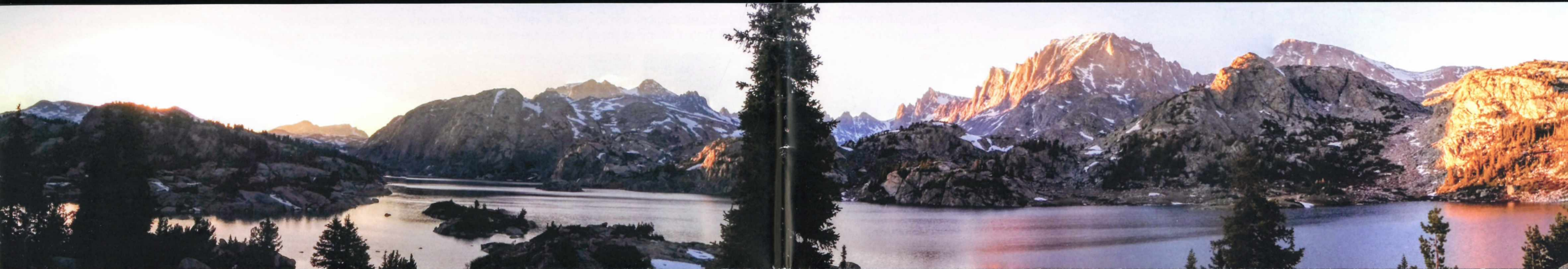


Continental Divide Trail

National Scenic Trail - Canada to Mexico



Traversing the Divide

The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (commonly known as the Continental Divide Trail, or CDT) is much more than just a line on a map: it is a living museum of the American West, a place to reconnect with nature, and a unifying force bringing people of all walks of life together. The CDT encounters some of the most dramatic and wild landscapes left on the planet as it traverses the backbone of America: the Great Continental Divide, which separates the watersheds that drain into the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. The CDT runs along the spine of the Rocky Mountains for 3,100 miles from Canada to Mexico. One of the world's greatest long-distance trails, the CDT is the highest, most challenging, and most remote of our 11 National Scenic Trails.

The Continental Divide is a landscape with not only geographical but also historical significance. Native Americans often traveled back and forth across the Divide to trade with other nations or to hunt on the Great Plains. Many locations along the Divide have spiritual significance for the descendants of those who lived there; members of the Blackfoot Nation of northern Montana, for example, refer to the Divide as the "Center of the World." Lewis and Clark expected to see the Pacific Ocean when they reached Lemhi Pass, but were greeted instead with views of the Selkirk-Bitterroot Mountains in what is now Idaho. As Europeans colonized the American West, the region's mineral resources helped fuel energy and mining booms, while the inspiring vistas of the Rocky Mountains fueled America's first



conservation movements. This led to the establishment in 1872 of our first national park, Yellowstone - now home to 90 miles of the CDT.

In 1978, in recognition of these significant scenic, historic, natural and cultural qualities, Congress designated the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. Despite decades of hard work by land managers and volunteers, the CDT is still incomplete, with approximately 5% of the Trail still in need of protection. The U.S. Forest Service is the lead administering agency for the Trail, working in close cooperation with local land managers across several state and federal agencies, and with non-profit volunteer groups, to build, manage and maintain the CDT.



EXPLORE THE TRAIL

Thousands of people from around the world visit the Continental Divide Trail each year to enjoy the dramatic landscapes of the American West. The CDT is designed for hiking and horseback riding, but certain sections are also open to mountain biking, skiing, hunting, and more. Each year, several hundred people attempt to thru-hike the CDT, walking its entire length in one go, but only about one-third will succeed. It takes most thru-hikers four to five months to hike the trail. While it's common for hikers to start in April at the southern terminus, the Trail can be hiked in both north-bound and south-bound directions. Whether you want to spend several months on the Trail or just an afternoon, the CDT is yours to explore.

