

San Juan Hut Systems Durango to Moab Route Description

“Adventure Without The Weight”

*Using the Daily Route Description: Due to varying calibrations in odometer, riders may notice some inaccuracies in the mileages listed in this route description to what you are seeing in the field. Therefore, please use the mileages listed here as a guideline to help you determine your location and where you need to go. In conjunction with the maps provided and those recommended, you will be able to get where you’re going. The *** symbol after listed directions in this route description indicate a corresponding GPS waypoint. The mileages and directional instructions are in **bold**, while additional important information, warnings and hazards are marked in **red**. Water references are highlighted in **blue**.*

Please also note that from year to year and sometimes week to week, new roads and trails appear. Particularly in the area of Dry Creek where gas and mining exploration is taking place. Your route, unless this description states otherwise, will almost always follow the most used option. Do Not start second guessing yourself, listen to your instincts. Enjoy your ride.

Day One: Durango Mountain Resort to Bolam Pass Hut

Total Mileage	Total Ascent:	Total Descent:	Max. Elevation:
18.0	3,725’	1,310’	11,420’

Alternate Route Information:

The day one *Little Molas Lake* Alternate Route is a fantastic Single-Track trail above tree line with a high point of 12,600’ at Rolling Pass. This is the Colorado Trail. It is approximately 20 miles long, and is available after snowmelt usually after mid- July. The start at Little Molas Lake is approximately 15 miles (North) on Highway 50 from the Standard Route start at Durango Mountain Inn. You will absolutely need the “Latitude 40-Durango” map to ride this Alternate Route.

GPS Track: “Day 1: Alt. Co Trail” Alternate Colorado Trail

Parking Information:

Park your vehicles in the parking areas of the lodging providers where you stayed the night before. Durango Mountain Resorts, at the trailhead, will allow guests and non-guests to leave their vehicles *upon request*, though they will not be responsible for vehicles or their contents. Please visit the front desk of main lodge and indicate you are a client of San Juan Hut Systems so that Security will be notified and not tag your car.

Standard Route: GPS Track: Day 1: DMR to BP Hut

0.0 **Pass through the gate and continue up the Hermosa Park Rd. (FSR 578)** Look for the green road name sign on the Right side of the road. The gravel road shortly begins climbing a series of switchbacks. ***

2.8 **Stay Right (North) at the intersection following the sign for Hermosa Cr. Trail.**

3.2 **Go Left (West) staying on FSR578** (sign on the Right) following the sign for Hermosa Creek Trail.

4.2 **Continue Straight (South West)** past an un-named road on your Left and enter the Purgatory Trail System

6.4 **Continue Straight (West)** staying on the main road past Sig Creek Campground marked by a large Forest Service Sign.

8.4 **Continue Straight (West) following the main road.** You leave Hermosa Creek Trail here following the USFS Sign with an arrow that reads “Bolam Pass 9”.



- 9.0 **The road Bears Right (North)** following Hermosa Creek now on your Left.
- 9.7 **Cross Hermosa Creek continuing North West** following the main road.
- 10.9 **Go Right (West) and slightly downhill following the sign toward Bolam Pass.**
- 16.3 **Continue on the main road past Graysill Mine Historic Site** (cabin on the right) and climb the switchbacks on the main road.
DO NOT follow the small road to the Right after the cabin.
- 16.6 **Continue Straight (North) on the main road past Celebration Lake** (on your Left (West)). The day one Alternate Route re-joins the Standard Route here on your Right (East) marked by a signpost for the Colorado Trail.
- 16.8 **Continue Straight (North)** and climb switchbacks on the main road past FSR 578b on the Right. Riders on the day one Alternate Route may also re-join the Standard Route here.
- 18.1 **Continue on the main road across the 11,420 ft. Bolam Pass Summit.** Pause to take in the great views of Lizard Head and the 14,000 ft plus Wilson Peaks. To the North you can also see Last Dollar Pass Road, part of the San Juan Hut Systems' Telluride to Moab Route.
- 17.9 **Go Left (South) onto a short access road to the hut.** This road is in a meadow and is the first road on your Left you come to after the pass.
- 18.0 **Bolam Hut on the Left. *****



Day Two: Bolam Pass Hut to Black Mesa Hut

Total Mileage	Total Ascent:	Total Descent:	Max. Elevation:
29.0	3,722'	4,450'	11,420'

Alternate Route Information: To ride these Single-Track Alternate Routes you need two “Latitude-40” maps: The “Latitude -40 Durango” and the Latitude-40 Southwest Colorado.”

