



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

NATIONAL FOREST – San Juan RANGER DISTRICT - Columbine

Updated: May, 2003

**Hunchback Pass to Elk Creek Trail
Trail #813 to #503**

Length: 3 mi / 4.8 km

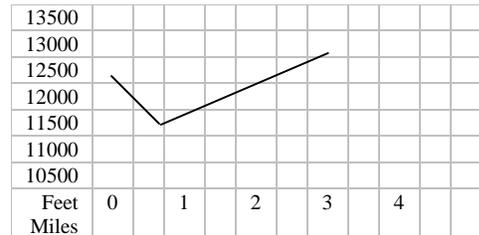
Recommended Season

Spring Summer Fall Winter
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Use: Moderate to Heavy
Difficulty: Easy, Moderate

USGS Map (s):
Storm King Peak

Starting Elevation: 12,500'
Hunchback Pass
Ending Elevation: 12,800'
Continental Divide Trail



Access # 1:
Vallecito Creek Trail to Hunchback Pass—roughly 17 miles from the Vallecito Campground. (Please refer to the trail sheet description of Vallecito Creek to Hunchback Pass #539)

Access # 2:
Needleton through Chicago Basin, over Columbine Pass to Johnson Creek Trail—17 miles, then Vallecito Creek Trail to Hunchback Pass—9.4 miles. (Please refer to the trail sheet describing Needle Creek Trail to Johnson Creek #504, and Vallecito Creek Trail from Johnson Creek to Hunchback Pass #529.)

Attractions & Considerations:
From Hunchback Pass the trail descends 800 feet in less than a mile as it intersects with the Beartown Trailhead. There are several mines in the area but very few people. The trail to Kite Lake (#813) is recommended as you climb back up to join briefly with the Colorado Trail and Continental Divide Trail. At approx. mile 2.5 you will leave the Continental Divide Trail, heading south and then west on trail #503.



The alpine meadows are full of blooming wildflowers in late July and in August. This area provides excellent views and photographic possibilities. Water can be found off the trail in most of the tributaries, but due to Giardia it should be filtered. As with all high-altitude areas, storms can move in rapidly, bringing severe wind, lightning, rain, snow, or hail—at any time of the year. Plan accordingly.

Weminuche Wilderness Regulations:

- Group size is limited to 15 people.
- In the area surrounding Emerald Lake and Little Emerald Lake, camping, campfires, grazing, and restraining stock are not allowed, except in designated sites.
- 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 lake shores and streams or within riparian areas.

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