



# Orient Mine

Colorado State Natural Area

## What to Expect

Orient Mine Natural Area, which sits on the western slope of the Sangre de Cristo Range, is home to the largest colony of Brazilian free-tailed bats in Colorado. The mostly male “bachelor” colony roosts in the abandoned mine during the summer months and then migrates south for the winter to Mexico and Central America. Several other species of bats, including the state rare Townsend’s big-eared bat, also roost in the Orient Mine, which was once Colorado’s largest producer of iron ore from the late 1800’s through the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.



*Nightly emergence of bats from the mine*



*Visitors enjoying the sunset at the natural area*

## About the Natural Area

**Location:** Saguache County, 10 miles southwest of Villa Grove

**Landowner:** [Orient Land Trust](#)

**Size:** 329 acres

**Address:** 64393 County Road GG Moffat, CO 81143

[Google maps link to Orient Land Trust Welcome Center](#)

## Know Before You Go

The Orient Mine Natural Area is owned by the Orient Land Trust (OLT), a non-profit land trust. Guided and self-guided hiking tours are usually available through OLT during the summer months to learn about the area’s rich history and watch the amazing nightly out flight of bats. The moderate two-mile hike includes excellent interpretive sites and views of the San Luis Valley. For up to date information, visit the [OLT website](#), and follow all rules and guidelines posted there. Please keep in mind that access to the Orient Mine is through Valley View Hot Springs, which is a clothing optional area.



*Flowers in bloom amid backdrop of the San Luis Valley*

**For more information about the Colorado Natural Areas Program (CNAP) visit [CNAP’s website](#).**