Alternate 1: Open after snowmelt, The East Fork of the Dolores River Trail Alternate Route starts as a 4-WD road then narrows into a Single-Track. The trail starts approximately 3/4-mile East (of the hut) on the road that brought you to the Bolam Pass Hut. Return the way you came to the trail intersection noted on the Day One description for mile 17.1. Turn Left (East) onto FSR 578b and follow it to its end feeding you onto the East Fork of the Dolores Trail.

Alternate 2: At the bottom of the East Fork of the Dolores River Trail, there is a paved highway and an option for an additional Single-Track Alternate Route, The Ground Hog Stock Driveway. This trail is the Southern Boundary of the Wilderness Area. It is just **outside** the Lizard Head Wilderness Area. Bikes are not allowed in the Wilderness area. Cross highway and start at Cross Mountain Trail area. This takes you to The Groundhog Stock Driveway Trail, which eventually brings you back to the Standard Route.

Standard Route: GPS Track: Day 2: BP Hut to BM Hut

- 0.0 **Return to the main road FSR 578.**
- 0.1 **Turn Left (South West) on the main road FSR578.**
- 0.6 **Pass a Dead end Sign** on the Left just after a culvert/bridge.

*DO NOT go Left towards the "Dead End" sign. ****

- 3.3 Continue straight on the main road past a log cabin on the Left.**
- 4.3 Stay Right (North) at a "Y" intersection with 496 Rd,** continuing down valley on **FSR578** keeping the creek on your Right. ***
- 6.7 Go Left (South West) downhill through an intersection.** Looking back you will see signs for Hermosa Park Rd, Bolam Pass, Hwy 550, and Cayton Camp Ground.
- 7.0 Turn Right (North East) onto the paved Highway 145.** Just before the intersection you will have crossed a one-lane bridge. The town of Rico is approximately 4 miles to your Left on Highway 145. Sheep Mountain is visible on your Right. ***
- 7.5 Turn Left (North) onto FSR 535.** Look for the sign to Dunton. Begin climbing switchbacks.
- 11.6 Continue Straight (West) on the main road across a culvert.** Just before the culvert on the Right, is the Single Track Groundhog Stock Driveway Trail #634.
*This is where Alternate 2 Single-Track joins the Standard Route. ****
- 11.7 Continue Straight (West) on FSR 535** toward Burrow Bridge C.G. passing FSR 471, Eagle Creek Road on your left.
- 12.4 Continue on main Road FSR 535** across Dunton Meadows, and past Meadow Creek with a small historic homestead on the Right.
- 14.8 Continue on the main road FSR 535** downhill past Navajo Lake Trail Head on the Right. ***
- 15.2 Cross the Burro Bridge** at the bottom of the hill.
- 15.7 Burro Camp Ground** is on the Left. There is a toilet and water faucet to refill your bottles here.
- 17.1 Turn Right (North) onto FSR 611** at the bottom of a hill following the sign for Black Mesa Rd., Ground Hog Resvove. 20, Dolores- Norwood. Rd. 25. Begin a long climb up switchbacks. ***
- 19.1 Stay Right (North) on the Main Road FSR611.** Cross the cattle guard and pass the Groundhog Stock Trail #634 marked by a sign on the Right. Continue to climb. ***
- 21.7 Stay Right (North) on FSR 611 and continue uphill.** Pass FSR 305 on the Left.
- 22.0 Cross Fish Creek** and then in 200 yards pass a road that cuts up and right. ***
- 26.6 Stay Right (South East) on the main road FSR 611.** Pass Fish Creek Trail #647 on the Left.
- 28.8 Turn Right (East) (just before two round white reflectors and the top of the hill)** onto a non-descript road that enters the trees to a small parking area.
- 29.0 Continue about 100 yards on a Single Track into the woods to the Black Mesa Hut.** ***



