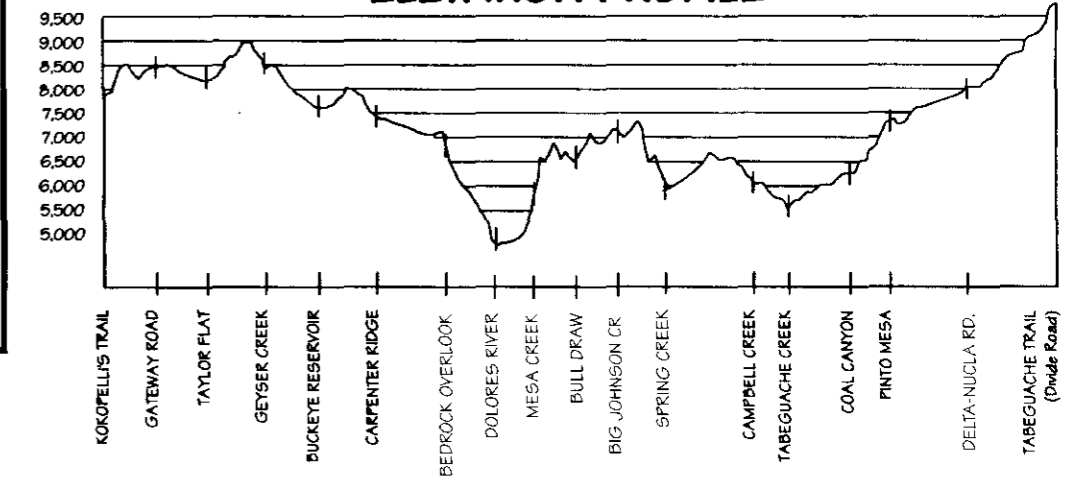


ELEVATION PROFILE



For more information Contact:

- Bureau of Land Management**
Uncompahgre Resource Area
2505 S. Townsend Ave. • Montrose, CO 81401
(970) 240-5300
- U.S. Forest Service**
Uncompahgre National Forest
1760 Grand Ave. • Norwood, CO 81423
(970) 327-4261
- U.S. Forest Service**
Manti-La Sal National Forest
125 West 200 South • Moab, Utah 84532
(801) 259-7155
- Nucla/Naturita Chamber of Commerce**
230 West Main Street • P.O. Box 425
Naturita, CO 81422
(970) 865-2350
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- Internet Information Available:**
www.copmoba.org
Keywords: COPMOBA or Paradox Trail

PARADOX TRAIL LOG

The Paradox Trail links the Tabeguache Trail on the Uncompahgre Plateau and Kokopelli's Trail in the La Sal Mountains of Utah. It's 105 mile length traverses a wide variety of terrain, elevation and eco-zones. Most of its length follows existing, jeep and county roads. It is accessible by mountain bike from the months of May thru November although many sections are accessible year round. The trail is marked every mile and at key intersections with brown carsonite posts with the Paradox Trail emblem (trail markers may be missing from some sections). Section descriptions are from east to west and all mileages are approximate. Vehicle access points are marked on the map. Services are limited to the Nucla/Naturita area and Bedrock. Major portions of the trail are accessible by two-wheel drive vehicles. Check locally for road conditions. Since the trail is not patrolled be prepared with plenty of food and water. Trail difficulty is rated in this log as either easy, difficult or very difficult. When wet, all unpaved roads and trail segments may be impassable to both mountain bikes and vehicles. Most of the trail is on remote, unpatrolled USFS and BLM land with unmarked hazards. The adventurous nature of this trail requires users to be cautious, personally responsible, self-sufficient and have a working knowledge of back country survival. The use of topographic maps and a compass is strongly recommended. Drinking water is not readily available along the trail. Water can be found in major drainages but should be treated before drinking. Most of the trail can be found on the Nucla 1:100,000 scale BLM map and the La Sal Mountains BLM map.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAIL SECTIONS