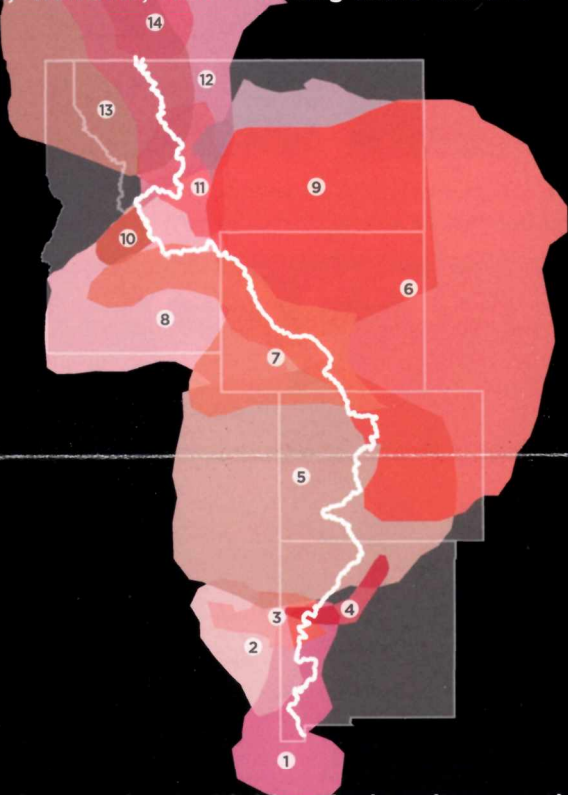
SCENERY

The CDT travels through a wide variety of landscapes. Depending on what section you choose to explore, you may experience alpine meadows studded with wildflowers, desert canyons, peaceful glacial lakes, roaring rivers, or the rocky tundra of 14,000' peaks. Due to its high elevation, the season for traveling on the CDT without snow is as short as 2-3 months in many places. Some sections are remote and receive little use, while others are highly popular and close to large towns and cities. Many towns along the CDT are designated as CDT Gateway Communities, which are recognized for their part in promoting awareness and stewardship of the CDT and creating a welcoming environment for people traveling along the Trail.

Native Land

The CDT traverses the ancestral lands of many Native American nations. The map below shows some of their historical territories; however, due

to the contested history of land ownership in the U.S., this map may be inaccurate and may even be missing entire nations.



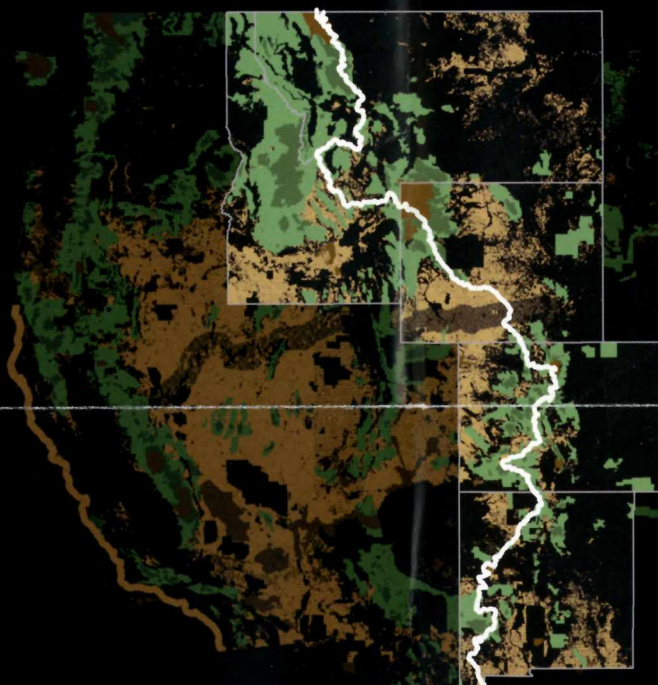
14 Native American nations with historical territory on the CDT.

- Chiricahua Apache
- Western Apache
- Zuni
- Pueblos
- Ute
- Cheyenne
- Eastern Shoshone
- Shoshone-Bannock
- Apsaalooké (Crow)
- Lemhi-Shoshone
- Salish Kootenai
- Niitsitapi (Blackfoot)
- Ktunaxa
- Tsuu T'ina

Federal Land

The CDT corridor is 95% protected as public land. More than 70% of the CDT traverses lands administered by the U.S. Forest Service, the primary

managing agency of the CDT, but the Trail also crosses many miles of Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service land.