Day Two Alternate Single Track

GPS Track: DM Day 2 Alternate

0.0 Reverse Day one's route to Celebration Lake.

1.5 At Celebration Lake go Left on 578B passing a Dead End Sign heading toward Tin Can Basin.

- 3.0 **Turn Left (West) off the 4x4 road** onto a single track trail, “The East Fork Trail”.
- 3.3 Another trail joins from the left.
- 4.1 Trail rejoins 4x4 road.
- 4.7 4x4 road ends.
- 9.1 **Cross Hwy 145.** At this point you can turn Left on the Hwy **145 to rejoin the standard route.**
- 9.1 **Head uphill (North West) on The Cross Mountain Trail.** There is a creek here if you want to refill your water bottles.
- 9.6 **Turn Left (South West)** by a sign for “The Groundhog Stock Trail”
- 10.9 **Cross a stream** with a bridge and then switchback Left (South).
- 14.6 Rejoin the Standard Route by going Right (West) on the main road.

Day Three: Black Mesa Hut to Dry Creek Basin Hut

Total Mileage	Total Ascent:	Total Descent:	Max. Elevation:
35.2	2,061’	5,457’	11,066’

Standard Route: GPS Track: Day 3: BM Hut to DC Hut

0.0 Return to FSR 611

0.1 Turn Right (West) on the main Road FSR 611

0.2 Take the 2nd road from the Left FSR 533. This is the most used looking road. Just past the intersection you begin to descend and will see a squiggly road 15mph road sign. ***



1.3 Bear Right at “Y” intersection uphill onto FSR 534 past a squiggly road 15mph road sign. There is a spring at this intersection in case you forgot to fill up with water. ***

DO NOT descend to the Left on FSR 533 past the “One Lane Road Sign”.

4.0 Continue Straight (North) at the top of the hill on FSR534 past the gated FSR 534b on your Left and then past the gated FSR 534A on your Right.

6.5 View of Navaho Mountain and Groundhog Reservoir down to your Left (South) as you traverse the mountainside.

7.7 Turn Right (North East) onto FSR 615. This is the 3rd road from the left at this 3-way intersection marked by a wooden post. You leave the improved road here and climb a short distance to a pass with outstanding views to the North and East of the Uncompahgre Plateau. Follow the main road down the valley. ***



This junction is also the county line boundary between San Miguel and Dolores Counties. It is also the boundary between Uncompahgre National Forest to the North and San Juan National Forest to the South. On your SJHS map you will see the ----- (slashed boundary line) going right through this junction. This new black/ gray soil road is Mancos Shale and is potentially very muddy, so try to beat the rain.

9.8 Bear Left (North) at an intersection with a signpost on the Left marked 615. Continue downhill / valley. ***

11.1 Turn Left (West) at the 4-way intersection onto the improved road. Looking back at this intersection you will see a post marked 615 for the road on which you arrived. ***

