

Steppin' Out

with Colorado State Parks



1313 Sherman Street, Room #618
Denver, CO 80203
Phone: 303.866.3437
Web site: www.parks.state.co.us
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your guide to metro area trails

Steppin' Out

with Colorado State Parks

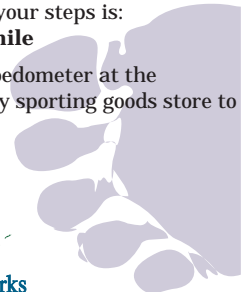
Welcome to Colorado State Parks Steppin' Out Guide! Colorado State Parks is committed to helping people enjoy the beauty of the state while achieving their goal of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through physical activity. This guide is intended to help people of all ages use local trails to increase their activity.

Being physically active every day is simple and attainable. However, more than 60% of American adults do not get enough exercise and 25% are not active at all. Physical activity reduces the incidence of heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer, high blood pressure and obesity. It also builds muscle, bone and joint health, increases energy levels and raises self-esteem.

This guide is a result of the America on the Move program (www.americaonthemove.org). Their message is to eat 100 fewer calories and take 2,000 more steps each day. This guide shows you how to get those extra 2,000 steps by steppin' out on Colorado State Parks trails. Walking an extra 2,000 steps a day may take a little extra effort or can be a goal you build up to over time. Please know that adding more steps to your day will get easier as you go.

A quick guide to calculate your steps is:
2,000 steps = 1 mile

If you prefer, you can also purchase a pedometer at the America on the Move Web site or at any sporting goods store to calculate the steps for you.



Steppin' Out on the Trail

Most of the trails in this guide were chosen for their proximity to urban areas, making it easy for people to add more steps into their regular routine.

There are many benefits to using trails for outdoor recreation:

- Trails provide access to natural, scenic beauty, which motivates people to be outside and physically active.
- Trails provide safe, cost-effective, easy-to-use places to increase activity compared to the interruptions and traffic hazards that are possible on urban streets.
- Surveys have shown that recreation is linked to overall happiness, family unity, improved educational opportunities, better health, and deters crime and substance abuse.
- Scientific evidence shows that providing access to places, such as trails, increases the level of physical activity in a community.

Exercise doesn't need to be strenuous to be beneficial: people of all ages benefit from physical activity. Walking for fitness and recreation is among the top three activities people choose for outdoor recreation.

Before Steppin' Out

Here are a few considerations to take into account before hitting the trail:

- Before starting any new activity, have your physician evaluate and monitor your health status.
- One thing you can count on with Colorado weather is that it will change. **Dress in layers** and wear comfortable shoes.
- **Bring water** to help you stay hydrated. People are prone to dehydration in Colorado's dry climate and high altitude.

- With an average of 300 days of sunshine per year, always **apply sunscreen** to exposed skin before going out, even on cool or overcast days. At higher altitudes, ultraviolet rays are 50-60% stronger than at sea level. Remember to wear sunglasses to protect your eyes as well.
- In Colorado, lightning is the number one life-threatening weather hazard. While on the trail, keep an eye out for approaching storms. Retreat from high or open ground if a storm threatens and wait for it to pass.
- On some trails you may encounter wildlife. Be sure to stop and read postings at trailheads about wildlife so you can become familiar with handling these situations if necessary.

Steppin' Without a Trace

Whether you are steppin' out for 10 minutes or for two hours, please remember to follow the *Leave No Trace* principles when you are on a trail:

1. Plan ahead and prepare (take a small daypack or fanny pack with water, sunscreen, sunglasses, light jacket, and bug spray)
2. Travel on durable surfaces
3. Dispose of waste properly: pack it in, pack it out
4. Leave what you find
5. Respect wildlife
6. Be considerate of other visitors

To learn more about *Leave No Trace* principles, visit www.lnt.org.



Steppin' Out

with Colorado State Parks

Trail Locations



Barr Lake State Park

- 1 - Niedrach Nature Trail
- 2 - Perimeter Trail to the Gazebo

Castlewood Canyon State Park

- 3 - Canyon View Nature Trail
- 4 - Creek Bottom Trail

Cherry Creek State Park

- 5 - Perimeter Trail: Mountain Loop to the Marina
- 6 - Perimeter Trail: Tower Loop to the Swimbeach

Chatfield State Park

- 7 - Dam Overlook Trail
- 8 - Lakeview Trail
- 9 - Plum Creek Picnic Area Trail
- 10 - Wetlands Gazebo Trail

Denver Metro

- 11 - Cherry Creek Regional Trail
- 12 - South Platte River Greenway

Eldorado Canyon State Park

- 13 - Fowler Trail
- 14 - Rattlesnake Gulch Trail

Golden Gate Canyon State Park

- 15 - Horseshoe Trail
- 16 - Raccoon Trail

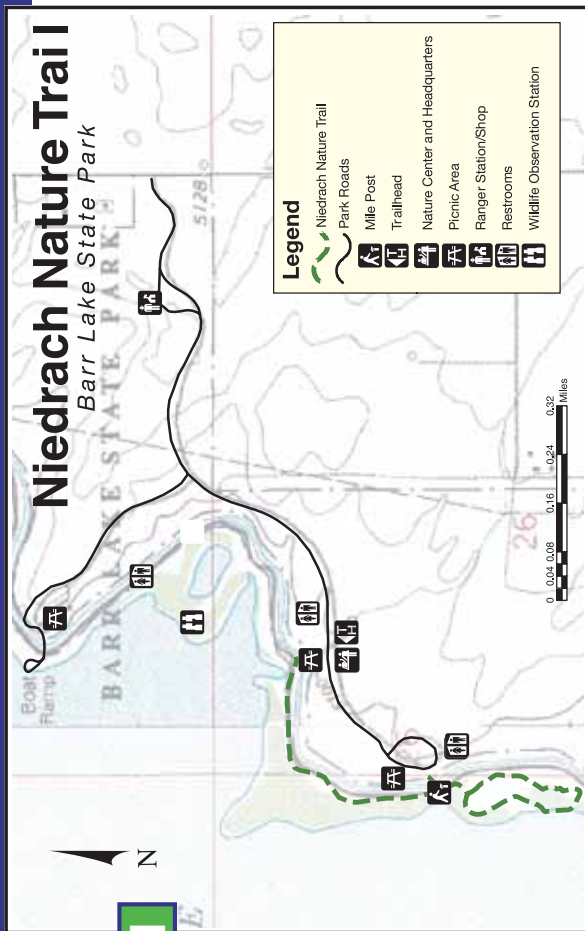
Roxborough State Park

- 17 - Fountain Valley Loop Trail
- 18 - Willow Creek Trail



Niedrach Nature Trail

Barr Lake State Park



1

1 - Niedrach Nature Trail

Distance Round-trip:	2.2 miles (4,400 steps)
Surface:	natural/boardwalk
Difficulty:	easy

Are you a dinosaur descendant lover? Known far and wide as a bird lover's paradise, Barr Lake is a treat you won't want to miss. On a bright, cool spring or fall morning, let your feet lead you down the Neidrach Nature Trail. This loop trail, dominated by a boardwalk, winds through century-old cottonwoods and then out over the water. White pelicans, eagles, ducks, owls, shore and songbirds dive, soar, paddle, splash, swoop and serenade your walk. Frogs nestled among the cattails in nature's nursery, chirp a background chorus. The Nature Center at trail's end is a wonderful place to rest your happily tired feet then explore the amazing exhibits.

Finding the Trailhead

Barr Lake State Park is northeast of Denver. Take I-25 north to I-76 east. Take I-76 to the Bromley Lane Exit. Go east on Bromley Lane then turn south on Picadilly Road. The entrance to the park is on the west side of the road. Take the main park road to the Nature Center. Park at the Nature Center and ask park staff for a map and directions. The Neidrach Nature Trail is left of the bridge over the canal at the Nature Center.

Telephone: 303.659.6005
Address: 13401 Picadilly Road
Brighton, CO 80603
Web site: www.parks.state.co.us
E-mail: barr.lake@state.co.us

Please purchase a Colorado State Parks daily or annual pass for entry.

