

# Hit The Trails

A HIKING GUIDE FOR GREER & THE SURROUNDING AREA

2nd Edition

## 16 trails

through some of Arizona's Most Beautiful Wilderness

- Trail Maps
- Wildlife Information
- FireWise
- Greer Campgrounds

**Pack it in...Pack it Out!**

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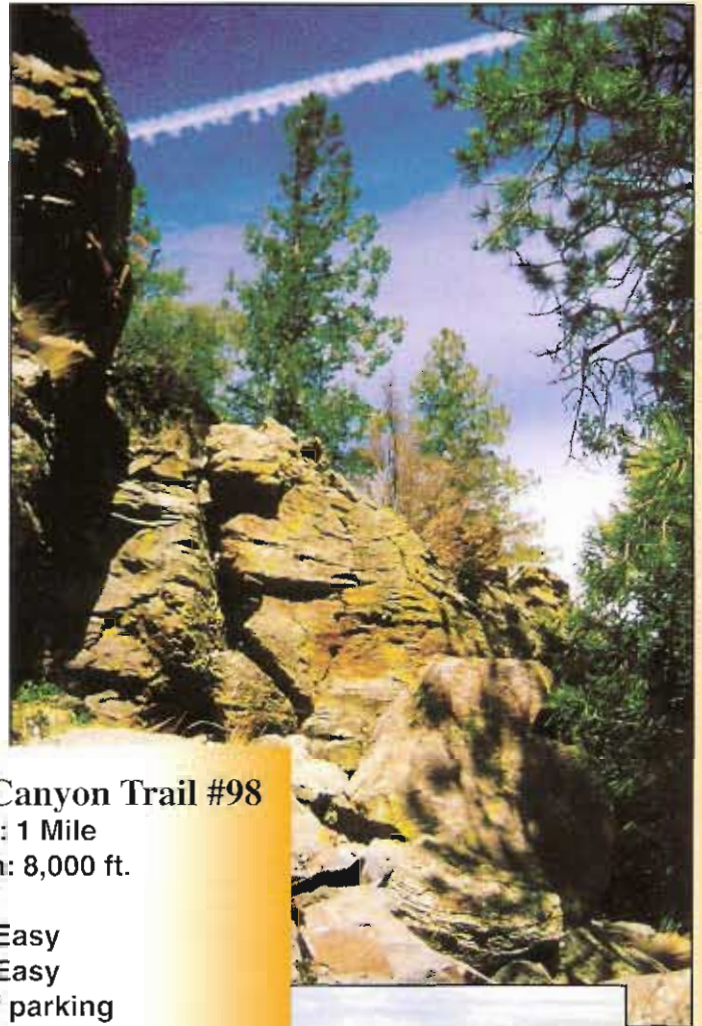
# Butler Canyon Trail No. 98

This beautiful mountain canyon trail was named after Jacob Noah Butler, who moved to Arizona with his 19 children in 1888 to homestead in the Greer area. Tall evergreens and quaking aspen overlook large rock formations along the flowing Butler Canyon stream. Wildflowers color the landscape, making this a popular place to visit from early spring until late fall.

The Butler Canyon Trail is a self-guided nature trail that provides lots of information about the wildlife, plants and the different habitats that are found along this path. For example, there is a 300-year-old ponderosa pine at station No. 2. From station No. 15 you can see and read about the dwarf mistletoe — a parasitic plant that can withdraw water and nutrients from its host and eventually kill it. At station No. 5, you can read about tree harvesting and station No. 6 gives you information about multiple tops and forked trees. Station No. 21 has information about riparian communities that flourish along the stream in the canyon.

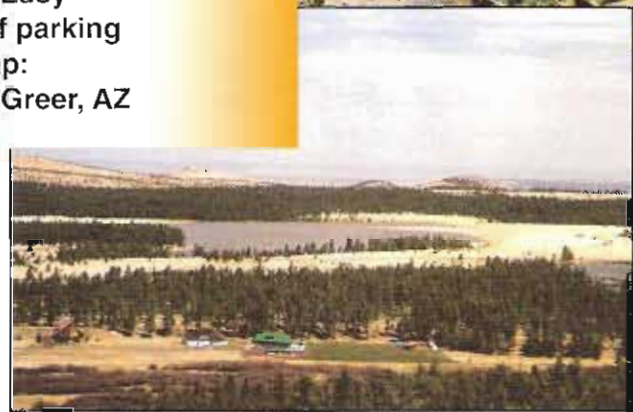
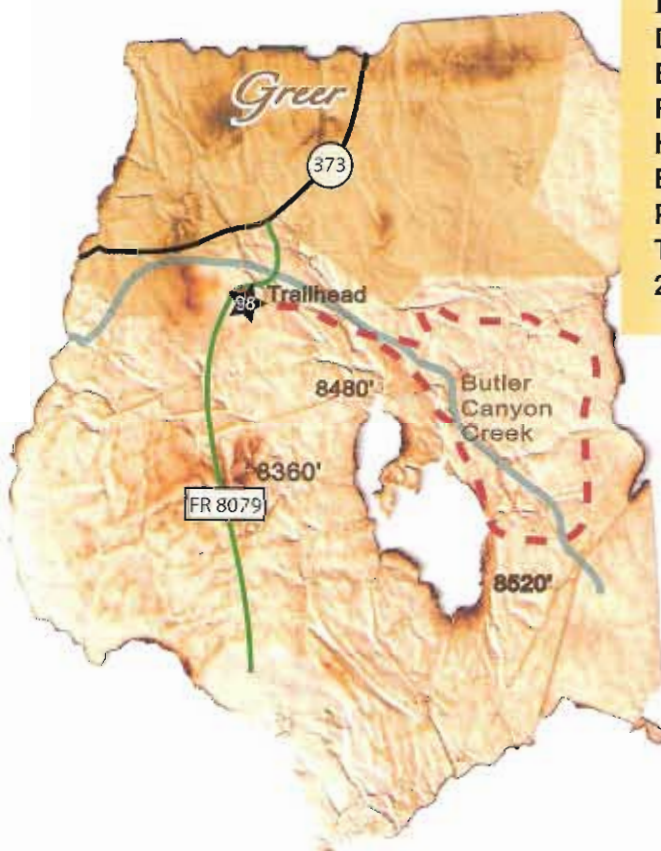
This trail is only a one mile hike — short enough to take your time and enjoy the wonderful scenery and even learn a lesson or two about nature. You may want to pick up a trail guide with each station's information from the Springerville Ranger District before you go.

Greer is a great recreation area with several resorts, restaurants, cabins and campgrounds with beautiful natural surroundings including Greer Lakes and the East and West Fork of the Little Colorado River.



## Butler Canyon Trail #98

Distance: 1 Mile  
Elevation: 8,000 ft.  
Rating:  
Hiking - Easy  
Biking - Easy  
Plenty of parking  
Topo Map:  
258 SW, Greer, AZ



View from the highest point of the trail.

### To find Butler Canyon Trail...

From Greer, look for the East Fork Road (located off Rt. 373 toward the entrance of Greer) and a sign that says "Nature Trail" on the east side of the road. Turn here and you will see the Trailhead and the parking lot.



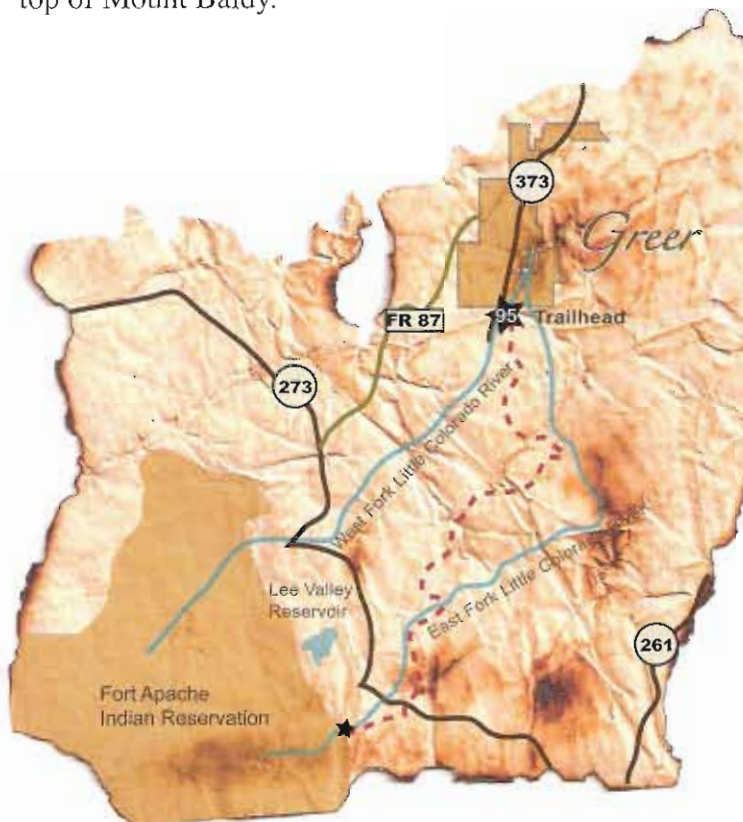
# East Fork Trail No. 95

You may get your feet wet crossing the Little Colorado River at the start of this trail — there's no bridge, but don't worry, your feet will warm up after you climb the 600-foot rise in elevation to Amberian Point. After the climb, the rest of the hike is easy. Pay attention to trail markers at the beginning of this trail (the trail turns to the right a few yards from the start of the barbed-wire fence), or you will end up in someone's backyard.

