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Schofield/Taylor | T5007D | 0.2 | ✓ | ✓ | X | X | X |

Figure 3 – Map of Benson Ridge Trails and Surrounding Features