

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Within the boundaries of the Colorado State Forest lie 71,000 acres of the great outdoors as it was meant to be. Eye-filling mountain beauty greets the visitor and provides a setting unequalled for hiking and mountain biking opportunities. There are over 90 miles of hiking trails and 130 miles of mountain biking trails.

The State Forest is high country, ranging in elevation from 8,500 to 13,000 feet, so visitors may find they need time to acclimate. Sunburn is possible in the high, thin cool air and in the summer mosquito repellent is a necessity.

The park stretches along the west side of the Medicine Bow Mountains and into the north end of the Never Summer Range. From Ft. Collins, visitors can take Highway 14 over Cameron Pass, a 75 mile drive. From Denver, the route leads over Berthoud and Willow Creek passes to Walden, a 150 mile trip.

The State Forest's recreational uses are administered by Colorado State Parks, which has leased the area for public recreation from the Colorado Board of Land Commissioners since 1972.

Not included in this guide are our 3 nature trails (Beaver Lodge, Ranger Lakes, and Mountain View). These short enjoyable, educational hikes are wonderful for families or those who are short on time and want to experience the park. Another short hike is a trail that goes around Ranger Lakes. For more information on these trails please pick up the respective brochure for them. Mountain bike trails not included in this guide are the Gould Mountain Loop and the Diamond Peaks Trail. Information on these trails can be found in our OHV brochure.

## SHARE THE TRAIL

State Forest State Park is a multiuse park and on many of the trails its is possible that you will encounter different types of recreational users. It is important to be courteous to other users on the trail. Here are some tips to take into consideration:

- Stay on the center of the trail to minimize impact
- Be ready to yield to others on the trail whether going up or down.
- Move to uphill side of trail to let others pass.
- Alert other users before passing.
- Slower traffic has the right-of-way.
- Do not shortcut trails.
- Do not pick flowers or collect natural items.
- Don't litter

## HIGH-COUNTRY CONSIDERATIONS

### Lightning

When in the high-country in Colorado you must be prepared for the possibility of being stuck in an lightning storm. Every year at least a few people are injured or even killed in Colorado because of lightning. Below are some tips to help limit the chance of this occurring and what to do if you are caught in a storm:

- Check current weather conditions before heading out and be observant while hiking.
- Try to be off a summit or an exposed ridge by noon.
- If caught in a storm when you are exposed try to get to a lower elevation.
- Get rid of any metal objects that are on you and put some distance between them and you.
- Try not to be the highest object around and don't crouch near any tall objects.
- Stay at least 15 feet apart from other group members
- Crouch or kneel to reduce exposure but don't put your hands on the ground or lie flat on the ground

### Acute Mountain Sickness

Although infrequent, this is the most common high altitude illness, occurring usually above 8,000 feet. Some people will experience it at lower altitudes. It can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, physical fitness, or previous altitude experience. Symptoms generally begin with a headache and are followed by: loss of appetite, nausea, fatigue, light-headedness, difficulty sleeping, or shortness of breath. Children may experience these symptoms plus vomiting.

Tips to avoid Acute Mountain Sickness include:

- Give your body a few days to acclimate if possible.
- Do some light activity the next day after acclimating.
- Keep hydrated with water and eat carbohydrates.
- Avoid alcohol, caffeine, sleeping pills, or pain medication.
- If you experience any symptoms descend immediately until your symptoms subside.

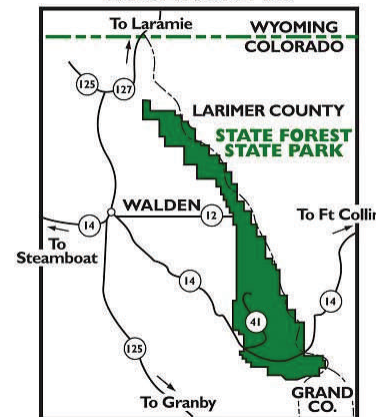
## FOR MORE INFORMATION



State Forest State Park  
56750 Highway 14  
Walden, CO 80480  
(970) 723-8366

Email: [state\\_forest@state.co.us](mailto:state_forest@state.co.us)  
[www.parks.state.co.us](http://www.parks.state.co.us)

### LOCATION MAP



## EMERGENCY AND MEDICAL

- First Aid is available at the Moose Visitor Center located on Highway 14 in Gould, CO.
- A medical clinic is located in Walden, CO.
- The nearest hospital are in Fort Collins, CO or Laramie,

### Emergency Numbers:

Park Office .....(970) 723-8366  
Jackson County Sheriff .....(970) 723-4242  
Emergencies.....911



## STATE FOREST Hiking & Mountain Biking Guide



Visit all your Colorado State Parks  
at [www.parks.state.co.us](http://www.parks.state.co.us)



## Hiking/Mountain Biking Trails

### Michigan Ditch Trail

**Length:** 6.5 miles one way

**Difficulty:** Easy **Elevation Gain:** 225 feet

**Access:** Park at the summit parking lot on Cameron Pass and cross Hwy 14 to access the trail.

Easy hike offers great views of Nokhu Crags and Diamond Peaks. From the top of Cameron Pass the trail follows a service road for a water ditch and ends just below Lake Agnes. You can also access American Lakes from this trail.

### Canadian Trail

**Length:** 3.3 miles one way

**Difficulty:** Easy **Elevation Gain/Loss:** 1,000 feet

**Access:** Trailhead is about .5 miles on the left below the lower trailhead of Ruby Jewel or drive to the end of CR 41 and the trailhead starts a 1/4 mile down on the right.

An easy mountain bike ride or hike that follows an old logging road. The trail takes you through several new stands of lodgepole and aspens. There is one stream crossing near the Ruby Jewel end that can be somewhat hazardous during spring runoff.