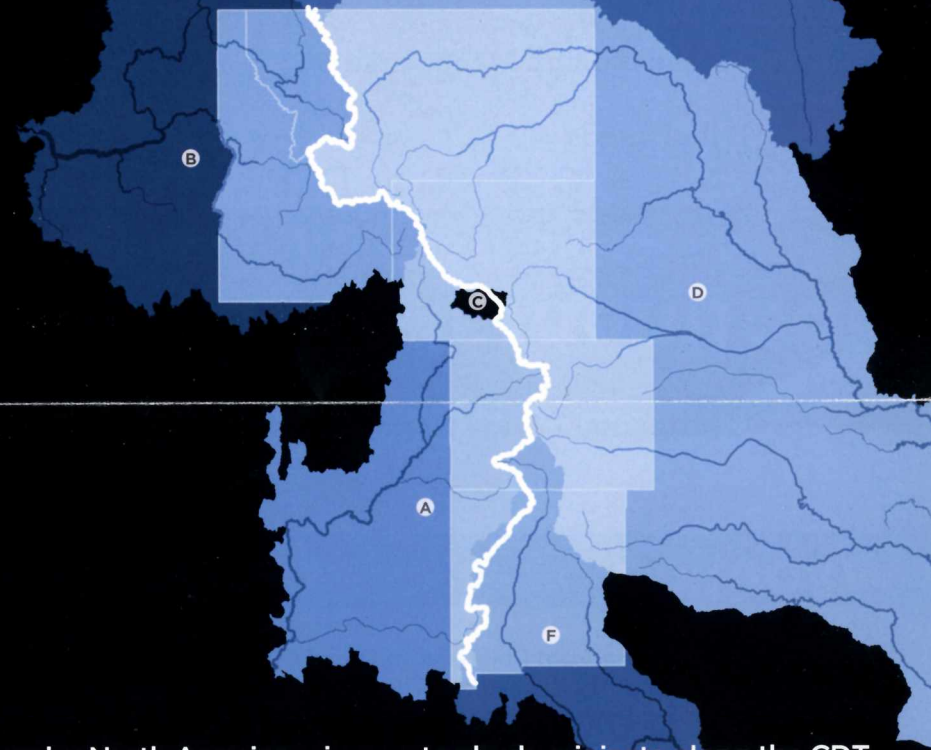


- 2150 Miles across
- 20 National Forests
- 381 Miles across
- 13 BLM Field Offices
- 279 Miles across
- 4 National Park Service Units

Watersheds

The CDT is named for the hydrologic divide that separates all watersheds in North and South America between those that drain into the Atlantic

and Pacific Oceans. Travelers on the CDT traverse the headwaters of five ocean-bound watersheds, as well as the Great Divide Basin.

