

# Browns Creek to Waterfall

**Direction to trailhead:** Take U.S. Highway 50 west past Salida to Poncha Springs. At the traffic light (intersection of U.S. 50 and Colorado State Highway (CSH) 285 turn right (north) and continue 0.58 miles then turn right onto CSH 285 for 11.7 miles to county road (CR) 270. CR 270 is easy to miss. If you reach CR 240 you have driven too far. Turn right (west) onto CR 270 and continue for 1.5 miles to a 4-way intersection. Continue west on CR 272, a dirt road, for 2 miles to where CR 272 makes a ninety degree to the left (south). Continue south for 1.62 miles to the parking area and trail head. The trail head is located on the northwestern side of the parking area. A restroom and information signs are located on the west side of the trailhead. About 85 miles one way from Canon City.

**Length of hike:** 6 miles

**Beginning elevation:** 8,912 feet

**Elevation Change:** 1,053 feet

**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Description:** This is an especially scenic trail that ends at a very picturesque water fall. It is moderately difficult with loose rocks scattered along some sections of the trail. From the trail head, the trail goes west through an open forest of mostly ponderosa pines. After 0.18 miles you will reach a gate that you will have to open. Be sure to close and secure the gate after passing through. From the gate, the trail soon makes a sharp curve to the northeast, then turns to the north and then to the west (Figure 1). From there, the trail follows the side of a ridge for about 1 mile. The openness of this section of trail affords excellent views of the mountain to the east (Figure 2). Further along this section are great views of Mt. Antero (Figure 3). This is the most arid section with mostly pinion pines, junipers and mountain mahogany growing along the trail. After 1.5 miles from the trailhead the Browns Creek Trail intersects the Colorado Trail. (The Colorado Trail turns north at this point.) After 0.2 miles, the Colorado Trail leaves the Browns Creek Trail turning southeast. Stay on the Browns Creek Trail as it goes south then turns more to the southwest and continues going southwest to the end of the trail (Figure 1). The first two water crossings are located along this section of the trail. The first one has a bridge crossing. The second has logs placed cross the stream. Lodgepole pines are predominant along this section of the trail. After about 2.4 miles from the trail the trail enters a long oval shaped alpine meadow. As you continue the trail makes two more relatively easy stream crossings. Logs have been placed across one crossing and a makeshift bridge across the other. Browns Creek is quite pretty at these locations (Figure 4). After another 0.14 miles the trail to the water falls makes a sharp turn to the left (south). A small brown sign marks this turn. You should be able to hear the water flowing over the falls located about 375 feet from the main trail (Figure 5). The main trail continues for 3 more miles to Browns Lake.

