

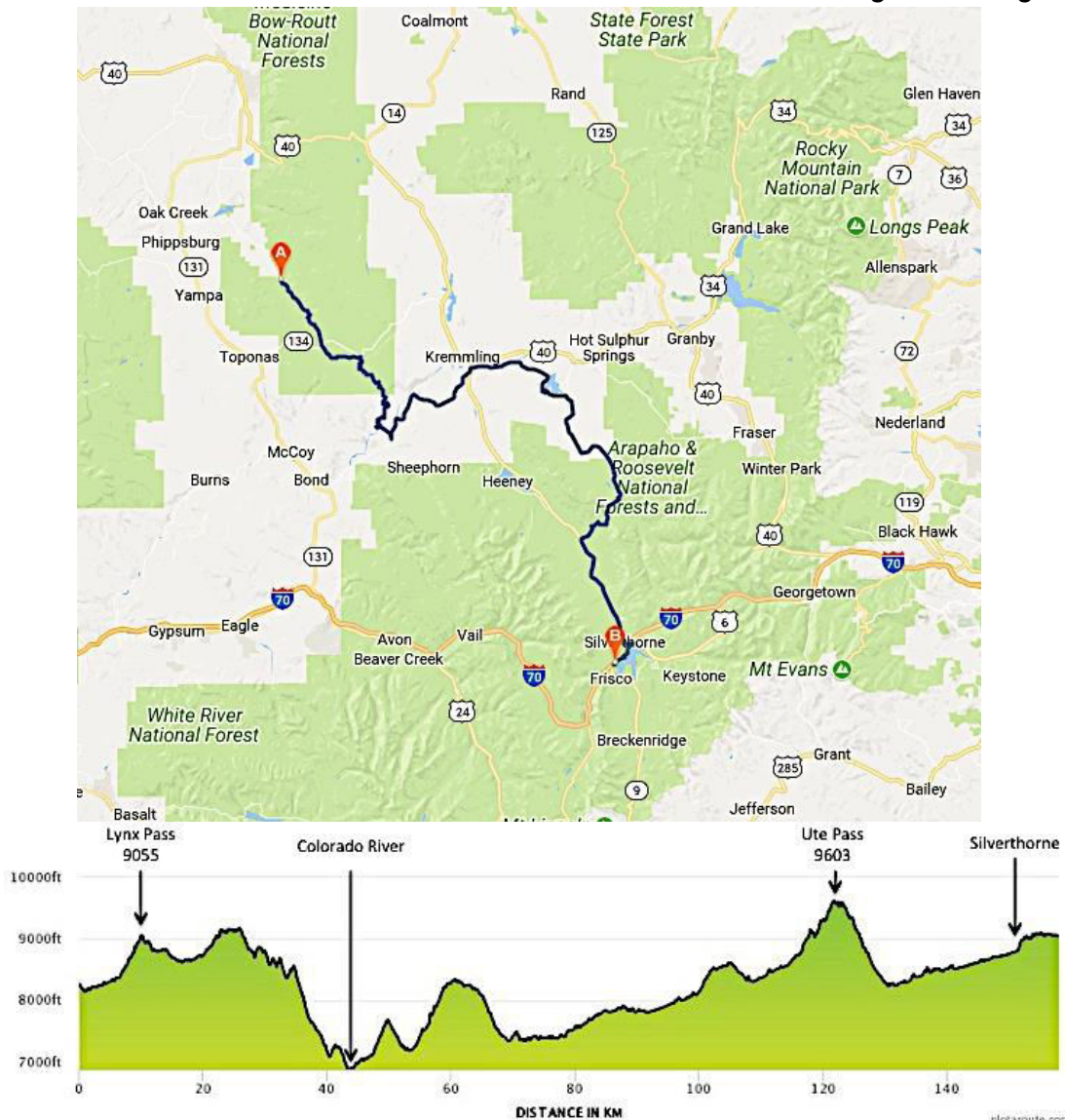
Day 19 **27th June 2017**
Rough camp below Lynx Pass to Dillon Reservoir

157.9k / 98.1miles

3296m / 10813ft (3059m / 10036ft descent)
50.1%↑ 39.2%↓ 10.7%→ 37.8% max

It is far better to be alone, than to be in bad company.

George Washington



I think it can safely say today was hilly – look at the stats. I think any day over 8,000' is interesting!

It found it hard to get up this morning it was cold out and warm in my bag but need must. So out I got, packed up and onto my 'steed'.

Don't laugh but when I crawl into my bag, I always felt rather a heel having left the bike out overnight, especially if has rained. I know it's daft but you do get strangely attached to pieces of kit, especially if you are intimately attached to them for 14+ hours a day. Sad man I know.