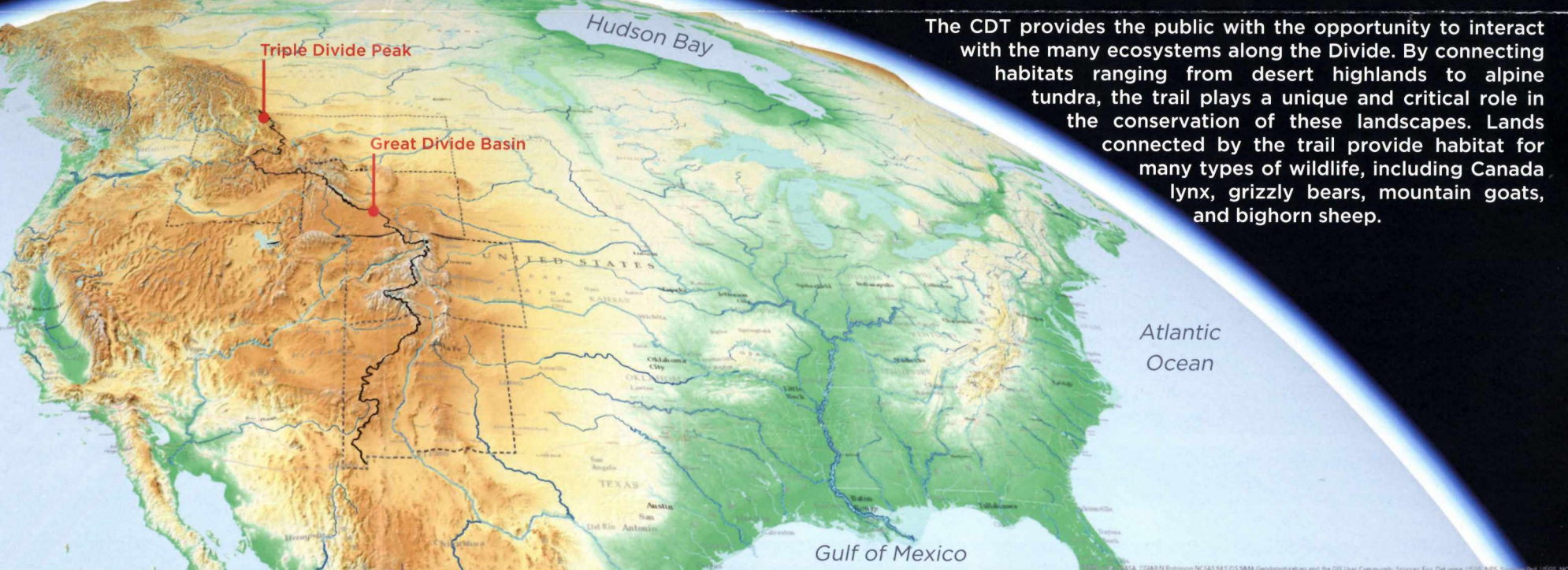


6 major North American river watersheds originate along the CDT

- Colorado River
- Columbia River
- Great Divide Basin
- Mississippi River
- Nelson River
- Rio Grande

Terminating in the Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic Oceans.

In Wyoming, the Continental Divide splits in two for more than 90 miles, creating the Great Divide Basin. Rain that falls over the basin flows neither to the Pacific nor the Atlantic Ocean, but instead simply drains directly into the arid ground. In Montana's Glacier National Park, Triple Divide Peak marks the convergence of the Continental and the Laurentian Divides. From this point, waters flow to the Pacific, Atlantic, and Arctic Oceans.



The CDT provides the public with the opportunity to interact with the many ecosystems along the Divide. By connecting habitats ranging from desert highlands to alpine tundra, the trail plays a unique and critical role in the conservation of these landscapes. Lands connected by the trail provide habitat for many types of wildlife, including Canada lynx, grizzly bears, mountain goats, and bighorn sheep.