The first part of the trail is a dense forest of spruce, fir, ancient ponderosa and aspen. There are several signs of wildlife, such as porcupine markings, fox scat and several tracks left behind by animals such as coyote, rabbit and raccoon. Squirrels leave their cache inside overturned tree trunks and tiny, blue butterflies dance around the forest floor.

As you leave this area, the trail leads you to wide, tree-lined meadows with cienegas (marshy areas) and interesting rock formations. Venturing on you pass Marble Springs and Colter Reservoir. You can see the old corridor of the Apache Railway as you pass by the reservoir and as you look to the southwest, you can see Mount Baldy.

At the end of this trail is the Gabaldon Horse Campgrounds, where you'll find a trail that leads to the East Fork Mount Baldy Trail, which will take you to the top of Mount Baldy.



## East Fork Trail

Distance: 7 Miles (one way)

Elevation: 8,200 - 9,300 ft.

Rated:

Hiking - Moderate to difficult

Biking - Moderate to difficult

Topo Maps: 258 SW Greer, AZ

280 NW Big Lake, NW, AZ

The East Fork Trail crosses the Little Colorado River in Greer. There are many hiking groups in the White Mountains. Call the Lakeside Ranger District for more information at 928-368-5111.

## To find East Fork #95 Trail...

From Greer, follow Rt. 373 to FR 575. The trail marker is on the left side of the road, just off the main road. There is designated parking along the river.



# West Fork Trail No. 94

The West Fork Trail starts off on Osborne Road (in Greer) and meanders along a small creek surrounded by aspen and ponderosa pine. The trail gradually ascends to Badger Pond, also known as Trail Springs Tank, which is surrounded by raspberry bushes and wild roses. After leaving the pond, the trail splits but joins again in less than a quarter-of-a-mile. The most difficult part of the trail starts at this point.

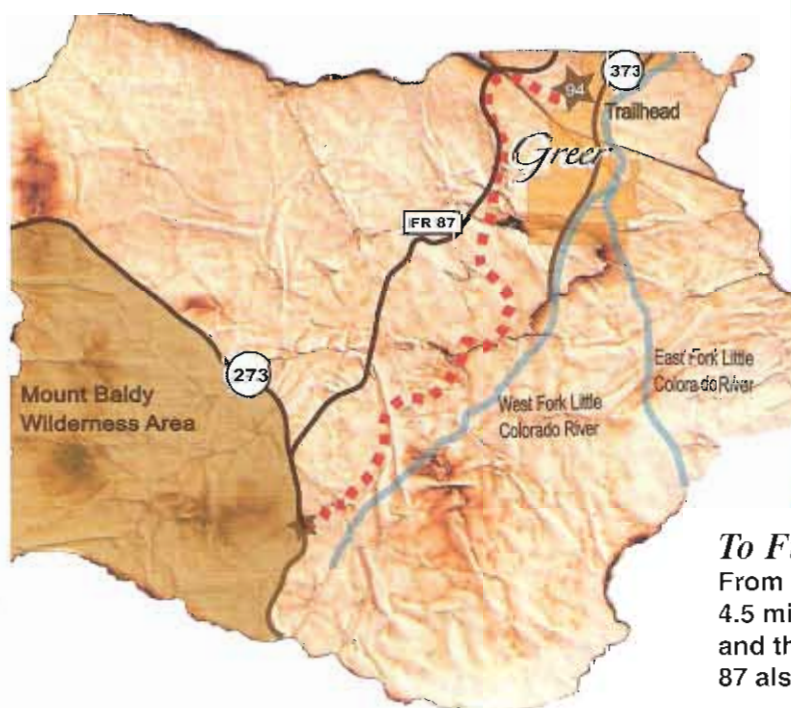
Once the trail joins, you begin climbing through steep and rocky terrain. Once you have passed this area, the trail levels out and you can see FR 87. This provides another starting point, where the trail connects to the road (there are two dead-end roads off of FR 87 that provide plenty of parking).

As I hike this trail, elk and mule deer cross my path. The deer stand their ground as I pass, showing true bravery. The elk take off before I can reach them, so I only get a fleeting glimpse. Beautiful stands of aspen line most of the trail on my way to Sheeps Crossing and the "quaking" of their leaves toss flickering shadows on my path.

Potato Hollow Spring, a natural spring, is 2 miles from Badger Pond and 4 miles from Sheeps Crossing. One quarter of a mile from Sheeps Crossing, you cross Route 273 to the West Fork of the Mount Baldy Wilderness Trail. There are restrooms here and plenty of parking.



Mountain Bluebells can be found along the trail.



## West Fork Trail #94

Distance: 7 Miles (one way)

Elevation: 8,500 - 9,000 ft.

Rated:

Hiking - Moderate to difficult

Biking - Moderate to difficult

Topo Map:

258 SW Greer, AZ

280 NW Big Lake NW AZ

## To Find the West Fork Trail...

From Greer, find the Osborne Road off Rt. 373 (approximately 4.5 miles toward Greer from Rt. 260). Turn west onto Osborne and the trail is a few blocks on the left. The trail connects to FR 87 also.

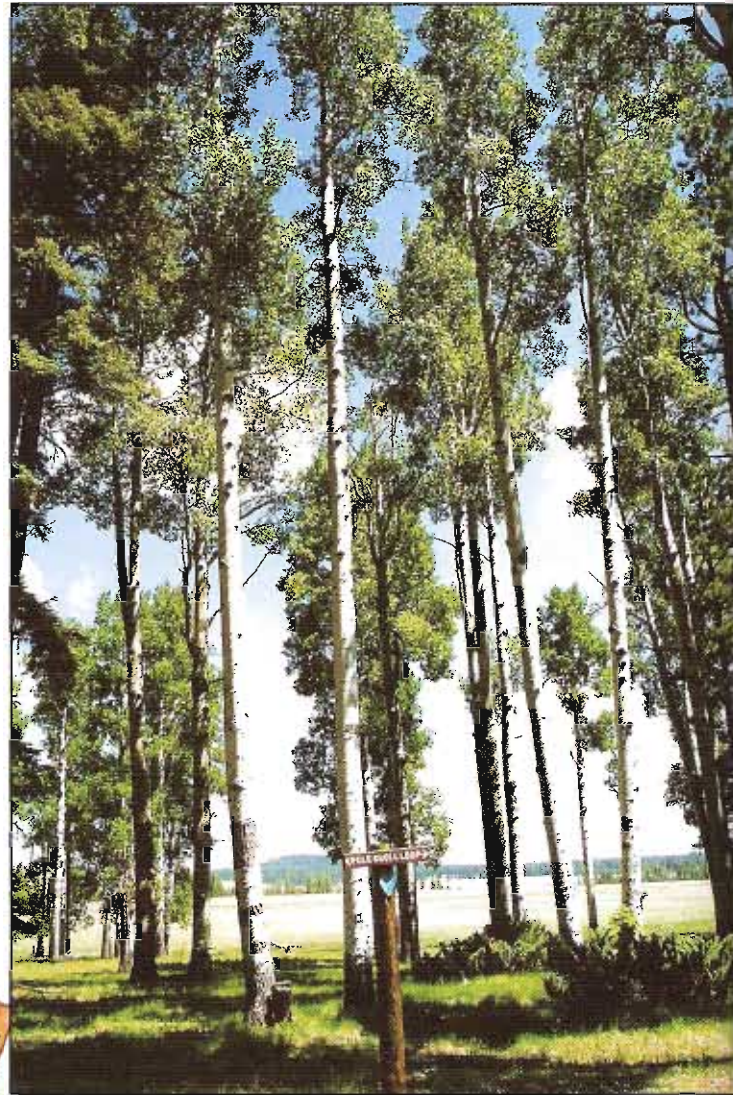


# Squirrel Springs Trail

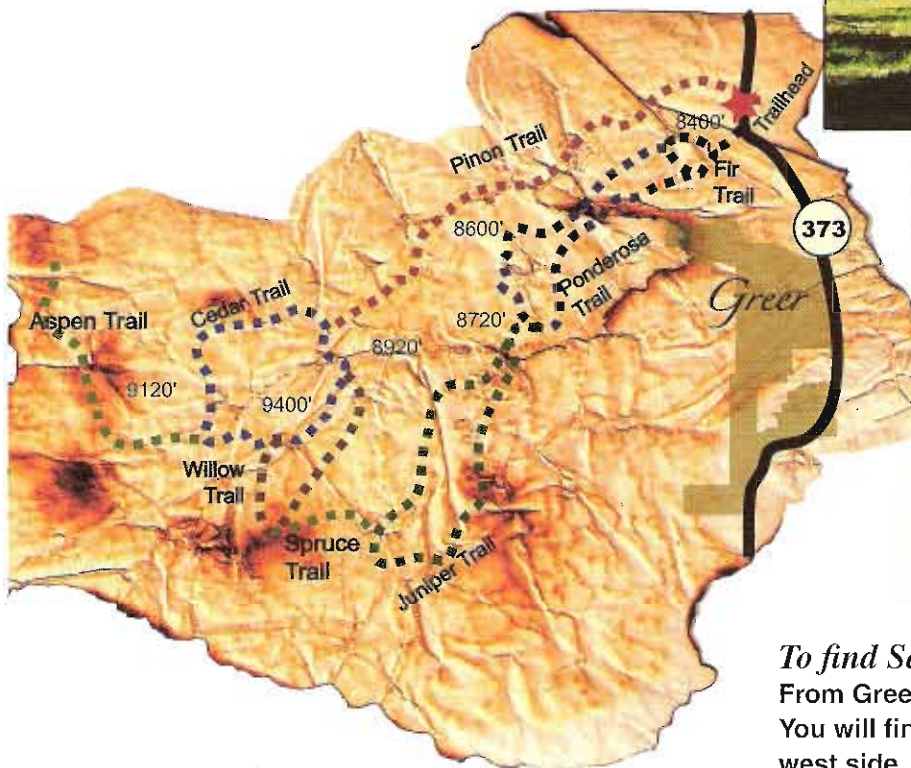
Large ponderosa pine towered over me as I started hiking Fir Trail (one of the many trails that make up the maze at this trail site). It is the first trail from the trailhead and connects with Ponderosa and Juniper Trails. Large stands of aspen with their bright green leaves and the coolness of the breeze made the hike an enjoyable exploration.

