



Trail 20--Pipeline: Church Fork to Burch Hollow

Duration: 2 hours

Distance: 4 miles out-and-back

Difficulty: Moderate

Trailhead: Church Fork trailhead

Elevation: Church Fork Trailhead 5684'; Trail Junction 6000';

Burch/Pipeline Junction 6515'

Avalanche: Low

Map: Mount Aire 7.5' quadrangle

GPS Coordinates: not needed

Dogs: No dogs off leash on even numbered calendar days per county ordinance. Dogs must be leashed in all parking lots, trail heads and developed sites.

Introduction: Church Fork Picnic Area comes complete with waterfalls and creek crossings.

Accessing the Pipeline trail from this trailhead is not a climb up a narrow wash, but a jaunt through scenic picnic grounds. My favorite aspects of this trail are the waterfalls at the beginning of the trail, the pleasant jaunt along the pipeline, and the stepped up views of the canyon below. The trailhead for Grandeur Peak sits at the top of Church Fork picnic grounds as well. This is the access point for both Grandeur and the Pipeline trail. Restrooms are available at Church Fork picnic area.

How to get there: Church Fork is 2.4 miles up Mill Creek Canyon from the fee booth. There is no parking area at Church Fork as the gates are closed for winter. One must park along the road.

Trail Description: The trail starts behind the restrooms and follows the road through the picnic grounds for .36 mile. At the far side of the picnic grounds, you'll find the trailhead for Grandeur Peak. Follow this for .1 of a mile to the Pipeline trail junction. At this trail junction, head right to get to Burch Hollow. Taking a left will take you to Rattlesnake Gulch, going straight will take you to Grandeur Peak. The trail junction is well marked. The trail is easy to follow, not only because it's well used, but also because it is cut into the mountain and the terrain is easily read. There is a bit of uphill climbing, but once on the Pipeline trail the mountain views open.

From the junction it is approximately a mile along the Pipeline trail, to the point where you'll hit the junction with the trail that leads you down to the Burch Hollow trailhead. The descending trail takes you another .45 miles down to the trailhead

Option: If you desire only downhill, start from Burch Hollow and leave a shuttle at Church Fork.