1

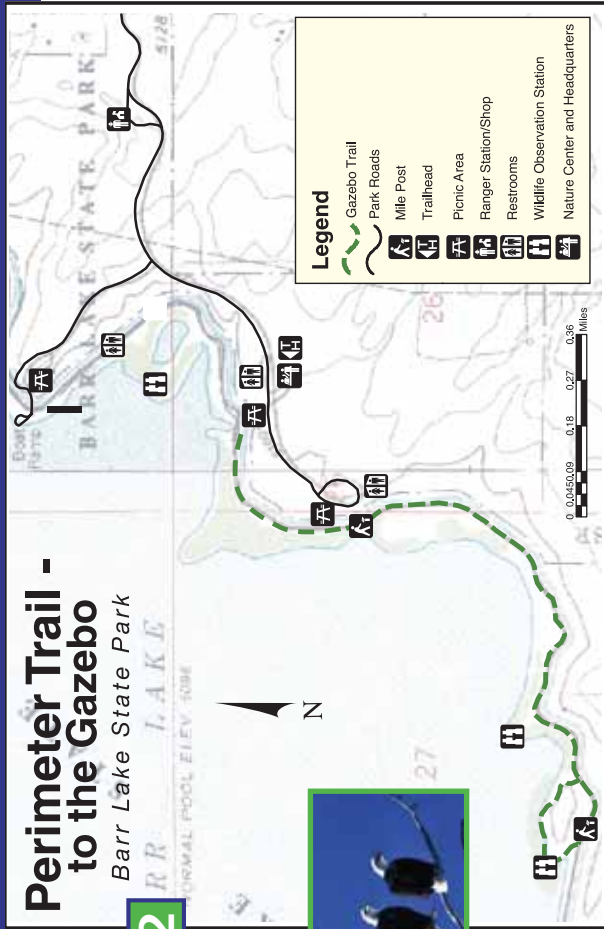
Niedrach Nature Trail

1

Perimeter Trail - to the Gazebo

Barr Lake State Park

2



2 - Perimeter Trail to the Gazebo

Distance Round-trip:	2.2 miles (4,400 steps)
Surface:	natural/boardwalk
Difficulty:	easy

A nesting pair of bald eagles is the pied piper of the Perimeter Trail that begins at the Nature Center and ends under a gazebo perched way out on the water of Barr Lake. Best hiked on a cool spring or fall morning for wildlife viewing and comfort, this wide, sunny trail affords a rich diversity of experiences. Look for deer and fox among the wildflower meadows and up at the sky for flying critters on wing or roosting in treetops. If your feet are willing, two short trail spurs will take you closer to the water's edge. A boardwalk zigzags out to a covered gazebo that houses interpretive exhibits and affords prime eagle viewing. So, pack your binoculars, a camera, water, sunscreen and a hat, double knot your hiking shoes and step lively!

Finding the Trailhead

Barr Lake State Park is northeast of Denver. Take I-25 north to I-76 east. Take I-76 to the Bromley Lane Exit. Go east on Bromley Lane then turn south on Picadilly Road. The entrance to the park is on the west side of the road. Take the main park road to the Nature Center. Park at the Nature Center and ask park staff for a map and directions. The Gazebo Trail departs directly from the Nature Center.

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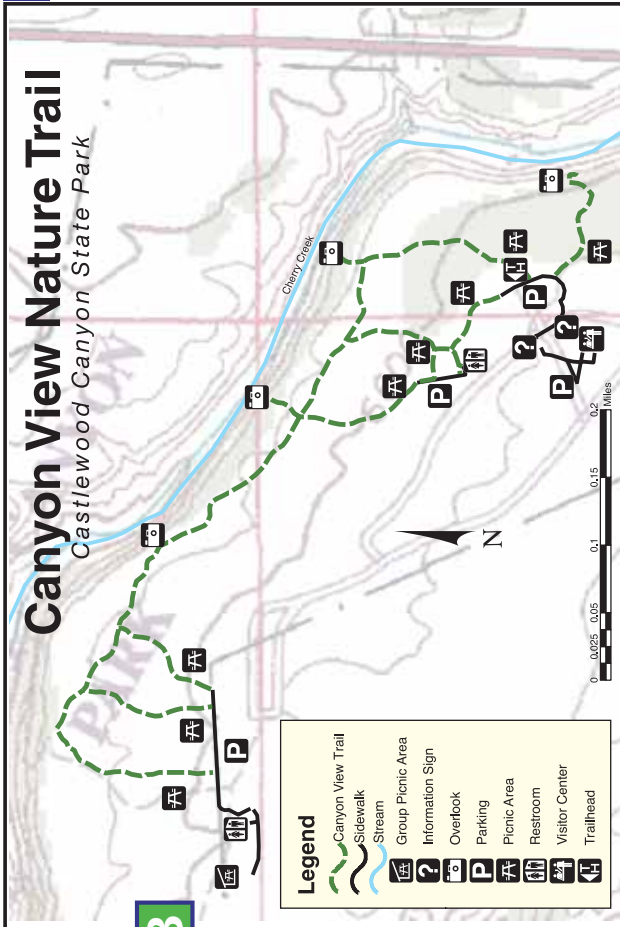
2

Perimeter Trail to the Gazebo

2

Canyon View Nature Trail

Castlewood Canyon State Park



3

3 - Canyon View Nature Trail

Distance Round-trip:	2.4 miles (4,800 steps)
Surface:	concrete
Difficulty:	easy

Wow! What spectacular scenery on the Canyon View Nature Trail. This meandering concrete path hugs the rim of the East Canyon, offering stunning views across and deep into Castlewood Canyon. Watch for raptors slowly circling high above Cherry Creek as it threads its way through rich streamside vegetation. From the Bridge Canyon Overlook to the Group Picnic Pavilion, three scenic overlooks with interpretive exhibits offer fascinating insights and tidbits into the character of the Black Forest. These overlooks are a perfect place for wildlife watching and a picnic. After your walk, be sure to stop in the Visitor Center and view exhibits and a short, captivating video for a historical peek at a duel between man and nature and discover who won.

Finding the Trailhead

Castlewood Canyon State Park is east of Castle Rock and south of Franktown. From Denver, take I-25 south to Exit 182 at Castle Rock. Go six miles east on Highway 86 to Franktown. Go south on Highway 83 (South Parker Road) five miles. The entrance to Castlewood Canyon State Park will be on the west side of the road. Follow the park entrance road to the Visitor Center. The trailhead for this walk is immediately on your right (Bridge Canyon Overlook).

Telephone: 303.688.5242
Address: 2989 South Highway 83
 Franktown, CO 80116
Web site: www.parks.state.co.us
E-mail: castlewood.canyon@state.co.us

Please purchase a Colorado State Parks daily or annual pass for entry.

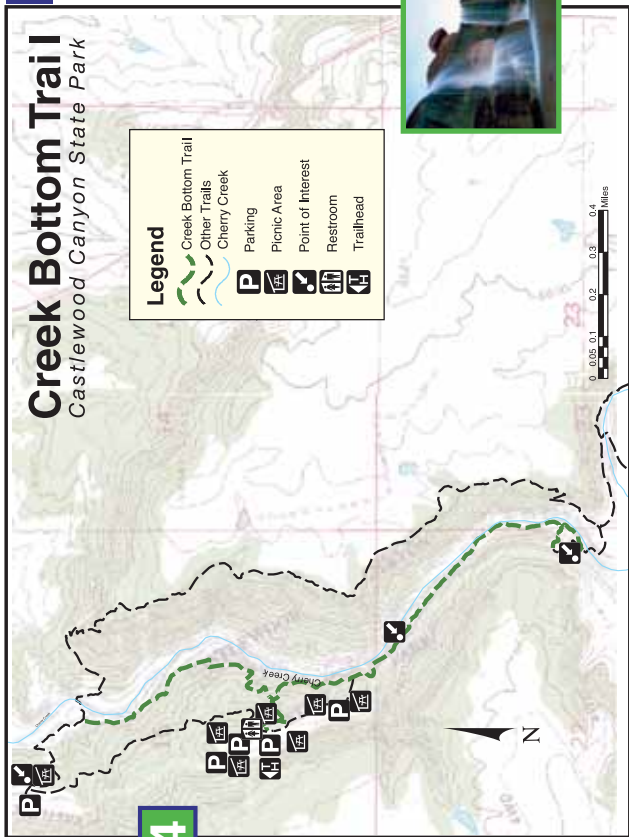
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Canyon View Nature Trail

3

Creek Bottom Trail

Castlewood Canyon State Park



4

4 - Creek Bottom Trail

Distance Round-trip:	3.4 miles (6,800 steps)
Surface:	natural
Difficulty:	moderate

The beautiful Creek Bottom Trail winds its way down through pine forest to Cherry Creek where it weaves through willows, lush shade, huge boulders and past a waterfall.