11.6 Continue Straight (North East) on the main road past a road on your Left marked 612 by a post.

- 13.3 Stay Left (North West) at a 3-way intersection with a grassy triangular center** marked by a sign for “Beaver Park 4” continuing toward Norwood.
*The backside of the sign reads “West Beaver Pond. ****
- 16.1 Continue on the main road** past FSR 612 on the Left. ***
- 16.2 Cross a cattle guard and leave the Uncompahgre National Forest.** Descend on the main road.
- 17.9 Turn Left (West) at a “T” intersection** with a yield sign onto Beef Trail Rd. ***
- 19.3 Continue Straight on Beef Trail Road** past 45M Road on your Right with stone fence posts and a sign for Norwood 15. ***
- 20.8 Turn Left (South) at the “T” intersection** with a stop sign onto 44ZS Road.
- 22.1 Turn Right (West) onto L40 Road** following the sign for Miramonte 3.
- 24.3 Bear Right (North West)** past 31U Road entering on the Left. Cross a cattle guard and at the boat ramp continue following the road North around the lake across the dam, past the ranger station, and campground. ***
- 27.0 Bear Right (North West) staying on the main road** away from the lake entrance.
- 27.3 Continue Straight (West) on 31U Road** past 39N Road on the Right marked by a “Summer Maintenance Only” sign. You will shortly begin the last climb of the day to Sandy’s Fort Pass Summit. ***
- 30.7 Continue straight on the main road** to the top of the Sandy’s Fort Pass Summit past Mountain Wildlife Ranch sign, chaparral and gate on the Left. It’s all downhill from here! ***
- 33.6 Continue Straight (North West) on the main road** past a road on the Left marked by a large sign behind the fence that reads “Welcome to your State Wildlife Area, Dry Creek Basin”. Begin the countdown and watch for the green “5 mile” marker post on the Left side of the road.
- 34.9 Turn Left onto a small road 200 feet past the green 5 mile marker post on the Left side of the road.** The hut should be in view. ***
- 35.2 Turn Right (South West) Dry Creek Hut is 250 ft.** ***

Day Four: Dry Creek Basin Hut to Wedding Bell Hut

Total Mileage	Total Ascent:	Total Descent:	Max. Elevation:
33.5	2,500’	3,320’	7,294’

Note: This day’s ride in particular has a large number of small un-marked roads that are constantly changing due to the current mining and gas exploration activities in the area. Do not start second-guessing yourself. Unless told otherwise, you will usually stay on the most used road.

Alternate Route Information:

Detailed Alternate Route Description will be available in the hut for these three routes.

The Gas Road Alternate:

The Lookout Mines Trail Alternate:

The Mexico Mines Trail Alternate:

These three trails can be connected to each other and the GPS track is a continuation of all three.

GPS Track: Day 4: Alt. Mexico Mine Trail: a combination of all Day 4 Single Tracks.

Standard Route:

GPS Track: Day 4: DC Hut to WB Hut

0.0 Return to dirt road at the end of the driveway – 250 feet, not all the way to the fence.

0.001 Turn Right (South) on dirt BLM Road 4007 (not marked here).

0.9 Continue on the main road around the Old Ray Homestead. ***

2.5 Cross a deep gully wash marked with a BLM Road 4007 stake.

3.0 Go Right (North West) at a “T” intersection staying on BLM Road 4007. Look for the marker post on the Right. Pass an often dry pond on the Right in approximately 0.1 mile.

4.4 Stay Left (West) at a “Y” intersection. Climb a small hill in about 400 feet and cross an earthen dam. ***

5.4 Turn Left (South) at the “T” intersection after crossing a second earthen dam staying on BLM Road 4007 heading toward the long dark colored butte. Look for the BLM Road 4007 marker post on the Left at the far side of the dam. ***

7.2 Turn Right (North) at the “T” intersection onto the improved CNTY Road 28T. ***

The Dry Creek Basin lies before you. Heat, sun, dust, rain, mud are issues, although the morning is beautiful. Hog-back ridge is on your Left. There are Single-Track Options out in that higher rockier terrain if you feel like being adventurous and have good navigating skills. In the morning and evening there are many antelope in this Basin. The Uncompahgre Plateau is off to the Right, Northeast in the distance.

9.4 Turn Right (North East) at the stop sign at the “T” intersection with Highway 141(paved) heading toward the ‘town’ of Basin and the Basin Café & Store. For the Gas Roads Alternate and access to the Lookout Mines Trail and Mexico Mines Trail routes turns Left (South West) at this intersection. ***

10.7 Turn Left (West) onto U29W Road at the 4-way intersection. The Basin Store and Café are to the East at this intersection. Pass a “Slippery when Wet sign/symbol 100 yards down the dirt road. ***

This is a potential mud zone. If there is bad weather, you can continue North on the paved Highway 141 to the town of Naturita and get lodging for the night. If you do this, you will miss the Wedding Bell Hut and have to re-join the Standard Route at the Paradox Hut. Beware; dust storms are also an issue.