- TABEGUACHE TRAIL TO DELTA-NUCLA ROAD, via Hauser Road**
Rating: Easy to Difficult • **Surface:** Dirt
Length: 10 miles
Elevation: 8,840 ft. to 8,140 ft. (3,000 m to 2,450 m)
Hauser Road begins at a junction with the Divide Road 3 miles NW of Antone Springs campground. It is a well-graded dirt road along the south ridge of the upper Tabeguache Basin, dropping 1700 ft. to meet Delta-Nucla Road. Switchbacks and panoramic views to the south and west characterize this area. The upper section begins in spruce and aspen forest. Oak and pines dominate the lower section
- Attention:** Between the Glencoe Bench and Doby Canyon the Paradox Trail skirts the southern boundary of the Tabeguache area - a BLM/USFS area managed as wilderness - mountain bikes are not allowed. Please stay on the designated route.
- DELTA-NUCLA ROAD TO PINTO MESA via Glencoe Bench**
Rating: Difficult • **Surface:** Dirt
Length: 8 miles
Elevation: 8,140 ft. to 7,380 ft. (2,450 m to 2,250 m)
Turn right on the Delta-Nucla road for approximately 1/8 mile. Look for signs on an old jeep road coming up on the left. If you start dropping on the county road, you've missed your turn. The jeep road heads in a westerly direction through meadows, pine forests and oak brush. Some wet and boggy areas exist. This section marks the southern boundary of the Tabeguache Area which is off limits to mountain bikes. The trail offers

views of the La Sal Mountains in Utah and the Tabeguache Creek canyon. After mile 4 the jeep road narrows to a wide trail rehabilitated to prevent vehicle travel. At mile 7 the trail rounds a point, heads south down a steep hill, then climbs quickly to Pinto Mesa to intersect a dirt road. Turn left and follow for 1/2 mile to a "T" intersection.

- PINTO MESA TO COAL CANYON**
Rating: Difficult • **Surface:** Dirt
Length: 4.3 miles
Elevation: 7,380 ft. to 6,232 ft. (2,250 m to 1,900 m)
At "T" intersection trail turns right on Pinto Mesa. Near the mesa rim the road forks, bear left and begin dropping down the side of the rim to the NW. Road is rough and rocky and will switchback to the south. Vegetation is juniper and pinon while the road becomes rockier and rougher in its descent. A north/south fence marks the boundary between National Forest and BLM lands 2-1/4 miles from Pinto Mesa. Trail forks off to the left (south) shortly beyond the fence and goes immediately down into a drainage. Trail follows a dry creek bottom on a soft trail which eventually climbs out of the creek bed to the north and brings you to a large fenced in opening. The trail climbs around to the right on a steep road.
- COAL CANYON TO TABEGUACHE CREEK**
Rating: Easy to Very Difficult • **Surface:** Dirt
Length: 6.3 miles
Elevation: 6,232 ft. to 5,576 ft. (1,900 m to 1,700 m)
Trail climbs steeply out of the open area to an existing pack/seismic road. This section can be extremely rough and steep in places as it drops and climbs out of various drainages. Trail bears in a NW direction. Eventually the terrain becomes more rolling and gentle before intersecting with County Road Z-26 in Third Park. Turn right and drop into Tabeguache Creek. You will find a nice swimming hole upstream of the bridge.
- TABEGUACHE CREEK TO SPRING CREEK via Z-26 Rd.**
Rating: Easy to Difficult • **Surface:** Dirt
Length: 8.5 miles
Elevation: 5,576 ft. to 6,628 ft. (1,700 m to 2,021 m)
Cross the bridge and climb NE out of the canyon. Road climbs steadily to the north with views of Shavano Creek, Uncompahgre Plateau and the La Sal Mountains Road drops to Campbell Creek 3.7 miles from the Tabeguache Creek. Pass by private property with a ranch house and fenced pasture. Please respect owner's privacy. Continue on Z-26 Rd. as it climbs up and over the hills to Burro Creek drainage. Come to gate 7-1/2 miles from Tabeguache Creek. Return any gates as you find them and respect private property on both sides of the road. Road will overlook a house as it drops into Spring Creek. Head north along the creek to the intersection of U-18 and Z-26 Roads
- UPPER SPRING CREEK MESA TO SOUTH FORK MESA CREEK**
Rating: Difficult to Very Difficult • **Surface:** Dirt
Length: 12.25 miles
Elevation: 6,100 - 7,500 feet (1877m to 2308m)
Turn left and follow U18 Rd. up a short hill to the SW. Ride about a tenth of a mile, then take the first right onto a dirt two track that goes through a