Depending on the season, the creek is either bubbling or busting its banks as it courses through the channel cut by the roaring water of the 1933 flood, when the Castlewood Canyon Dam burst. This trail leads to the dam ruins and a short but strenuous hike to the top for outstanding views of the ecologically unique Black Forest area of Colorado. So bask on a boulder, tickle your toes in the creek, observe the critters for a thoroughly enjoyable day.

Finding the Trailhead

Castlewood Canyon State Park is east of Castle Rock and south of Franktown. From Denver, take I-25 south to Exit 182 at Castle Rock. Go six miles east on Highway 86 to Franktown. Go south (right) onto Castlewood Canyon Road, through the West Entry to Castlewood Canyon State Park to the Westside Trailhead.

Telephone: 303.688.5242

Address: 2989 South Highway 83
Franktown, CO 80116

Web site: www.parks.state.co.us

E-mail: castlewood.canyon@state.co.us

Please purchase a Colorado State Parks daily or annual pass for entry.

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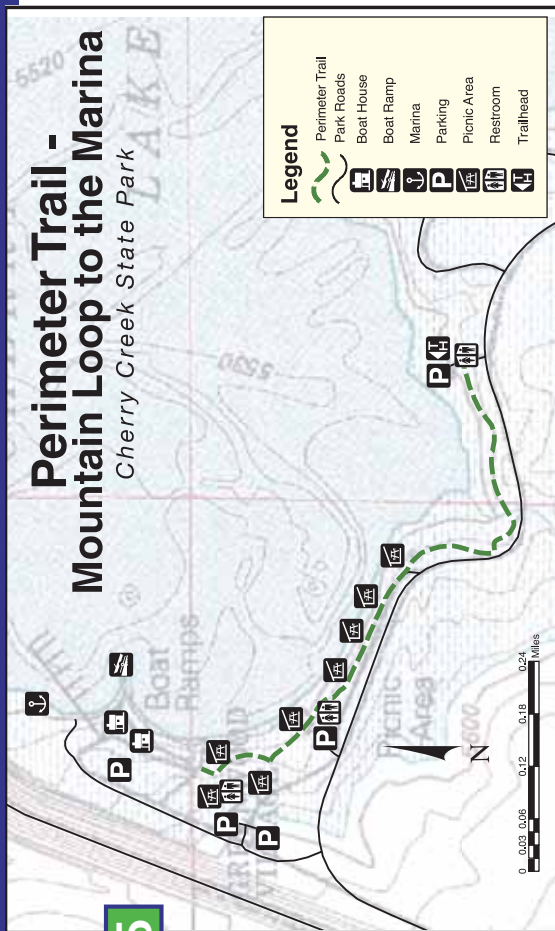
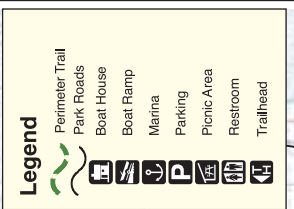
Creek Bottom Trail

4

Perimeter Trail - Mountain Loop to the Marina

Cherry Creek State Park

5



5 - Perimeter Trail - Mountain Loop to the Marina

Distance Round-trip: 1.7 miles (3,500 steps)
Surface: asphalt/concrete
Difficulty: easy

Leaning on a railing overlooking sparkling water. Cloudless, blue sky. Brightly colored, jaunty sails. Flags snapping in the wind. The cries of seagulls. Warm air scented with water and hot dogs. A busy, bustling waterfront. Where are we? Atlantic City? Bar Harbor? Seattle? Nope! On the Perimeter Trail from Mountain Loop to the Marina in Cherry Creek State Park. Beginning at Mountain Loop, a stroll takes you past the quiet, wooded edge of the reservoir and then gradually to the heart of the park. Past people on a picnic, on a bike or on a boat. People reading, playing, sitting, sleeping, sunbathing – or simply people watching people. Sit awhile on the beach or on the marina restaurant deck and watch the world go by in all its colorful glory. It's amazing where your feet and imagination can take you. So go ahead – get out and make a memory!

Finding the Trailhead

Cherry Creek State Park is southeast of Denver in Aurora, Colorado. From downtown Denver, take I-25 south to the I-225 exit. Take I-225 to the Parker Road Exit. Go south on Parker Road (Highway 83) to LeHigh Street. Go east into the park. From the entrance station road, go south at the first intersection. Follow the main park road; it will begin to bear west. On your right (north side of the road) you will see the sign for Mountain Loop. Park and follow the trail west from the parking lot.

Telephone: 303.699.3860
Address: 4201 South Parker Road
 Aurora, CO 80014
Web site: www.parks.state.co.us
E-mail: cherry.creek.park@state.co.us

Please purchase a Colorado State Parks daily or annual pass for entry.

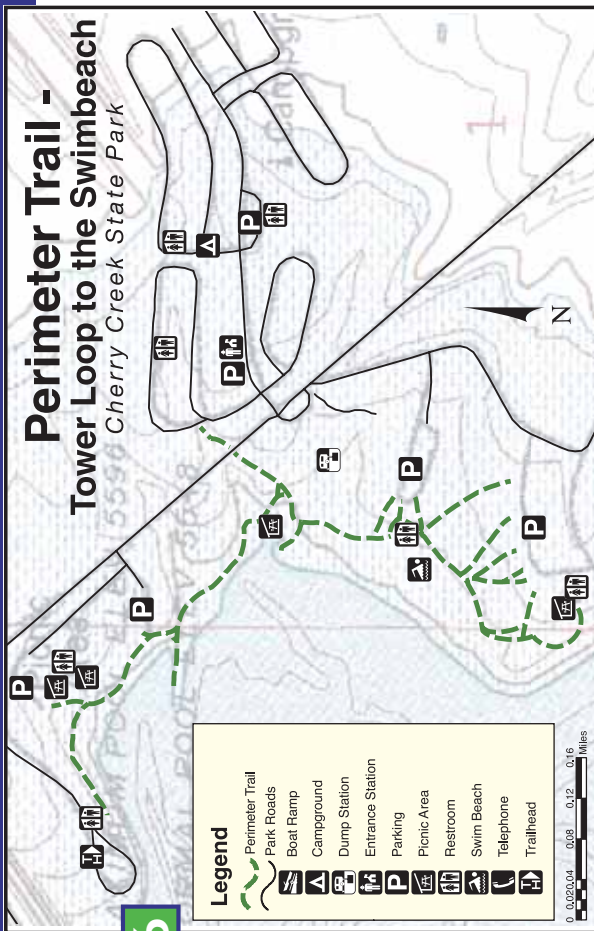
5

Perimeter Trail - Mountain Loop to the Marina

5

Perimeter Trail - Tower Loop to the Swimbeach

Cherry Creek State Park



6

6 - Perimeter Trail - Tower Loop to the Swimbeach

Distance Round-trip:	1.25 miles (2,500 steps)
Surface:	natural
Difficulty:	easy

This gently rolling trail starts at the imposing Dam Tower and heads south along the reservoir's edge. During the summer you might want to wear a swimsuit under your hiking duds to cool off at the swimbeach after hoofing it in the heat. Or simply sit in the many shaded places and see the views. The blue lake and white wakes. Buoys bobbing and rocking. Yellow jet skis, red and white-striped umbrellas, blue tents and bright green swimsuits. There's a snack hut, playground and campground just across the road. In Dixon Grove Picnic Area, lay out your picnic spread on one of the tables under a shady cottonwood tree. Wet your line at one of the popular fishing spots right there along the shoreline. Any way you look at it, there's never a dull moment. Rain or shine, summer or winter your feet will welcome this walk.

