



Trail 17-- Maple Grove to Big Water

Duration: 6 hours

Distance: 9 miles out-and-back

Difficulty: Moderate

Trailhead: Maple Grove trailhead

Elevation: Maple Grove 6110; Big Water Yurt 7650'

Avalanche: Low

Map: Mount Aire 7.5' quadrangle

GPS Coordinates: Unneeded

Dogs: No dogs off leash on even-numbered calendar days per county ordinance. Dogs must be leashed in all parking lots, trail heads and developed sites.

Introduction: During winter months, the Forest Service closes off the road at Maple Grove and grooms a kick-and-glide track from the Maple Grove gate up to the Big Water trailhead at the top of Mill Creek Canyon. The trail sees maintenance twice a week. If you're looking for a groomed trail, a little trail running, or a trail that will keep you in proximity to others, this is your place.

How to Get There: Maple Grove Picnic Area sits five miles up Mill Creek canyon. Parking is available at the gate. No motorized access allowed beyond the winter gate.

Trail Description: The route lies just beyond the closed winter gate. Groomed the entire 4.5 miles. The route is easy to follow because it simply follows the road curving beneath the walls of the canyon, and ending at Big Water. Other trailheads can be found along the way. Enjoyed by skiers and snowshoers alike, snowshoers are asked to stay to the side of the kick-and-glide tracks of the skiers. If you want an even longer trek, Big Water provides access to a wide backcountry, but if you plan to take backcountry excursions off the main trail, be prepared with avalanche equipment and be aware of avalanche probability. At Elbow Fork and at Big Water forest service restrooms are available.

Option: For a shorter trip along this groomed road, pull up at Elbow Fork trailhead which will make it a 3 mile R.T. with a slight elevation gain of 680'.