It would be very difficult to get lost on this trail — to the north is Route 260, and to the southeast is Greer. If you keep hiking to the west (where the sun sets in the evening), you will end up at Pole Knoll Recreation Area. Both of these trails are “hot spots” in the winter, when they are some of the best cross-country ski trails in the White Mountains.

The 14.29 miles of trail is rated from beginner to expert. Eight trails lead you through a thoroughfare of lower elevation terrain, like Fir Trail and a more challenging trail such as Ponderosa. The rest of the trails (except for Aspen) are rated expert, which makes this an excellent system of trails for the experienced hiker or skier.



Parts of the Squirrel Springs Trail are lined with beautiful aspen that show off their colors in the fall. The winter provides great cross-country skiing.



**Squirrel Springs Trail**  
**Distance:** 14.29 (combined)  
**Elevation:** 8,400 - 9,400  
**Rated:**  
Hiking and Skiing -  
Beginner to Expert

*To find Squirrel Springs Trails...*  
From Greer, follow Rt. 373 toward Rt. 260.  
You will find the very visible trailhead sign on the west side.



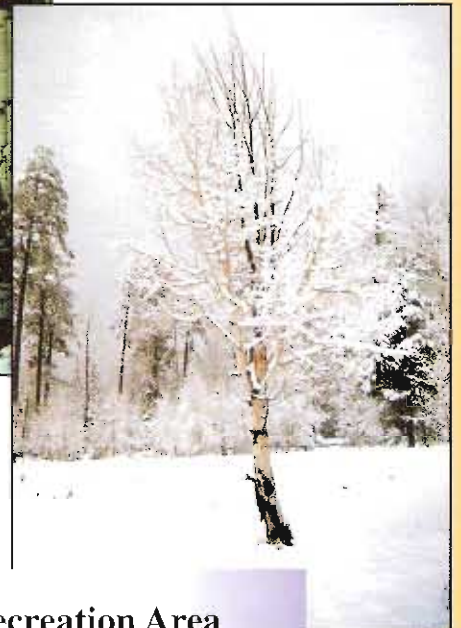
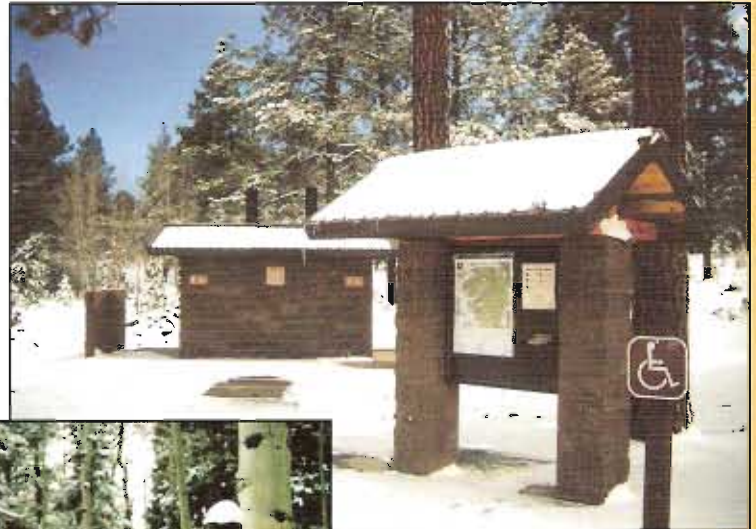
# Pole Knoll Recreation Area

If it's cross-country skiing you're looking for, Pole Knoll (thus its name) is known for its maze of various levels of ski trails. There are easy trails for the beginning skier or more difficult trails for the amateur skier, who is up for a challenge. For the most daring skier, Pole Knoll has its version of the black diamonds and the best part—the scenery is spectacular!

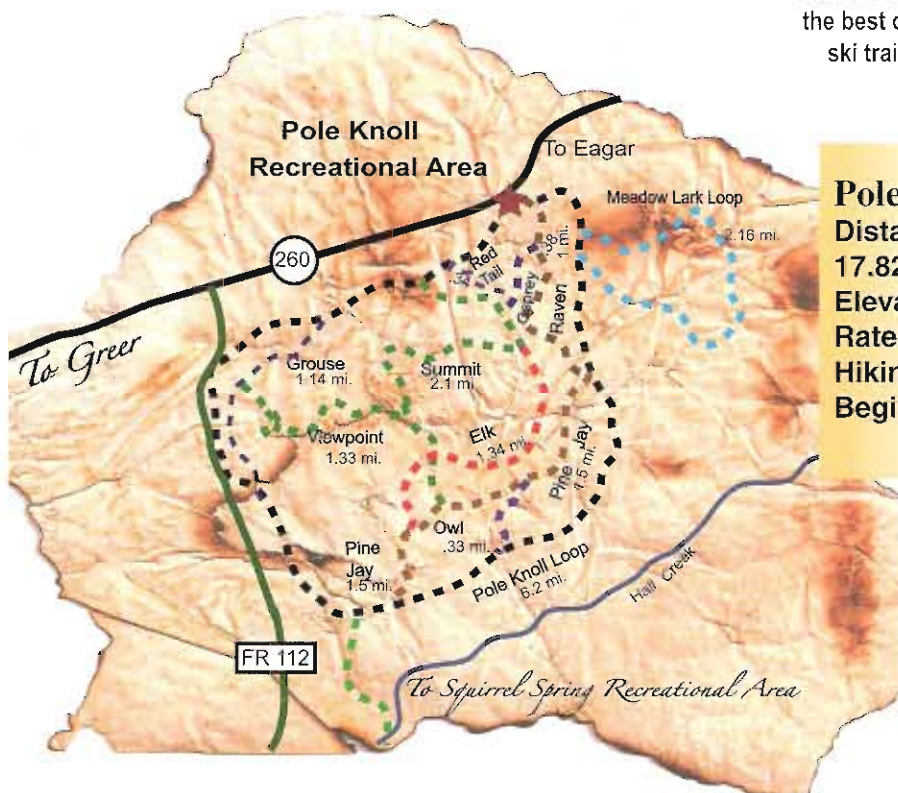
Large aspen stands and giant ponderosa shadow the snow-covered corridors as skiers glide across this winter wonderland. The Pole Knoll Loop girdles the maze as it glides past open meadow with panoramic views to Sunrise and Mount Baldy. For the challenge-deprived skier, Viewpoint Trail leads you up a group of switch-backs to an outstanding view of the surrounding area and a breathtaking return as you descend almost 500 feet.

You don't have to wait for winter to visit this recreation area. Spring and summer bring wildflowers, the bright green buddings and leaves of the aspen and plenty of horned lizards. Bright yellows and oranges embellish the aspen in the fall and they glisten above the trail like small, shiny sequins.

Please call the Springerville Ranger District at 928-333-4301 to check on snow conditions before venturing up for skiing.



Pole Knoll has some of the best cross-country ski trails in the area.



## Pole Knoll Recreation Area

Distance:

17.82 combined miles of trails

Elevation: 8,920 - 9,720 ft.

Rated:

Hiking and skiing -

Beginner - Expert

### To find Pole Knoll Trails...

From Greer follow Rt. 373 to Rt. 260. Turn left and follow Rt. 260 toward Sunrise Ski Area and look for the Pole Knoll Trail sign on the southeast side.



# Mount Baldy Trail No. 94

## West Fork

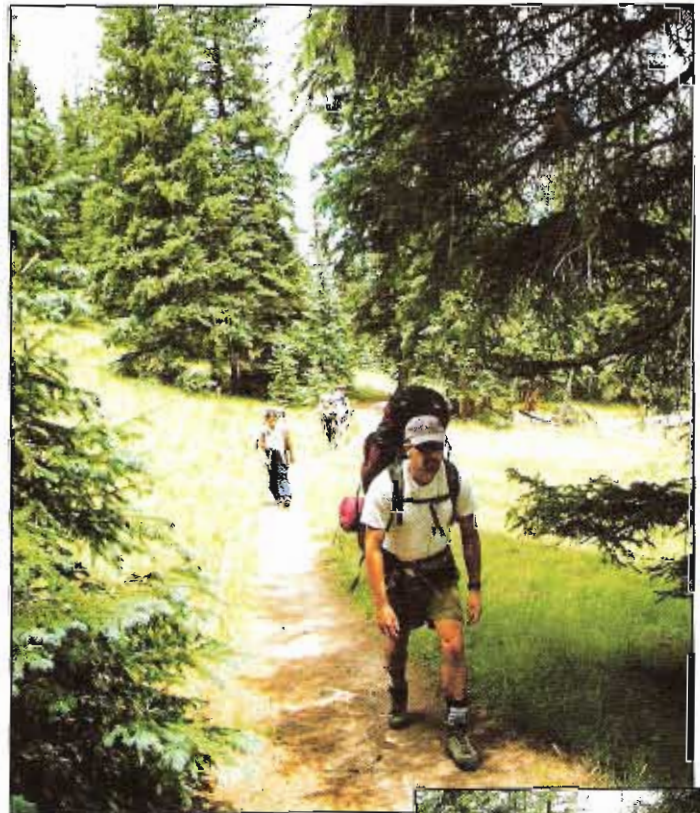
Mount Baldy Wilderness Trail is one of the most frequently traveled trails in the White Mountains. It offers more diversity than most trails in this area. It showcases the Little Colorado River, huge rock formations, meadows, panoramic mountain views and old growth forests.