Finding the Trailhead

Cherry Creek State Park is southeast of Denver in Aurora, Colorado. From downtown Denver, take I-25 south to the I-225 exit. Take I-225 to the Parker Road Exit. Go south on Parker Road (Highway 83) to LeHigh Street. Go east into the park. From the East Entrance Station off Parker Road, go directly east to the first right turn (north). Take this road to the end for the Tower Loop Parking Lot. The trail departs from the northwest end of the parking lot and heads south.

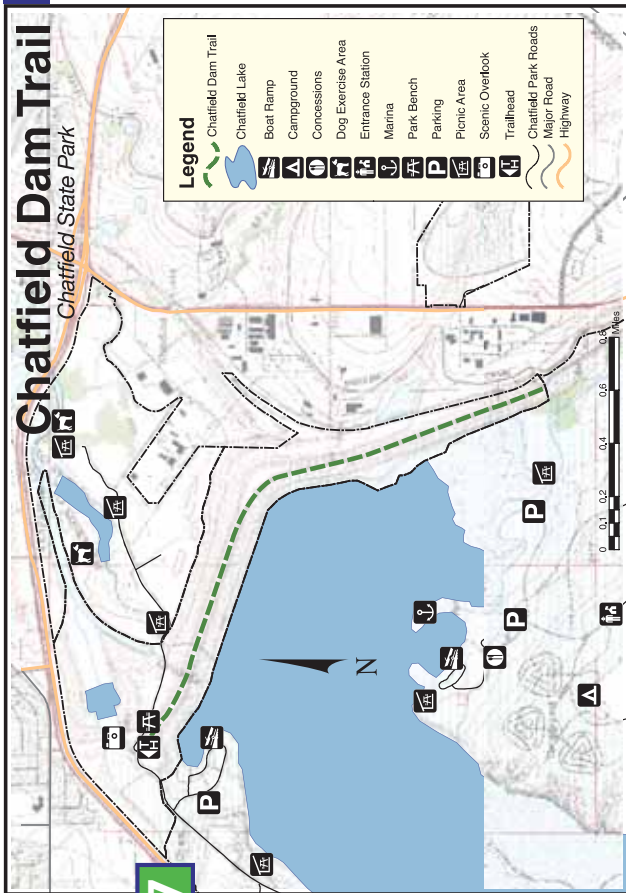
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6 Perimeter Trail - Tower Loop to the Swimbeach 6

Chatfield Dam Trail

Chatfield State Park



7

7 - Chatfield Dam Trail

Distance Round-trip:	4.8 miles (9,600 steps)
Surface:	asphalt/natural
Difficulty:	easy

This mostly asphalt trail traverses the top of the earthen dam at Chatfield State Park. The beautiful, 360-degree views of the Chatfield Basin area from the Chatfield Dam Trail are picture perfect. While you walk, imagine a long ago vista of a shallow, salty sea, the thundering upheaval of the Rockies, the grinding of glaciers, Native Americans hunting and fishing, explorers scouting and mapping and pioneers farming and ranching along the abundance of the South Platte River. In 1965, after a long history of devastating floods, the river burst its banks and roared into Denver. The dam was built, along with 13 more upstream, to stem the flow. As you take in the view the lake, populated with boats and wildlife – the river lies underneath. There’s no shade on this trail – except under the picnic shelters that await you after your walk – so take a hat, water, sunscreen and your camera. Afterward, put your feet up under a breezy shelter and relax.

Finding the Trailhead

Chatfield State Park is southwest of Denver. From downtown Denver, go south on I-25 the west on C470. Take C470 to the Wadsworth Exit (Highway 121). Go south on Wadsworth about one mile. Chatfield State Park is on the east side of the road. The trailhead is north from the first “T” intersection. Go up the main park road about two miles past the North Boat Ramps and up the road to the top of the dam. Park in the lot at the top of the dam.

Telephone: 303.791.7275
Address: 11500 North Roxborough Park Road
Littleton, CO 80125
Web site: www.parks.state.co.us
E-mail: chatfield.park@state.co.us

Please purchase a Colorado State Parks daily or annual pass for entry.

7

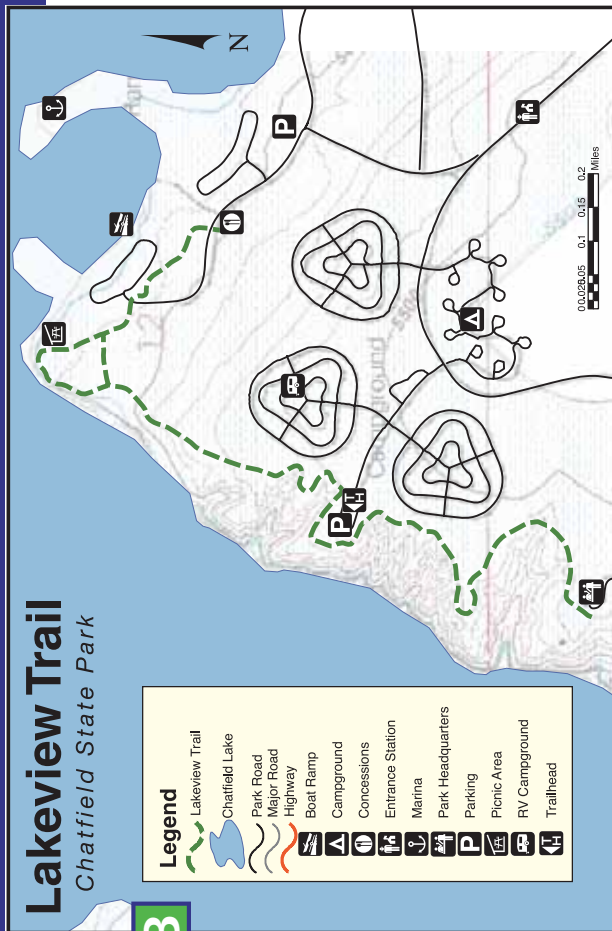
Chatfield Dam Trail

7

Lakeview Trail

Chatfield State Park

8



Legend	
	Lakeview Trail
	Chatfield Lake
	Park Road
	Major Road
	Highway
	Boat Ramp
	Campground
	Concessions
	Entrance Station
	Marina
	Park Headquarters
	Parking
	Picnic Area
	RV Campground
	Trailhead

8 - Lakeview Trail

Distance Round-trip: 2.8 miles (5,600 steps)
Surface: asphalt
Difficulty: easy

The Lakeview Trail gives you an equally delightful choice: south to the historic 1852 Slocum Cabin or north to a pier overlooking the lake, and just a hop, skip and jump from the marina. So heads north, tails south. Either way you can't lose. Both ways offer an expansive view of the lake and the hogbacks as this serpentine trail follows the edge of a bluff high above the water. This open expanse of high prairie, studded with wildflowers, cut by deep arroyos and crowned by the bright blue sky is a great taste of the West's wide open spaces. There are lots of picnic tables on both ends. The marina area, busy with fishermen and boaters, guarantees plenty of people-watching.

Finding the Trailhead

Chatfield State Park is southwest of Denver. From downtown Denver, go south on I-25 then west on C470 to Wadsworth (Highway 121). Go south one mile and turn east into the Deer Creek entrance. This trailhead is on the east side of the park. At the first intersection in the park turn right (south). Follow the main park road as it crosses the Platte River and passes through the campground. Go west (left) at the sign for the Campground Office. Lakeview parking lot is at the end of the road.

