

# Canyonlands

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

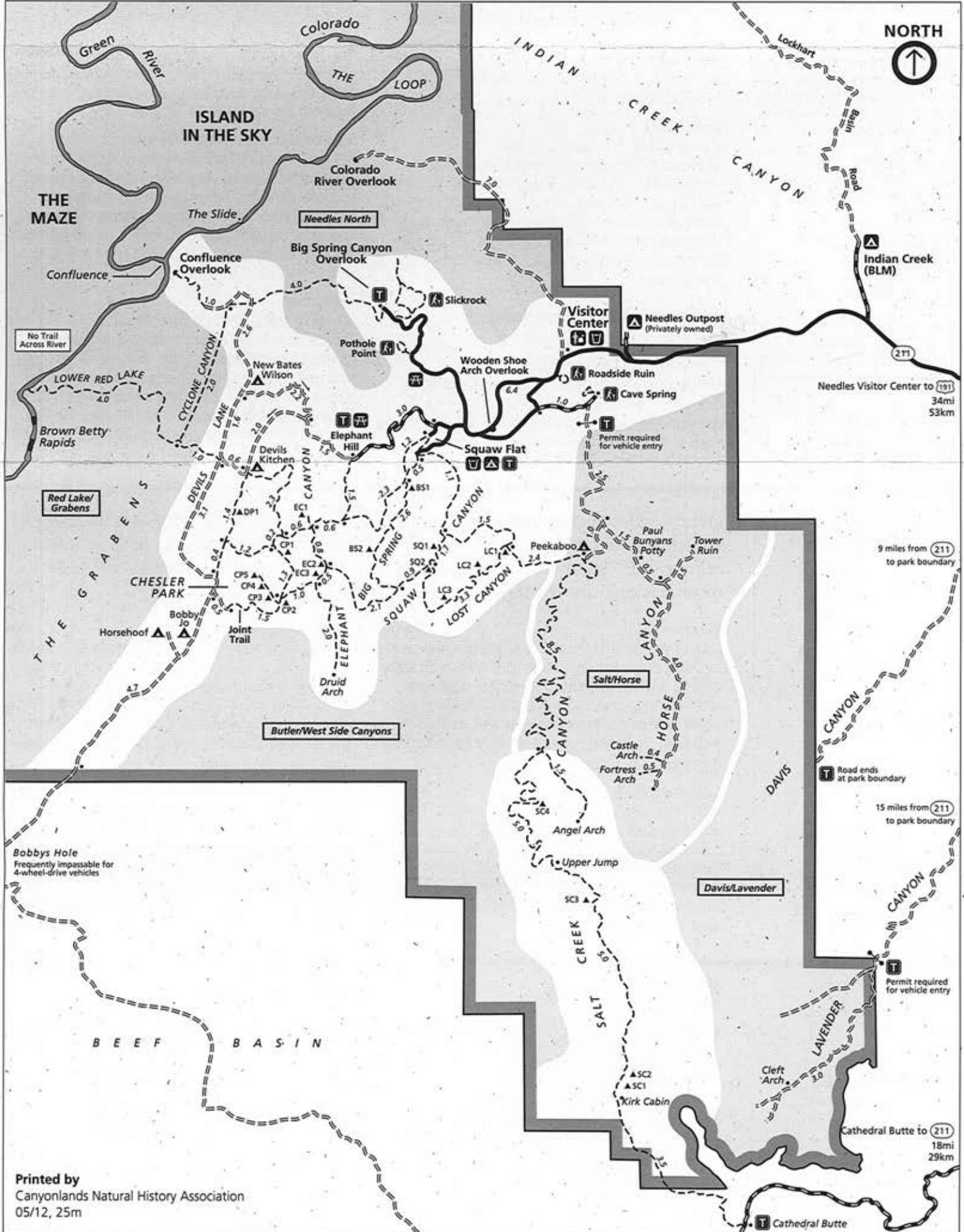


Canyonlands National Park

## Needles District Trails and Roads

- |                               |                                       |                                     |                |                             |                               |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Overlook/<br>Paved road       | High-clearance,<br>4-wheel-drive road | Rapids                              | Ranger station | Developed Campground        | Self-guiding trail            |
| Unpaved<br>2-wheel-drive road | Locked gate                           | At-large<br>Backpacking Zone        | Picnic area    | Backcountry Vehicle Camp    | Backcountry Trailhead Parking |
|                               | Hiking Trail                          | Name<br>Name of<br>Backpacking Zone | Potable Water  | Designated Backpacking Site |                               |

NOTE: White shading within Canyonlands National Park indicates areas with designated site camping only.



## Hiking Trails

Over 60 miles of interconnecting trails present hikers with spectacular canyon scenery. Some of the more common routes are described below. Trails traverse a mixture of slickrock benches and sandy washes, and some may require negotiating steep, rocky passes with drop-offs, narrow areas and ladders. Water sources are unreliable; carry all that you will need. Trails are marked with cairns (small rock piles) and signs at intersections.

### ELEPHANT HILL TRAILHEAD

#### Chesler Park Viewpoint

6mi/10km, 3-4 hrs round trip

This popular trail leads across to a pass overlooking a scenic expanse of desert grasses and shrubs surrounded by sandstone spires.

#### Chesler Park Loop / Joint Trail

11 mi/18 km, 5-7 hrs round trip

This loop travels beyond the viewpoint described above, providing great views of the Needles formations. The southern portion, called the Joint Trail, winds through deep, narrow fractures in the rock. A short segment follows the four-wheel-drive road.

