

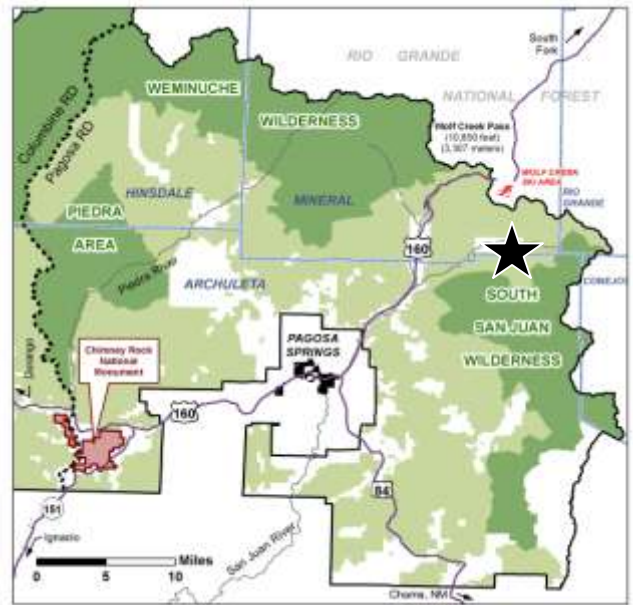


Trip Planning Information South San Juan Wilderness

The South San Juan Wilderness encompasses the eastern extent of the San Juan Mountain Range, including a segment of the Continental Divide. Originally designated as Wilderness by Congress in 1980, it is a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

As you visit, you will join thousands of others who travel in the South San Juan each year. You can help protect the Wilderness through your knowledge and skills, and by complying with regulations.

The information within this handout will assist you as you prepare for your trip.



It's Wild Out There!

The South San Juan is large, remote, and wild. Signing is limited to junctions or Forest Service system trails and does not give mileages. Due to vandalism or harshness of conditions, signs may be damaged or missing. **Be sure to carry a current topographical map of the area.**

Weather

Expect and be prepared for rain, hail, snow, or biting wind at any time of the year. Intense afternoon thunderstorms are common in summer. Lower elevations are usually free of the winter snowpack by mid-June, but higher areas may be snow-covered into late July or mid-August. **Carry clothing and equipment which will keep you warm and dry, even when day-hiking.**

High Elevation

Elevations **range from about 8,000 to over 13,000 feet**. High altitude sickness is a potential problem and can be fatal. Monitor yourself for symptoms – irritability, headache, dizziness, drowsiness, nausea, clouded thinking ability. Symptoms may also include raspy breathing, rapid heartbeat when resting, and difficulty sleeping. **Move to lower elevation and drink lots of water.** If symptoms persist, seek medical aid.

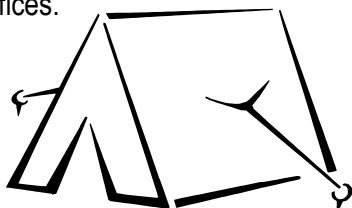
High Water

During spring snow melt, high fast water and muddy conditions are common. Water levels of streams and rivers may rise dangerously with warm weather or after rainstorms. **Use caution when crossing streams or delay crossing until the water levels drop.**

Keeping it Wild!

The following regulations are in effect to help ensure the protection of the wilderness environment.

Violators may be cited and fined. A complete listing of official orders is available for review in Forest and District offices.



Specific South San Juan Regulations

Group Size

Maximum group size is 15 people per group, with a maximum combination of people and stock not to exceed 25.

Camping

Camping, campfires, and restraining or grazing of recreational livestock **are NOT** permitted within 200 feet of **Bear Lake, Blue Lake, Green Lake, and Red Lake.**

Livestock and pets

- Recreational livestock are prohibited from being restrained within 100 feet of lakeshores and streams or within riparian areas.
- Pets must be under voice control or physical restraint.

Travel and Equipment

- Possession of motorized equipment and equipment used for mechanical transport are prohibited. This includes the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment, bicycles, hang gliders, and carts.
- Use of aircraft to land or drop people or materials is prohibited, with the exception of agency-approved administrative use or emergency search-and-rescue operations.

Forest-wide Regulations

1. Stock Feed

All hay, cubed hay, straw, mulch, and other products in your possession on the Forest must be certified as weed-free by a sanctioned certification program.

2. Campfires

Do not leave campfires unattended. Make sure fire is out and ashes are cold.

