

**Key:**

Vertical Gain/Steepness:	E=Easy, 0' to 400' gain per mile
	M=Moderate, 400' to 800' gain per mile
	D=Difficult, 800' to 1200' gain per mile
	X=Extreme, 1200' + gain per mile
Surface/Terrain:	E=Easy, mostly sand, dirt or pine needle covered on established trail
	M=Moderate, small rocks and roots present on established trail
	D=Difficult, loose and rocky on established trail
	X=Extreme, very loose, with large rocks and possibly scrambling required. Trail may not be established or easily recognizable

**Trail Name:**

Newlin Creek Trail (USFS Trail #1335 - TH elevation 7100') Reference the Rockvale USGS Topographical Map.

**Trail Location:**

From downtown Westcliffe, drive east on CO 96 26 miles to Wetmore CO. Turn left (north) on CO 67 and travel about 7 miles to County Road (CR) 15 – look for signage to Florence Mountain Park and Newlin Creek Trail - turn left. Follow this road about 6.5 miles. There are a couple of roads that veer off of CR15, just continue following the signage to Florence Mountain Park. At this point you will need to make a decision as to whether you park here, or continue up the somewhat rugged road another ½ mile in your vehicle to the parking area for the trail. When dry, this road is typically passable in an AWD SUV. If wet and muddy, or snow packed, you will likely need a 4WD vehicle.

**Trail Summary:**

Newlin Creek Trail used to be an old logging road leading up to the remains of the Herrick Sawmill, which Nathaniel Herrick started to develop in 1887. Upon his death that same year, the business venture, all structures and equipment, and road were abandoned.

Not only does this trail offer a view of the enterprising spirit taking hold in the west during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, but it also offers excellent hiking (and rock climbing!) experiences to a variety of skill levels. The trail can be considered in three ways; 1) the hike up to the sawmill – 2.5 miles (one way) and about 1300' vertical, 2) rock climbing at various formations along this first segment, and 3) a rather steep hike from the sawmill to an unnamed peak which overlooks Florence and the Arkansas river basin – and additional 0.8 miles and another 850' vertical.

*Accessibility:* This trail is accessible to foot and horse traffic in all seasons, but given that much of the trail lies deep in the Newlin Creek drainage, winter/spring hiking opportunities totally depend on how much snow has fallen during the winter. The snow packs can remain well into

spring since much of the trail does not get much direct sun. As spring warms things up, these snow packs can develop icy patches, so Yaktrax (or a similar product) may be helpful during early season hikes.

*Trail Length and Type:* To the sawmill – 5.1 miles roundtrip  
All the way to the peak – 6.65 miles roundtrip

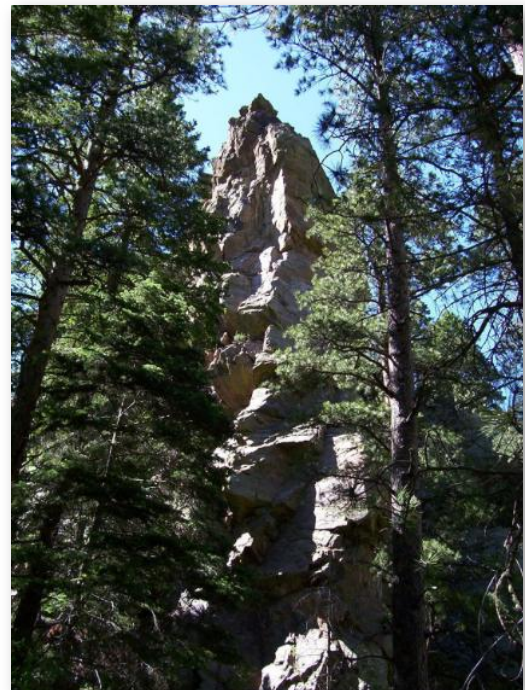
*Vertical Gain and Steepness:* To the sawmill - 1300' vertical gain, 75% E, 25% M  
All the way to the peak – 2150' vertical gain, 60% E, 25% M, 15% D