The forests include spruce, majestically tall fir, white pine, ponderosa pine and aspen. The spectacular mountain views are breathtaking and the rock formations are awesome. This will take your mind off the fact that once you reach the top of Mount Baldy, you will have climbed over 2,000 feet.

Wildflowers are abundant in the mountain meadows along the trail. You can see harebell, yarrow, asters and skyrocket gilia, just to name a few. For the bird watcher, the Mount Baldy Trail is host to several varieties of warblers and vireos, and if you are lucky you may catch sight of a goshawk.

Mount Baldy Trail is very busy during the summer and especially during holidays. So, please try to plan around these times to prevent wear and tear of the trails or at least make sure to stay on the designated trail and pack out what you pack in. Mount Baldy is a wilderness area and part of a national and local effort to preserve wild and pristine areas. Rules pertaining to designated wilderness areas apply.

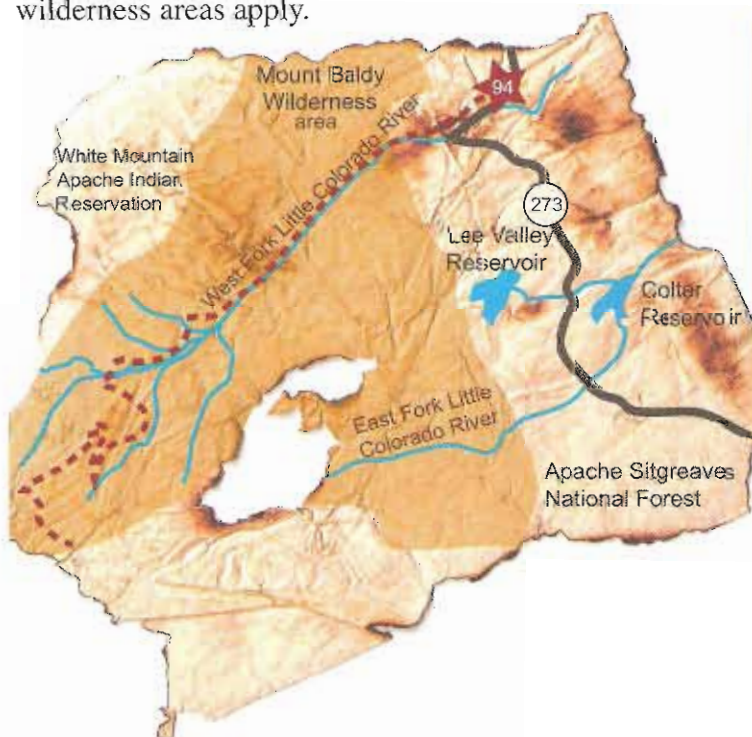
There are many other hiking trails that are not designated as wilderness areas and are just as great an outdoor experience. Call the Springerville Ranger District for more information at 928-333-4301.



**Mount Baldy - West Fork**  
**Distance:** 7 Miles to the summit - 14 miles round trip  
**Elevation:** 9,000 ft. at trailhead and 11,200 ft. at Reservation Boundary  
**Rating:**  
**Hiking - Moderate**  
**No Biking allowed**  
**Plenty of Parking**

### *To find Mount Baldy - West Fork Trail*

From Greer, follow Rt. 373 to Rt. 260. Turn left toward Lakeside to Rt. 273 (Sunrise Ski Hill). Turn left and follow Rt. 273 (past Sunrise) until you see the Mount Baldy Trail sign on your right. Turn into the parking lot. The kiosk is at the end of the parking lot.





# Mount Baldy Trail No. 95

## East Fork

It's a known fact that people drive for thousands of miles to see the beauty of Arizona's White Mountains. In years past, many homesteaders also realized its beauty and settled in to call it home.

One such homesteader, Phelps, built his cabin on the East Fork of the Little Colorado River, which is one of the most spectacular areas in the mountains. At one time you could sit on the remnants of his cabin at the beginning of this trail. Safety hazards, foreseen by the Forest Service, required the remaining ruins to be burned.

As you pass through the gate, you are captured by the rhythm of the Little Colorado River as it flows over rocks, creating small waterfalls. The trail meanders upward through a pristine forest with views of mountain meadows that are breathtaking. Rock formations jut out of the ground like giants looming over the trail and inspire the imagination of those who pass by.

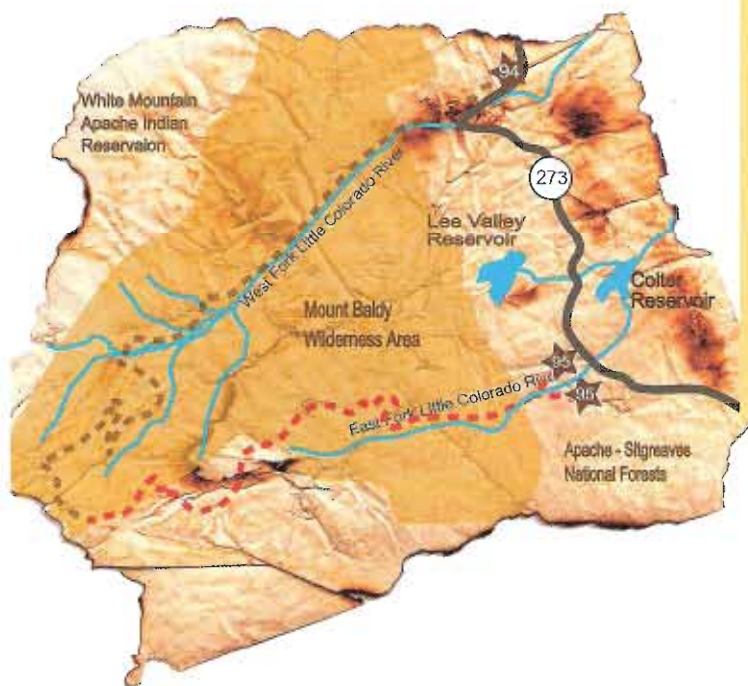
The climb to the summit is a 200-foot change in elevation, but is definitely worth the effort. The peak of Mount Baldy is beyond the White Mountain Apache Reservation boundary line and is closed to the public. Just prior to the boundary are remnants of a plane crash that occurred in the 1950s.

There are a few different ways to hike this trail. You can start at either the East Fork or West Fork trailheads and hike up to the top and back the way you

came or... you can hike the entire 17.5-mile route using the connector trail. Wear comfortable shoes and take along plenty of water. You may want to take along snacks or a lunch if you plan to hike the trail in its entirety. It will take most moderate hikers a full day.



The old plane crash on Mount Baldy is just before the boundary line on the East Fork Trail. Baldy is filled with a variety of diverse terrains.



### Mount Baldy Trail - East Fork

**Distance: 7 Miles to the summit  
14 miles round trip  
17.5 miles including the connector trail  
Elevation: 9,300 at trailhead  
11,200 at Reservation Boundary  
Rating: Moderate  
No biking allowed  
Plenty of parking  
Topo map: 279 NE Mount Ord, AZ; 280 NW Big Lake**

### *To find Mount Baldy - East Fork Trail...*

From Greer follow Rt. 373 to Rt. 260. Turn left and follow Rt. 260 to Rt. 273 (Sunrise Ski Hill) toward Lakeside. Turn left and follow Rt. 273 past Sheep's Crossing and the single lane bridge until you see the trailhead sign on your right.



# South Fork Trail No. 97

South Fork Trail is a beautiful trail that winds along the Little Colorado River through a lush forest of ponderosa pine and aspen. The trail starts from the South Fork Campground at the end of the driveway, travels approximately three miles, crosses the river and continues another four miles (uphill) to Mexican Hay Lake. There is a variety of terrain including picturesque panoramic views, wildflowers and wildlife.

The vivid green colors along the river make this a worthy hike. Willows and wild roses combined with the melodic sounds of the river's flow is a hiker's paradise. But beware! Not all of the plants are friendly. Poison ivy covers large portions of the river bank, so closed-toed shoes are highly recommended.

