

The Gates of Lodore

by Dave Cooper



Getting to the Trailhead: Located in extreme northwest Colorado, the Gates of Lodore section of Dinosaur National Monument is reached by driving to the town of Maybell, 30 miles west of Craig on Highway 40. At the west end of Maybell, take Highway 318 and drive 47 miles to the junction with County Road 34N. Turn south on 34N and drive 1.7 miles to a T junction. Turn right (west) on County Road 34 and drive west then south 3.6 miles to the end of the road, in Dinosaur National Monument. The Trailhead is located just past the camping area.

Hike Statistics: The trail gains less than 100 feet in a round trip distance of 0.9 miles.

Difficulty: A short walk on a good trail.

USGS Quads: Canyon of Lodore North, CO.

The Gates of Lodore-small.jpg

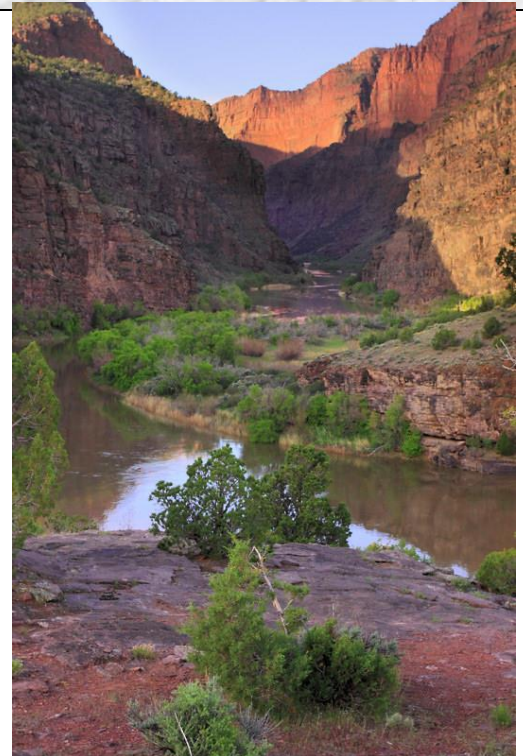
John Wesley Powell and his fellow adventurers almost came to grief at the start of their epic exploration of the Green and Colorado Rivers. Powell wrote, on June 7, 1869

“...and now it is a dark portal to a region of gloom—the gateway through which we are to enter on our voyage of exploration tomorrow. What shall we find?”

Sunrise on the Gates of Lodore-small.jpg

One of the members of that expedition suggested the name “The Gates of Lodore”, and this name is still used today to describe the sheer cliffs that embrace the Green River as it enters the Canyon of Lodore.

Powell’s expedition suffered a near-disaster shortly after entering the Gates, but overcame that trial to continue their travels. Today, the Gates of Lodore is a popular starting spot for rafters, but also is an excellent place to visit just to enjoy the spectacular scenery. A short nature trail is the only maintained trail



at this remote, northern end of Dinosaur National Monument. Other social trails in the area may allow you to explore further, but check with the Park Ranger before heading into the backcountry. Cryptobiotic soil in the area is easily damaged by careless feet.

Though this hike is the shortest to appear in the Trail Mix column, the spectacular views and pleasant setting make a stop here very worthwhile. The short distance to the viewpoint makes it reasonable to photograph both sunset and sunrise from the viewpoint, especially if you stay overnight in the small campground bordering the Green River - one of our favorites.

