



Bear Creek Nature Center (West Side Route)



Hike Information

Rating: 4 - Easy/Moderate

Distance: 3.8 Miles

Total Elevation Gain*: 482 feet

Starting Elevation: 6,356 feet

Hike Time: ~2.0 Hours

Total Event Time: ~2.0 to 2.5 Hours**

Dog Friendly: No

* Total Elevation Gain includes total feet climbed throughout hike and does not represent difference between low and high points.

** Total Event Time includes Hike Time plus transportation to and from the initial meeting point.

Hike Description

This is a 3.8-mile double-loop hike which begins at the Bear Creek Nature Center near Manitou Springs; the route travels southwest toward Gold Camp Road and includes great views and a beautiful loop in the forest.

Hikers begin at the Bear Creek Nature Center and head south along portions of the Mountain Scrub and Coyote Gulch loops, before joining leaving the nature center and joining the main Bear Creek trail. Once on Bear Creek trail, hikers head southwest toward Gold Camp Road. This route includes steady climbing for the first half, and traverses several trails on the southwest end, including Stephanie's Trail and Cub Trail, before finishing along a picturesque stretch of Bear Creek.

This hike consists of dirt and rock, sometimes involving stepping up and around obstacles in the rougher places of the trail. The views are excellent along the entire route, including a view of Garden of the Gods and the surrounding front range mountains.

This hike traverses both prairie and forest, and includes numerous trees, including ponderosa pine, scrub oak thickets, cottonwoods and willows. Hikers often find mule deer along this route, as well as numerous species of birds, including scrub jays and red-tailed hawks, plus many more around the main nature center. As this hike begins and ends in the nature center, dogs are not permitted on this hike.

This is a fantastic hike which can be done by hikers of nearly all ability-levels. With a focus on nature and great views, this hike will appeal to both nature-lovers and adventurers alike.

What To Bring

- Water:  = 40 ounces
- Food: Light, Healthy Snack
- Clothing: Breathable Layers (adjust for daily temps)
- Footwear: Comfortable hiking boots or shoes
- Headgear: Hat
- Safety: Sunscreen, Sunglasses
- Optional: Hiking Poles



To learn more about this location, visit:
<https://parks.elpasoco.com/el-paso-county-nature-centers/bear-creek-nature-center/>

See Next Page for Maps and Meeting Point Information

Hikers may meet at the carpool meeting point or the hike location
(Both meeting times are indicated on the Event Schedule)



Carpool Meeting Point

Buffalo Lodge Resort

2 El Paso Blvd, Colorado Springs, CO 80904



Buffalo Lodge can be a little tricky to navigate the first time you visit. This is a 5-acre self-enclosed lodge with numerous buildings. As you first pull into the property, you will see the main Lodge Office on the right...**this is where the group meets for the hike.**

However, please do not park up front as this is only for lodging guests. Instead, drive through the lot to the rear area and park in the large dirt lot marked "Event Parking". You will then walk to the front of the lot and meet us at the main Lodge Office.

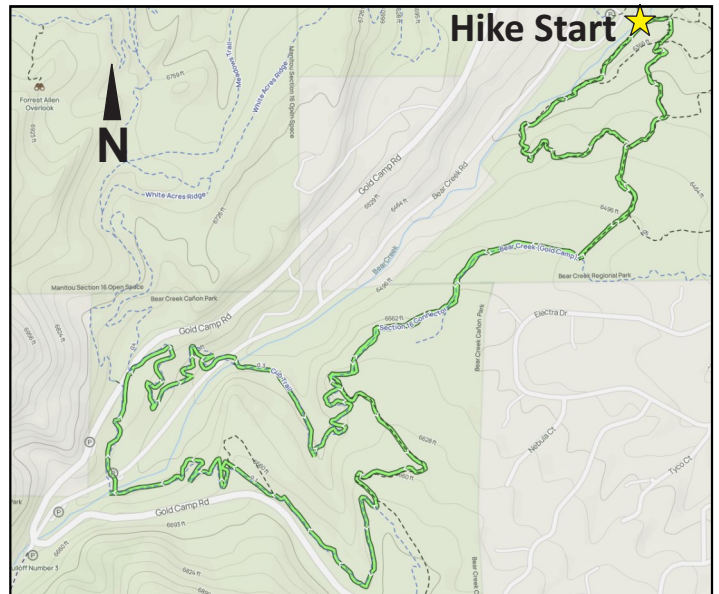
Mountain Trails members may choose to ride with someone, offer a ride to other hikers, or simply follow the caravan in their own vehicle. The priority for this hike series are the Buffalo Lodge guests; if any guest needs a ride, we will provide them with transportation.

About the Buffalo Lodge Hike Series:

This hike is part of a partnership with the Buffalo Lodge Resort, offering guided hikes to lodge guests and members in the Manitou Springs area. Mountain Trails members are encouraged to meet here and learn more about Buffalo Lodge before proceeding to the hike (but may also choose to meet the group at the hike as shown below.)

Regardless where you choose to meet the group (Buffalo Lodge or hike meeting point), hiking club members are encouraged to visit Buffalo Lodge as they have a lounge with interesting decor, a variety of activities, a bicycle shop, and live music most nights of the week.

Hike Meeting Point & Map



This hike begins and ends at Bear Creek Nature Center (245 Bear Creek Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80906). The map above shows the nature center as the start and finish of the hike.