14.7 Continue Straight (West) past 25R Road on the Left. ***

16.8 Turn Right (North) at the “T” intersection. The private Snyder Ranch Road with yellow cattle guard is on the Left. ***

An early start will help you avoid fierce headwinds, common in this section.

21.9 Continue (North West) on the main road past a road on the Left with a water sock hanging from a pipe used to fill stock tanks. ***

23.7 Turn Left (South West) at the “Y” intersection on to U29W and immediately cross a cattle guard. 18Y goes to the North West. ***

DO NOT turn onto 18Y Rd.

- 23.9** Pass 4750 on the left.
- 25.4** Pass 4751 on Left.
- 25.7** Continue (West) on the main road pass 3 pumping sheds on the Right (2 are enclosed in a chain link fence) and there is a primitive two-track road on the Left. ***
At this location, the Gas Roads' Alternate Route re-joins the Standard Route from the primitive double track to the left.
- 26.1** Continue Straight (North West) on the main road (now U29W Road) through a 4-way intersection following the sign for Radium Mtn. and Wedding Bell Mtn.
*The "Bail Out" from the Mexico Mines Alternate Route joins the Standard Route from Hams Canyon on the left. The road to the Right is 16Z road. ****
- 26.2** Stay Left (South West) where CR Y16 comes in from the right.
- 27.9** Shade Tree on right is a nice spot to take a break.
- 28.2** Continue Straight (West) through the 4-way intersection crossing 15Z. ***
- 28.4** Continue Straight (West) following the sign for Radium Mtn. and Wedding Bell Mtn. past 14Z Road on the Left. ***
- 29.0** Stay Left (West) following the overhead power lines. ***
To the North, under the power lines, you will see shelf road climbing out of Bull Canyon. That's your road for the next day, but you will go through a bunch of crazy country before you get there.
- 30.9** The road drops (South West) into the Dolores River canyon.
The rock band across the valley to your Right in a Westerly direction with a road slanting up to it and a bunch of old uranium roads underneath it, has some dinosaur tracks, behind a big boulder column detached from the main wall leaning out.
- 31.4** Stay Left on U29W (South West) and go up the hill past County Road 13Z. ***
- 32.9** Pass a sign for Wedding Bell Mountain on your Right.
- 33.1** Pass CR12Z on your left.
This is where the Mexico Mines Alternate Route joins the Standard Route from the left.
- 33.5** Turn Left (North West) on JJ12 Road and descend to the hut. ***
- 34.0** Arrive at the Wedding Bell Hut. ***

Day Five: Wedding Bell Hut to Paradox Valley Hut

Total Mileage	Total Ascent:	Total Descent:	Max. Elevation:
32.3	3,100'	4,190'	6,990'

Alternate Route Information:

The Standard Route goes out onto Davis Mesa a beautiful ride, and becomes increasingly more technical culminating on the Single Track "Catch-Em-Up Trail". This Single Track trail is not for the faint of heart. It soon drops over the edge of a cliff rapidly descending 1,011 feet in a miles distance. For all but the most skilled "trails rider", this will be a mandatory hike-a-bike on the upper cliff descent section. This trail drops you at the Dolores River near the Bedrock store. If you do not feel up to this challenging trail you may avoid it by taking the Paradox Valley Alternate Route. Ten

miles of pavement with no shoulder and traffic traveling at very high speeds (90-100 mph) makes this route less desirable and potentially **very dangerous**.

If you choose the **dangerous** paved HWY 90 alternate, from mile 14.9 on the Standard Route continue down DD19 Road to Highway 90. Turn Left (West) and follow the paved highway to rejoin the Standard Route at the Bedrock Store.