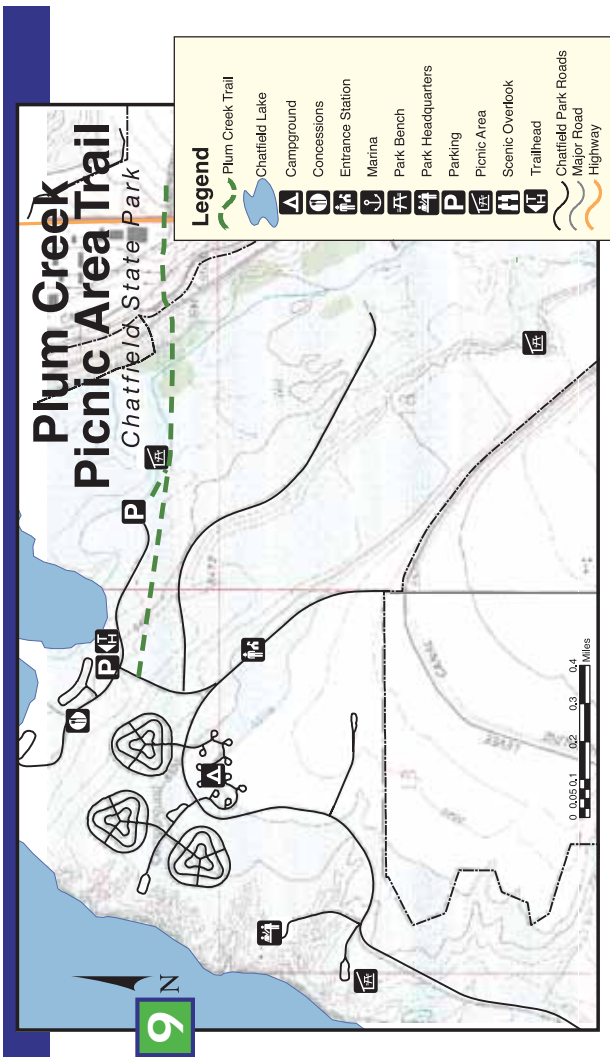
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 Littleton, CO 80125
Web site: www.parks.state.co.us
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88

Lakeview Trail

88



9 - Plum Creek Picnic Area Trail

Distance Round-trip: 1.5 miles (3,000 steps)
Surface: asphalt/concrete
Difficulty: easy

Good at any time, the Plum Creek Picnic Area Trail is especially great during the spring when the intermittent, braided stream, Plum Creek, is flowing at peak levels. This trail begins in a shady picnic area, crosses a picturesque bridge and then winds through a wooded riparian area. The presence of water in semi-arid Colorado guarantees trees, flowers and wildlife. Hikers may see deer, porcupine, birds, insects and small mammals, accompanied by the vanilla smell of cottonwoods and the quiet music of the creek. Remember to look up, down and all around, on this relaxing walk, for a chance to spot all the tree and ground dwelling critters you can.

Finding the Trailhead

Chatfield State Park is southwest of Denver. From downtown Denver, go south on I-25 then west on C470 to Wadsworth (Highway 121). Go south one mile and turn east into the Deer Creek entrance. At the first intersection in the park turn right (south). Follow the main park road as it crosses the Platte River and passes through the campground. Turn left (north) at the triangular intersection just past the campground dump station. At the next stop sign turn right (east) onto the Plum Creek Picnic Area dirt road. Take it to the end and park. The trail starts in the southeast corner of the parking lot.

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Wetlands Gazebo Trail

Chatfield State Park



10

10 - Wetlands Gazebo Trail

Distance Round-trip:	1.5 miles (3,000 steps)
Surface:	crusher fine
Difficulty:	easy

Bring your binoculars and your sunscreen. The jewels of the sunny, wide Wetlands Gazebo Trail await only $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile away. Your destination is the Wetlands Gazebo overlooking a successful man-made wetland complex of ponds and a perfect spot to rest while you are watching the abundance of wildlife drawn to one of semi-arid Colorado's very important habitats. This is how wetlands work and during dry times, other types of wildlife move in. Watch for critters that crawl, burrow, fly, climb, paddle, run, jump, float, swim, dive and hop; of every shape, form, color and constitution. This dynamic system teeming with life will always offer wonderful surprises every season of the year. If you find your feet itching for more mileage, there are many other trails that depart from the Discovery Pavilion hub – your magic carpets to the adventures in the natural world.

Finding the Trailhead

Chatfield State Park is southwest of Denver. From downtown Denver, go south on I-25 then west on C470 to Wadsworth (Highway 121). Continue driving south on Wadsworth to Waterton Road. Go left (east) on Waterton Road and make your first left (north) into the Discovery Area parking lot of Chatfield State Park. The Wetlands Gazebo Trail begins at the north end.

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E-mail: chatfield.park@state.co.us

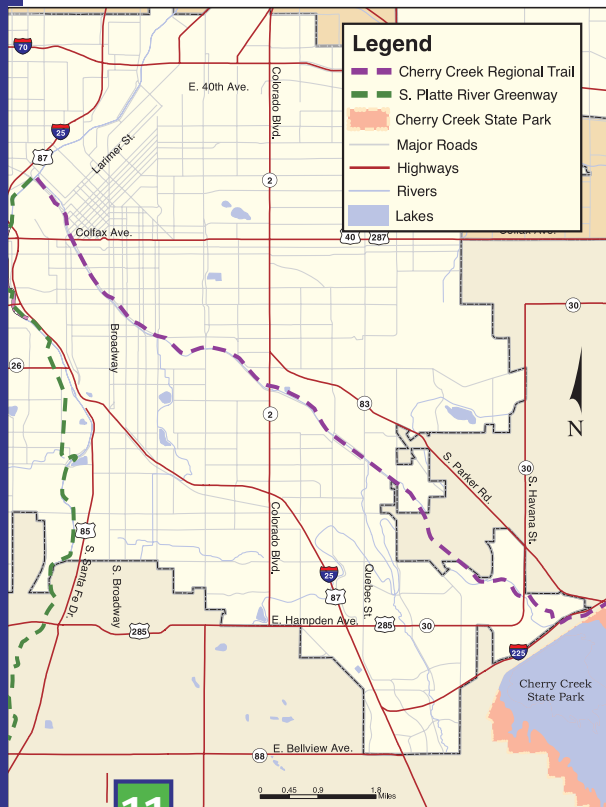
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10

Wetlands Gazebo Trail

10

Cherry Creek Regional Trail



11

11 - Cherry Creek Regional Trail

Distance One-Way:	13 miles (26,000 steps)
Surface:	concrete/asphalt
Difficulty:	easy to moderate

Put on those rambling shoes and start your foot pursuit of adventure and health. Cherry Creek Regional Trail is a people-watcher's paradise. Popular and easily accessible, it follows the meandering creek that wanders to downtown Denver and Confluence Park. Winding through neighborhoods and industry, past the mansions watching over the Denver Country Club, the path then dips down from the steep banks of the creek to the stream's edge and a quiet refuge below the hustle and bustle of downtown. The last spell of the trail travels under historic railroad bridges, past a Larimer Street park and brings you to Confluence Park and all the nearby amenities of a thriving city. From here, let your feet lead you into the heart of downtown and the many attractions and opportunities for shopping, dining and lodging.

Finding the Trailhead

You can choose to begin this trail in either direction, starting at Cherry Creek State Park or Confluence Park.

Cherry Creek State Park: Take I-25 south to I-225 and exit at Parker Road. Travel south (right) on Parker Road to LeHigh Road then turn right (west) into the park. A Daily pass is required for a vehicle. Park in the Swimbeach parking lot or the E Loop of the campground.

