

The Beartooth All-American Road also known as the Beartooth Highway, officially opened on June 14, 1936. Often referred to as “the most beautiful drive in America”, by Charles Kuralt, *On the Road* television correspondent, the Highway is a destination in its own right. It is the highest elevation paved highway in the Northern Rocky Mountains open to travelers seasonally from May to October.

The Beartooth Highway is a 68-mile travel corridor beginning just south of Red Lodge, MT at an elevation of 6400 feet and ending near the Northeast Entrance to Yellowstone National Park and Cooke City, MT at an elevation of 7500 feet. In between those two elevations, the road rises to 10,947 feet at Beartooth Pass in Wyoming. The Beartooth All-American Road is a 54-mile section of the Beartooth Highway beginning 8 miles south of Red Lodge and ending just east of Cooke City.

Travelers are treated to a spectacular array of scenic resources from sweeping vistas of snow-covered ridges along the Beartooth Plateau to the dramatic spire of Pilot Peak.

Plan at least two hours of driving time and be sure to pack your windbreaker and warm clothing for the trip.

Points of Interest on the Wayfinding Map (Opposite page)

- 1. Rock Creek Vista Point Rest Area and Interpretive Trail** - Elev 9190'. This wayside is twenty-one miles from Red Lodge. Vista Point provides breathtaking views of Rock Creek Canyon and Hellroaring Plateau. The short trail to the overlook is wheelchair accessible.
- 2. International Summer Ski/Snowboard Camp** - Elev 10,737'. The ski area lies in Wyoming above the Twin Lakes Headwall with slopes of 15 to 50 degrees and is one of North America's oldest ski training areas, operated by International Ski and Snowboard Camp. It is generally open for skiing by late April and runs into early July with access to 3,000 feet of terrain unless there is insufficient snow.
- 3. Gardner Lake Pullout and Trailhead** - Elev 10,536'. This is the trailhead for the Beartooth Loop National Recreation Trail. It is also a great location for viewing the Bear's Tooth, a pyramidal spire rock formation carved by glaciers and the namesake of the Beartooth All-American Road. Look for alpine flowers in mid-July.
- 4. West Summit, Beartooth Pass Overlook** - Elev 10,947'. This is the highest point along the Highway with spectacular views in every direction. In late May and early June, this high elevation area can produce harsh weather conditions including blowing snow and fog, resulting in short term (less than 24 hours) highway closures.
- 5. Top of the World Store** - Elev 9400'. This stop offers food, fuel, gifts and lodging and is 38 miles from Red Lodge and 25 miles from Cooke City. The store was built on Beartooth Lake and moved to its current location in the 1960's. It is operated under a special use permit from the Shoshone National Forest.
- 6. Beartooth Bridge, Falls and Ravine** - Elev 8900'. Beartooth Lake outlet flows under an historic bridge constructed in the 1930's using unique construction techniques. The high mountain water rushes south through the ravine and then turns to present a magnificent waterfall to travelers along the highway. A quick side trip to the Beartooth Recreation Picnic Area takes you to Beartooth Lake, which is great for fishing and canoeing against the backdrop of Beartooth Butte.
- 7. Clay Butte Fire Lookout Tower** - Elev 9811'. At one time, this tower was used as a fire lookout. Now, it serves mainly as a visitor center. A well-signed pullout begins a three-mile drive up a gravel road to Clay Butte Tower. Visitors are welcome to take in the panoramic views that include Montana's highest point, Granite Peak and Beartooth Butte and to enjoy the interpretive displays of the 1988 wildfires in and around Yellowstone National Park.
- 8. Pilot and Index Peak Overlook** - Elev 8718'. These two peaks located many miles west of the pullout in Wyoming rank in the top ten of the most often photographed scenes along the Beartooth All-American Road. In addition to the Peaks, this location looks down on the beautiful Clark's Fork River Valley that ultimately flows into the Yellowstone River.
- 9. Clark's Fork Overlook** - Elev 8000'. This pullout offers restroom facilities and closer views of the Clark's Fork River Valley. In late summer, patches of brilliant yellow aspen trees contrast with the background of dark mountains in the distance.
- 10. Lake Creek Falls** - Elev 7329'. This rumbling falls plummets under the Beartooth All-American Road. A short hike takes you to a pedestrian bridge where you can get a closer look at the powerful waterfall.
- 11. Crazy Creek Cascade** - Elev 7329'. A short hike upstream presents a mass of water tumbling over rocks giving a cascade appearance rather than a falls.
- 12. Clark's Fork Trailhead and Picnic Area** - Elev 7900'. The Beartooth All-American Road travels back into MT where there is a mile-long stretch of recreation facilities including hiking and horseback-riding trailheads, Chief Joseph Campground and a Nez Perce Interpretive Site. Stop along the way for a picnic, a hike, or a history lesson.
- 13. Orientation Site** - Elev 7500'. At the west end of the Beartooth All-American Road you will find a wealth of information about the Beartooth Mountains, Mining history and the Cooke City Area.