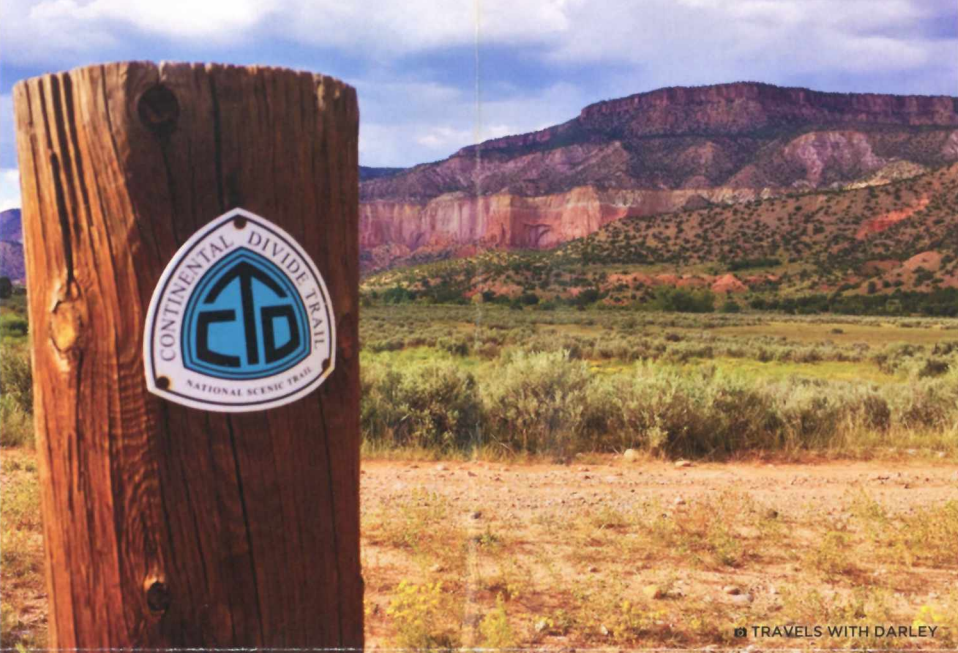
Know Before You Go

Before you explore the Continental Divide Trail, it is important to be aware of the unique conditions and regulations that exist along the Trail. It is always a good idea to check with the local land manager of the section you'll be visiting to learn about current trail conditions and other updates.

WILDLIFE

The many animals that call the CDT home are part of what makes the trail experience special, but some can be dangerous to humans when they feel scared or threatened. Never try to feed a wild animal, and respect wildlife by maintaining a safe distance between them and you, as well as any pets you may be traveling with. Due to their large size and intelligence, bears can pose a particular threat to

CDT travelers - and CDT travelers pose a particular threat to them. As the saying goes, a fed bear is a dead bear. When bears obtain human food or garbage, they quickly learn to seek more. Often, they become destructive and dangerous to humans and must be killed. Black bears live along almost the entire CDT outside of low-lying desert areas in New Mexico, and grizzly bears can be found anywhere north of Wyoming's Great Basin. In some areas along the CDT, regulations mandate proper food storage in bear boxes or canisters, but even where these food storage methods aren't required, CDT travelers should always plan to store their food in a bear canister or by properly hanging it. In addition, it is strongly recommended that travelers carry bear spray in grizzly habitat.



FIRE

Wildfires are often a concern in the arid Rocky Mountains, and the CDT is no exception. Every year, sections of the Trail are closed or rerouted because of nearby wildfires, and fire bans are common during the summer and fall in every state along the CDT. The Continental Divide Trail Coalition maintains an updated list of fire bans and trail closures on their website.

FEES AND PERMITS

Fees and permits are required for camping and entry in certain areas along the CDT. Camping permits for national parks along the Trail may require several months of advance notice. Check with the local land manager to determine whether fees and permits apply.



Building the CDT

Volunteerism is as much a part of the Continental Divide Trail as the footpath itself. The involvement of volunteers in building the CDT is mandated in its founding legislation, and for decades, dedicated volunteers have invested their time, sweat, and muscle into building and maintaining an uninterrupted route from Canada to Mexico. Today, hundreds of people volunteer on the CDT each year to enjoy the satisfaction that comes from building new trail, giving back to the land, and providing a good experience for others who will use the CDT in the years to come.

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE TRAIL COALITION

The Continental Divide Trail Coalition (CDTC) is a non-profit organization

TRAIL COURTESY

Treat all trail users with respect and courtesy. The CDT is designed for hiking and horseback riding. Other uses, such as mountain biking and motorized vehicle use, are permitted along certain sections of the Trail. Motorized users should always yield to non-motorized users, while equestrians always have the right of way. Mountain bikers should yield to hikers and equestrians. All users should stay on the trail, particularly in alpine and other ecologically sensitive landscapes. Respect the privacy of trail neighbors by not trespassing onto private property.

LEAVE NO TRACE

Leave No Trace is a set of outdoor ethics that help reduce the impact visitors have on natural resources. These guidelines are everyone's responsibility to follow when enjoying the CDT to help ensure that it remains beautiful and wild for generations to come. For more information, visit www.lnt.org.

- Leave No Trace Principles:
- Plan ahead and prepare
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces
- Dispose of waste properly
- Leave what you find
- Minimize campfire impacts
- Respect wildlife
- Be considerate of other visitors

that works trailwide in partnership with the Forest Service and other land managers. Its mission is to complete, promote, and protect the CDT by building a strong and diverse trail community, providing up-to-date information to the public, and encouraging conservation and stewardship of the Trail, its corridor, and surrounding landscapes.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Continental Divide Trail Coalition and other non-profit partners support the Forest Service and other land managers on the CDT by recruiting volunteers to build new trail, completing routine maintenance, and providing other assistance. Whether you're an outdoor enthusiast who loves getting their hands dirty or prefer to

help at the comfort of a desk, contact CDTC to learn how you can become a part of the Continental Divide Trail community.