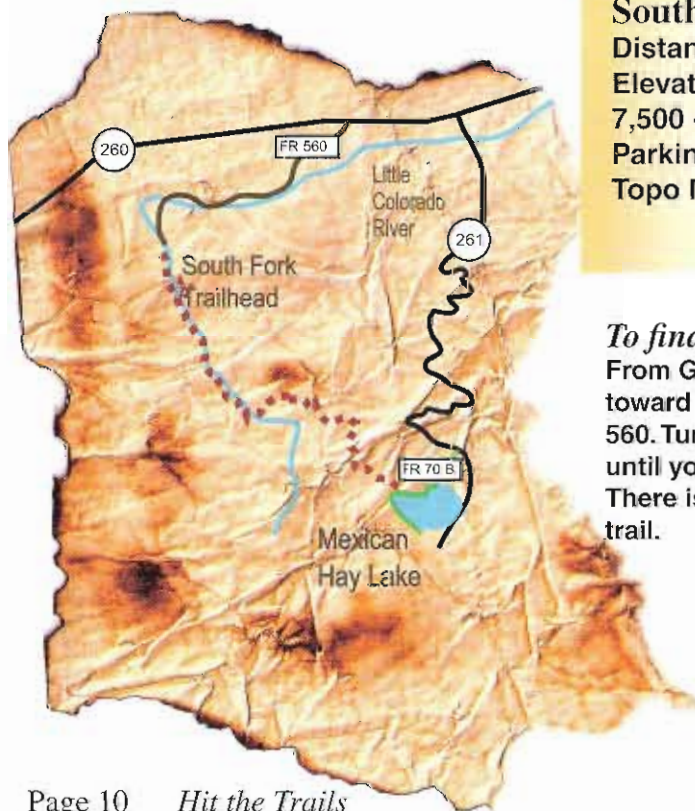
Depending on the time of year, South Fork can be very hot. Take along a lot of drinking water (never drink from the river unless you filter it first) and sunscreen. Your hiking boots should have good tread to scale the climb after crossing the river. Once to the top of the bank, the trail ascends at an easier rate and eventually levels out. Some of the best views can be seen at the top, so the climb is worth the work.

I recommend driving two cars for this hike. Park one at Mexican Hay Lake off of Rt. 261 and one at South Fork Campground (located at the end of FR 560). This

makes the hike shorter and gives you a break for lunch and to just enjoy the views. Elk, antelope and bear are known to frequent this trail, but the day I hiked it the biggest and wildest creature I saw was a horned lizard.



The first part of the South Fork Trail follows the Little Colorado River. Tall pine and other riparian vegetation provide shade for a cool hike.



## South Fork Trail

Distance: 7 Miles

Elevation:

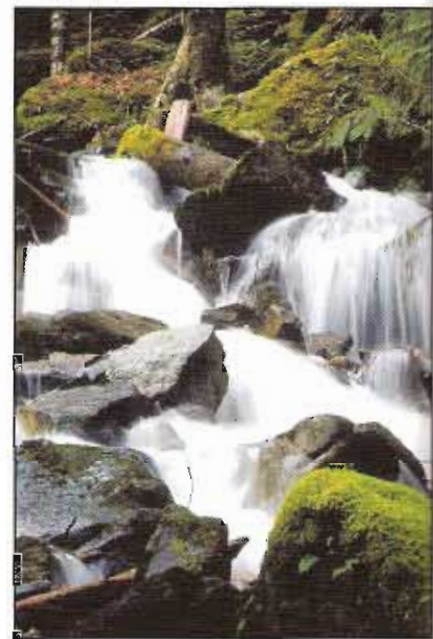
7,500 - 9,000 Ft.

Parking available

Topo Map: AZ; 258 SE Eagar

### To find South Fork Trail...

From Greer travel east on Rt. 260 toward Eagar until you reach FR 560. Turn right and follow this road until you reach the campground. There is a directional sign for the trail.



Just after a great White Mountain winter, the strong flow of the streams provide beautiful waterfalls.

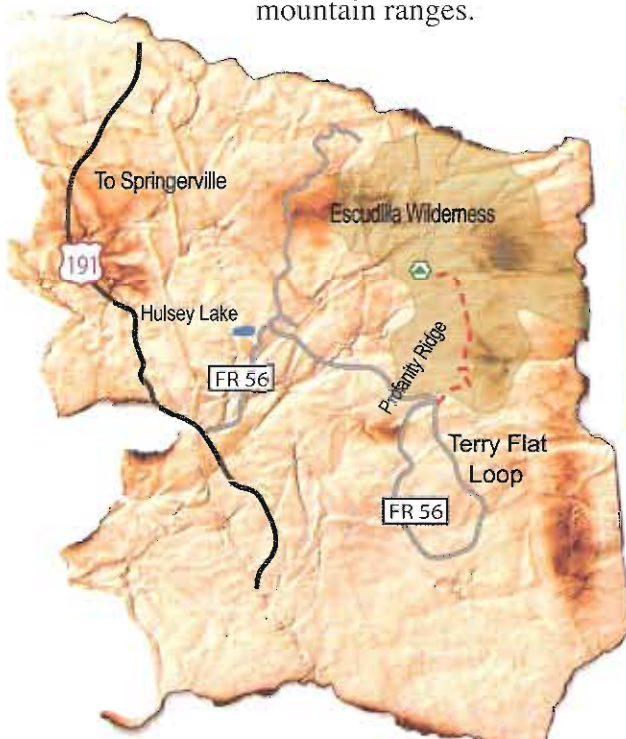


# Escudilla Mountain Trail

## No. 308

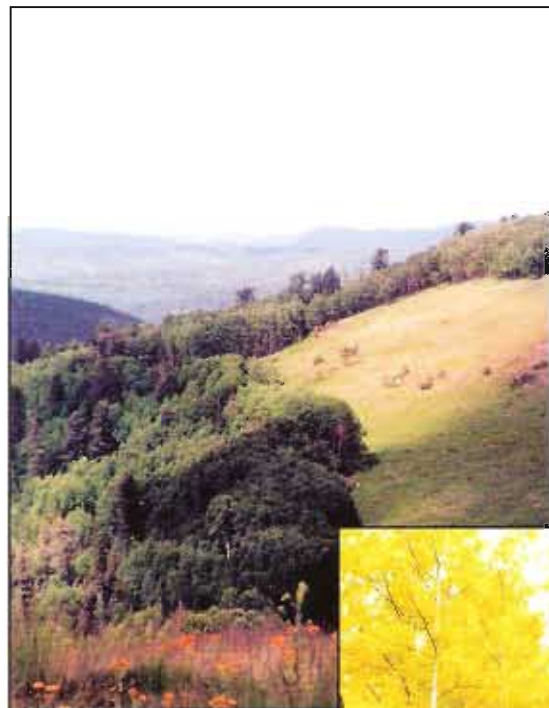
“To the north of the mountain you rode on honey-colored plains. Look up anywhere, anytime, and you saw Escudilla.” This is the description of Escudilla Mountain, written by Aldo Leopold, when he worked as an Arizona Forest Officer in 1909. He was one of the founders of the Wilderness Society and initiated the first Forest Wilderness Area now known as the Gila National Forest. He also founded the profession of game management. Back in the days when Leopold worked in Arizona, Escudilla Mountain was the home of a large grizzly bear named Big Foot. He was seldom seen but left incredible tracks. Big Foot only killed one cow a year, but this was his downfall. Eventually a government trapper (common in those days) came out looking for problem animals and was told about the large grizzly living up on the mountain. After failing at all his usual methods of trapping, the Fed rigged up a set-gun (a string-triggered rifle), and the last grizzly bear in Arizona shot himself on Escudilla Mountain.

Parts of Escudilla Mountain were declared wilderness in 1984. It includes approximately 500 acres of thick aspen stands, spruce and Douglas fir. It is one of the most popular hikes in this area. The large stands of aspen bring people from all over the world to see the incredible fall colors. The fire tower located at the end of the trail provides panoramic views of the surrounding mountain ranges.



Because of the popularity of this trail, particular care should be taken to keep the area in its pristine condition. Because of its wilderness status, no bikes are allowed and all restrictions pertaining to wilderness apply. For more information about wilderness hiking and camping, call the Springerville Ranger District at 928-333-4301.

If you plan to hike Escudilla Mountain, read “A Sand County Almanac” by Aldo Leopold. It may change how you think about this mountain — you might “think like a mountain.”



**Escudilla Mountain Trail**  
**Distance: 3.5 miles (one way)**  
**Elevation: 9,560 - 10, 877 ft.**  
**Rating:**  
**Hiking: Moderate**  
**No biking allowed**  
**Parking at the end of Terry Flat Loop**

### *To find Escudilla Mountain Trail...*

From Greer, follow Rt. 373 to Rt. 260. Turn right and follow Rt. 260 through Eagar and south on Rt. 191 toward Alpine. Look for FR 56 (approximately 5 miles before reaching Alpine). Turn left onto FR 56 and follow this road until you reach Terry Flat Loop. The trailhead is on the left.



# West Fork Trail No. 628

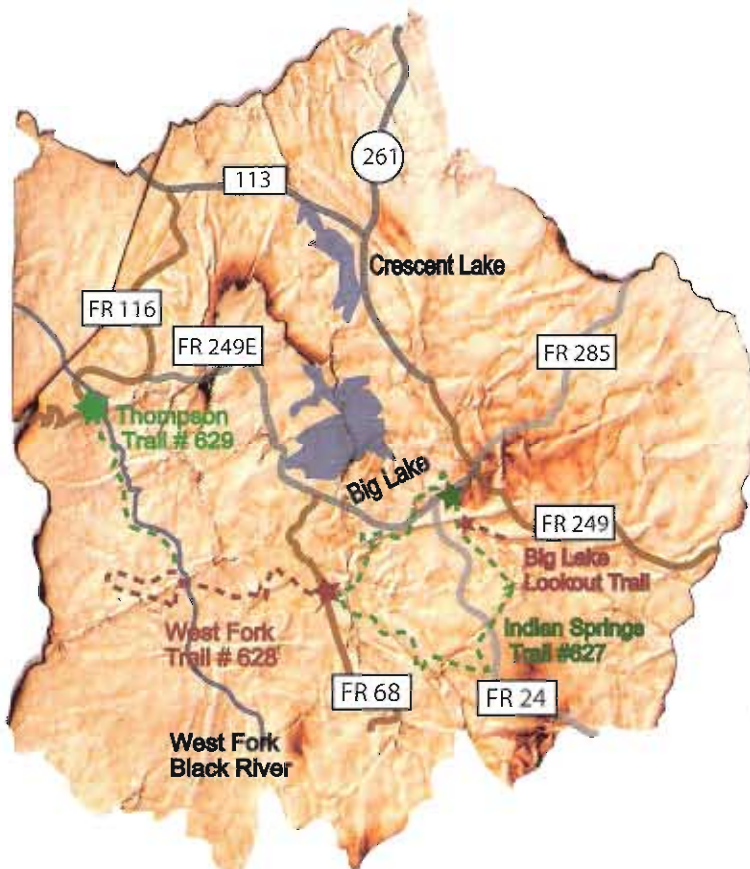
One of the most beautiful areas in the White Mountains is the West Fork of the Black River. There are several access points along this portion of the river, but if you want a spectacular hike through Douglas fir, aspen and giant ponderosa, the West Fork Trail is an exciting venture through old-growth forest.