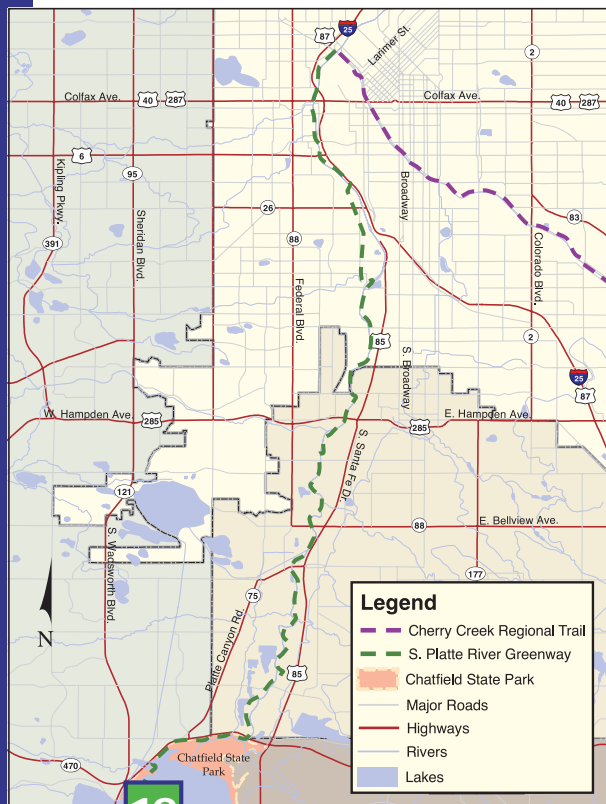
Confluence Park: Take I-25 north to the 23rd Street Exit. Go east (right) onto 23rd Street. Follow the road as it curves around past Ocean Journey and REI. There are many parking opportunities around REI. The trail and Confluence Park are behind (east of) REI.

11

Cherry Creek Regional Trail

11

South Platte River Greenway



12

12 - South Platte River Greenway

Distance Round-trip:	32 miles (64,000 steps)
Surface:	concrete
Difficulty:	easy

From the hum of spring and summer to the crisp solitude of autumn and winter, this walk has something for everyone. The South Platte River Greenway begins at Chatfield State Park and heads north through Littleton. This beautiful stretch has expansive picturesque views of the river and mountains, and wildlife viewing opportunities. The trail is rich with wayside exhibits, benches, gardens and artwork. In spring stroll through a bower of pink and white flowering fruit trees. Summer ushers in kayakers, vanilla-scented cottonwood trees and the trill of red-winged blackbirds. Scuff through falling autumn leaves, listen to geese honking on a cool golden afternoon. Winter beckons the walker with the plaintive call of a seagull, stark sculptures of leafless trees, river ice and brisk solitude. And then, if you've a mind to, hop onto the Light Rail back home. Journey's end.

Finding the Trailhead

You can choose to begin this trail in either direction, starting at Chatfield State Park or Confluence Park.

Chatfield State Park: From I-25 take C470 west to the Wadsworth Exit (Highway 121). Go south (left) on Wadsworth .8 mile to the park entrance. A Daily pass is required for a vehicle. Park in the Cottonwood Grove Picnic Area to access the trail.

Confluence Park: Take I-25 north to the 23rd Street Exit and exit east (right) onto 23rd Street. Follow the road as it curves around past Ocean Journey and REI. There are many parking opportunities around REI. The trail and Confluence Park are behind (east of) REI.

12

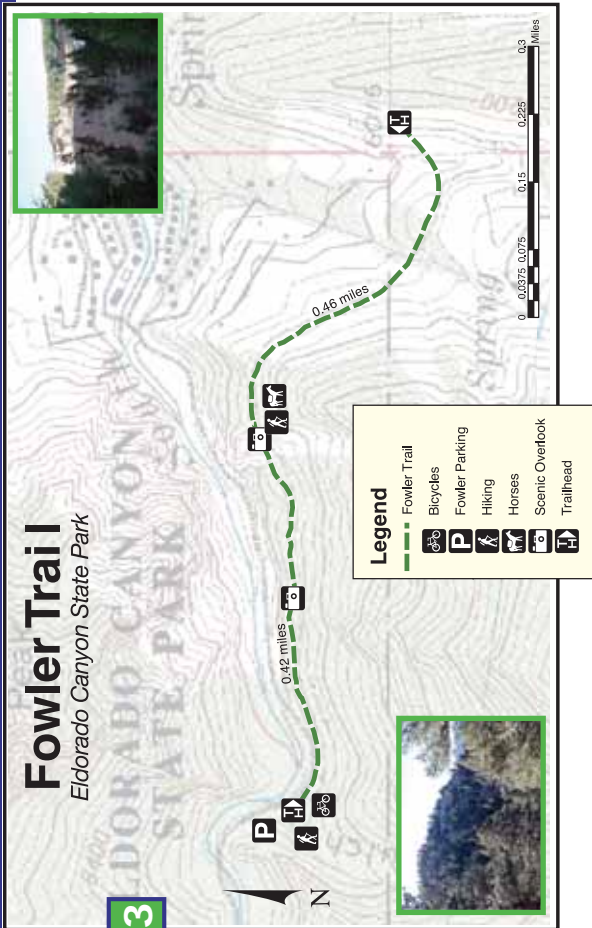
South Platte River Greenway

12

Fowler Trail I

Eldorado Canyon State Park

13



13 - Fowler Trail

Distance Round-trip: 2 miles (4,000 steps)
Surface: crusher fine
Difficulty: easy - moderate

Towering canyon walls, roaring water, soaring raptors and intrepid rock climbers – that’s the view from Fowler Trail. Cut into sandstone rock, the high perch of this flat bench trail offers all the excitement of canyon country – breathtaking scenery, abundant wildlife and a “close up” of the trees and plants that flourish in this niche between the plains and mountains. The Fowler Trail blends into City of Boulder Open Space, where the landscape shifts from ravine to woodland, and rounds out a very pleasant walk. Enjoy the sounds of South Boulder Creek, followed by a visit to the nearby Eldorado Canyon State Park Visitor Center. At an altitude of 6,000 feet, any season is a good time for a hike. But, as always, be ready for swift changes in weather.

Finding the Trailhead

Eldorado Canyon State Park is northwest of Denver and south of Boulder. From Denver, take I-25 north to Highway 36 west. Get off at the Louisville-Superior exit and go south to Highway 170. Go west on Highway 170, 7.4 miles to Eldorado Canyon. You will cross over Highway 93. Continue west on Highway 170. This road goes through the town of Eldorado Springs and ends at the entrance station to Eldorado Canyon State Park. Fowler Trailhead is on the south side of the park road. Watch for signs. The Visitor Center is further down at the end of the park road.

Telephone: 303.494.3943
Address: 9 Kneale Road
Eldorado Springs, CO 80025
Web site: www.parks.state.co.us
E-mail: eldorado.park@state.co.us

Please purchase a Colorado State Parks daily or annual pass for entry.

13

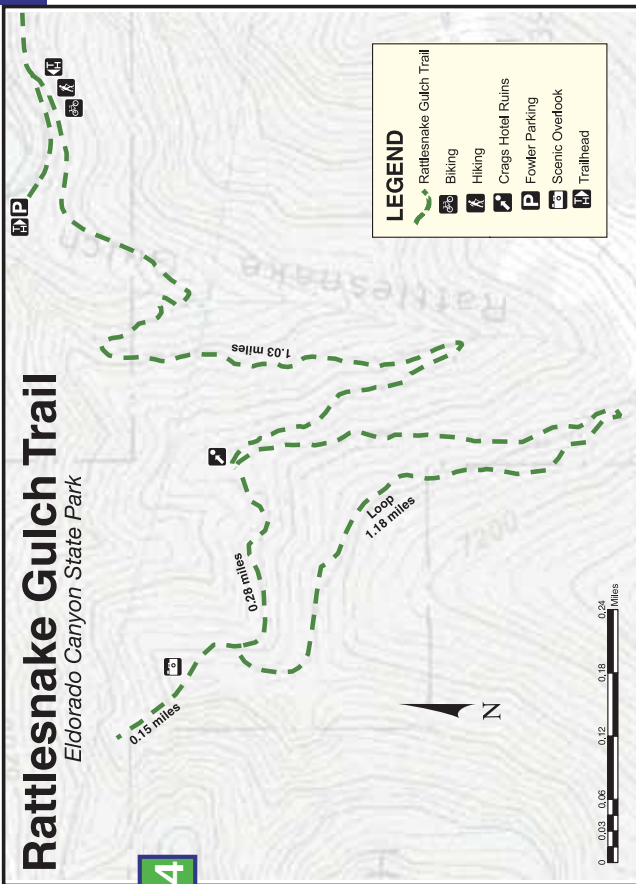
Fowler Trail

13

Rattlesnake Gulch Trail

Eldorado Canyon State Park

14



14 - Rattlesnake Gulch Trail

Distance Round-trip:	3.6 miles (7,200 steps)
Surface:	natural
Difficulty:	moderate - difficult