On the descent from Lynx pass (8,937') I came across the rustic two story Rock Creek Stage Wells Fargo mail station. Built in the 1880's, it was derelict when it was restored in 2000. All well and good, but it's fenced off now – why restore a building but not allow people to use it? Seems to value a mothballed building for its shape and historical significance over functional use.

Next up of interest was Ford Rock Creek, the ACA map describes a road reroute if it this was unfordable, but today it was OK. Floris, the Dutchman was there. I was constantly amazed at how I kept on meeting him. He was infinitely faster than me but was on a much lighter, less robust bike. He described having to carry his bike over the Fish Mountain Bypass section as he had broken a fork.

Having crossed the river he set off like lightning – I suspected I would never see him again, but you never know on this trip....

*Ford Rock Creek
Floris, on the right, is
ascertaining the depth
and assessing it's fordability.*

Give me this ford over the KoKo Claims river ford on day 2 any day!!



Coming over a crest I was able to see, way below, the Colorado River. There then followed a great descent down to the river river, a drop of nearly 2000' over 7 miles, I was glad I was not coming up this as a NoBo.



However I knew I'd have to do the same in reverse on the other side.



The trail surface was good and it was tempting to simply blast down and enjoy the speed but I did stop and take some photos

Start of the descent proper

View looking south west at bridge I would be crossing shortly

It was possible to see the trail on the opposite side of the valley snaking up to Inspiration Point.





View looking north east.

My route lies on the opposite side of the valley just above the bush in the middle of the picture

Having crossed the Colorado River and climbed 1,500' up to Inspiration Point I had a fine view along the Gore Valley, with the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad on the opposite bank.



They certainly like shooting up their local signs up in Colorado as evidenced by the damage wrought on the information posters at the site.

Not something you see in the UK, although conversely to date I had seen very little litter in the US compared with the sorry state people leave our countryside.

Think I prefer the bullet holes - litter is such an eyesore, although I accept a bullet hole in someone does tend to rather spoil their day.

Information station, with gunshots holes in the signs.

My abiding memory of the Gore valley and the trip back down to the Colorado River was the adverse wind¹.

Kremmling which has services ie food lies 3k off route on the opposite side of the Colorado. However the next potential resupply was Silverthorne (74k and the 9,524' Ute Pass away).

I debated the extra 6k vs the food option. The food won, actually it didn't; the prospect of not having to cycle into the wind for a while decided the debate!!



Close up of the Colorado River far below in Gore Canyon

I visited the Subway in Kremmling; had my usual a 12" tuna.

On the way back to the route I met several fellow TD riders also coming into Kremmling for sustenance.

1. I think in future any reference to wind will automatically assume the adverse element. Winds are never favourable – if they are you will inevitably find you have made a mistake and are going the wrong way. In fact I think you can probably do the TD route without a map – all you need to do is point your bike into the wind - there lies your correct direction.



Heading east towards Williams Fork Reservoir



Good trail surface no washboarding - Nirvana

Surprisingly, having discussed the wind issue above, once I returned to the trail; initially the wind was favourable, but inevitably it realised it's error and soon reverted to type as I turned south.

I must admit to being disappointed at the subsequent photos because, when I reached the top of the 9,524' Ute Pass, the sun was so strong they all look rather dark.