*Surface/Terrain:* To the sawmill - 80% E, 20% M  
All the way to the peak – 75% E, 25% M

## Trail Experience:

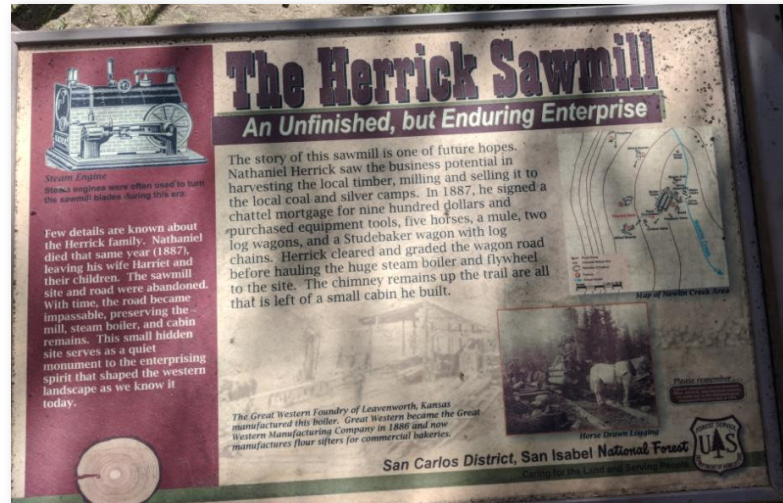
Newlin Creek Trail is a very popular trail about 10 miles southwest of Florence, CO. This trail has a lot to offer, especially if you like to cross a creek while hiking – there are 17 crossings on this trail between the trailhead and the sawmill! This trail meanders through heavy forest cover along Newlin Creek for much of the first 2.5 miles up to the abandoned Herrick Sawmill. Creek crossings are very manageable, and only become a challenge when runoff is very heavy.

The first 0.75 mile is very easy, and by itself is a beautiful walk through the forest. At about mile 0.75 you are made aware of the terrain changing with the introduction of a beautiful rock tower to the right (photo credit Richard M. Wright). This tower has climbing bolts on it, as do other buttresses in the area. For details about climbing and bouldering opportunities in the Newlin Creek area, check out <https://www.mountainproject.com/area/105744415/newlin-creek> . Once you pass this tower, the trail continues beneath many rock formations, which are all to your right (north), for the next mile and a half. The trail along this section can be rocky, and steep for short sections, but there are many opportunities to rest, take in the beauty of the nature around you. You may even be able to watch some climbers in action!



The trail between the tower and the sawmill never veers far from the creek - the terrain on both sides of the trail is simply too steep. In this section of the trail you will encounter several small waterfalls and numerous creek crossings. The trail here is very obvious and well-travelled, but as mentioned above, can be a bit rocky and steep in parts. At about 2.5 miles you will break into a small meadow shouldered on all sides by steep inclines – this is where the remains of the Herrick Sawmill lie.

Beyond this meadow, and the remains of the sawmill, the trail does continue due north up a steep slope (about 550' vertical in just over 1/3 of a mile). The trail here is less travelled, and once you get up the initial steep slope out of the meadow, it may not be obvious. Just continue to look ahead – cairns have been created in the past to mark the trail in obscure locations.