Standard Route:

- 0.0 Return (South) to the intersection of JJ12 road and U29 Road.**
- 0.5 Turn Left (North) at the intersection.** The road at this point becomes II13 Road and is no longer U29 Road.
- 1.3 Continue (North East) on the main road** past an old mining hopper. ***
- 2.3 Stay Left (North East) on II13 Road** passing JJ13 Road on the Right. ***
- 3.0 Continue Straight (East) on the main road** past JJ14 Road on the Left. You may notice that your route is now marked by a post JJ13; begin contouring around the canyon. ***
- 3.8 Pass a site where mining reclamation work has been performed** (Lots of gravel and grass on the hillside to your right) and then go past an old loading chute as you cross a drainage.
- 4.0 Stay Left continuing you're contouring around to head of the canyon on the main road.** As you pass a road that climbs to the Right with a GG16 post, a JJ14 Post will be on your Left behind you. Your route now takes the name GG16 and is the main road.
- 5.3 Continue (East) on the main road** past an old brown and white junk car on Left.
- 7.3 Pass a slick rock 'poor-off'** of about 100 vertical feet on your left.
- 9.9 Continue Straight (North East) on GG16 Road** past GG15 Road. Pass under power lines. ***
- 11.2 Continue Straight (North) on FF16 Road** past GG16 Road on the Left and begin to climb out of Bull Canyon. ***
- 12.4 Top out the climb and continue (North East) on the main road** across a cattle guard.
- 12.7 Stay Left (North East) at the "Y" intersection** and then Left again in a short distance.
- 13.6 Keep Right (North West) past EE16 Road and the "Monogram Stock Driveway" sign on the Left.**
- 14.4 Begin to descend on the main road DD19 Road** at the big Paradox Valley viewpoint. **Watch for your next turn which will be the first Left.** ***
The long straight highway at the bottom of the valley is the paved Highway 90, the route you will follow if you opt for the Paradox Valley Alternate Route. Before you drop down off the top, it is great to go on the rocks to the Left of the yellow boulders, in the shade of some trees to catch a great uplift of wind. There are many neo-lithic scatters in this area (arrowheads). Let it cool off in the valley, before you head down; it is scorching hot down there.
- 14.9 Turn Left (North West) on DD16 Road** and traverse out onto Davis Mesa. Be aware of Private Property Signs that ask you to stay on the main road. *** *If you are going down to Highway 90, turn right on DD19.*
- 15.9 Stay Right (North West) on DD16 Road to Davis Mesa.** Look for the BLM sign indicating Skein Mesa Left and Davis Mesa straight. In 200 yards take a right at a "Y" intersection passing DD15 on Left. The county sign is not hung well and is misleading. ***
DD15 Road descends on the Left.
- 16.2 Stay Left on the main road** curving back (North West) past two un-marked roads on the Right.

- 16.8 Stay Right** (North West) on main road.
- 17.9 Pass a meadow and dry pond, and then Stay Left/Straight** (West), going into the juniper trees. Look for mining signs on the Right ***
- 18.5 Go over a cattle guard.**
- 22.1 Stay Left (West) on the more used road** (un-marked) at an intersection in a meadow with a red and yellow rock dome. ***
- 22.6 Stay Left (West)** and climb up the rocky ledgey road that soon deteriorates into an ATV track.
- 23.0 Turn Right (North) onto a Single Track trail.** This Single Track is the **Catch-Em-Up Trail**. Good luck and have fun! ***
- 24.2 Turn Right (North) upon rejoining the road and then immediately Left (West) onto the paved Highway 90** crossing the green bridge over the Dolores River. This is where the Paradox Valley Alternate Route re-joins the Standard Route. ***
- 25.3 Continue straight (North West) on the paved Highway 90** past the Bedrock Store on your Left. Unfortunately the Bedrock Store is for sale and now closed.
- 25.3 Turn right (North) on 950 Road** (gravel) by the Small Paradox Trail sign. ***
- 26.3 Turn Left (West) at the “T” intersection** on to X Road. ***
- 26.8 Turn Right (North) following the main road** on to 900 Road. ***
- 28.8 Turn Left (West) on to V Road.** ***
- 30.8 Turn Right (North)** on to the paved 7.00Road. ***
- 31.8 Turn Right (East) at the “T” intersection** on to U Road (gravel). Look for the Paradox Valley Inn Bed and Breakfast sign. ***
- 32.2 Continue Straight (East) to the hut** at the 5-way intersection in front of the Paradox Valley Inn Bed and Breakfast.
- 32.3 Arrive at the Paradox Valley Hut on the Left.** ***