The line of trees form an avenue to guide you toward spectacular vistas far above the river. As you hike, you'll find various signs of wildlife such as squirrel, elk, deer and even mountain lion. There are expansive mountain meadows filled with wildflowers and tall grasses that peacefully bend with the wind. The view of the river, etched into the crease of the canyon and the tall Douglas fir that surrounds it, is incredible. Near the bottom of the trail, a bridge provides steady crossing over a rock slide that leads to the last leg of the trail and the West Fork of the Black River.

As you reach the river, you will be impressed by the thick, lush green grass, speckled with color from the many wildflowers that grow along the shore of this crystal clear, blue water. Bring a lunch, relax and listen to the river as it falls over large boulders and runs through willows.

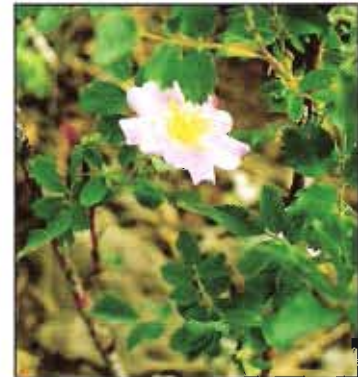


The beautiful West Fork of the Black River



## West Fork Trail

Distance: 6 miles  
(round trip)  
Elevation: 9,000 ft.  
Rating:  
Hiking - moderate  
Biking - difficult  
No horses allowed.  
Parking at trailhead  
Topo map: 280 SW -  
Big Lake, SW AZ



Wild Rose



Mountain Bluebells

## To find the West Fork Trail...

From Greer, follow Rt. 373 to Rt. 260. Turn right toward Eagar and follow this road until you reach Rt. 261. Turn right and follow this road toward Big Lake until you reach Rt. 273. Follow Rt. 273 until it turns into FR 249, take this road to FR 249E (which circles Big Lake). Turn right and follow this road to FR 68. The trailhead is located about 2 miles on the right side of FR 68.



# Thompson Trail No. 629

The fish were biting the day I hiked the Thompson Trail, according to fishermen along its shores. Many of them have discovered this section of the river and have returned for the ambience and solitude. Tall Douglas fir, willow and aspen line the 6.5-mile (round trip) trail that follows the West Fork of the Black River.

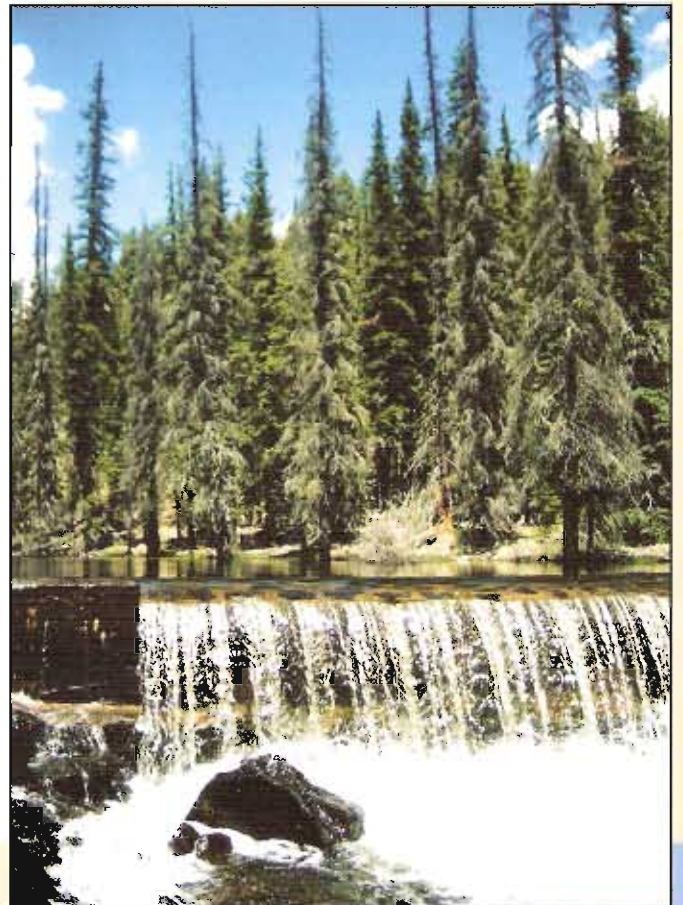
With a grant from the Heritage Fund, the Thompson Trail was built in a combined effort by the U.S. Forest Service, the Arizona Game and Fish Department and several volunteers. It is noted as some of the most beautiful country within the district. To protect soil and water resources the trail is only open to hiking. Bikes, horses or motorized vehicles are not allowed.

Spectacular waterfalls are created by the fast running water, especially under the large rock and cement structures, called "fish barriers," that cross the river in a couple different places. The barriers are designed to allow fish to swim downstream, keeping exotic (non-native) trout out of the upper reaches of the river and its tributaries.

The old railroad berms follow the trail from above the canyon walls with some of the original railroad ties, as a reminder of the past logging that went on years ago. The old tracks carried logs from Maverick, a previously bustling logging town located deep in the Apache Reservation, to Holbrook.

Hiking river trails can be difficult to follow because of the rising and falling of the water and the many

marshy areas it creates, but follow the flow of the river. There are a couple of spur trails that lead to either FR 116 or FR 68, and eventually the Thompson Trail meets up with the West Fork Trail located on the east side of the river. This is where Thompson Trail ends and I turn around and head back up-river, back up the trail, through the pines, past countless wildflowers along the melodic Black River.



## Thompson Trail

Distance: 6.5 miles (round trip)

Elevation: 8,600 - 8840 ft.

Rating: Hiking - moderate - No horses, bikes or motorized vehicles

Topo Map: 280 NW, Big Lake; 280 SW, Big Lake AZ

### *To find the Thompson Trail...*

From Greer follow Rt. 373 to Rt. 260. Turn right toward Eagar and follow this road until you reach Rt. 261. Turn right and follow this road toward Big Lake until you reach 273. Turn left and follow this road until it turns into FR 249. Continue on this road to FR 249E (which circles Big Lake). Turn right and travel this road until you reach FR 116. Turn left and the kiosk and parking are located on the right side of FR 116. The trail begins on the south side of FR 116.



# Railroad Grade Trail

In 1924, Lew Calhoun was hired as the railroad engineer that ran the little steam engine, No. 307, from Big Lake and Maverick to McNary, and passenger service from McNary to Holbrook. In its later years the train was chartered for scenic trips and special events. Today, the tracks of the old Apache train are no longer there, but the corridor was left behind.

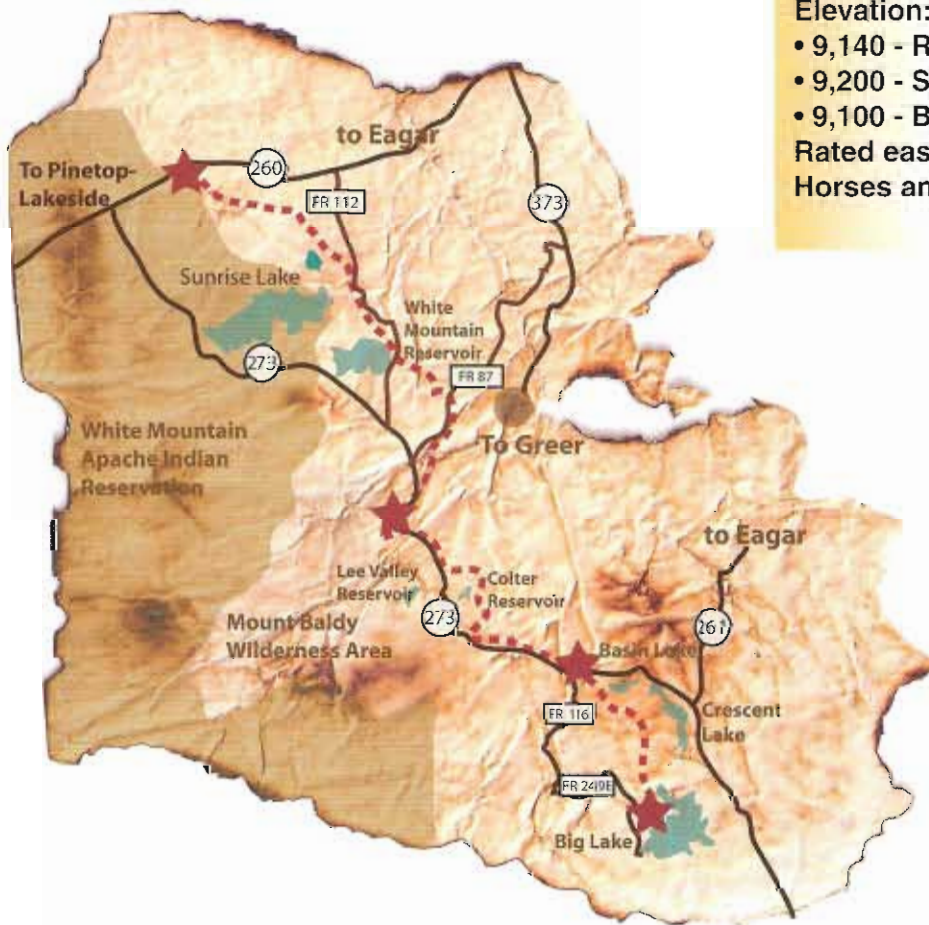
Apache County and the U.S. Forest Service has opened the old railway beds for public use. Rails-to-Trails is a program, started over 30 years ago, designed to preserve America's old railroad network. This trail is part of a system of trails that is expected to run coast to coast. There are as many as 878 trails completed that equal more than 8,930 miles with over 600 more trails in the works.

