

Key:

Vertical Gain/Steepness:	E=Easy, 0' to 400' gain per mile
	M=Moderate, 400' to 800' gain per mile
	D=Difficult, 800' to 1200' gain per mile
	X=Extreme, 1200' + gain per mile
Surface/Terrain:	E=Easy, mostly sand, dirt or pine needle covered on established trail
	M=Moderate, small rocks and roots present on established trail
	D=Difficult, loose and rocky on established trail
	X=Extreme, very loose, with large rocks and possibly scrambling required. Trail may not be established or easily recognizable

Trail Name:

Comanche-Venable-Alvarado Loop Trail (Trail #s 1367, 1336, 1345, 1366, TH Elev. 9,040')

Trail Location:

From Westcliffe, CO travel south on Hwy 69 approximately 3.5 miles. Turn right (West) on CR140 (Schoolfield Rd). Follow brown colored signs for Alvarado Campground to end of CR140 an additional 6 miles. Before the campground turn off for the trailhead, there is a right turn due west signed for Comanche/Venable Trail head. Travel the ½ mile up hill, switching back to the parking lot. The loop up to the parking lot becomes one way about ¼ of a mile up. There is a seasonal bathroom facility in the parking lot. Please note for winter activities the road up to the parking lot may not be accessible. There should be a plowed parking for a few cars on CR140 below the trailheads.

Trail Summary:

This trail is short walk with little elevation gain/loss. There are 3 different loop trails you can take. Two of them are 1.7 miles each and the 3rd is 2.4 miles. The loops are ideal for those wanting a quick, quiet walk, ski, or snowshoe in the forest and access to the Rainbow Trail. These hikes are also recommended for families with young children and for birders.

Accessibility: This trail is in San Isabel National Forest and accessible via foot/horse or ATV travel. Accessible all seasons.

Trail Length and Type: 1.7 to 2.4 miles, loops

Vertical Gain and Steepness: 288' gain, 100% Easy

Surface/Terrain: Easy/Medium - The access trails to the Rainbow Trail are notoriously eroded. The Venable access trail (#1367) is the most eroded, so step mindfully.

Trail Experience:

Loop #1 – Begin on northern most trail (Trail # 1367) out of the parking lot – Venable Trailhead, return on Comanche access (Trail # 1345) trail. 1.7 miles.

Loop #2 – Begin on southernmost trail out of the parking lot – Comanche (Trail # 1345), return on the Alvarado Trailhead (Trail # 1366) side (comes out further south in the campground). 1.7 miles.

Loop #3 – Begin on northern most trail out of the parking lot – Venable Trail Trailhead (Trail # 1367), return on the Alvarado Trailhead (Trail # 1366) side. 2.4 miles.

