

Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp Trail Guide

Introduction:

This is a guide to the trails and other destinations around camp. The authors of this guide have been to each of these places multiple times. This guide only covers standard camp hikes and a few other points which can be reached easily from these hikes. As we explore more territory we hope to add more routes and destinations for campers to enjoy. The trails and mountains surrounding RMMC are a special place, please respect nature and try to follow Leave No Trace Principles. Some of the routes described in this guide follow difficult terrain and should only be attempted by those with navigational skills. Use this guide at your own risk.

Using this Guide:

There are two sections in this guidebook, a hiking guide and a running guide, they cover many of the trails. The first descriptor in the guide is how difficult the route is. It is a class rating which is internationally used to describe the difficulty of a route. The class rating goes up to class 5.15. Nothing in this guide is more difficult than class 3+. This is a rundown of the class rating.

Class 1: On trail hiking or easy off trail hiking.

Class 2: Rough trail hiking or off-trail hiking, hands may be used for balance.

Class 2+: Hands are needed, this is almost scrambling.

Class 3: Easy scrambling, hands are needed, downclimbing can usually be done facing out.

Class 4: More difficult scrambling, hand holds are more difficult to find, downclimbing is done while facing in.

Class 5: This is technical climbing, usually with ropes.. A rappel is often used on the descent.

The distance is the roundtrip distance from the given trailhead. This is the same with the elevation gain.

We do not like estimated times for hikes. People hike at different speeds and are able to travel through terrain at different speeds so a time I would give to one person would not be the time I would give to another. Luckily for us, Gerry Roach, author of several guidebooks and the second person to climb the highest peak on each continent came up with a ratings system which we will use in this guide. The idea is that people hike at a speed which can be translated to different hikes, so we will use a ratings point (RP) system. So if a hike has a given RP of 100 and you have determined that you hike at 20 RP per hour, then the hike should take you 5 hours. This way we eliminate the need to adjust times for people of varying abilities.

Some destinations have multiple routes to their summit, we describe these in the variations section. We describe some extra credit hikes as well. These are points near destinations which are worth visiting, most do not have a trail or cairns to guide you.

We will also make mention of ranked peaks and unranked peaks in this guide. There are only four peaks with easy access directly from camp which can garner enough prominence to be

ranked. Those points are Raspberry Mountain (10,605), Point 10,770, Point 10,940 (Lard Point), and Pikes Peak (14,110). You may be asking, what exactly does it mean to be a ranked summit. The answer is that it rises at least 300 feet from its saddle with a higher peak. If a peak could be ranked given more accurate measurements, then it is a soft ranked summit. There are two soft ranked summits near camp, Sentinel Point (12,527) and The Craggs (10,900). An interesting note about the named feature The Craggs, the actual high point is a technical rock climb about 100 yards west of where the trail ends.

Using the Trail Running part of this guide:

The mileage and elevation gain are from the trailhead stated in the guide.

I use an Easy, Moderate or Expert rating to describe trails. These have no bias for distance. Easy trails or routes have little elevation gain. There are very few, if any steep sections, and the footing is good the entire trail.

Moderate trails or routes have more elevation gain, there will be steep sections which could be sustained, and the footing could be poor in spots. If you are a beginner you will probably have to walk sections of moderate trails.

Expert trails or routes should only be attempted by experienced trail runners. These trails are steep rugged with loose gravel and poor footing. Many of these trails cannot be run in their entirety. Some expert trails are better for hiking

The other rating I give is the runability of a trail. Most trails around here that I describe are 100% runnable. This means that an expert runner can run the entire length of the trail, there may be one or two obstacles which need to be walked around. This rating goes down until a trail cannot be run at all, but why would you attempt to run the unrunable?



About the Authors:

Aaron Voth: I started coming here as a camper in 1998, my first hike here was Old Baldy. Since my first experience here I have worked on staff for five summers. Currently I live in Boulder CO and climb mountains whenever possible. In five years I have climbed over 650 peaks 200 of them over 13,000 feet.



Matt Layman: I'm from Harrisonburg, Virginia and graduated from Virginia Tech in 2013 with a degree in Geography. I will be pursuing an MS in Geographic Information Systems at the University of Denver this fall, and will be climbing as many mountains as possible. I was on staff at RMMC for two summers.