#### Druid Arch

11 mi/18 km, 5-7 hrs round trip

This trail offers one of the most spectacular views in the Needles. It follows the first part of the Chesler Park trail, then branches off to travel along the bottom of Elephant Canyon through deep sand and loose rock. The last .25 mile at the upper end is steep with 1 ladder and some scrambling.

### BIG SPRING CANYON TRAILHEAD

#### Confluence Overlook

10 mi/16.5 km, 5-6 hrs round trip

Unlike other Needles hikes, this trail traverses dry, open country along the northern edge of the geologic faults that shaped the Needles. Trail ends at a cliff overlooking the junction of the Green and Colorado rivers 1,000 feet below.

### SQUAW FLAT LOOP "A" TRAILHEAD

#### Big Spring Canyon to Squaw Canyon

7.5 mi/12 km, 3-4 hrs round trip

A great introduction to the landscape of the Needles, connecting two canyons for a loop across varied terrain. The route between the canyons climbs steep grades that are dangerous when wet and may make people with a fear of heights uncomfortable.

#### Big Spring Canyon to Elephant Canyon

10.8 mi/17 km, 4-6 hrs round trip

This loop features extended hiking on slickrock benches and mesa tops overlooking canyons. Excellent views of sheer cliff walls and other rock formations. Two ladders must be climbed in the pass between the canyons.

#### Squaw Canyon to Lost Canyon

8.7 mi/14 km, 4-6 hrs round trip

Another wonderful loop hike with some difficult sections climbing between the two canyons. Riparian areas in both canyons attract birds and other wildlife. Route in Lost Canyon passes through dense vegetation and may be very wet. One ladder must be climbed.

#### Peekaboo

10 mi/16.5 km, 5-6 hrs round trip

Trail crosses both Squaw and Lost canyons on its way to Salt Creek Canyon, passing along high slickrock benches with spectacular views. Steep slopes and nearby cliff edges make this a challenging route. Two ladders must be climbed. Prehistoric rock art panel may be seen at the end of the trail near Peekaboo camp.

## SHORT HIKES

Short on time? Four short, self-guiding interpretive trails highlight various aspects of the area's cultural and natural history. Trail guides are available in the visitor center and at trailheads for a nominal fee.

### Roadside Ruin

.3 mi/.5 km, 20 minutes

Easy trail. Leads to an ancestral Puebloan granary.

### Cave Spring

.6 mi/1 km, 45 minutes

Two ladders. Leads to historic cowboy camp and prehistoric pictographs.

### Pothole Point

.6 mi/1 km, 45 minutes

Uneven surface. Leads to pothole communities, views of the Needles.

### Slickrock Trail

2.4 mi/4 km, 2 hours

Uneven surface. Several viewpoints and sometimes bighorn sheep.

## Four-Wheel-Drive Roads

Over 50 miles of challenging backcountry roads access campsites, trailheads and park attractions. All vehicles and bikes must remain on designated roads. All of these roads require high-clearance, four-wheel-drive vehicles. Drive carefully: the risk of vehicle damage is great and towing expenses typically exceed \$1,000.

### Elephant Hill

One of the most technical four-wheel-drive roads in Utah, Elephant Hill presents drivers with steep grades, loose rock, stair-step drops, tight turns and backing. Over the hill, equally challenging roads lead to various campsites and trailheads, as well as to BLM lands south of the park. Challenging mountain biking.

### Colorado Overlook

Moderate road, good for mountain bikes. There are large rocks and stair-step drops in the last 1.5 miles which visitors may avoid by parking on the road (leave room for others) and walking to the overlook. Outstanding views of the Colorado River Canyon. Unprotected overlook; use caution. No vehicle camping.

### Horse Canyon / Peekaboo

Permit required for day and overnight use. Roads travel along canyon bottoms where deep sand, deep water and quicksand are common. Too sandy for mountain bikes. At Peekaboo, vehicle campsites are available and prehistoric rock art may be seen. Horse Canyon road leads to several arches and Tower Ruin.


### Lavender Canyon

Permit required for day use. Road follows a canyon bottom where deep sand, deep water and quicksand are common. Too sandy for mountain bikes. There are two major creek crossings with steep banks. Arches and ancestral Puebloan granaries may be viewed from the road. No vehicle camping inside the park.

## Backcountry Reservations

Canyonlands National Park  
Reservation Office  
2282 S. West Resource Blvd.  
Moab, UT 84532  
Phone: (435)259-4351  
Fax: (435)259-4285

## For More Information

Canyonlands National Park  
2282 SW Resource Blvd.  
Moab, UT 84532  
(435)719-2313  
[www.nps.gov/cany](http://www.nps.gov/cany)  
 CanyonlandsNationalPark  
 CanyonlandsNPS

## Protect Your Park

- Pets are not allowed on hiking trails or on four-wheel-drive roads, even in a vehicle.
- Do not enter, alter, damage or deface archaeological sites. Do not collect artifacts.
- Vehicles and bikes must stay on roads.
- ATVs and OHVs are not permitted.
- Protect cryptobiotic soil crusts by staying on trails and roads.
- Permits are required for all overnight backcountry trips.

## Protect Yourself

- Drink at least one gallon of water each day.
- Always carry a topo map, adequate clothing, and a flashlight.
- Remain in one place if you become lost or separated from a group.
- Never cross a canyon that is flooding.
- During lightning storms, avoid lone trees, cliff edges and high ridges. Return to your vehicle if possible.
- Be careful near cliff edges, especially when rock surfaces are wet or icy.