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United States Department of Agriculture



HIKING

CRESTED BUTTE
WEST MAROON TRAIL via SCHOFIELD PARK

Length: 11 miles one-way (17.7 km)

Difficulty: Difficult

Trail Use: Heavy

Beginning Elevation: 9,580 feet (2920 m)

Highest Elevation: 12,500 feet (3810 m)

USGS Map(s): Maroon Bells, Snowmass Mtn.

PERMIT INFORMATION: In order to provide quality recreation experiences and to protect the wilderness lands the Forest Service must gather data regarding visitor use and travel patterns. Each **party overnighiting** in the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness is **required to self-register at the Trailhead and to carry a copy of the registration with them** during their visit. There is no fee charged and no limit to the number of permits issued.

DAY/BACKPACKING OVERVIEW: This is the shortest route to Crested Butte. It is more difficult than East Maroon and more popular. It offers magnificent views of the Maroon Bells/Snowmass Wilderness area and vast fields of wildflowers. Campsites for backpackers can be found in the woods between the two river crossings described in the West Maroon Pass trail guide. The trail ends at Schofield Park, 14 miles from Crested Butte. The most popular transportation from the park to town is via taxi. Arrangements for the taxi to meet you can be made by calling the Crested Butte Chamber of Commerce. If trying to hitch a ride, turn left at the Schofield parking lot and walk down the dirt road to Emerald Lake. If unsuccessful, keep walking 7 miles to the town of Gothic which is 7 miles from your final destination. One can usually find a ride from Gothic. **PLAN ON STARTING THIS HIKE IN THE EARLY MORNING AS THUNDERSTORMS ARE COMMON AT THE PASS IN THE EARLY AFTERNOON.**

ACCESS: Drive 1/2 of a mile west of Aspen on Highway 82 to the Roundabout. Go around the Roundabout and turn right onto Maroon Creek Road. Drive 10 1/2 miles to the overnight parking lot at Maroon Lake. This is located on the left side of the road. Access to this lot after 7:00 AM during the summer months requires a stop at the Forest Service Ranger Station on Maroon Creek Road for an overnight pass. If the lot is full you may drive 1/4 mile back down the road to the West Maroon parking lot.

NARRATIVE: Use the trail guide for the West Maroon Trail to West Maroon Pass. From the top of the pass a series of switchbacks descends from a steep scree field into meadows of magnificent wildflowers before the trail reaches the valley floor. A mile below the pass, the trail intersects with the Frigid Air Pass Trail which goes right. Continue straight following the trail as it curves through the valley and then bears left. About one mile below the Frigid Air intersection, the trail crosses a small stream and then intersects with the Hasley Basin Trail to the right. Go left. In 2/3 of a mile another trail heads left, stay on the main trail. Here the trail climbs briefly through a meadow and then descends again. The trail is intersected again, continue straight. After a series of switchbacks the ruins of an old cabin appear. The parking area of Schofield Park is just minutes ahead beyond the woods which follows along the right side of a small stream.

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

- * **DOGS MUST BE LEASHED** out of consideration for both other people and wildlife.
- * Limit group sizes to 10 people and 15 stock/pack animals.
- * **SANITATION** - bury human waste 100 feet from water and 6 inches in the soil.
- * Lightweight campstoves are recommended and required above the timberline.

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

WILDERNESS AREAS are in a delicate state of natural balance, they are not renewable resources. Any careless act by man can upset this natural balance and result in the destruction of the beauty found in the wilderness. By following the above ethics and regulations you can help protect and preserve the natural features of the wilderness for future visits. **Please, respect the land and right of others!**