- sage covered flat. Climb steadily on this two track towards the dramatic uplift of the Uncompahgre Plateau for over 2 miles bearing right at any intersections and splits in the road. After a brief, steep descent, bear left at a grassy open area and a three way intersection. The trail narrows as it becomes rougher and more overgrown climbing steeply from this point. This section of trail is known as the "Koski Traverse" named for a local mountain biker who first re-connected the route over to Bull Draw. The 4.5 mile traverse is rough, steep and rocky with some hike a bike sections as it climbs and drops through three major drainages on its way to Bull Draw. Continue to climb and then descend to Atkinson Creek. Ride upstream for a short distance where the creek is easily crossed. Once across continue downstream and look for signage or rock cairns that mark the trail. The trail begins to climb again to the NW up a steep, rocky hike a bike affair. Descend to Big Johnson Creek. A trail goes upstream after crossing but do not follow. The Paradox Trail goes through an oak thicket and heads up to the SW which can be seen from the creek. Don't follow the cow trail that heads downstream. Climb up the old jeep road and then descend to Little Johnson Creek then ride upstream on the main trail as it climbs through an old burn area. Follow the long descent as it drops into Bull Draw. Turn right in the open area where a two track comes up Bull Draw. Follow up the draw and continue to bear right at another road coming in from the left. The road now continues up and rounds a mesa to your left. Continue on the rolling two track through Blue Basin. Turn right at the next three way intersection, climb briefly on the obvious two track. The scenic nature of the "wild west end" canyon country and the La Sal mountains to the west is quite apparent. Descend to an intersection overlooking the South Fork of Mesa Creek. Turn right to descend to the creek.
- SOUTH FORK MESA CREEK TO HWY 141**
Rating: Easy to Difficult • **Surface:** Dirt, gravel
Length: 11 miles
Elevation: 6,100 to 4,800 ft. (1,877m to 1,477m)
Once across the South Fork of Mesa Creek turn left and head downstream on an old two track as it parallels the creek. In less than a mile merge with another two track that comes in from the right. Ride down the canyon for another four miles to a three way intersection. Turn right onto a graded dirt road (P 12), cross the South Fork and go past an old homestead, a remnant of the old ranching days. The road continues on a bench overlooking the confluence of the South Fork and North Fork of Mesa Creek then head up the canyon where it crosses the North Fork in a nice cotton wood grotto. This is on BLM ground and makes an excellent camp site. The road continues downstream on a bench overlooking the creek on a well graded road. At the next intersection turn left (O 14) and continue down the canyon. The Dolores River canyon and Hwy 141 can be seen in the distance to the south. The road quickly drops to intersect with Hwy 141.
- HWY 141 TO CARPENTER RIDGE**
Rating: Easy to Very Difficult • **Surface:** Paved, dirt
Length: 14.5 miles
Elevation: 4,800-6,960 ft. (1477m to 2141m)
At Hwy 141 turn left riding up canyon along the Dolores River for two miles on pavement. Turn right on a bridge crossing the river and begin climbing a graded road bearing left as it climbs to a bench heading upstream. About 1.7 miles upstream the mouth of Red Canyon is reached.

- The rough road becomes narrower and more rugged as it climbs the canyon. The route at this point follows the old Radium Trail, a name referring to the region's uranium mining history and the radioactive ores that were mined from the well exposed Morrison formation. Dinosaur bone is found in the same formation. The Radium Trail travels the entire length of Red Canyon. The trail becomes more rugged and takes a final steep hike a bike pitch up to the top of the ridge. The trail rounds a point which offers commanding views of the Paradox Valley, the San Juan Mountains to the east and La Sal Mountains close up to the west. The trail continues to climb the ridge as it goes through mature pinon stands on a sometimes soft trail. At approx. 9.5 miles the trail connects with Rd. Q13. Go left and follow this seasonally graded road up as it parallels Carpenter Ridge. The ridge is popular with hang gliders in the region for obvious reasons. At 14.5 miles a road comes up from the Paradox Valley to form a big triangular intersection. Bear right as the road continues around the back side of Carpenter ridge toward Buckeye Reservoir.
- CARPENTER RIDGE TO BUCKEYE RESERVOIR**
Rating: Easy to Difficult • **Surface:** Dirt
Length: 6 miles
Elevation: 7,380 ft. to 7,630 ft. (2,250 m to 2,326 m)
Road heads north and west as it rounds Carpenter Ridge. It quickly enters mature pine forests with views to the north into Sinbad Valley and Sewerup Mesa. Continue to go left at intersections, staying on the main road. It tops out at 3-1/2 miles from Carpenter Ridge. Gradually descend along a jeep road passing Buckeye Reservoir on the left. The trail bears right after passing the reservoir on the road. Camping, swimming and fishing are popular at this small lake. No services are available.
- BUCKEYE RESERVOIR TO TAYLOR FLAT**
Rating: Easy to Difficult • **Surface:** Gravel, Dirt
Length: 11.5 miles
Elevation: 7,630 ft. to 8,260 ft. (2,326 m to 2,500 m)
From Buckeye Reservoir head NW and soon cross the state line into Utah. Road is well-maintained and sees a variety of traffic including log trucks. Road climbs through pine forests and open meadows, then drops into the Geiser Creek drainage. Switchbacks bring you out of the drainage to a maintenance station near the intersection of the Taylor Flat Road. Turn right on the Taylor Flat Road and continue to climb through mature aspen groves. Sinbad Valley and the Uncompahgre Plateau can be seen to the right. Road then drops steadily to Taylor Flat through oak thickets.
- TAYLOR FLAT TO KOKOPELLI'S TRAIL**
Rating: Difficult • **Surface:** Gravel, Dirt
Length: 10.5 miles
Elevation: 8,216 ft. to 8,000 ft. (2,500 m to 2,439 m)
The road climbs steadily the length of Taylor Flat as it heads north to meet the Gateway Road - County Road 207. Turn left on the Gateway Road. It drops and then climbs around the ridge. The road then drops steadily to the intersection with Kokopelli's Trail. Moab is 30 miles to the west from this point.

