

The Pinnell Mountain National Recreation Trail is one of Interior Alaska's premier hiking trails! Take in sweeping mountain vistas and brilliant wildflower displays under the unceasing light of the midnight sun. The trail offers an unforgettable experience whether your visit lasts a few hours or a few days.

Located about 100 miles (161 km) northeast of Fairbanks, the 27-mile (44 km) Pinnell Mountain National Recreation Trail traverses a series of alpine ridge tops entirely above timberline. The trail is marked with rock cairns as it crosses open tundra with views north to the Yukon River and south to the Alaska Range. Wooden posts along the trail show the mileage from the start at Eagle Summit (milepost 107 on the Steese Highway) to the trail's end at Twelvemile Summit (milepost 85.5, Steese Highway). Two emergency shelters provide refuge from storms, but hikers should come prepared for unpredictable, dramatic alpine weather. Thunderstorms and mountain fog are common during the summer.



Shelters
There are two shelter cabins located on the Pinnell Mountain National Recreation Trail.

The Ptarmigan Creek Shelter is just south of the trail approximately 10.1 miles (16.2 km) from Eagle Summit in a saddle west of Pinnell Mountain.

The North Fork Shelter is tucked around the south face of the ridge. A side trail to the shelter is located at mile 17.8 (28.6 km), 9.5 miles (15.3 km) from Twelvemile Summit. These small, unfurnished shelter cabins provide emergency shelter, away from strong wind and blowing rain or snow. They operate on a first-come, first-served basis. Hikers should always carry tents and be prepared to use them in case the shelter cabins are occupied.



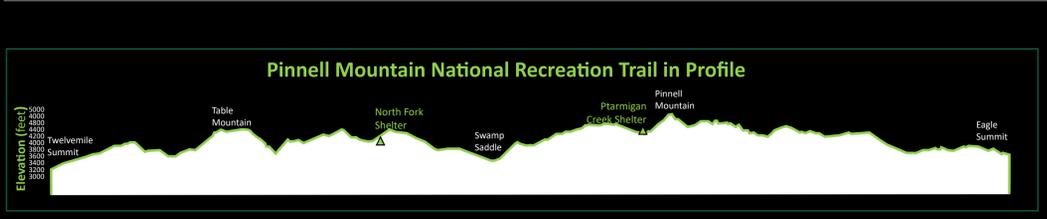
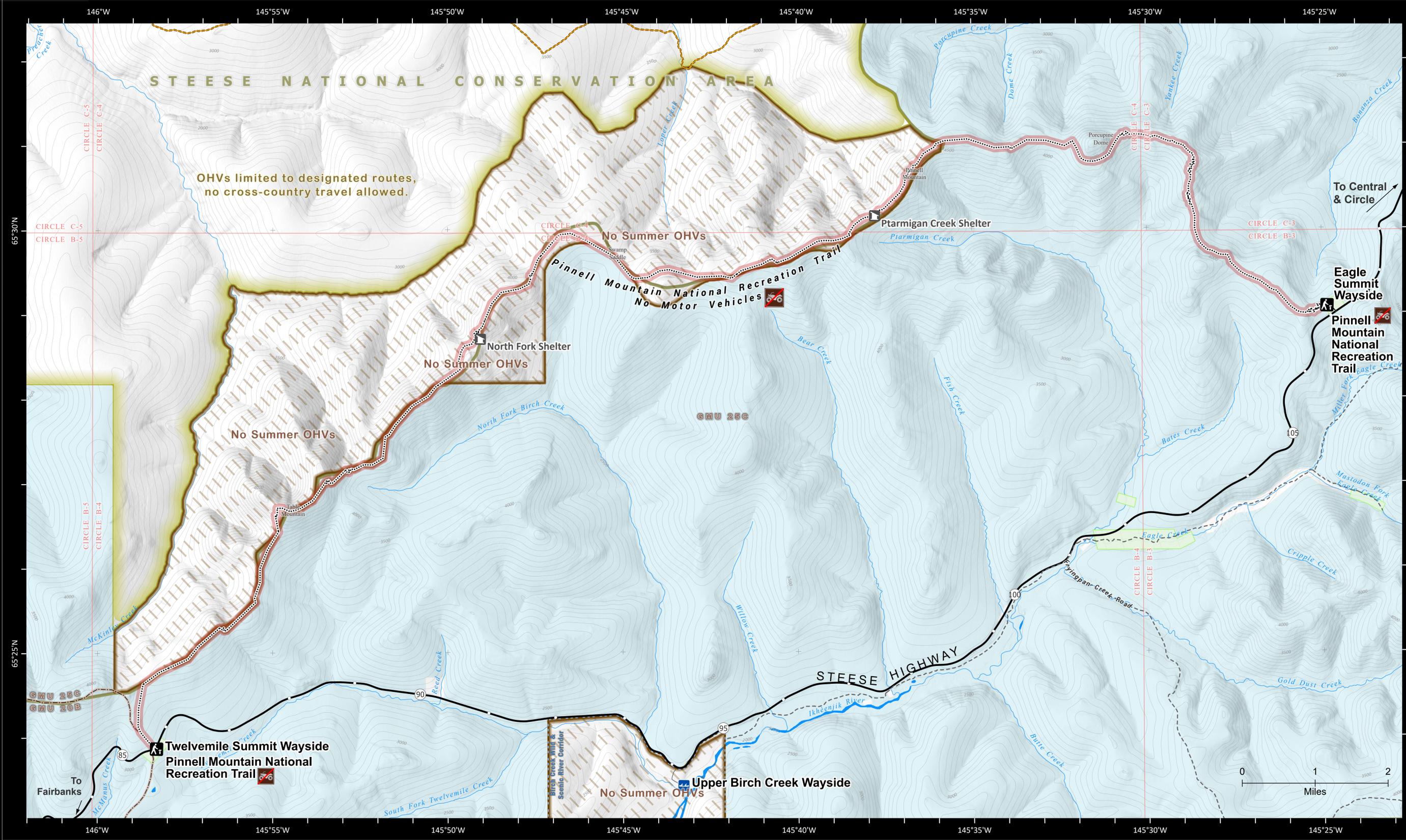
Water
Finding drinking water along the trail can become difficult later in the summer, when snowfields and small ponds dry up. Water is generally available at both shelter cabins where catchment systems collect melting snow and rain. All water should be treated before use. Day hikers should carry enough water for a full day (at least 2 quarts or liters), and backpackers should always carry at least 3 quarts or liters of water.