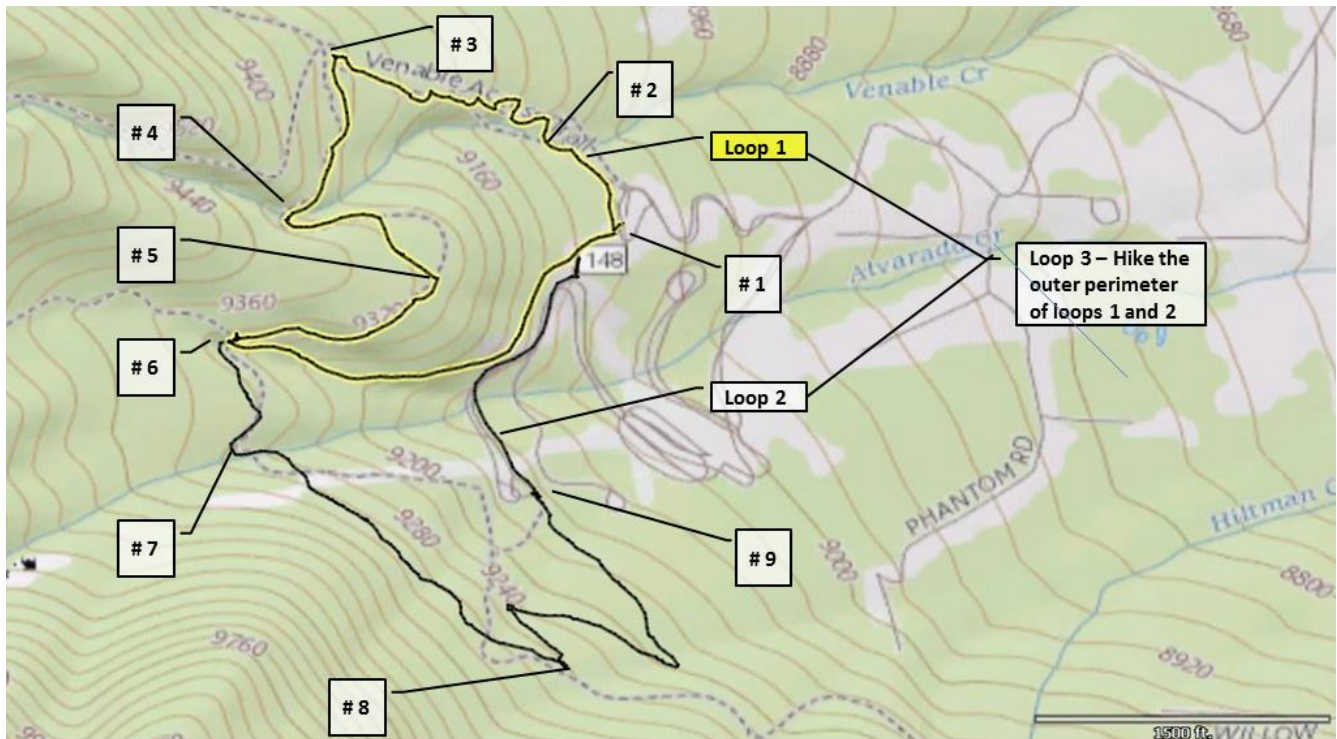
All three access trails up to or returning from the Rainbow are 0.5 or 0.6 miles long. Venable is the steepest and most eroded. Comanche and Alvarado are both comparatively gentle. Please note you should not plan on parking in the campground area to hike. This is a fee area so it is best to end your loop at Alvarado Trailhead and then hike north through the campground (stay on the roads) and then exit over to the Comanche/Venable Trailhead parking via a path in an open area branching off left (north) before the switchback in the campground road. At this point you will be able to see the cars in the parking lot.

The south heading middle sections of the loops on the Rainbow are both 0.7 miles for each of the shorter loops and a combined 1.4 miles if doing the longer loop (loop 3). You will experience views west to Spring Mountain and east to the valley and beyond to the Wet Mountains. All junctions are well marked with trail names and mileages. Each loop has a stream crossing with foot bridges; across Venable Creek on Loop #1 and Alvarado Creek on Loop #2.

A bit of history regarding the ruins you see on the Comanche Trailhead side and the wall you see if you are doing head-in parking facing west; Holy Cross Abbey (Canon City) had a summer camp that operated at 3 locations: In Canon City at the Abbey School, Abbot's Lodge (near Alvarado Campground), and Forestdale Camp (near Ophir Creek off CO165). The camp closed sometime before 2005 after 40 years of service. The property reverted to the Forest Service and the buildings were burned down as a fire fighting exercise. The camp was a 5 week camp for 150 children and 3 different age groupings were rotated during the camp time between the 3 locations. The staffers at the camp were monks and camp alumni.

(map on next page)

Map – Comanche-Venable Loop (Trail #s 1367, 1336, 1345, 1366)



- # 1 – Trailhead Parking
- # 2 – Bridge at Venable Creek
- # 3 – Junction of Venable Access and Rainbow Trails
- # 4 – Bridge at Venable Creek

- # 5 – High Point and View
- # 6 – Junction of Rainbow and Comanche Access Trails
- # 7 – Alvarado Creek Crossing
- # 8 – Rainbow and Alvarado Access trails junction
- # 9 – Alvarado Access Trailhead

The Legal Stuff: The information contained in these trail summaries is intended to be a supplement to the typical tools and references used by people who are well prepared to venture into the mountains. Always carry a map specific to the area you are exploring. Failure to have the necessary experience, physical conditioning, and supplies or equipment can result in injury or death. Trails For All provides no warranties, either express or implied, that the information provided in our published Trail Summaries is 100% accurate or reliable. By using any information provided, you agree to absolve Trails For All from any responsibility for damage or other liability arising from the use of Trails For All Trail Summaries.

