

Denver Special Places on your National Forests

Cache la Poudre River
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Brainard Lake Recreation Area (Near Boulder)

Nestled below the craggy peaks of the Continental Divide, this area offers year-round opportunities for recreation. Brainard Lake can be accessed via the Peak to Peak Scenic and Historic Byway. The highway winds through ghost towns and past vistas of timbered slopes and rugged mountains.

***Travel Time:** 1.5 hours **Visit:** www.byways.org/explore/byways/2104

Arapaho National Recreation Area (Near Granby)

Shimmering below frosted peaks, the Arapaho National Recreation Area hosts the “Great Lakes of the Colorado” where five lakes provide endless opportunities for water sports, hiking, wildlife viewing, and more. The recreation area is near the beginning of the Colorado River Headwaters Scenic Byway that winds past reservoirs, ranchlands, recreation sites, and railroads—all hinting at the history and lifeblood of the river.

***Travel Time:** 2 hours **Visit:** www.byways.org/explore/byways/2106

Independence Pass (Near Leadville)

Independence Pass provides a closeup view of 14,000 foot peaks, summer snowstorms, and the land above the trees. Situated along the Top of the Rockies Scenic Byway, travelers can discover Colorado’s mining heritage, past to present. This route also crosses the Continental Divide as it traces the Arkansas River; tendrils of the route shoot off to special places like Turquoise and Twin Lakes.

***Travel Time:** 2.5 hours **Visit:** www.byways.org/explore/byways/2119

Mt Evans (Near Idaho Springs)

At the top of the highest paved road in North America, Mt. Evans provides a rarified view into the world above timberline. Here there is an amalgam of hardy wildflowers, lichens and grasses, furtive mammals, rock-jumping mountain goats, and alpine lakes. Meanwhile, views of the Front Range and Continental Divide sprawl at your feet.

***Travel Time:** 2.5 hours **Visit:** www.byways.org/explore/byways/2112

Pikes Peak (Near Colorado Springs)

This is the icon that inspired the words to *America the Beautiful!* The summit is much easier to reach now than in 1806 when Lt. Zebulon Pike’s exploratory party first spotted the “small blue cloud” on their approach from Missouri. Drive your car, hike the Barr Trail, or ride the Pikes Peak Cog Railway to 14,115 feet—and don’t be surprised if your feet are in the clouds.

***Travel Time:** 3 hours **Visit:** www.pikespeak.us.com

Picket Wire Canyon (Near La Junta)

Travel back in time 150 million years ago when these canyons were under a shallow lake, Brontosaurus and Allosaurus roaming the edges. Proof of their lives can be read in their footprints--the largest known set of dinosaur tracks in North America. Others came after, recorded through Native American rock art, early Hispanic settlements, and a historic ranch.

***Travel Time:** 3 hours **Visit:** www.fs.usda.gov/attmain/psicc/specialplaces/

**Travel times are from Denver city-center and are one way only.*



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