3. Trash

Pack out and properly dispose of all refuse. Do not bury trash.

4. Damage to trees

Cutting or damaging live trees without a permit is prohibited.

5. Caches

Caches or stashing of equipment for more than 14 days is not permitted. Geo-caches are not permitted within the San Juan National Forest. Caching is subject to seizure and fines.

6. Outfitters and Guides

Commercial guides and outfitters must hold a valid legal permit to operate within National Forests. Contact the Forest to confirm that your outfitter is permitted.

7. Reserved Campsites

No camping is allowed in or within 100 feet of areas signed as “reserved” or “assigned” to permitted commercial outfitters.

8. Hunting

Hunting is permitted under regulation by the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

Leave No Trace Ethics

Practicing a “Leave No Trace” ethic is very simple: make it hard for others to see or hear you and “Leave No Trace” of your visit. With your help, the wilderness resource can be managed to ensure that its unique character and values remain intact.

PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

- Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use. Split larger parties into groups of 4-6.

TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses, or snow.
- Camp at least 200 feet from water. In areas where there are no established sites, move your camp before impacts being to show.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.

DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from water sources. Use small amounts of biodegradable soap or no soap. Scatter wash water far from camp and water sources.
- Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug to 8

inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.

- Pack out all that you pack in—food scraps and trash. Do not bury or burn any trash.

LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

- Preserve the past. Examine, but do not move or remove cultural or historic structures and artifacts.

MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

- If you choose to have a campfire, be sure the area is not closed to campfires, and then keep it small.
- In areas at or above tree line or which are heavily used, avoid building campfires due to the limited supply of down and dead wood.

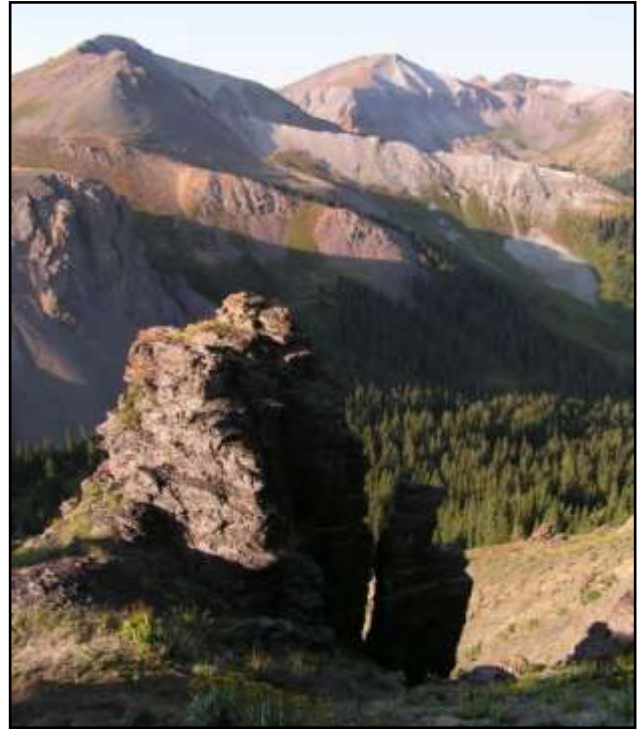


RESPECT WILDLIFE

- Protect wildlife from you food by using bear resistant methods of storing or hanging food, trash, and other scented items.
- Keep pets under control, preferably leashed, to protect wildlife and lessen conflicts with other visitors.

BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS

- When hikers meet horses or other stock on the trail, hikers should move to one side and well off the trail. When safe to do so, move off the trail to the downhill side. Speak to riders to let the stock know you are people, not predators.
- When hikers with llamas meet horses or other stock, move well off the trail and speak to the riders.
 - Horses and mules which are not familiar with llamas are often startled by the odor or sight of llamas.
- Keep restrained stock far from water sources, trails and campsites. Horses should be tied to trees only for short periods of time. Do not allow stock to damage trees. When using a highline, electric fence or hobbles, move animals frequently to avoid overgrazing.
- Respect other visitors. Let nature sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.



South San Juan Wilderness



South San Juan Wilderness – Photos by Mark Roper

The South San Juan Wilderness is managed by the San Juan and Rio Grande National Forests. For more information contact the Pagosa Ranger District (970) 264-2268 or the Rio Grande National Forest (719) 852-5941.

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