

Lower Curley Creek TH from South Boulder to Rock Creek TH (27.4 km point-to-point single-track)

Directions:

Exit I-90 at Cardwell and proceed 8.3 km toward Harrison before turning right onto South Boulder Rd. Proceed 15 km on South Boulder Rd to Rock Creek TH, and another 6 km to the Lower Curley Creek TH.

Description:

Difficult but spectacular trail through the Tobacco Root Mountains with 360° view where the trail tops out at 10 km (3000⁺ m altitude). Short areas of rugged footing for running. Trail takes six hours of fast steady walking. Stream water to filter. Upper third of trail off limits until July 15th as protected mountain goat habitat. Trail normally free of snow through Labor Day, but it can snow up there any day of the year.

Alternative start:

Upper Curly Creek TH provides a easier running route, but the road to the TH requires a high clearance vehicle. The two Curly Creek trails unite at ~5 km.

Alternative finishes:

The trail has three spurs

- 1) Beall Lake trail junction at 8 km, but that trail goes to the opposite front of the Tobacco Roots, and it does not have an approved exit on public land.
- 2) McGovern Creek trail junction at ~20 km goes back to South Boulder Rd, finishing on a primitive road with no trail head.
- 3) Mill Canyon trail junction at ~22 km, another trail that goes to the opposite front of the Tobacco Roots.

Negatives:

The first 0.7 km are extremely steep.

Transportation needed from the finish.