



**Colorado Scientific Society Fall Field Trip
to the Western San Juan Mountains, CO
September 30 to October 2, 2011
Leader: George Moore**

Fall is here and it's time for the Annual Fall Colorado Scientific Society field trip! This year we will be looking at the geology from the Proterozoic to Pleistocene of the San Juan Mountains within the Ridgway-Silverton region of Colorado. (Details on page 2.)

Details: Departure will be on Friday morning, September 30, at 8:00 a.m. We will meet at the new Cold Springs Park-N-Ride on the west side of the Denver Federal Center, north of the new St. Anthony's medical complex. Vans will be provided. We arrive in Ouray at 3 p.m., and after a quick drive to an overlook, we will go back to Ouray to check-in to the hotel and go to the Jeep touring company to register, pay, and sign paperwork, after which you can roam Ouray or go for a soak in the Ouray Hot Springs Pool. Saturday morning we will depart at 8:00 a.m. for a full day of touring the caldera and mines. Please be ready for any kind of Colorado Rocky Mountain autumn weather, it might be chilly/snowy, but hopefully beautiful. We leave Ouray on Sunday morning and return to Denver by mid-afternoon.

Lodging: \$98.99/double room/night. All attendees must reserve their own rooms at the Best Western in Ouray (800-207-2700); a block of twenty rooms has been reserved. State that you are with the CSS field trip.

Meals: There are many restaurants to choose from in Ouray for Friday and Saturday nights. A complimentary breakfast is provided free of charge at the Best Western each morning. Lunch is provided by the tour company on Saturday afternoon, and drinks will be provided. Please bring "lunch food" for Friday on the way to Ouray and Sunday on the way back to Denver.

Tour cost: \$100/person, lunch included. (Please let us know if you prefer a vegetarian lunch when you pay upon arrival in Ouray.)

Van fee: \$50/person.

Registration Deadline: September 16, 2011. *Capacity: 40 people max.*

Contact: For reservations, payment info., or other questions contact Cal Ruleman, (303) 859-0911, or cruleman@usgs.gov.

****Student Scholarships Available****

Scholarships from the Pillmore Fund to cover expenses are available for qualifying students. Contact Cal Ruleman to RSVP, (303) 859-0911, cruleman@usgs.gov



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The field trip will concentrate on volcanic geology and ore emplacement, alpine glacial geology, historic mines and mills.

Day 1. Arrival in Ouray

We will meet on Friday, Sept. 30, at 3:00 pm in the parking lot south of the tennis courts at the southeast corner of the Ridgway city park. (site of the hanging scene in the original True Grit movie). GPS reading: 38°02'22.4"N : 107°40'45.7"W From there we will drive to an overlook on Log Hill Mesa for an orientation stop. GPS reading: 38°10'54.2"N : 107°46'36.5"W

We will then return through Ridgway and drive up the Uncompahgre Valley to Ouray. When we reach Ouray, we will go to the tour company office to individually pay and sign releases for the next day's tour. Our costs will be \$100/person for the tour transportation with lunch included for Saturday. (Taxes are included.)



Ouray, known as the *Switzerland of America*, is a small Victorian mining town with a population of 800 nestled in the mountains at the head of the Uncompahgre Valley at an elevation of 7,800 feet. A short hike from the south edge of town is the famous exposure of the angular unconformity in Box Canyon Park. At the opposite end of town is the Ouray Hot Springs Pool. Surrounding cliffs exhibit colorful layers of Paleozoic and Mesozoic sedimentary and Tertiary igneous rocks. Historic buildings, shops, art galleries, and restaurants are clustered along Main Street and adjacent side streets, and numerous Victorian homes can be seen on a walking tour of town.

Day 2. Uncompahgre Gorge, Silverton Caldera, and the Red Mountain, Upper Uncompahgre, Poughkeepsie Gulch, and Eureka Mining Districts

[*Mines, Mountain Roads, and Rocks—Geologic Road Logs of the Ouray Area (2004)*, provides detailed documentation of the geology, mining history, and scenery along most of the roads we will travel on Day 2.]

Departure from Ouray will be at 8:00 a.m. The first leg will be through the Precambrian quartzites of the Uncompahgre Gorge, to the caldera rim in Ironton Park and up Corkscrew Gulch to Corkscrew Pass for an overview of the caldera-related volcanics of the Uncompahgre-San Juan caldera complex and the structures and mineralization related to the Silverton caldera and its precursors. The second leg will be over Hurricane and California Passes with a descent into California Gulch. Next, we will travel up Placer Gulch along the Sunnyside fault to the Gold Prince mine, then across the Eureka graben, over Treasure Mountain Pass and down Picayune Gulch to the Animas River near Eureka. We will return to Ouray via Silverton on the Million Dollar Highway with potential stops at Red Mountain Pass, Red Mountain Town, and the National Belle Mine. (To see an archive photo of the mine, go to: <http://www.colorado.gov/dpa/doit/archives/mining/silverto.html>)

If road conditions or foul weather make parts of the high country unavailable, we will alter the route to cover as much of the caldera as is accessible.

We will be near 13,000 feet for part of Saturday. The sun is intense, mountain weather can vary suddenly, and snow showers are possible. Long-sleeves, jackets, hats, sunscreen, and drinking water are recommended. (tour vans are "open-air") We will be on irregular terrain, so sturdy shoes or boots are in order. Bring your hand lens and rock hammer. Don't forget your camera. And bring your bathing suit if you wish to enjoy the Ouray Hot Springs Pool.

Related Web sites:

Ouray Chamber Resort Association, www.ouraycolorado.com/
Ouray County Historical Society,
www.ouraycountyhistoricalsociety.org/
Switzerland of America Jeep Tours, www.soajeep.com/