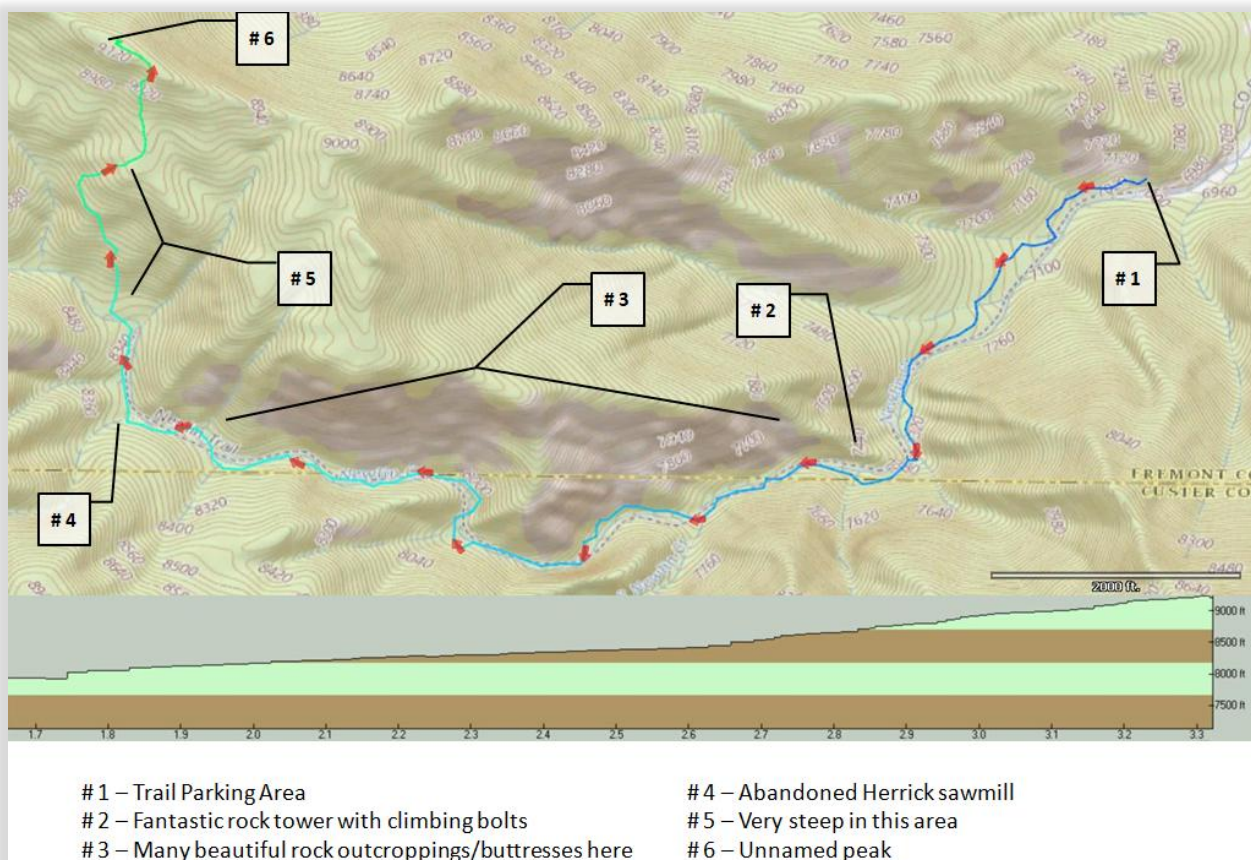


After the steep portion coming out of the meadow, the trail does flatten out quite a bit on top of the ridge above the meadow. Here the trail meanders through a fairly open forested area for a bit before you encounter another short incline up to the summit of an unnamed peak. The peak is forested, and is an excellent place to pull up a rock, enjoy a lunch, and take in the beautiful vista to the NE, which looks out towards Rockvale, Coal Creek and Florence.

Since this trail is so close to Florence and Canon City, it can be very busy during prime hiking season, especially on weekends. During these times the trailhead parking area can fill up, so you may be forced to find a spot somewhere along the 4WD road that leads up to the parking area. Generally, however, this is a great trail for many reasons, and will appeal to a wide variety of hikers!



## Map: Newlin Creek Trail (USFS Trail #1335)



**The Legal Stuff:** The information contained in these trail summaries is intended to be a supplement to the typical tools and references used by people who are well prepared to venture into the mountains. Always carry a map specific to the area you are exploring. Failure to have the necessary experience, physical conditioning, and supplies or equipment can result in injury or death. Trails For All provides no warranties, either express or implied, that the information provided in our published Trail Summaries is 100% accurate or reliable. By using any information provided, you agree to absolve Trails For All from any responsibility for damage or other liability arising from the use of Trails For All Trail Summaries.