### Ruby Jewel Trail

**Length:** 3 miles one way from the lower trailhead and 1.5 miles one way from the upper trailhead.

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Elevation Gain:** 2,100 feet from lower trailhead and 1,200 feet from upper trailhead

**Access:** Most people park 1.5 miles below the trailhead at the car corral just past the yurt. The upper trailhead is 3 miles further up a rough 4WD road.

This trail leads you up to Ruby Jewel Lake. You can also access Clark Peak from the Ruby Jewel Trail. Instead of following the trail to the lake take the trail on the right side of the valley which will allow you to gain the ridge to Clark Peak. There is also a geocache located on the trail.

### Lumberjack Trail

**Length:** 1.27 miles one way

**Difficulty:** easy **Elevation Gain:** none

**Access:** Go for 4 miles on CR 41 take right for Bockman campground and trailhead is on the left across from Pennock trailhead.

Easy trail that takes you over 3 easy stream crossings and through several meadows. Trail starts off of Bockman Road and comes out onto Ruby Jewel Road.

### Pennock Trail

**Length:** 1.1 miles one way

**Difficulty:** easy (Hiking) advanced beginner (Mountain Bike)

**Elevation Gain:** none

**Access:** Take CR 41 to the right fork which is on the south side of the reservoir. Go past the campground, take a right, and go a 1/2 mile to the trailhead on the left.

Easy hike or mountain bike ride that can be done from either Bockman road or the Grass Creek road. Trail takes you through two meadows and a stand of pines, spruce, and fir. The trail also offers the chance to see wildflowers/wildlife. There is also a geocache located on the trail.



## State Forest State Park

Map Scale 1 : 78,000 1 inch = 6,500 feet  
0 0,5 1 2 Miles  
Contour Interval 50 meters

## Summer Recreation - South

- State Forest State Park
- National Park Service
- State of Colorado
- National Forest
- USFS Wilderness
- Bureau of Land Management
- Scenic Byway
- County Road
- 2 Wheel Drive
- 4 Wheel Drive
- Trails
- Boat Ramp
- Cabins
- Campground
- Entrance Station
- Fee Station
- Nature Trail
- Overlook
- Phone
- Trail Head
- Visitor Center
- Yurt

## Hiking/Mountain Biking Trails

### Gould Loop

**Length:** 6.5 miles roundtrip

**Difficulty:** Easy **Elevation Gain:** 250 feet

**Access:** Access the trailhead from the Moose Visitor Center or the Ranger Lakes Day use area.

This loop trail parallels the middle fork of the MI River. There is great moose habitat along the trail. There is also a geocache located on the trail.

### American Lakes/Thunder Pass Trail

**Length:** 5.5 miles one way from the American Lakes trailhead, 6 miles one way from Michigan Ditch, and 3 miles one way from Crags campground.

**Difficulty:** moderate to difficult (hiking) difficult (Mountain biking)

**Elevation Gain:** 1,680 feet (American Lakes Trailhead) 800 feet (Michigan Ditch)

**Access:** From Hwy 14 turn into the Crags entrance and go 2 miles staying left to the American Lakes trailhead. You also can access another trail to the lakes by going to the end of the Crags campground.

The trail ends at American Lakes with options over Thunder Pass into Rocky Mountain National Park or up to Snow Lake. Spectacular views with only fly and lure fishing permitted. A great backpacking trip. Fires are prohibited above timberline.

### Kelly Lake Trail

**Length:** 6.5 miles one way

**Difficulty:** difficult (hiking) difficult (Mountain biking)

**Elevation Gain:** 2,300 feet

**Access:** From Hwy 14 turn right onto CR 41 for 8.75 miles to the end of CR 41 .

This is a great hike for backpackers or a mountain bike ride. The trail leads to a high alpine lake with spectacular views. Fly and lure fishing is permitted. No fires above timberline. Also, you can access the N. Canadian Yurt, Canadian Trail, and Hidden Valley Trail.

### Clear Lake Trail

**Length:** 7 miles one way

**Difficulty:** difficult (hiking)

**Elevation Gain:** 2,055 feet

**Access:** From Hwy 14 turn right onto CR 41 for 8.75 miles to the end of CR 41 .

This is a great hike for backpackers. The trail leads to a high alpine lake with spectacular views. Fly and lure fishing permitted. No fires above timberline. You can also access the Canadian Trail, Kelly Lake Trail, and the N. Canadian Yurt on the way.

### Hidden Valley Trail

**Length:** 2.5 miles one way

**Difficulty:** difficult **Elevation Gain:** 150 feet

**Access:** Most people park 1.5 miles below the Ruby Jewel trailhead at the car corral just past the yurt. The upper trailhead is 3.5 miles up a 4WD road About .5 miles up the Ruby Jewel Trail take the path to Kelly Lake (start of Hidden Valley trailhead).

This trail connects the Ruby Jewel trail to the Kelly Lake trail. The trail offers outstanding views of the Medicine Bow Range and Kelly Lake. There is also the opportunity to see numerous wildflowers in the summer. The trail has several stream crossings and you will need to follow the cairns to navigate your way through the trail.

### Lake Agnes Trail

**Length:** .8 miles one way

**Difficulty:** moderate **Elevation Gain:** 340 feet

**Access:** From Hwy 14 turn into Crags entrance and go 3/4 miles. Turn right for 1.5 miles staying right to the trailhead.

Short hike into the Lake Agnes scenic area. Spectacular views of Nokhu Crags. Fly and lure fishing permitted at Lake Agnes. Historic cabin at the trailhead. No camping/fires or mountain biking permitted.