Giardia: This intestinal parasite can leave you feeling miserable for weeks. Boiling your drinking water is the best way to kill the organism.

Trail Conditions
The Pinnell Mountain National Recreation Trail is an alpine trail marked with wooden mileposts and rock cairns to help hikers stay on the trail when clouds cover the ridges. A few miles of wooden planking provide passage through boggy areas.

Hikers along the trail should expect a physical challenge. Most of the trail has at least an 8 percent grade. In many areas the grade exceeds 25 percent. Switchbacks were constructed to provide safer access across steep talus slopes. At Eagle Summit, Pinnell Mountain and Table Mountain, the switchbacks cover 600-foot (182 m) elevation changes over a distance of one-half mile (0.8 km). Please do not short-cut the switchbacks.

Who was Pinnell?
Lt. Commander R. Darling of the U.S. Coastal and Geodetic Survey named Pinnell Mountain for Robert Pinnell, killed in an accident on July 17, 1952 while climbing nearby Porcupine Dome.



Summer Designations: May 1 - October 14

BLM Routes

- Pinnell Mountain Trail - Trail and 50 ft. on either side of trail is closed to motorized use.
- Use is limited to OHVs weighing 1,000 pounds or less curb weight and a maximum width of 50 inches.

OHV Use Areas

- No Summer Use of OHVs.
- OHVs limited to designated routes, no cross-country travel allowed.
- BLM-managed lands outside Steese & White Mountains Units - Cross-country travel allowed for OHVs 1,500 pounds or less curb weight and a maximum width of 64 inches.

Other Features:

- Unmaintained Roads/Trails
- Highway (with milepost)
- Game Management Unit (GMU)
- USGS 1:63,360 Index
- State of Alaska Lands
- Private Lands

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Curb weight is the unloaded vehicle weight with full fuel and oil.

Contact Information

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