

Aspen Ranger District  
806 West Hallam  
Aspen, CO 81611  
(970) 925-3445  
(970) 925-5277- Fax



United States Department of Agriculture

### **PYRAMID PEAK 14,018 feet (4272 meters)**

**LENGTH:** 3 ½ miles one-way

**ELEVATION GAIN:** 4,400 feet

**AVERAGE HIKING/CLIMBING TIME:**

5 1/2 hours one-way

**USGS MAP(S):** Maroon Bells

**SKILL FACTOR:** All 14'ers within the Aspen District are for experienced mountaineers only. This particular climb is very difficult due to the extreme steepness and looseness of rock.

**RECOMMENDED SEASON(S):**

Late spring and summer

**ATTRACTIONS/CONSIDERATIONS:** The Maroon Bells gained their name from the red color and bell-like shapes. Ferdinand Vandiveer Hayden applied the name during his 1870s exploration with the US Geological and Geographical Survey. The red color in the formations results from the weathering of hematite, an iron-bearing mineral. Sides of "hanging" valleys mark the sites of small tributary glaciers. Hanging valleys are seen 1,000 to 1,500 feet above the valley floor. Deep bowl-shaped basins, or cirques, are also a result of glacial sculpting. Though the glaciers long ago retreated, wind, water and erosion continue to shape these mountains.

**ACCESS:** Drive west of Aspen on Highway 82 to the Roundabout. Take a right onto Maroon Creek Road. Drive 10 ½ miles to the parking lot at Maroon Lake.

**NARRATIVE:** Pyramid Peak is very rough and steep. You start the climb from Maroon Lake. Walk approximately 1 mile and gain 400 feet on the West Maroon-Crater Lake Trail. When you've gone 1 mile, turn left and head up a steep slope toward the opening of the Basin under the North Face (side trail is marked by a large cairn on the left hand side). Once in the basin, (1 mile, 1,200 foot gain) walk toward a major gully left of the North Face and climb it to the ridge saddle on the left of the face (approximately 1 mile and 1,800 foot gain). From here you work your way south and up diagonally- this helps minimize rock fall danger. This section is very loose. Proceed this way to the summit (1/2 mile and 1,000 foot gain). Ropes and hardhats are recommended and, if you are unfamiliar with the terrain, a guide is recommended.

It is your responsibility to know the hazards involved in your activities and to use the proper safety procedures and equipment to minimize the inherent risks and hazards related to your activity. As a user of National Forest System Lands, you have significant responsibility for your personal safety during any activity you might pursue. The Forest Service installs signs and other information devices at various locations where conditions limit placement of signs or other specific warnings and necessitates the use of more general education efforts. Hazards are not limited to, but include: changing weather conditions, snow, avalanche, landslides and falling rock, caves, overlooks, falling trees or limbs, high or rushing water, contaminated water, wild animals, becoming lost or over exerted, hypothermia, remnants of mining and other activities involving excavation, tunnels, shafts, decaying structures and a variety of equipment, and changing road and trail conditions. You may also be exposed to unreasonable acts of others. **The Forest Service does not manage or control all of these occurrences.**

The peaks in the White River National Forest do not have designated routes to the top. The Forest Service is currently studying the present, user-created trails to determine the feasibility and desirability of designated routes. For further sources on information and routes to the peaks, please call the office at (970) 925-3445.

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CALL - PITKIN COUNTY SHERIFF - 920-5310**