Rattlesnake Gulch Trail takes you 1,200 steep feet up to historic ruins and outstanding scenery. How about possible bear or mountain lion sightings, sheer cliffs, fantastic boulder formations? Did your ears perk up? Is your interest piqued? Appetite whetted? Then this hike is for you – well, you and a buddy. This back-country trail over rough and steep terrain is fairly remote. Load your backpack with food, water, rain gear, camera, binoculars, field guides, sunscreen and a hat. Good hiking shoes are a must. The Craggs Hotel ruins from a fire in 1912 await you, along with outstanding views of the Continental Divide. On the way up, surrounded by the beauty of the forest, you'll pass remnants of the inclined railway that transported guests to the luxury hotel, pass boulder fields and soft meadows. Rest a bit at the top; on the way down gravity gives a helping hand.

Finding the Trailhead

Eldorado Canyon State Park is northwest of Denver and south of Boulder. From Denver, take I-25 north to Highway 36. Take Highway 36 west. Get off at the Louisville-Superior Exit and go south to Highway 170. Go west on Highway 170, 7.4 miles to Eldorado Canyon. You will cross over Highway 93. Continue west on Highway 170. This road goes through the town of Eldorado Springs and ends at the entrance station to Eldorado Canyon State Park. Rattlesnake Gulch Trail departs from the same location as the Fowler Trail.

Telephone: 303.494.3943
Address: 9 Kneale Road
Eldorado Springs, CO 80025
Web site: www.parks.state.co.us
E-mail: eldorado.park@state.co.us

Please purchase a Colorado State Parks daily or annual pass for entry.

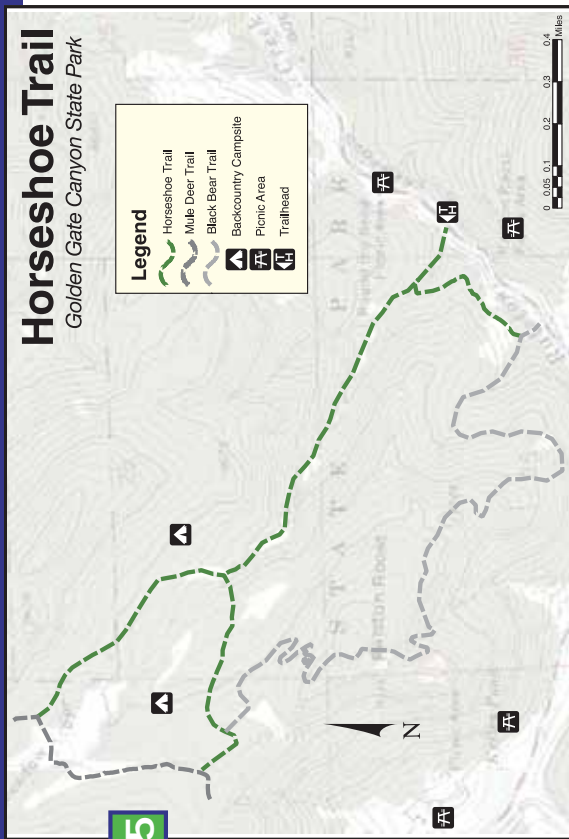
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Rattlesnake Gulch Trail

14

Horseshoe Trail

Golden Gate Canyon State Park



15

15 - Horseshoe Trail

Distance Round-trip:	3.6 miles (7,200 steps)
Surface:	natural
Difficulty:	easy to moderate

Horseshoe Trail is one of the most beautiful and painless ways to take 7,200 steps. Your destination from the trailhead is Frazer Meadow. In 1868, John Frazer, the “bachelor miner,” put down roots in this meadow that still bears his name. This natural surface trail, alongside a secretive, intermittent creek and bordered by immense rock outcroppings, ascends through pine, aspen and flowering meadows busy with insects, birds and the scratching of small critters. The creek sounds like rain and there’s a solitude so strong one bee sounds like a swarm, history so rich it’s humbling. Nature’s kitchen cooks up a fine spiced air...go and discover what this trail holds for you. Pack water, a lunch, field guides, binoculars, books – make a day of it. Or better yet, stay overnight in one of the back-country campsites. Make memories that last forever.

Finding the Trailhead

Golden Gate Canyon State Park is west of Denver. From I-25, take I-70 west. Exit Highway 58, go 5 miles to Highway 93. Go north 1.5 miles to Golden Gate Canyon Road, turn left then go 13 miles to the Golden Gate Canyon State Park Visitor Center at the intersection of Golden Gate Canyon Road and Highway 46. Turn right on Highway 46 and follow to Frazer Meadow Trailhead parking.

Telephone: 303.582.3707
Address: 92 Crawford Gulch Road
Golden, CO 80403
Web site: www.parks.state.co.us
E-mail: golden.gate.park@state.co.us

Please purchase a Colorado State Parks daily or annual pass for entry.

15

Horseshoe Trail

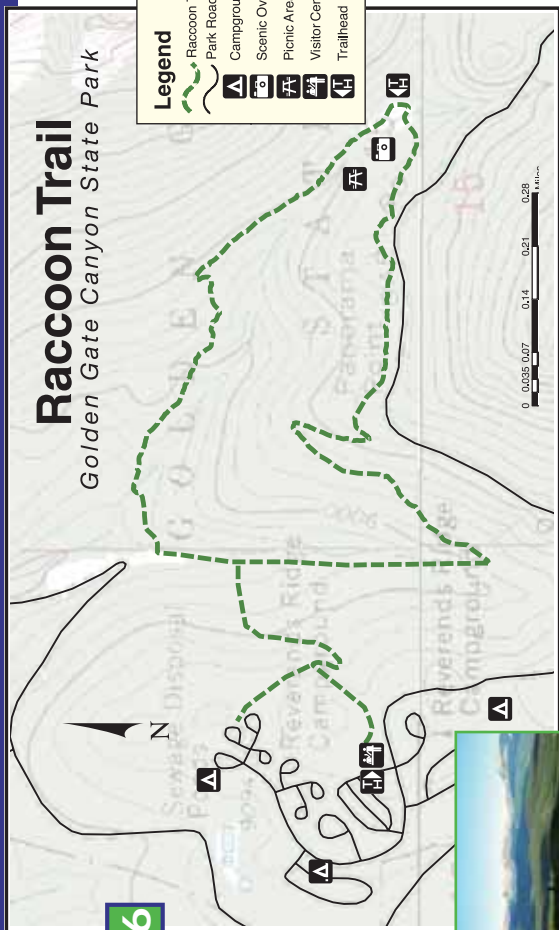
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Raccoon Trail

Golden Gate Canyon State Park

Legend

- Raccoon Trail
- Park Roads
- Campground
- Scenic Overlook
- Picnic Area
- Visitor Center
- Trailhead



16

16 - Raccoon Trail

Distance Round-trip:	2.5 miles (5,000 steps)
Surface:	natural
Difficulty:	moderate

Raccoon Trail darts out of Reverend's Ridge Campground, dives down into the forest and winds among the tall spires of pines. As you pad along on the noiseless carpet of pine needles in the cool shade, focus your senses on the surrounding natural beauty. Look up at the strikingly blue sky through the swaying tree tops and down at the bright green plants. Smell the air thick with the scent of evergreens. Listen to the creaks and cracklings, the rustling, peeps and chirps – and to the profound silence. The trail then pops back out at its pinnacle, Panorama Point, for a breathtaking view of the Continental Divide. Picnic tables, tucked into shady nooks welcome happy travelers for the congeniality of friends and family, a welcomed rest and then a walk back to see where you have been.

