

Lone Cone by Dave Cooper



The symmetric Lone Cone, looking directly at the Devil's Chair-small.jpg

The prominent shape of Lone Cone dominates the skyline south of Norwood. West of the Wilson Group of fourteeners, Lone Cone is well named, presenting a solitary, symmetric profile.

Surrounded by aspen forest, the peak is especially worth a visit during Autumn, when it sits on a sea of gold. Once the rough approach roads are snow-covered they become impassable, so don't wait too long for this one.

Historically the "standard route" was from the northwest, but due to access problems this side is now difficult to reach. The moderate North Ridge is

Getting to the Trailhead: From highway 145, 1.4 miles east of Norwood, turn south on County Road 44Z S (signed as Lone Cone Road). Measuring from this junction, drive south on CR44Z S, reaching the Forest Service boundary at mile 10.3. The road becomes dirt at this point and is designated as Forest Service Road (FSR) 610. Continue south until you reach Beef Trail Road (County Road M44) at mile 11.6. Turn left (east) on Beef Trail Road. At mile 14.0, turn right on FSR611 (not well signed). At mile 18.9, stay straight at the junction with the Beaver Park Road. At mile 20.5 turn right on FSR 612 and follow this progressively rougher road to the parking spot at mile 24.3, where an old logging road (closed by a downed tree) takes off to the left. Note that 1.2 miles before the parking area you will pass another road on your left, closed by Forest Service signs. While this road can also be used to access Lone Cone's northeast ridge, the routefinding is more complex and is not recommended.

Hike Statistics: From the Trailhead to the summit of Lone Cone (12,613 feet): 1900 feet of total elevation gain in 2.0 miles one way.

Difficulty: A short off-trail scramble, partly on somewhat loose talus. Requires good map and compass skills. A four wheel drive vehicle is recommended for the often muddy and sometimes steep, rocky approach roads.

USGS Quad: Beaver Park, CO; Lone Cone, CO.

the most reasonable route and is probably the most popular way to climb this peak. Expect some bushwhacking and lots of talus-hopping on this climb.

A four-wheel drive vehicle is needed for the approach to this climb, and even with such a vehicle, the driving can be a challenge when the roads are wet and muddy.

Hike Description

From the parking area walk generally south then southwest along an old logging road (closed to vehicles) and reach a small pond in 0.3 miles. From the lake climb steeply to the southwest up forested slopes, following cow trails. Aim for a saddle on the peak's northeast ridge labeled on the map as 11,230. Another old logging road, not shown on the map, may help you reach this saddle.

Once on the ridge, join a faint trail and walk southwest up the ridge crest to treeline at 11,500 feet, 1.1 miles from your vehicle. This is where you leave the northeast ridge. (By the way, if you're tempted to just head up the northeast ridge all the way to the summit, be aware that this route is quite difficult, involving Class 4 scrambling and extremely loose rock, and is recommended only for experienced mountaineers.) Contour west and scramble fifty feet up a steep, loose scree slope to gain the rock glacier which separates the northeast and north ridges. Contour across the rock glacier, which forms the seat of the feature known as the "Devil's Chair". Aim for treeline on the north ridge, and pick up a climbers' trail that ascends to the crest of the north ridge at 1.6 miles. Follow this trail south up the ridge until it disappears amongst the loose talus. Continue south and then southeast to the summit, where you will be greeted with two large summit cairns.

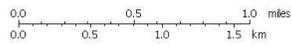
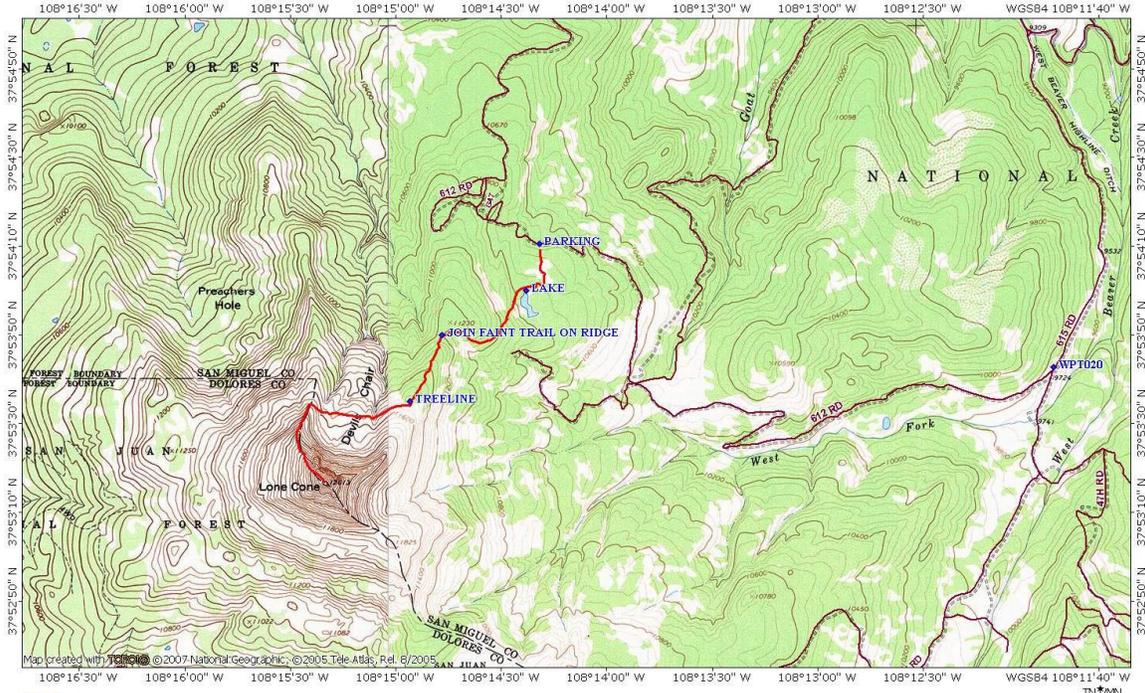
Enjoy the view towards Mount Wilson and its neighboring peaks as you relax over lunch.

Hiking up Lone Cone's north ridge-small.jpg

Descend by reversing your steps, again crossing the rock glacier to reach the northwest ridge, then back down to your vehicle.



TOPO! map printed on 09/10/07 from "Lone Cone2.tpo"



GPS Latitude / Longitude NAD83 (Deg., Min., Sec.)

PARKING: 37,54,11N / 108,14,19W, 10669 feet

LAKE: 37,54,0N / 108,14,23W, 10786 feet

JOIN FAINT TRAIL ON RIDGE: 37,53,50N / 108,14,47W, 11467 feet

TREELINE: 37,53,35N / 108,14,56W, 11532 feet

