



**HIKING - FOREST SERVICE - ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

NATIONAL FOREST – San Juan RANGER DISTRICT - Columbine

Updated: May, 2003

ELK CREEK TRAIL #503 Length: 8.9 miles (14.2 km.)

Use: Heavy

Difficulty: Most difficult

USGS Map (s): Storm King

Starting Elevation: 8,300'

Elk Park (Animas River)

Ending Elevation: 12,800'

Continental Divide Trail

Recommended Season: Summer/Fall

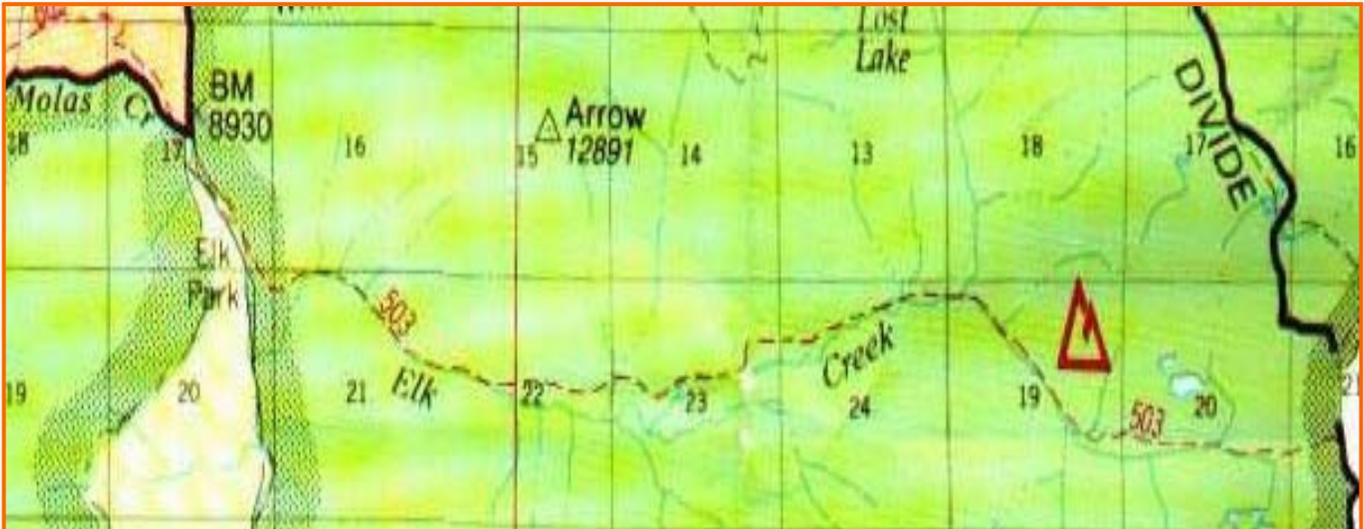
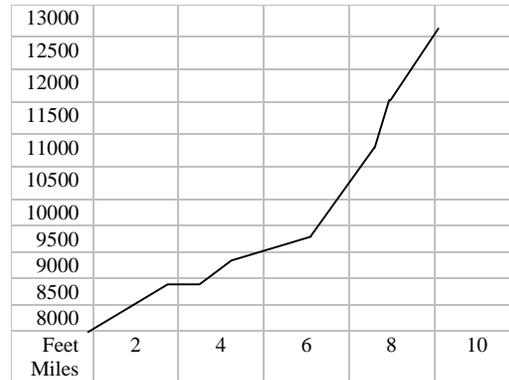
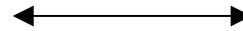
Access #1: Via Molas Trail from U.S. Hwy. 550, 42 miles north of Durango, off the top of Molas Pass toward Silverton. Turn east (R) at Molas Lake. Hike 5 miles down Molas Trail to Elk Park.

Access #2: By narrow-gauge railroad, to "Elk Park."

Access #3: Continental Divide Trail.

Recommended Season

Spring Summer Fall Winter



Attractions & Considerations : One of the biggest drawing points of this trail is the unique opportunity to combine a Wilderness trip with a ride on a steam locomotive. This same attraction can also affect other aspects of your wilderness experience, by decreasing overall solitude with increased visitation. Elk Creek drains the northern portion of the Grenadier Range, which includes Arrow, Vestal, and the Trinity Peaks; a mecca for mountaineers. These features, along with access to the Continental Divide Trail, make Elk Creek one of the most heavily used trails in the Weminuche Wilderness. Remember to filter water and practice low-impact camping.

Scan of the San Juan National Forest Map
Forest Service maps and other publications are available at the Public Lands Center, in the Durango Tech Center, ½ mile west of Durango off Highway 160, or by calling (970) 247-4874.
www.sjma.org

Fishing Considerations:

Elk Creek is rated good for rainbow and brook trout in the lower section of the creek. Please check the fishing regulations regarding limits, allowable lures, and restrictions on certain lakes, rivers, etc.

Weminuche Wilderness Regulations:

- Group size is limited to 15 people.
- Camping is not allowed within 100 feet of any water source.
- Outfitter-guides who receive any form of compensation must obtain a special-use permit to operate on public land.
- Possession of motorized equipment and mechanized means of transport are not permitted.
- Recreational livestock are prohibited from being restrained within 100 feet of lakeshores and streams or within riparian areas.