Today, as you hike along the old railway, you can see the breathtaking views of Mount Baldy and Sunrise Peak. The trail starts from the trailhead located on Rt. 260 (south past Sunrise Ski Hill). It is easy to spot with its fairly new restroom building and large parking area. The trail leads to Sheeps Crossing located near Crescent Lake off of Rt. 273. It ends at Big Lake trailhead

located off of FR 249E. This trail is easy to moderate and pretty lengthy. My personal preference is to pedal the distance, although that can get pretty challenging in some places. Horses are allowed.



Railroad Grade Trailhead off Rt. 260 between Greer and Sunrise.



## Railroad Grade Trail

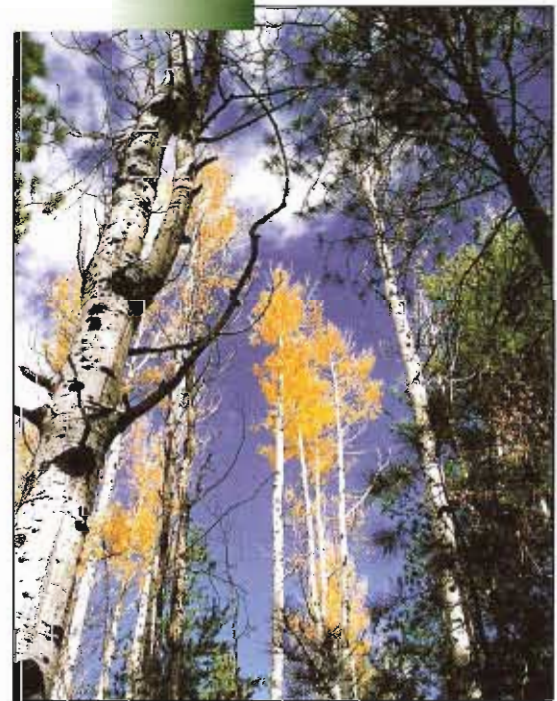
Rt. 260 to:

- Sheeps Crossing - 8 miles
- Lightning Ridge - 18 miles
- Big Lake - 21 miles

Elevation:

- 9,140 - Route 260
- 9,200 - Sheeps Crossing
- 9,100 - Big Lake

Rated easy to moderate  
Horses and biking allowed





# Indian Springs Trail No. 627

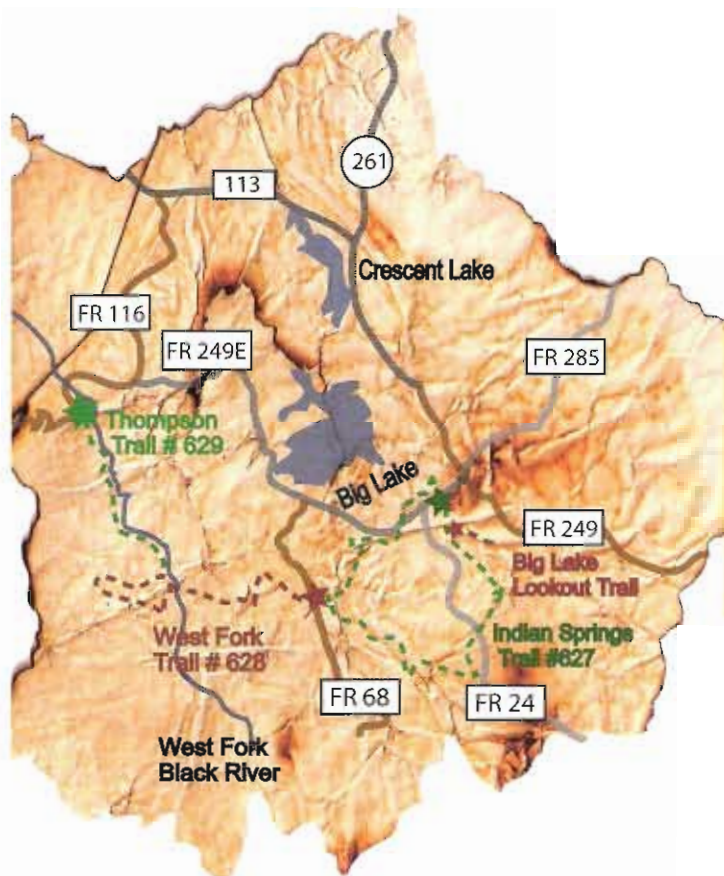
The elk bugling midday and the bright yellow aspen in the fall are just a couple of highlights on this trail. Cool breezes make hiking the White Mountains during the early fall season the best time to venture out into the multi-colored forest. The only drawback being that it is hunting season and a time of year to wear your bright orange to be spotted by hunters.

The trail meanders through a variety of terrain made up of very old aspen, tall ponderosa pine, spruce, large rock formations and mountain springs. The first spring we came to was called Spillman Spring. Three long overlapping troughs are full of water that trickles from the spring. Approximately a half-mile from the trailhead is a spur trail that leads to the Big Lake Lookout tower. Two-and-a-half miles later we reach Indian Spring — a small pool of water, surrounded by a mountain meadow lined with pines.

Parts of the trail follow a railroad bed of what was once the old Apache Railroad. In years past trains carried people and lumber between Holbrook and Maverick. The historical aspects of this trail combined with the spectacular scenery will make this one of your favorite hikes.

Two-and-a-half miles from Indian Springs there is another spur trail that leads to the West Fork of the Black

River (West Fork No.628). At this point there is only two-and-a-half miles left to reach the trailhead. The trail crosses FR 24 once and FR 349E twice. Elk, bear, coyote and other wildlife roam this trail, carpeted with wildflowers and mushrooms.



## Indian Springs Trail

Distance: 7.5 miles (loop)

Elevation: 9,000 ft.

Rating:

Hiking - moderate

Biking - moderate

Plenty of Parking

Spillman Springs

## To find Indian Springs Trail

From Greer follow Rt. 260 toward Eagar to Rt. 261. Turn right and follow this road until you reach Rt. 273. Follow this road until it turns into FR 249. Follow this until you reach 249E. The trailhead is to the left.



# Big Lake Lookout Trail

The views from Big Lake Lookout Tower are spectacular. You can see Big Lake, Crescent Lake and Escudilla Mountain. The tower is staffed between May and July, giving you the opportunity to climb to the top and meet the fire ranger. The tower was built in 1933 as a fire lookout station and it stands watch over the forest at a towering 30 feet, and has a 12-foot observation deck. There is a trail at the foot of the tower that connects to the Indian Springs Trail. The huge rock formations along the trail are like giants among the massive aspens that seem to compete with the rocks for a view.

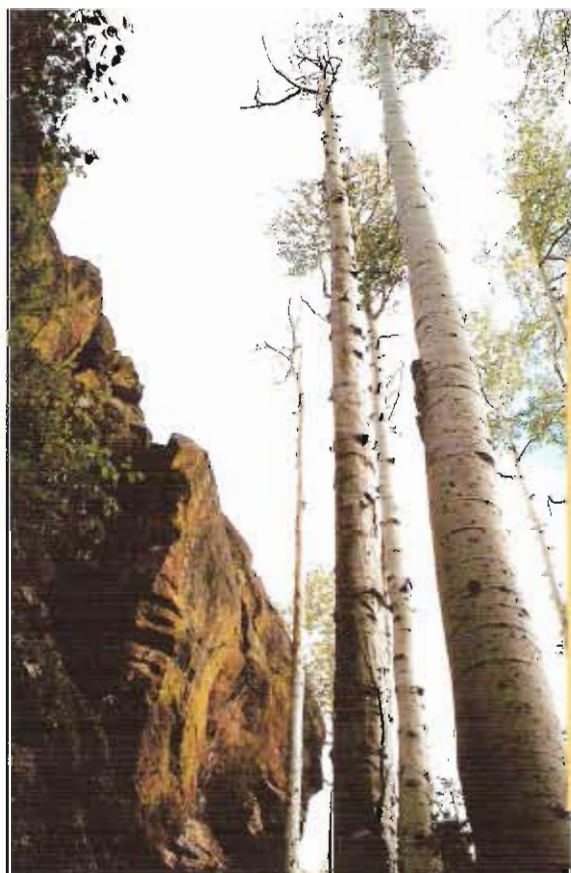
Fall is the best time to visit this trail. Even if you don't get to climb the tower, the colors of the many aspen will make up for it. If you are looking for a short, but memorable hike, this is the place to visit. This is a great place for kids and has picnic tables and plenty of parking.

