



2026

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Alpine Tunnel Trail

Colorado



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Gorgeous scenery awaits those who hike the Alpine Tunnel Trail through the tall pine trees of Colorado's San Isabel National Forest.



the trail's namesake, the Alpine Tunnel. Service through the tunnel ended in 1910 and both entrances are closed; the east entrance was caved in and its west entrance was covered by landslides.

Note that the trail, with an elevation of 11,523 feet, is high-altitude and subject to heavy snowfall. To avoid the snow, the best time to go is from June through October.

Gorgeous scenery awaits those who hike the Alpine Tunnel Trail through the tall pine trees of Colorado's San Isabel National Forest. The trail has a gentle grade suitable even for children as it follows the former Denver, South Park and Pacific Railroad between St. Elmo and Gunnison. In some places, you'll still be able to see the railroad ties. Completed in 1881, the narrow-gauge railroad was used during the area's gold mining heyday and was the first to tunnel through the Continental Divide. You can learn about its interesting history on informational displays along the trail.

The trail begins at the ghost town of Hancock and you can find good fishing spots here along Chalk Creek, which runs north to St. Elmo. After traveling 3 miles west along the path, you'll arrive at the rocky slopes of Mt. Poor and



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States: Colorado

Counties: Chaffee

Length: 2.7miles

Trail end points: US Forest Service Road 295
(5.5 miles south of St. Elmo) to Alpine Tunnel
(San Isabel National Forest)

Trail surfaces: Dirt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Fishing, Mountain
Biking, Walking

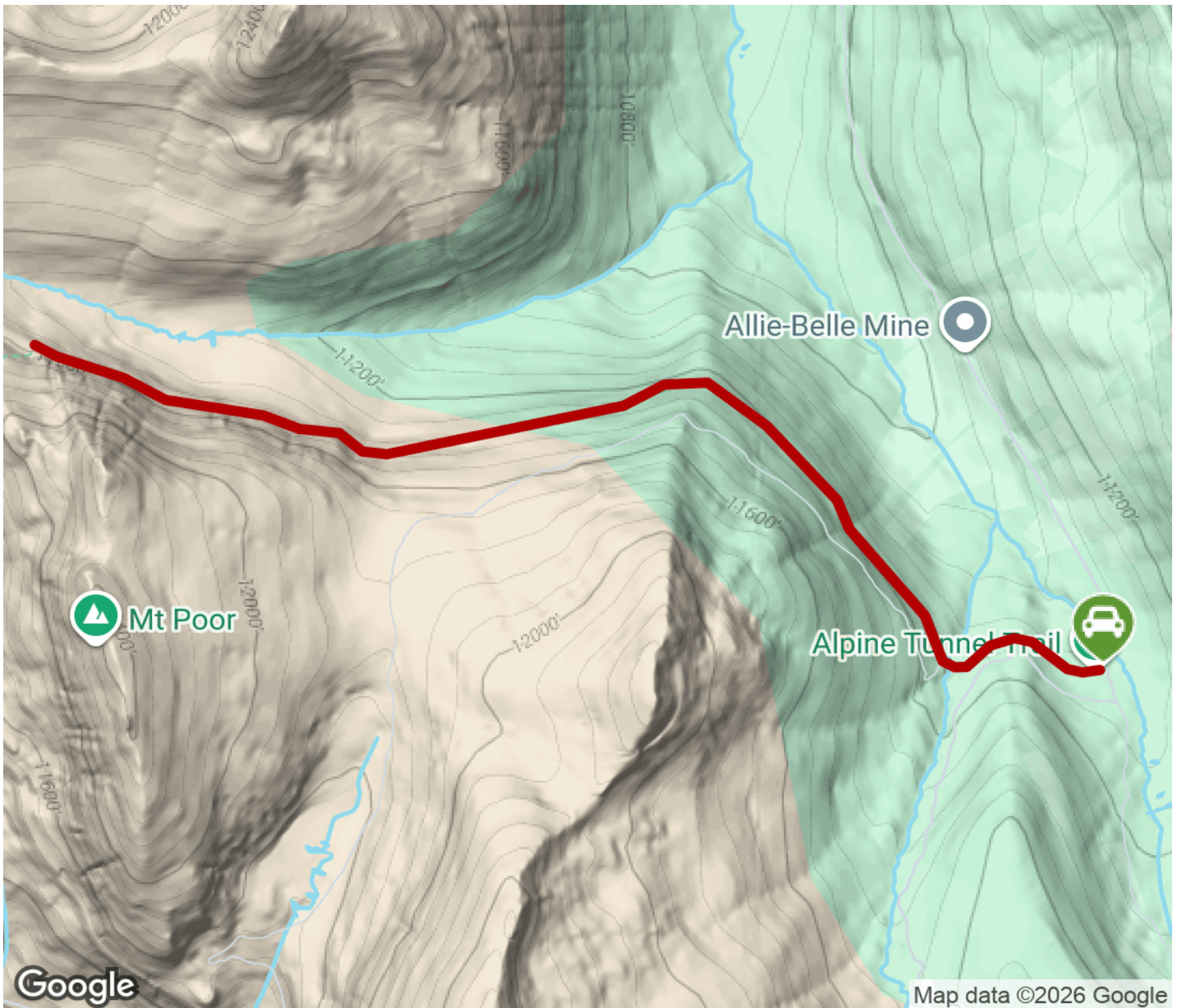
Parking & Trail Access

From the southern end of Nathrop, head west on US Forest Road 162 (Chalk Creek Drive) for 12 miles to St. Elmo. When you reach St. Elmo, head south on US Forest Road 295 and continue 5.5 miles to the ghost town of Hancock. You'll arrive at the Alpine Tunnel trailhead and parking lot shortly after crossing the bridge over Chalk Creek. Note that after St. Elmo, the road will be very bumpy.



Alpine Tunnel Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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