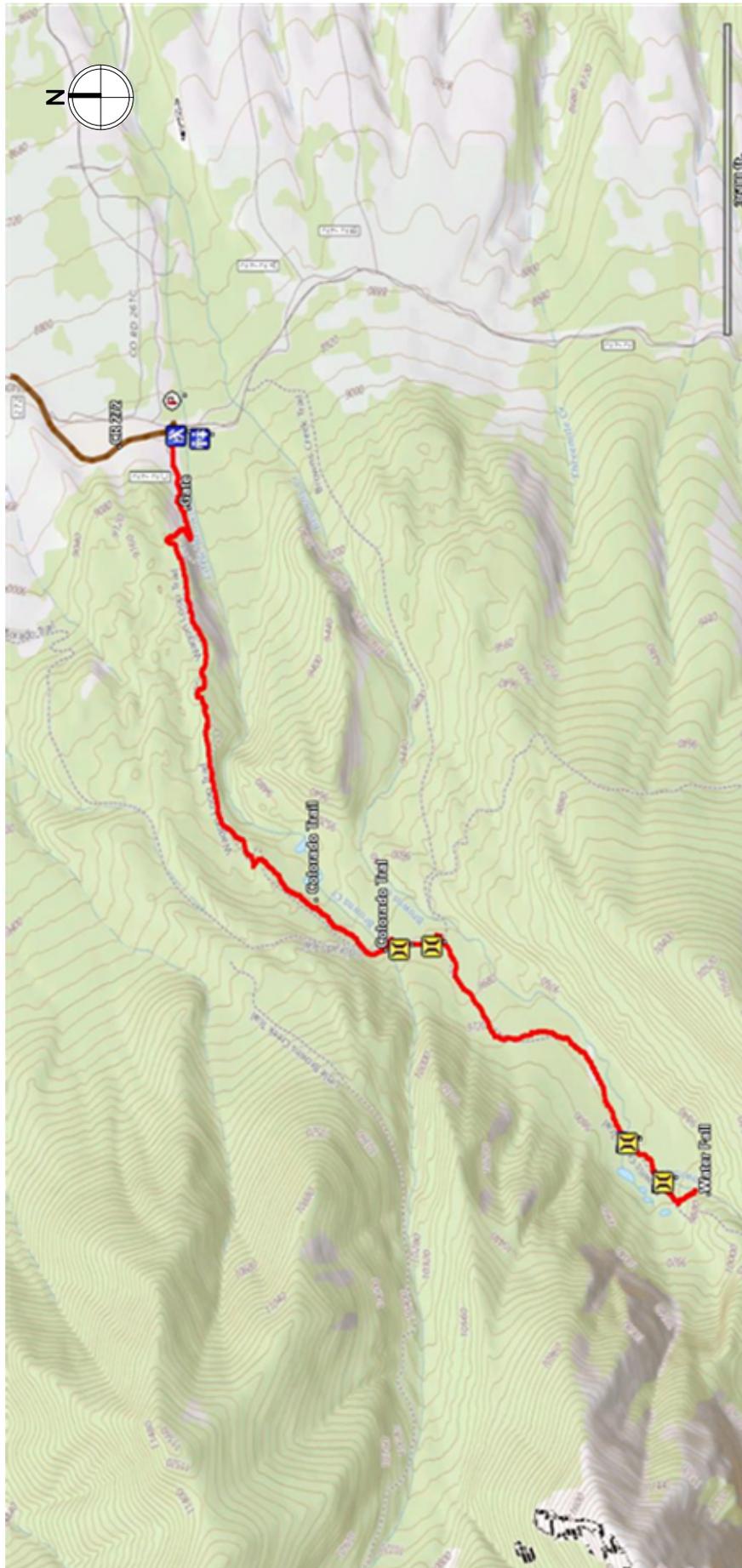


Figure 1. Map of Browns Creek Trail



Figure 2. View to the southeast



Figure 3. View of Mt. Antero

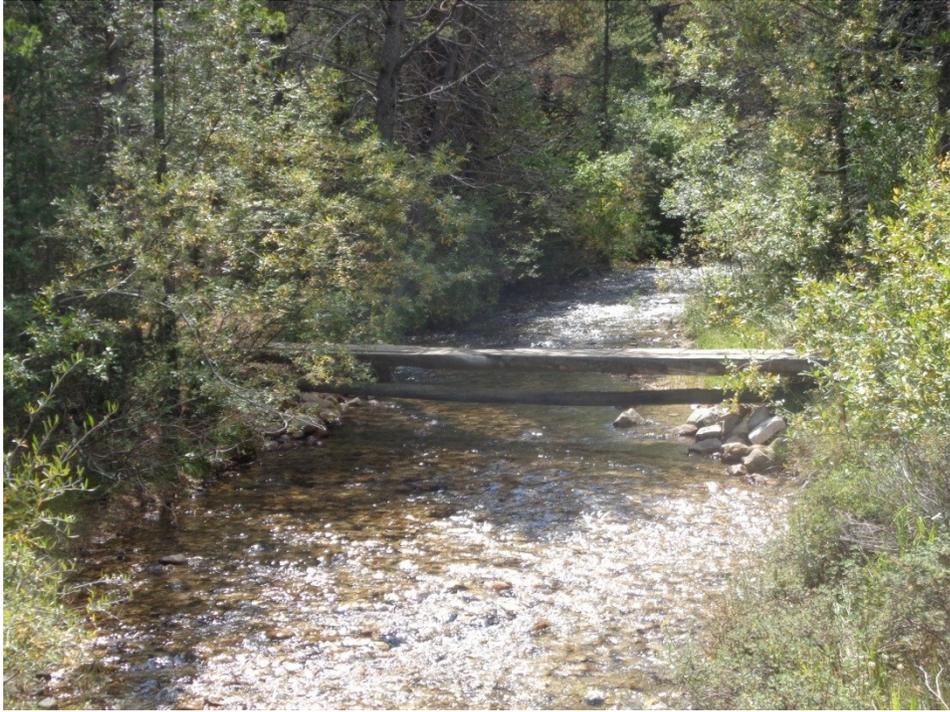


Figure 4. Bridge across Browns Creek



Figure 5. Browns Creek Water Fall