

Beaver Creek Riparian Area - Penrose

Direction to trailhead: Drive east from Canon City on State Highway 50 to Phantom Canyon Road (CR 67). Turn left onto CR 67 and drive for 1.7 miles to CR 123. Turn right and drive for ¼ mile to Upper Beaver Creek Road (CR 132). Turn left on CR 132 and drive 8.1 miles to the parking area and trailhead on right. About 14.5 miles one way from Canon City.

Length of hike: 6.0 miles (round trip)

Beginning elevation: 5832

Elevation change: 212 feet

Difficulty: Moderate

Description: The trail follows an old roadway (Figure 1). It crosses Beaver Creek after about 0.15 miles. However, crossing at this location likely entails getting wet. Instead, if you follow the creek for an additional 0.12 miles you will reach a large dead tree that lies across the creek. This is a relatively easy crossing. After making this crossing, follow the creek to the right (south-east) until you reach the trail/road. Continue following the trail for about 0.4 miles to a wire gate. Just to the north-west of the gate is an abandoned white house with a cabin attached at the back (Figure 2). Go through the gate, closing it after you pass through. Continue following the trail as it parallels the creek along the base of a long ridge that runs from the north-west to the south-east. For the first approximately 0.6 miles, the trail traverses a riparian environment with large magnificent cottonwoods (Figure 3) and also willows growing along the shore of the creek. Then the trail slowly ascends the side of the ridge where the environment becomes much more arid. Here junipers prevail with cholla and prickly pear cacti scattered along the trail. This also is a area of a variety of wildflowers. The trail begins to descend back down to Beaver Creek after about 2.4 miles. As you continue along the trail you will pass through three more gates. After passing through the last gate you will reach a large flat stone overlook that provides magnificent views of the valley below and the mountains beyond (Figure 4). This is an excellent location for a rest stop and snack or lunch. This also is a good location to turn around and head back to the parking area for a total hiking distance of about 5.5 miles. Or, you can continue following the trail as it descends down to the creek about 0.25 miles further. The property on the other side of the creek is privately owned and offlimits to hikers. Returning to the parking lot from this location provides a hike of 6 miles.

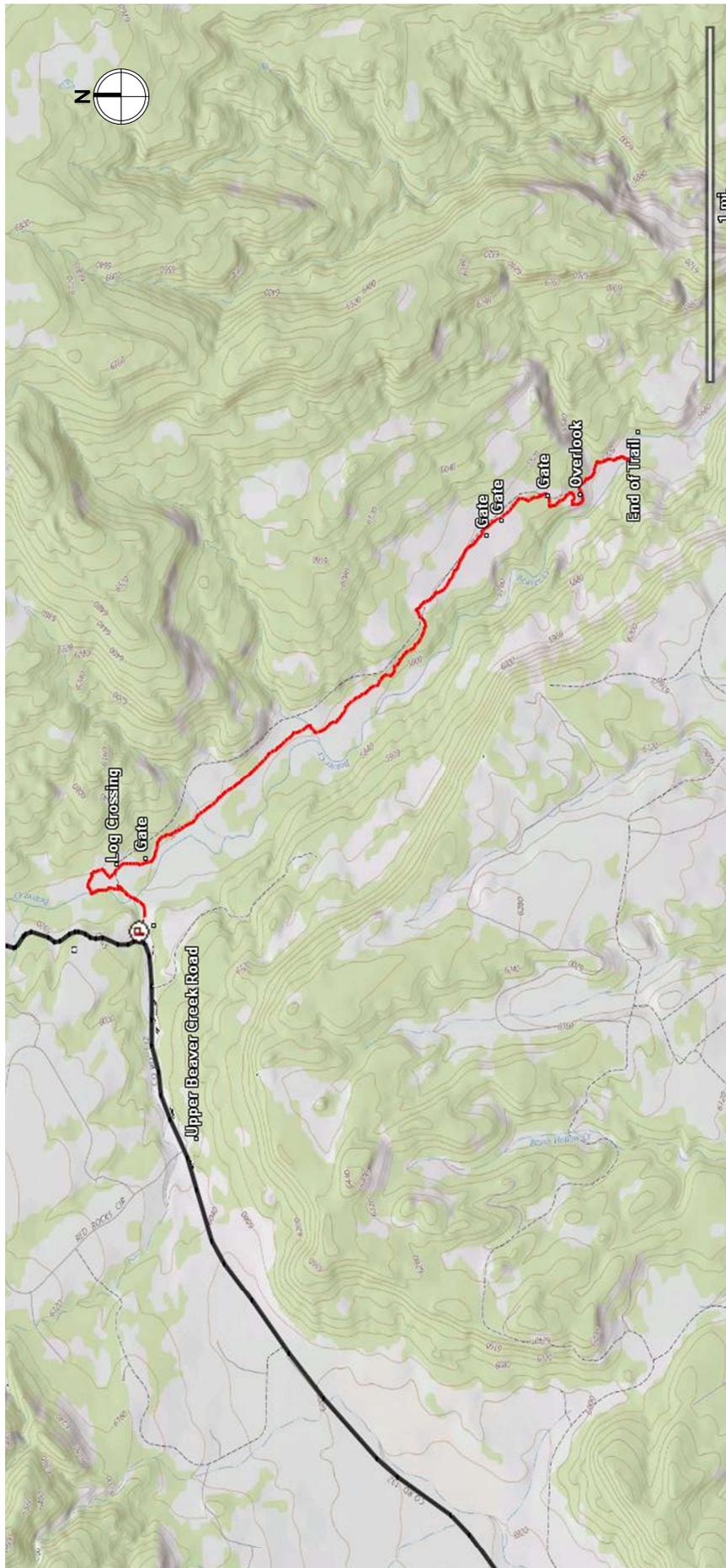


Figure 1. Map Beaver Creek Riparian Trail



Figure 2. Abandoned House with Attached Cabin



Figure 3. Cottonwoods along First Part of Trail



Figure 4. Scenic Overlook