



GHOST TOWN CLUB

OF COLORADO

Exploration, enjoyment, and preservation of historical sites

Field Trip: Independence and its Rough Riding Neighbor, Ruby

Date of trip: 07/30/2022

Meet at 10:00AM Twin Lakes Visitor Center Parking Lot

Leader: Josh Robinson

A trip to the ghost town of Independence seems appropriate for July for several reasons, the first being the obvious patriotic connection to the month our independence took place, and second in July the weather has cleared and our travel over the pass is likely to be an easy one.... Let's celebrate our independence with a trip to old Independence and her rough riding neighbor, Ruby!

Description of the day:

We will start off by meeting in the [parking lot of the Twin Lakes Visitor Center](#). From there we will caravan together 14 miles over the pass to the ghost town of Independence. There we will walk the site, Josh will give a talk about the preservation work going on at the site, and the ideas behind this approach to preservation. We will brown bag lunch at the site. From there we will break for our second-half-of-day options.

This trip includes an optional Phase II, or "pick your own ending trip," meaning folks involved can pick what they want to do, with two second half options scouted. See below:

Option 1 - 4x4 to Ruby with Josh:

We will depart from Independence and take the Independence pass road another 3 miles to turn off for Lincoln Creek Road and begin our 11-mile 4x4 road to the ghost of Ruby. The beginning part of the road is decent graded dirt as last seen, the last 3 miles are rougher and will require a high clearance vehicle. At the site we will walk the roughly 22 remaining ruins, gaining an understanding of the overall town site and its layout. This will feature several log houses including a Livery stable, and at least one commercial building. All buildings at the site are roofless.

Option 2 - Explore Leadville:

See itinerary for details on scouted options

Note: These are true ghost towns and will require hiking gear. Also, bring along snacks and drinks. And whatever else you will need...

Hiking rating for part one is a 3+. The ground is a natural setting with debris, and unmaintained roads and paths, hilly inclines. Not suitable for strollers or wheelchairs, or persons not in good physical health or difficulty walking.

Itinerary

Phase I

Meet at 10:00AM

Location: [Twin Lakes Visitor Center Parking Lot](#) (look for the GTC flag)

Leave Twin lakes at 10:30PM, begin caravan up and over Independence Pass

The Independence Pass Road is completely paved and is easily executed in any vehicle.

Note: You will need a 4x4 to travel to Ruby if you choose to participate in Option 1, or share a ride

Arrive at Independence:

We will arrive at independence, just on the west side of the Pass. There we will park and hike several hundred feet into the town site. Once there, Josh will lead a talk about the architecture and archeology found at the site, specifically focusing on the preservation work going on there.

Hiking rating as a 3+. The ground is a natural setting with debris, and unmaintained roads and paths, and hilly inclines. Not suitable for strollers or wheelchairs, or persons not in good physical health or difficulty walking.

Lunch at Independence:

We will eat lunch at Independence, bring a packed brown bag.

At around 2:00PM we will disperse for second-half-of-day options.

Phase II (Optional):

The second portion of the day is designed to provide participants with a variety of different options to participate in ... you may choose from either of these, or none.

Option 1 – 4x4 to Ruby with Josh:

From Independence, we will condense vehicles and take the paved Independence Pass Road another 3 miles west, to the turn off for Lincoln Creek Road. From there we will begin our 11-mile 4x4 road to the ghost of Ruby. The beginning part of the road is decent graded dirt as last seen... the last 3 miles are rougher and will require a high clearance vehicle. At the site we will walk the roughly 22 remaining ruins gaining understanding of the overall town site and its layout.

The road would be rated as Moderate according to the GTC Field trip Guide. Vehicles with 4x4 and high ground clearance are required. Suitable for most stock SUVs. For hiking it would rate at a 4 according to the GTC field trip guide - A more difficult walk, poorly maintained paths and steep or hilly inclines. Not suitable for strollers, wheelchairs, or persons with health problems.

Ruins we will see:

Ruby is an interesting site, and one that never really went beyond the log building phase of construction. It was not a grided town site, existing mostly along two streets and a central intersection in a high alpine meadow. What we will find today are the ruins of about 22 buildings scattered around the site, all are log construction and today roofless. Most of them still have standing walls however, and we will be able to identify many of them and their use.

Option 2 - Explore Leadville:

Turn back and head to Leadville and explore that town on your own.

Below are just a few recommended places to visit:

National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum

120 West 9th Street
(719) 386-1229
Open 9:00AM - 4:45PM

Temple Israel

201 W 4th Street
(303) 709-7050
Opens 10:30AM – 6:00PM

Evergreen Cemetery

Take 8th street west from Harrison Ave then make a right on to James Street the cemetery will be directly ahead of you across McWethy drive.

Note: This is a personal favorite of mine, with multiple cemeteries and numerous wooden headstones still in place.

DINNER SOMEPLACE!!!

To sign up for the trip, or for any questions, call or email Josh Robinson:

(724) 630-0631

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