National Scenic Trails



The threats of commercial development and interest in conservation prompted Congress to pass the National Trails System Act in 1968. Today the National Trails System includes 11 National Scenic Trails (shown here), 19 National Historic Trails and more than 1,200 National Recreation Trails. For more information about the National Trails System, visit www.nps.gov/nts

ABOUT THIS BROCHURE

Data and information for the resources here originate from the U.S. Forest Service, ESRI, NativeLand.ca, and other federal and state sources. CDTC and referenced sources do not guarantee the accuracy or reliability of information provided here, and information is subject to change. For more resources visit www.continentaldividetrail.org.



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Continental Divide Trail

National Scenic Trail - Canada to Mexico



The CDT traverses a number of distinct ecological and geological regions on its journey across the nation, including many unique landscapes that can be found nowhere else in the United States. Many of these places are protected for conservation and recreation by federal, state and local agencies.



Looking across miles of ancient lava flows at EL Malpais National Monument, New Mexico.



Lone Star Geyser, one of a handful of geothermal features found in Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming.



Hanging glaciers cling to the peaks surrounding U-shaped valleys in Glacier National Park, Montana.

Montana and Idaho



The CDT meanders along the Idaho-Montana border through the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest and up the Bitterroot Range, where it intersects the Nez Perce Trail. Turning east, the Trail travels through the rocky peaks of the Anaconda Range and wanders around Butte, a century-old copper town. From here it heads north through many National Forests, including Lewis and Clark, and into the famous Bob Marshall Wilderness. Finally, after nearly 3,000 miles, the CDT reaches Glacier National Park. Here it passes between glacial lakes over Triple Divide Pass, into the Red Eagle Valley and through the Many Glacier Valley before it reaches the Canadian border. In Glacier, grizzly bears forage for huckleberries in a search for calories, bald eagles and osprey share the sky, and lady slipper flowers wait to be pollinated by hummingbirds.

