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United States Department of Agriculture



CONUNDRUM CREEK TRAIL #1981

Length: 8.5 miles one-way (13.7 km)

Difficulty: Moderate

Trail Use: Low

Beginning Elevation: 8,700 feet (2652 m)

Ending Elevation: 11,200 feet (3414 m)

USGS Map(s): Hayden Peak, Maroon Bells

ACCESS: Drive 1/2 mile west of Aspen on Highway 82 to the Roundabout. Go around the Roundabout and turn right onto Castle Creek Road. Drive approximately 5 miles up Castle Creek and park in the pull-out just after the turn off for Conundrum Road. The official trailhead parking lot is not plowed and parking along Conundrum Road is prohibited. This narrow road is on a County right-of-way over private property. Parking is prohibited and cars are towed. From the pull-out on Castle Creek Road walk on Conundrum Road approximately 1 mile to the Conundrum Creek Trailhead.

NARRATIVE: The trail generally parallels Conundrum Creek weaving its way up the valley through the woods and meadows to three river crossings before the hot springs. Mt. Hayden looms at the start of the hike followed by views of Cathedral Peak, Conundrum Peak and Castle Peak. The first crossing at 2-1/2 miles and the second at 6 miles are over log bridges. The third crossing at 6-1/2 miles is bridged only by using a log jam or a large log. This can be hazardous during spring runoffs and with heavy snow. At 8 miles, there is a cabin, and the hot springs are just ahead on the left on the other side of the creek. A log bridge spans the creek for crossing. Please beware of avalanche danger. There are numerous avalanche shutes on this trail.

ETHICS/REGULATIONS: Conundrum Creek is within the Maroon Bell-Snowmass Wilderness, please educate yourself about Wilderness Ethics and the following rules:

- * **Respect private property.** Ask permission before entering.
- * **Be considerate** of other winter back-country travelers. Remember we're all out to enjoy the outdoors.
- * **Avoid disturbing wild animals** by staying out of elk and deer wintering areas. Detour if you spot wildlife.
- * **Wilderness Areas and Primitive areas are closed to motorized recreational vehicles.** Inquire at a local Forest Service office if in doubt. Obey all signs.
- * **BEWARE OF AVALANCHES!** Avalanches may occur at any time during the winter. Avoid mountainous terrain after heavy snowfalls or prolonged periods of high wind. Stay on the windblown side of ridges. Avoid crossing steep hillsides and entering narrow, steep canyons.
- * Remember to notify a responsible person of your travel plans.

PACK IT IN—PACK IT OUT!! LEAVE NO TRACE!!

This map is intended for use as a general guide only, not for actual land navigation. The White River National Forest suggests purchasing a topographical trail map prior to your cross-country/snowshoe trip.