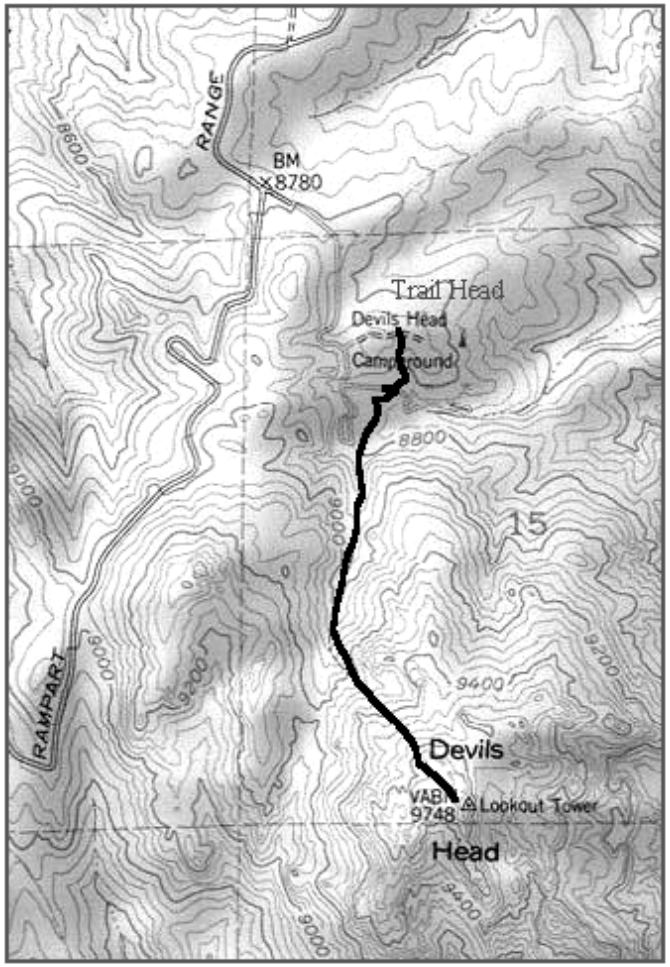
For your comfort and safety we ask you to observe the following rules:

- *Stay on the trail to help prevent erosion. Do not cut across switchbacks.*
- *Do not climb the stairs to the tower when lightning is occurring in the area. There is a limit of 10 people in the tower at a time, and you may be asked to leave in an emergency situation.*
- *While climbing the stairs, children must be under adult supervision and control at all times.*
- *Dogs must be on a leash at all times while on the trail. Horses are permitted on the trail.*
- *Motorized vehicles and bicycles are NOT permitted on the trail.*
- *Remember: Afternoon lightning storms often occur during the summer. Watch for storms and return to your vehicle since there is no shelter provided.*

Devil's Head Trail



South Platte
Ranger District

Devil's Head National Recreation Trail

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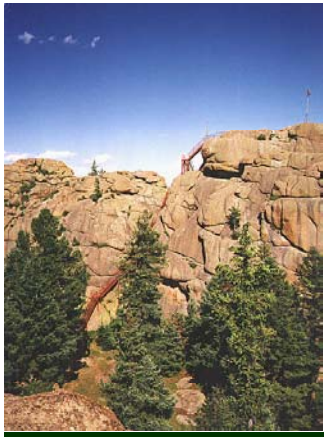
Devil's Head National Recreation Trail



Stairway to Devil's Head Tower.

We hope you enjoy your hike up to the fire lookout tower. The trail to the tower is 1.4 miles and has an elevation gain of 940 feet. Hiking time up to the tower is from 45-90 minutes, depending on your pace. There are several rest stops with benches and tables along the trail for your comfort. When you reach the base of the tower you are welcome to climb the steps up to the actual fire lookout tower. Bring along your own drinking water since none is available along the trail or at the tower. A toilet is located near the base of the tower.

Trail

Interpretative signs have been placed along the trail to explain the role of fire in the forest, among other things. Along the way you will see many types of wildflowers, shrubs, and trees.

tread lightly!®
LEAVING A GOOD IMPRESSION

History

The original fire lookout structure was built in 1912. It consisted of a table with a fire-finder bolted to a rock. The location was chosen because of the 360° panoramic views it offers of the Pike National Forest. A glass-enclosed lookout was built in 1919, the same year that Helen Dowe became the first woman fire lookout ranger in the U.S. Forest Service. The tower was reconstructed in 1951 with the help of 100 men and 72 mules of the 973rd Construction Battalion from Fort Carson. Devil's Head remains as the last of the seven original front range lookout towers. In 1991, the fire lookout tower was designated on the National Register of Historic Places.

Operation

When you reach the tower you will immediately become aware of the tremendous vantage point it offers. In fact, on clear days, mountain peaks over 100 miles away are visible. The tower's location is even more significant because of the fact that the area south and west of the tower has a very high frequency of lightning strikes. During a typical summer, we experience from 30 to 40 fires caused by lightning. From the vantage point of the tower, the fire lookout ranger is able to spot these fires very soon after they begin. Thus we are able to quickly dispatch fire crews to contain the fires. The tower usually is staffed mid-May through mid-September.

REMEMBER
Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires

All developed facilities in the South Platte Ranger District are managed by concessionaire. Rocky Mountain Recreation requires a camping fee, or a day use fee at these sites. An annual permit for day use can be purchased at any campground host site for $35. This pass is valid at all concessionaire-operated sites on the Pike and San Isabel National Forests. The concessionaire can be contacted at 719-687-3814 for more information.

South Platte Ranger District

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