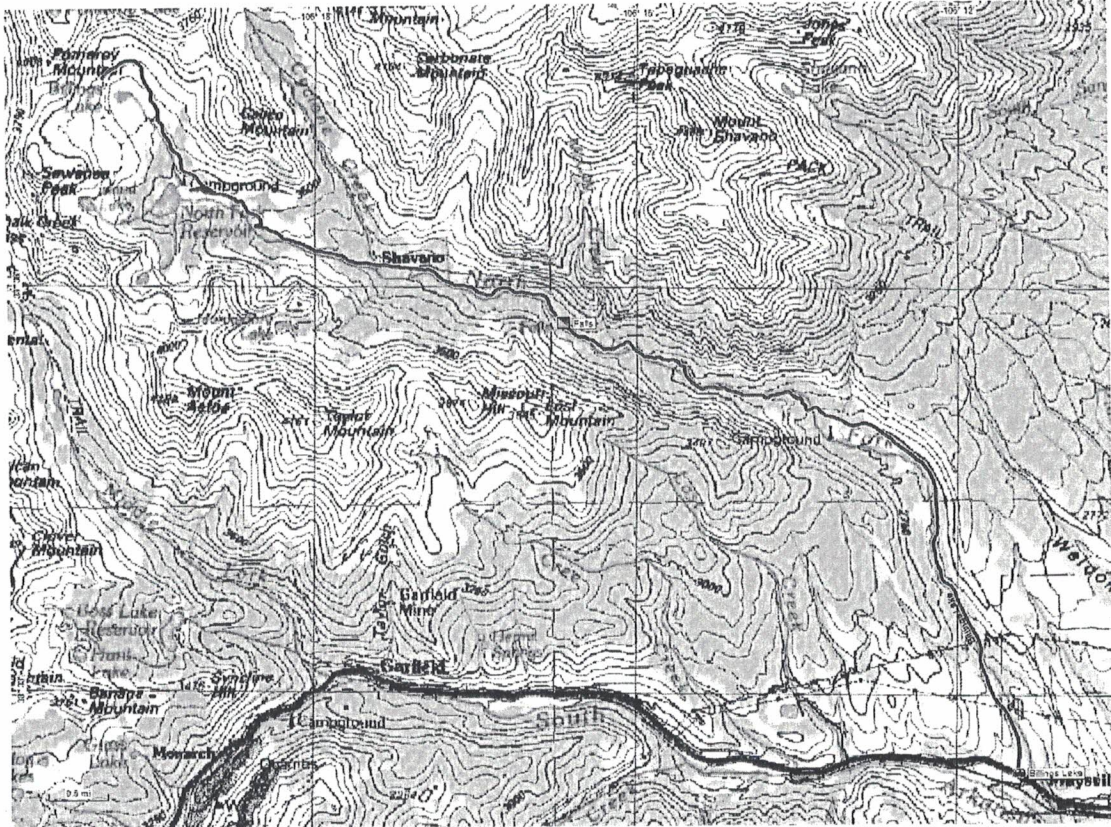


# Billings Lake

From the intersection of highway 50 and highway 285, take highway 50 west for 6.3 miles. At Maysville, turn right onto Chaffee County Road 240, following signs to Billings Lake.



The trail starts out paved for the first 2.7 miles and then transitions to an easy dirt road. The high-end rating only applies to the last leg of the trail, after the turn-off to the North Fork Reservoir Camp Ground.

Route finding is easy as there are few spurs, and the main trail is easy to discern. If you are undecided which direction to go, stay straight on the main trail.

At approximately six miles from the turn-off from highway 50, look for a gorge just off the trail to the left. There's just room for three or four vehicles to pull off to the left or otherwise park beside the trail. Walk over to the edge of the gorge to view a waterfall and the bottom of the gorge about 70 feet below you. This is an excellent spot for lunch or just to rest and view the scenery.

Continue up the trail and stay to the right at the turn for the North Fork Camp Ground. The trail will continue up above the tree line and partially loop around the Billings Lake. This section gives the trail its high rating as it's slightly rougher and requires more ground clearance. Also, here the scrub brush may scrape the side of a full-sized vehicle.

The trail ends above the lake at the Pride of the West Tunnel entrance. This was once a toll tunnel through the mountains. It certainly looks like it's not your run-of-the-mill mine, as the stone work is beautiful, with a capstone marked with the tunnel name and the date "1880." Return the way you came.

Trail maps and directions should not be a substitute for your determination of what is safe for you and your passengers.