Finding the Trailhead

Golden Gate Canyon State Park is west of Denver. From I-25, take I-70 west. Exit Highway 58, go 5 miles to Highway 93. Go north 1.5 miles to Golden Gate Canyon Road, turn left then go 13 miles to the Golden Gate Canyon State Park Visitor Center at the intersection of Golden Gate Canyon Road and Highway 46. Bear left on Highway 46 to Mountain Base Road. Go right (north) to Gap Road then west (left) and make your first right and follow the signs to the campground office.

Telephone: 303.582.3707
Address: 92 Crawford Gulch Road
Golden, CO 80403
Web site: www.parks.state.co.us
E-mail: golden.gate.park@state.co.us

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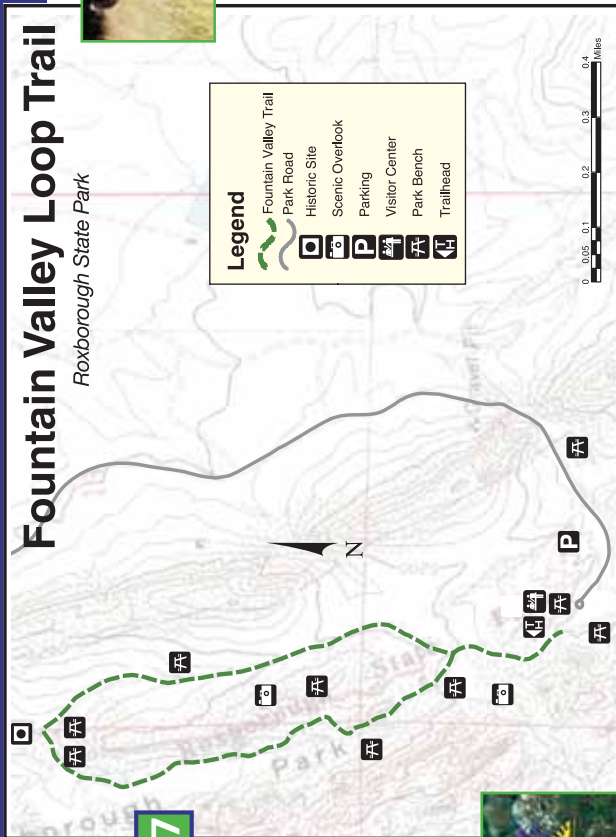
16

Raccoon Trail

16

Fountain Valley Loop Trail

Roxborough State Park



17



17 - Fountain Valley Loop Trail

Distance Round-trip:	2.2 miles (4,400 steps)
Surface:	natural
Difficulty:	easy to moderate

Just one step starts you on a fascinating journey through time – historic and geologic – on the Fountain Valley Loop Trail. This loop trail takes a traveler past the turn-of-the-century Perse Place home site and then close by the remarkable, red sandstone rocks of the Fountain and Lyons formations, where golden eagles nest in the smooth spires. Picnic on one of the trailside benches and watch the natural world go by – mule deer, coyote, birds, butterflies, bugs, raccoons, lizards – and maybe, just maybe a mountain lion or a bear. This diversity is the fruit of different habitats bumping up against each other. At the trail's end is the Visitor Center – great fun for all ages with its unique exhibits and interpretive programs.

Finding the Trailhead

Roxborough State Park is southwest of Denver. From downtown Denver, take I-25 north to C470 west. Then take C470 to the Wadsworth (Highway 121) exit. Travel south (left) 4.4 miles to Waterton Road, turn left and go 1.6 miles to North Rampart Range Road. Turn right and proceed 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Road, turn left and go one block to the park access road. Drive 2.2 miles on the access road to reach the Visitor Center parking lot. Fountain Valley Loop Trail departs from the Visitor Center on the south side.

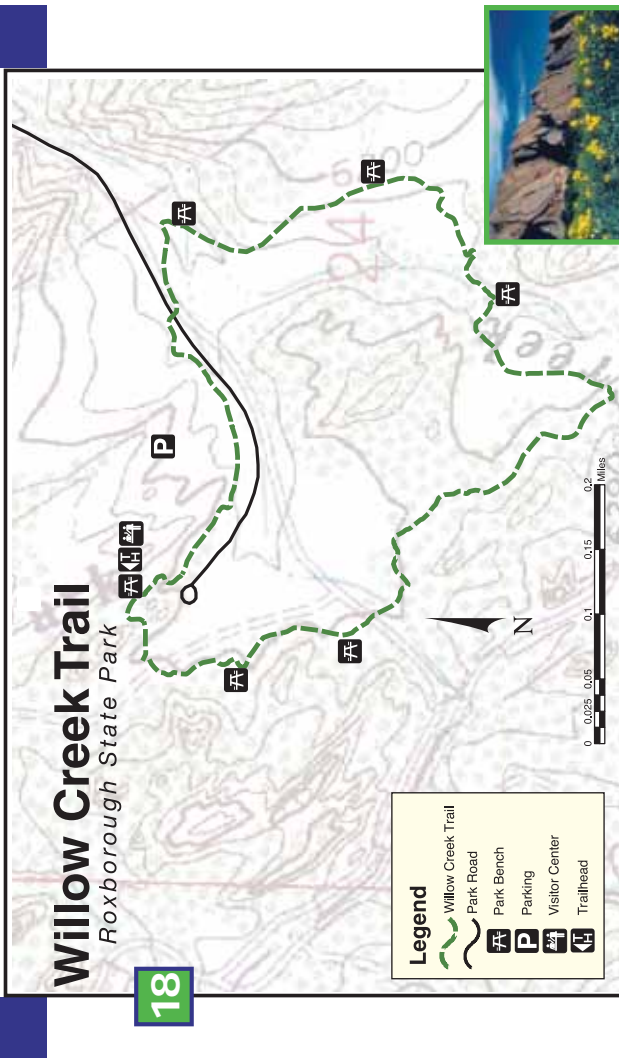
Telephone: 303.973.3959
Address: 4751 Roxborough Drive
Littleton, CO 80125
Web site: www.parks.state.co.us
E-mail: roxborough.park@state.co.us

*Please purchase a Colorado State Parks daily or annual pass for entry.
No pets allowed.*

17

Fountain Valley Loop Trail

17



18 - Willow Creek Trail

Distance Round-trip:	1.4 miles (2,800 steps)
Surface:	natural
Difficulty:	easy

A sweet retreat for your feet, Willow Creek Trail, a gentle slip of a trail, meanders through shady woodland, over Willow Creek and through a wildflower meadow. The peaceful solitude of Willow Creek Trail is broken only occasionally by soft footfalls, a bird's call or rustling in the underbrush. That rustling might be a good chance for a photo, so be sure to take a camera and binoculars for the great wildlife viewing and scenery. Speaking of wildlife, please leave Fido at home. Dogs are not allowed in order to protect them and the critters that call Roxborough home.

The Visitor Center is chock full of fun. And on a cold fall or winter day, sitting 'round the blazing fireplace with a book is positively magical.

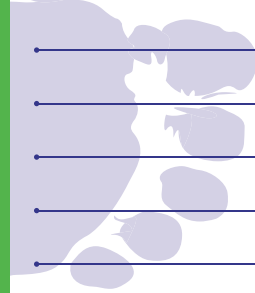
Finding the Trailhead

Roxborough State Park is southwest of Denver. From downtown Denver, take I-25 north to C470 west. Then take C470 to the Wadsworth (Highway 121) exit. Travel south (left) 4.4 miles to Waterton Road, turn left and go 1.6 miles to North Rampart Range Road. Turn right and proceed 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Road, turn left and go one block to the park access road. Drive 2.2 miles on the access road to reach the Visitor Center parking lot. Willow Creek Trail departs directly from the Visitor Center.

Telephone: 303.973.3959
Address: 4751 Roxborough Drive
 Littleton, CO 80125
Web site: www.parks.state.co.us
E-mail: roxborough.park@state.co.us

*Please purchase a Colorado State Parks daily or annual pass for entry.
 No pets allowed.*

Trail Notes and Observations



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Lined writing area for the right column, consisting of 20 horizontal blue lines.