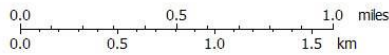
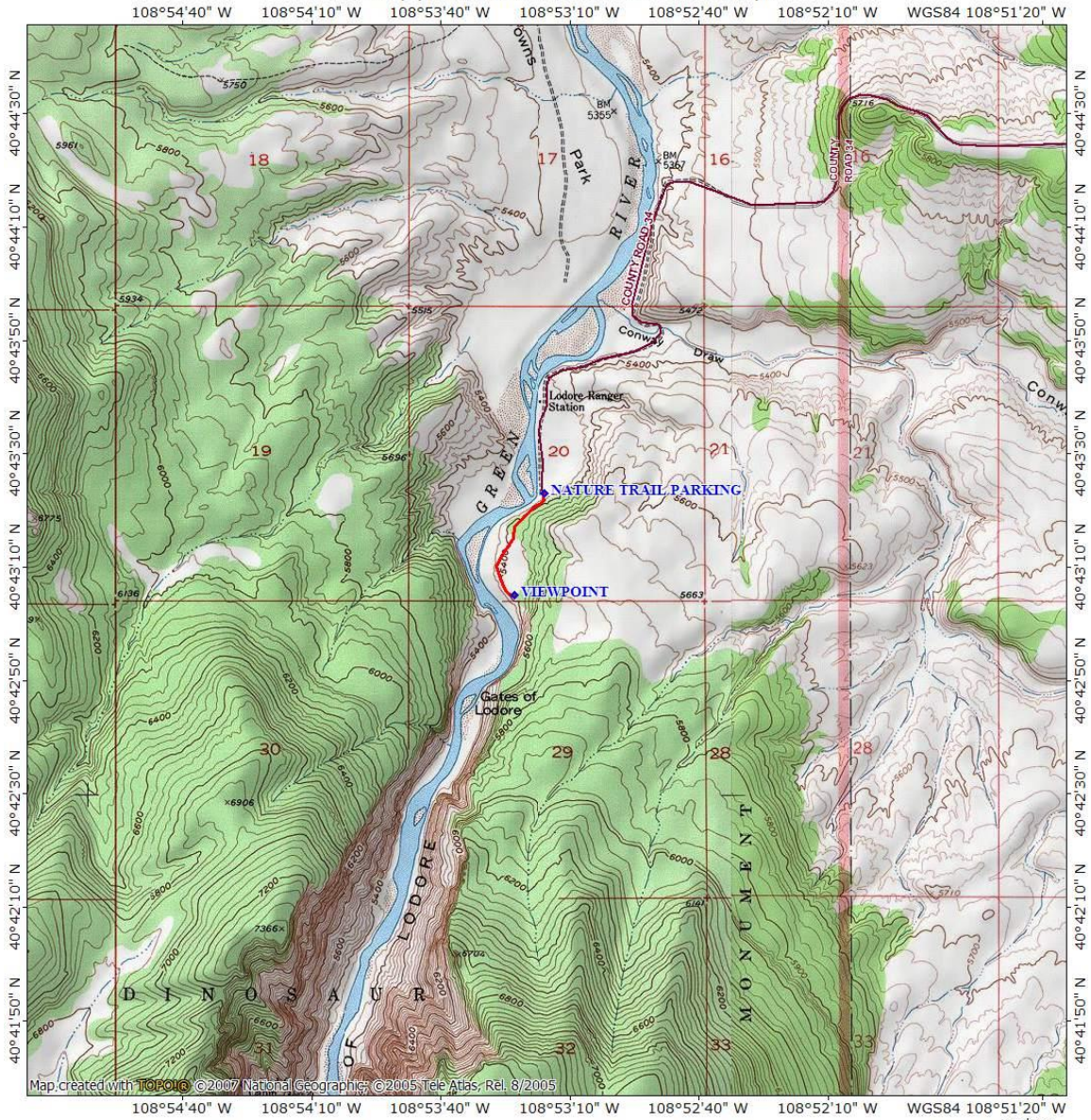
Hike Description

As you approach the Gates of Lodore you are greeted with a spectacular view-small.JPG

From the small sign indicating the start of the nature trail, head south, climbing steeply up steps on the excellent trail. Soon the trail flattens out and becomes an enjoyable stroll through desert shrubbery. The viewpoint appears after just over 0.4 mile and is quite obvious. Enjoy! Social trails continue up the hill beyond the viewpoint, but as mentioned earlier, it's best to check with the ranger for appropriate off-trail hiking options.



TOPO! map printed on 08/13/08 from "Untitled4.tpo"



GPS Latitude / Longitude NAD83 (Deg., Min., Sec.)
 NATURE TRAIL PARKING: 40,43,23N / 108,53,16W, 5325 feet
 VIEWPOINT: 40,43,5N / 108,53,23W, 5430 feet