- Alternate Routes**
- ALTERNATE ROUTE - THROUGH NUCLA**
Rating: Easy • **Surface:** Dirt, Gravel, Paved
Length: 18.9 miles
Elevation: 7,380 ft. to 5,576 ft. (2,250 m to 1,700 m)
At the "T" intersection on Pinto Mesa turn left and follow dirt road to Delta-Nucla Road, turn right and follow gravel/paved road to Nucla. From Nucla turn right (north) on Main Street (Hwy. 97). Climb briefly on the road that quickly bears west as BB Road. BB Road skirts around a mining area as it crosses Tuttle Draw. Turn left onto CC Road. Take second right on through Second Park, then left at intersection. Road turns to gravel and drops into Coal Creek climbing to Third Park. Follow the graded county road across Third Park for approximately 2 miles where the Paradox Trail comes in from the right. Nucla has a full array of services including a swimming reservoir. Motels and other services are located in Naturita 4 miles south on Hwy 141.
- ALTERNATE ROUTE THROUGH URAVAN AND PARADOX VALLEY: SPRING CREEK TO URAVAN**
Rating: Easy to Difficult • **Surface:** Dirt
Length: 8.5 miles
Elevation: 6,628 ft. to 5,248 ft. (2,021 m to 1,600 m)
Turn left and follow U-18 Road up the hill to the SW. It quickly tops out onto a sage and pinon covered flat. Road is well-graded as it drops steadily to Spring Creek Mesa. At mile 5 road starts to drop into the San Miguel River canyon along gentle switchbacks. U-18 ends at Hwy. 141 in Uravan. No services available.
- URAVAN TO BEDROCK**
Rating: Easy • **Surface:** Gravel
Length: 13 miles
Elevation: 5,248 ft. to 5,018 ft. (1,600 m to 1,530 m)
Turn right and follow Hwy. 141 1/2 mile. Turn left and cross the San Miguel River on a concrete bridge. Follow the river downstream as it drops into a small canyon to the confluence with the Dolores River at mile 4-1/2. Continue on the river road as it meanders through a deep river canyon. About 3 miles from the confluence the narrow canyon opens to the Paradox Valley. Cross the valley floor and meet Hwy. 90. Turn right on Hwy 90 and cross the Dolores River at Bedrock. This is an extremely scenic section. Limited services and water are available at the Bedrock Store.
- BEDROCK TO CARPENTER RIDGE**
Rating: Easy to Very Difficult • **Surface:** Gravel, Dirt, Paved
Length: 12.8 miles
Elevation: 5,018 ft. to 7,380 ft. (1,530 m to 2,250 m)
From Bedrock follow Hwy. 90 1 mile. Take the first county road to the right. Follow for 1 mile, turn left. Go 1/2 mile and turn right. Go up a small hill and travel 2 miles, turn left. Travel 3 miles straight into Paradox. 8.5 miles from Bedrock. No services available in Paradox. At Paradox turn right past the school and firehouse to the north side of the valley. The road climbs steeply on switchbacks for 3 miles to the top of Carpenter Ridge. Enjoy panoramic views of the Paradox Valley and the San Juan Mountains