

TRAILS OF GOLD

WANDER THROUGH HISTORY

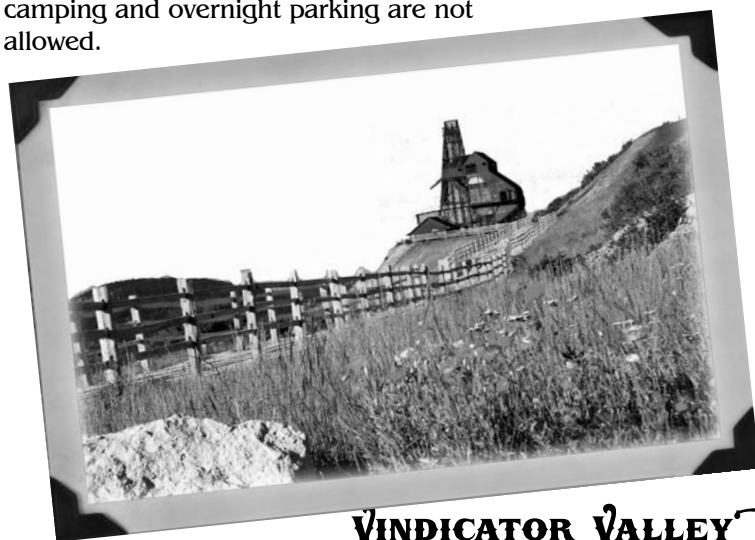


Thousands struck with gold fever made their way into the area on the southwest side of Pikes Peak in the 1890s. Their goal was to reach the Cripple Creek/Victor Mining District and promises of easy-found wealth.

Today the remnants of that gold rush legacy live on, dotting the landscape, atop mountains, along valleys where city streets used to be filled with miners, wagons and mules going to and from the mines.

The Southern Teller County Focus Group and the Cripple Creek & Victor Gold Mining Company teamed up to create a series of trails that lead you through the wealth of gold mining that made Victor and Cripple Creek famous. The trails are open to foot, horse and bicycle traffic in summer and skiing and snowshoeing in winter. No motorized traffic is allowed.

Visitors - please remember you are crossing private land and must stay on the trails for your safety. The trails are through mountain terrain at elevations of 9,500 to 10,500 feet above sea level. Dress appropriately for mountain weather and bring a hat, sunscreen and a jacket in case of a shower. Access to the Theresa, Vindicator and Independence mines are handicap accessible; the trails are open year-round; cross country skiing and snowshoeing are best in spring. There are no services at the trail; camping and overnight parking are not allowed.



Trail maps are located in Info Boxes at each trail-head.

VINDICATOR VALLEY TRAIL

This trail offers access to Vindicator Valley, the historic location of the town of Independence and several of the district's largest mines. Interpretive signs with historic photos of working 1890's gold mines, information about railroads and gold rush communities, as well as current-day mining and reclamation are located along the trail.

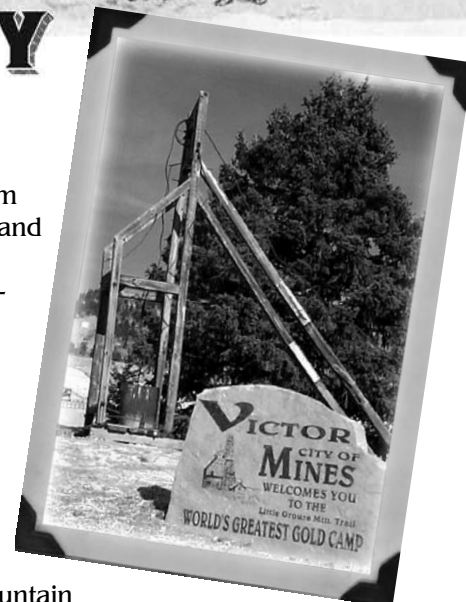
The 2-mile loop Vindicator Valley Trail has two trailheads: one across from Goldfield and one at the Vindicator Mine on Teller County Road 831 (turn onto the county road at the top of Bull Hill near the informational sign).

BATTLE MOUNTAIN TRAIL

The Battle Mountain Trail, designated in 2000 as a Millennium Trail, begins at Stratton's Independence Mine just outside of Victor on the Range View Road. This 1-mile trail takes you past the famous Independence Mine, where Winfield Scott Stratton made millions at the turn of the century. Winding its way up a gentle grade, the trail traverses Battle Mountain below the Portland I and Ajax mines and above the Strong Mine. Views of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and the historic city of Victor are spectacular. At the Independence Mine a recreation of the Cresson Ore Sorting House demonstrates an important process in 1890's gold mining.

GOLDEN CIRCLE

The Golden Circle Trail begins at Teller County Road 1 across from the Battle Mountain Interpretive Site and at the Independence Mill Site on the American Eagles Road. This trail connects the Mill Site with the Vindicator Valley Trail. Following the original grade of the Golden Circle Railroad, the easy, gradual trail is about 1.25 miles between the Mill Site and the lower Vindicator Valley Trail.



LITTLE GROUSE MTN.

A short climb up Little Grouse Mountain offers views of the Cripple Creek & Victor Gold Mining Company valley fill operations as well as a 360-degree view of the mountains to the west and surrounding terrain. The trail begins at the parking area just west of Victor on the south side of the bridge over Arequa Gulch. At the trailhead is an historic mining equipment display. Brochures at the site describe the equipment, which was relocated from historic mines in the district.

BATTLE MTN. INTERPRETIVE SITE

At Teller County Road 81 and Phantom Canyon Road, the ore cars and sheave wheel came from the Ajax mine and were installed at this point along the Gold Belt National Scenic Byway to point out the part gold mining has played in this great district. Interpretive signs show the various mines located on Battle Mountain, views of the City of Victor as it was in 1914 and as it looks today, a plan map of the geology of the district and the use of the sheave wheel and the procedure for dumping rock from the mine cars.

GOLD CAMP TRAIL

Hike up or down the trail through Poverty Gulch where Bob Womack found gold in 1890; tour some of the most historic country in the district as you retrace the footsteps of 1890's hardrock miners.

The trailheads are just to the west of Hoosier Mine on County Rd. 83, and at the Cripple Creek District Museum. Learn about the famous Gold King Mine, the C.O.D. Mine & the Mollie Kathleen Mine. End your hike at the Cripple Creek District Museum where gold mining history is displayed at the head of historic Bennett Avenue. Brochures at the Hoosier Trailhead describe the equipment, which was relocated from historic mines in the District.

DOWNTOWN VICTOR TRAIL

Interpretive signs along a historic trail in downtown Victor provide a tour of the City of Mines. These trails follow city streets and sidewalks past 1899 buildings and historic sites.

Brochures with trail maps are available at the Victor Lowell Thomas Museum, at Victor City Hall Visitor Center.

A downtown trail also leads from the museum at 3rd & Victor Avenue to the Independence Mill Site and Battle Mountain Trail.

