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WEST BRANCH LOOP

BACKPACKING TRIP

FYI: The map on the reverse side is for general orientation, not for navigation. **P.S.** Get and post trail updates at www.facebook.com/oriccolorado

Location: Rawah Wilderness Roosevelt National Forest Apx 64 miles W. of Ft Collins

Contact Info: Canyon Lakes RD 970-295-6700 www.fs.fed.us/r2

Length: 19.37 mile loop (estimate using Nat'l Geo Mapping Software)

Time: Two to three night backpack with options for a longer stay. The average person hikes at a speed of 2 miles per hour. Adjust your time +/- based on terrain, trail and weather conditions and your skill and fitness level.

Elevation Gain/Loss: +3088' -3088' = +0'

Difficulty: Moderate to strenuous

Season: Early July through October

Trail Users: Hikers, backpackers, stock animals and wildlife

Dogs: On hand-held leash

Permits: None required

Getting There From Denver: Take I-25 north to Fort Collins. Exit to US Highway 287 north and follow it about 6 miles until it meets Colorado Highway 14. Turn left (west) onto Colorado Highway 14 and continue for 50.8 miles to Larimer County Road 103. Turn right (north) on Larimer County Road 103 and follow it 6.8 miles to the West Branch trailhead.

Maps: Backcountry Adventure Map for Colorado's Rawah Wilderness, National Geographic Trails Illustrated #112W and or Rawah Lakes and Boston Peak USGS 7.5 topographic maps. **IMPORTANT:** Stay found with the aid of a topographic map, a compass, a GPS receiver and the skill to use them.

Safety Considerations and Supplemental Info:
Afternoon thunderstorms and lightening
Treat water drawn from sources along the trail
Stream crossings can be a challenge in the Spring and early Summer
Check <u>www.oriconline.org</u> for fire restrictions
Be prepared for mosquitoes from July through September

Trail Description: This is a loop trail that follows the West Branch of the Larimer River, climbs to Grassy Pass and then descends into a drainage that contains almost a dozen high mountain lakes with good campsites. **TIP:** Contact the Canyon Lakes Ranger District for trail updates.

Highlights: Alpine serenity and solitude Good fishing in the lakes and streams Fantastic wildflowers in season (especially in mid-July) Almost a dozen high mountain lakes Views of the high peaks of the Medicine Bow Mountains A chance to see a variety of wildlife including Mountain Goats, Bighorn Sheep and Moose Optional side trips to nearby alpine lakes

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