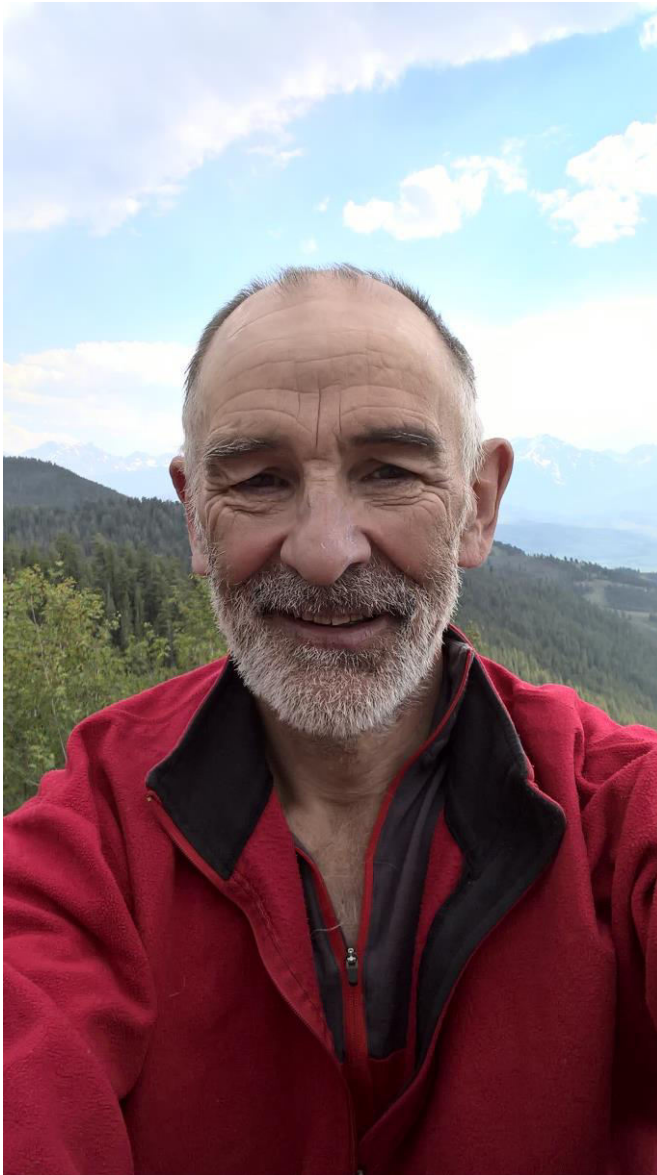


Ute Pass



After meeting Highway 9 leading to Silverthorne I had the very odd impression that I was still cycling on a downward slope but my profile showed a slow but steady climb up to Silverthorne. Very odd; an optical illusion or me being tired?

I never did resolve this issue but I was pleased when I reached Silverthorne climb or no climb.



*Top of the Ute Pass
looking a bit tired*

While cycling into Silverthorne I spied a Nepalese restaurant.

Realising what was missing in my life at that moment in time I pulled over and had a moderately good curry, two beers and a rest.

The restaurant didn't have WiFi but I could use the WiFi emanating¹ from the closed electronics shop next door.

It was a happy chappie who left the restaurant only to fall over ignominiously in front of the diner as I attempted to regain the road by cycling over some rough ground. I was taking the direct line from the car park, rather than the formal tarmac exit, hoping to save some 30m. Nothing hurt apart from the bruised pride of this seasoned TD rider!!

Descending from the Ute Pass

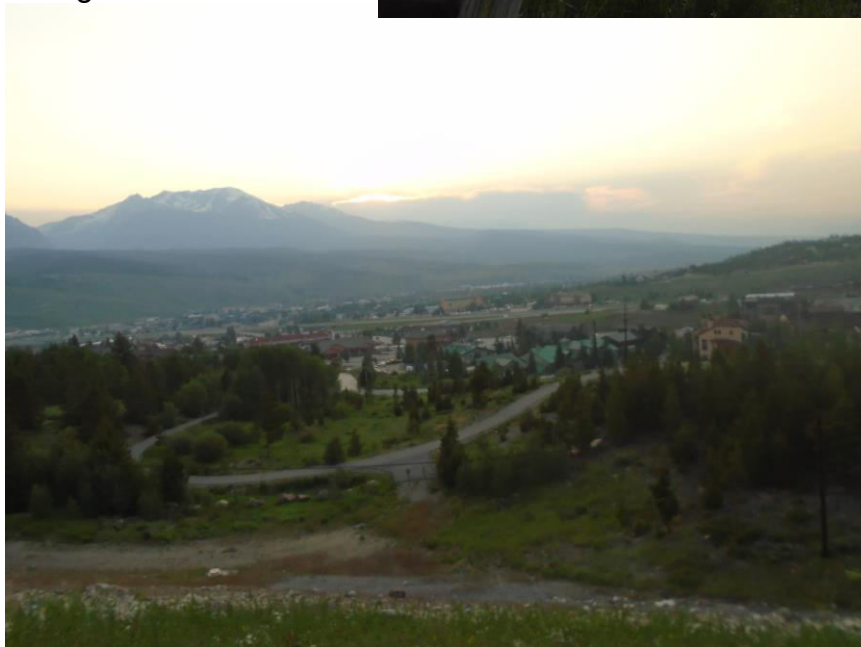


1. Does WiFi emanate, ooze or even seep? I really don't know - its all a bit of a dark art to me. Suffice it to say I was able to use the electronics shop's WiFi successfully.

*View progressing to
Silverthorne.*

Silverthorne lies under a large dam and the route zig zaged up the dam wall and then along the crest.

It was getting on to dusk when I reached the crest and I started to think about stopping - it had been a long day with significant climb.



Dillon Reservoir lies behind the dam and I found a stealth campsite in the trees lining the lake.

*Looking down
from the dam
onto Silverthorne*

*Looking south across
Dillon Reservoir,
from the dam wall*

My campsite was nice and flat. I slept well, with a full stomach and the occasional curry flavoured burp!

Things were going well.