## ***To find Big Lake Lookout Trail...***

From Greer follow Rt. 373 to Rt. 260. Turn right and follow this road until you reach Rt. 261. Turn right and follow Rt. 261 to Rt. 273. Turn left and travel on this road until it turns into FR 249. Continue on this road until you reach FR 249D. The trailhead is at the end on this road.

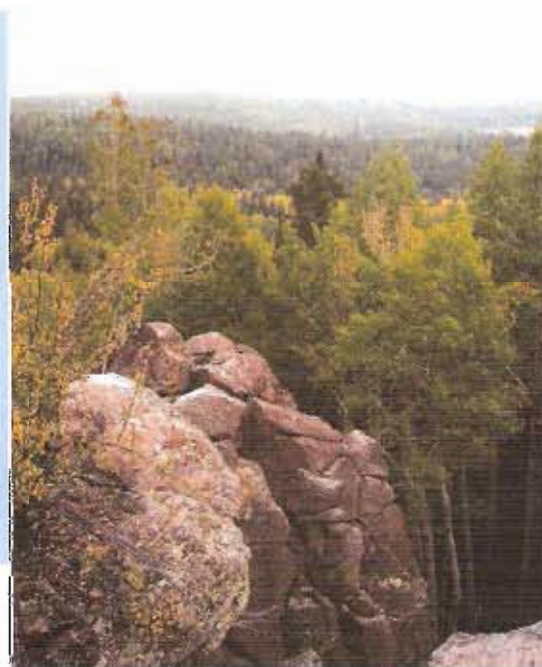


Big Lake Lookout Tower stands over 30 feet above the trailhead.



Some of the tallest aspen reside beside the tower and along the trail.

**Big Lake  
Lookout Trail**  
See map on page 19  
Distance: 2 miles  
Elevation:  
Trailhead - 9,100 ft.  
Base of Tower - 9,415 ft.  
Hiking - Moderate  
Biking - Moderate  
Parking  
Topo map: 280 SW,  
Big Lake SW AZ



Breathtaking panoramic views.



# Saffel Canyon OHV Trail

Off highway vehicle owners who prefer to see scenery via motorized travel, this trail is for them. Enjoy a ride through ponderosa pine, aspen, fir and alligator juniper forests as well as a variety of terrains.

The trail starts by climbing Mulligan Knoll. The climb is gradual, with several curves and switchbacks. At the top is a panoramic view of Flat Top (mountain) and Round Valley. Continuing across the knoll, wildflowers carpet both sides of the trail and a panoramic view of Escudilla Mountain greets you on the other side. Descending the knoll, the trail levels out and travels along Mulligan Valley Creek. Leaving the creek, you ascend Pat Knoll and four-wheel through a variety of forests and meadows, including tall ancient aspen. Upon reaching Pat Knoll, the trail loops around and heads back to Mulligan Knoll.

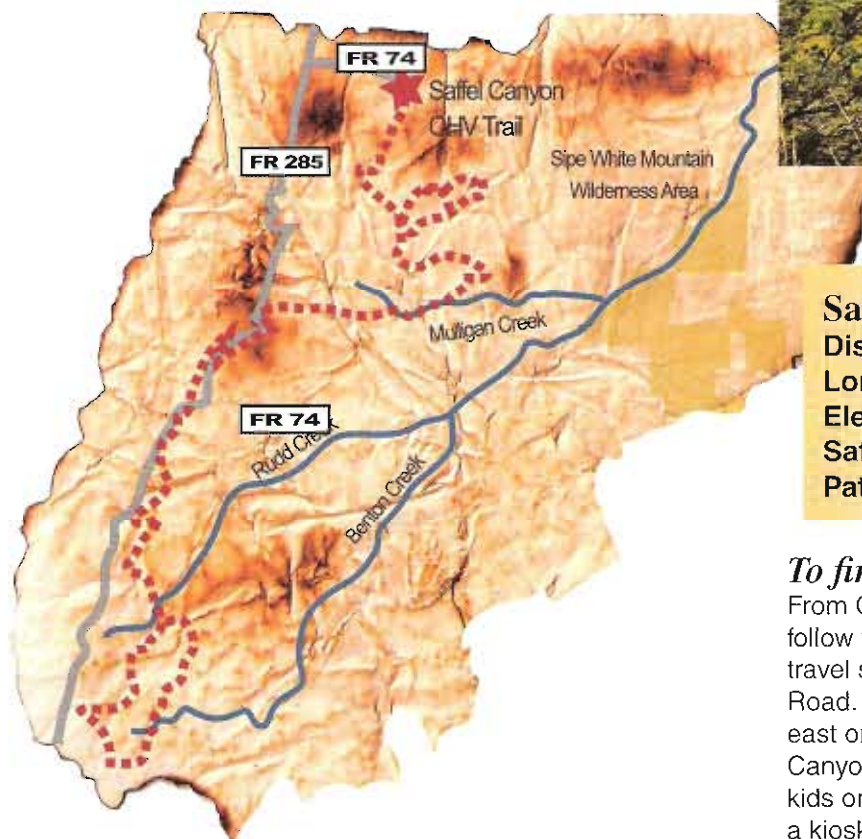
This is a great and well-marked trail. There is a long loop as well as a short loop.



In the spring, wildflowers blanket the scenery along the OHV Trail.



Spectacular panoramic views can be seen at the top of Mulligan Knoll.



## Saffel Canyon OHV Trail

**Distance:**

**Long Loop - 31 miles • Short Loop - 4 miles**

**Elevation:**

**Saffel Canyon - 7,600 ft.**

**Pat Knoll - 9,400 ft.**

### *To find Saffel Canyon OHV Trail...*

From Greer follow Rt. 373 to Rt. 260. Turn right and follow this road to Eagar. At the first traffic light turn right, travel south on Main Street, turn west on School Bus Road. Turn south on Water Canyon Road (FR 285). Turn east on FR74, and turn south on FR 74C into the Saffel Canyon OHV Trail parking lot. There is a small track for kids or beginning ATVers to practice. New restrooms and a kiosk with a large map of the entire trail can be found at the north end of the parking lot. For more information about this trail or other OHV trails, call the Springerville Ranger District at 928-333-4301.



# Murray Basin Trail

This is one of the Springerville Ranger District's newest trails. Rolling hills, juniper trees, open meadows, old windmills, corrals and homestead remnants give this trail a southwestern feel. Panoramic views from small knolls make it an enjoyable hike.

A herd of antelope graze in the distance as we circle Murray Basin and large ancient junipers stand in solitude and spread their angular branches, gathering sunlight. We stop for lunch near an old corral alongside an old abandoned homestead. The logs are still intact, but the floor on the small cabin is now a wildflower garden. On the horizon Flat Top (a well known landmark) can be seen.

As we head back to the trailhead, we are cooled by light rain. The mules we are riding welcome the sight of the trailer and the ride back to the barn.

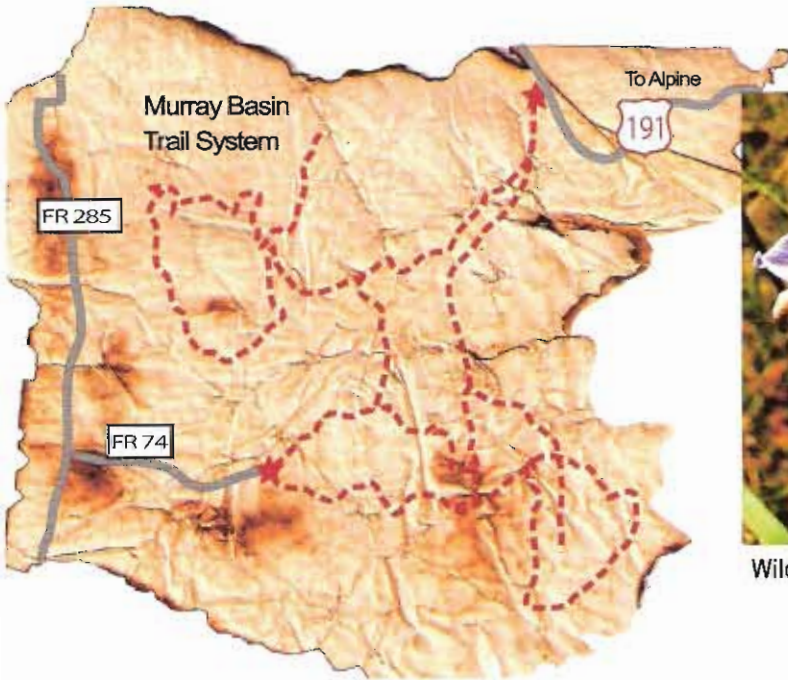
The best time to hike or ride this trail is in the spring or fall. Lack of shade makes it a very hot hike in the summer. There is plenty of parking for trailers.

## To find Murray Basin Trail

From Greer follow Rt. 373 to Rt. 260, turn right to Eagar, drive through the stop lights to Rt. 191. The trailhead is on the right.




Murray Basin Trailhead



Wild iris grow in many areas around the White Mountains.

**Murray Basin Trail**  
**Distance: 15 miles**  
**Rating: Moderate**  
**Horses or Mules highly recommended**  
**Plenty of parking**



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