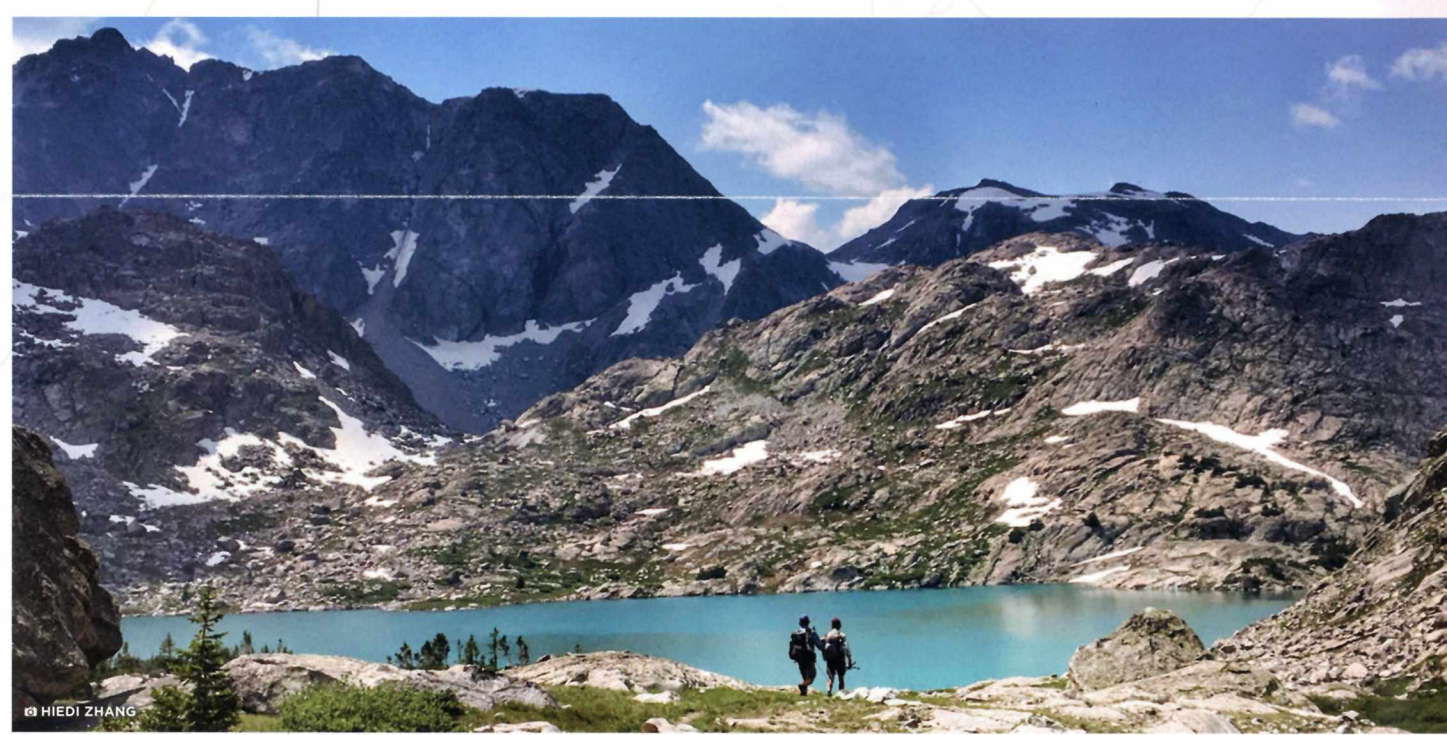


Scale 12,250,000 1 inch = 35.5 miles

- Legend**
- National Forest
 - Wilderness Area
 - National Park
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - Tribal Lands
 - State-Held Lands
 - Trail Towns
 - Physical Continental Divide
 - Continental Divide National Scenic Trail

Wyoming

The Trail enters Wyoming from Colorado and passes into the Sierra Madre Mountain Range of the Medicine Bow and Routt National Forests. Here it crosses Battle Pass and travels north to Bridger Peak, where it overlooks the historic copper-mining town of Encampment, before entering the Great Divide Basin, a massive basin where water does not drain to any ocean. The Trail then moves along the western side of the spectacular Wind River Range before traversing the craggy mountains of the Teton Wilderness. In Yellowstone National Park, the trail crosses between the glassy-blue surface of Yellowstone Lake and the white rapids of the Firehole River, wanders past Old Faithful Geyser, and traverses the Summit Lake Trail as it approaches the Idaho border. The CDT in Wyoming is inhabited by long-tail weasels, coyotes, wild horses, antelope, grizzly and black bears, and wolves. It is also home to the forget-me-not and the alpine buttercup.



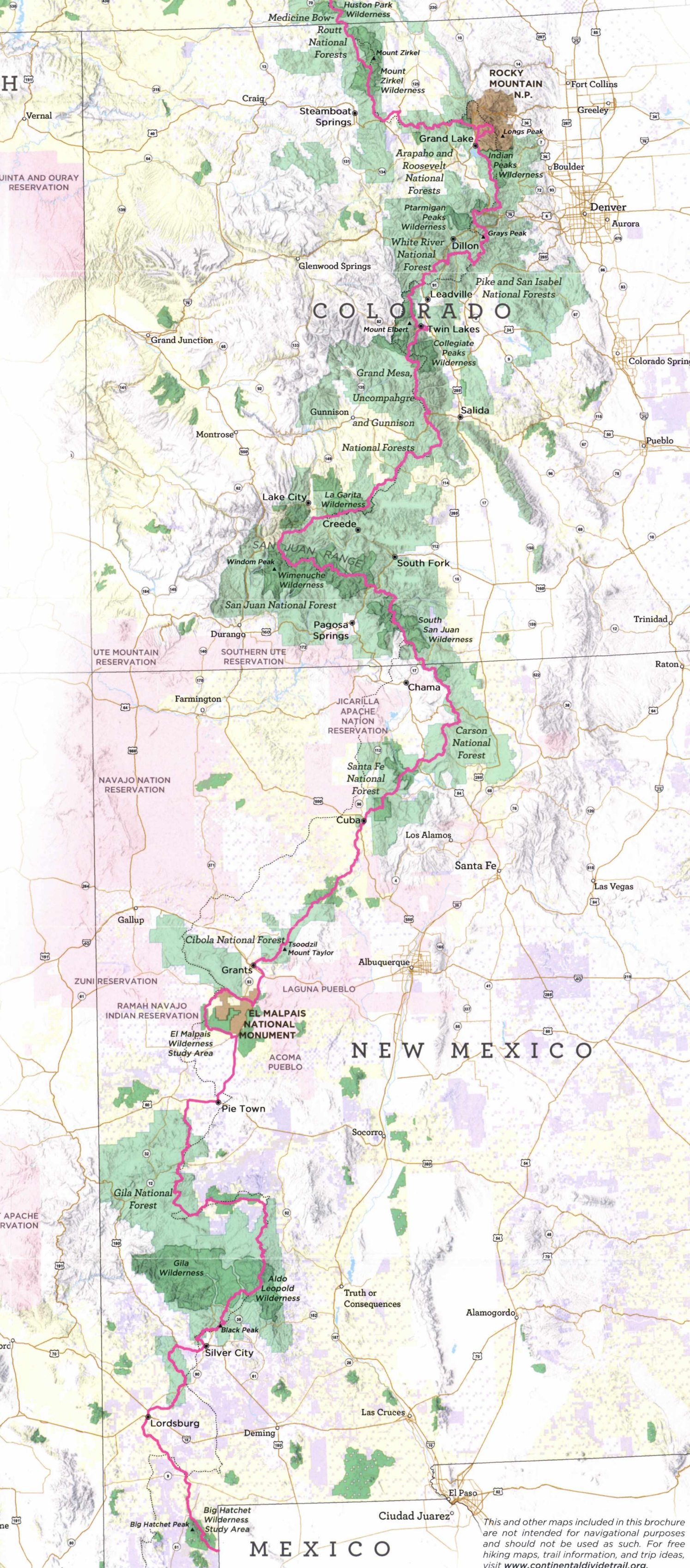
Colorado

Much of the CDT in Colorado lies high on the ridges and peaks of the physical Continental Divide. The CDT in Colorado offers spectacular views, travels through historic ghost towns, and reaches the highest point of any National Scenic Trail at 14,270' on Grays Peak. Entering Colorado from New Mexico, the Trail passes through the remote, rugged alpine wildernesses of the San Juan and the Rio Grande National Forests. Expect to see herds of elk and mule deer, bighorn sheep and mountain goats. The Trail continues northward through the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness and the high expanses of White River National Forest before crossing into the Vasquez Peak and James Peak Wilderness Areas of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest. Before entering Wyoming, the Trail then loops through the majestic Rocky Mountain National Park and the countless glacial lakes of the Zirkels in the Medicine Bow and Routt National Forests. Weather patterns on the Colorado CDT boast a typical high-alpine element of surprise; preparedness and experience are required.



New Mexico

The CDT in New Mexico begins at the Mexican border in the Big Hatchet Mountains Wilderness Study Area. The Trail winds through the arid Chihuahuan Desert before reaching the rugged, forested mountains of the Gila National Forest and the country's first Wilderness Areas, the Gila and Aldo Leopold. The Trail continues north across the lava flows of El Malpais National Monument, one of the best examples of recent volcanic landscapes in the United States, and often coincides with the 1,000-year-old Zuni-Acoma trade route. The Trail then heads up Tsoodzil (Mount Taylor), a prominent summit of 11,304', and begins the trek across the dramatic canyon lands of the Rio Puerco before heading into the lush San Pedro Parks Wilderness of the Santa Fe National Forest. The Trail then crosses the Wild and Scenic Rio Chama and along the beautiful Mesa de los Viejos before passing nearby the famous Ghost Ranch. It then heads into the high alpine areas of the Carson National Forest to cross into Colorado just south of Cumbres Pass. The impressive diversity of New Mexico, with its distinct ecosystems and a robust culture enriched with Native American and Hispanic influences, often leaves CDT users with a newfound appreciation for the Land of Enchantment.



This and other maps included in this brochure are not intended for navigational purposes and should not be used as such. For free hiking maps, trail information, and trip ideas, visit www.continentaldividetrail.org.