Vallecito a Hispanic word for Little Valley

Vallecito has never been an actual town. It is simply a valley where the Pine River (Los Pinos) and the Vallecito Creek join. As settlers ventured in, some ranches sprang up along the edges and bottom of the widest part of the valley where the rivers actually join, and other ranches were located up both of the individual rivers. No real boundaries to “Vallecito” have ever existed.

Since the construction of the Pine River Dam Project, the community has turned sharply from agricultural and ranching toward a heavy reliance on a recreational, tourist market. The people who now live in Vallecito are there for the area’s crisp mountain air and an easy-going lifestyle. Tourists come back for exceptional hiking, biking, boating, fishing and camping. You’ll continue to come back for our genuine Colorado hospitality - Vallecito-style!

Tour of Carvings

14 unique carvings located along the valley commemorating the firefighters and support personnel that fought the Missionary Ridge Fire of 2002. Each one stands 18 feet tall and weighs around 2,600 pounds. Most of the carvings are mounted on concrete piers and can be found all around the lake area. A brochure is available detailing the carvings and their locations.

Vallecito Lake is home to thousands of Ponderosa Pine trees, many over 200 years old and standing up to 175 feet tall. Many of the trees were lost in that fire. Pagosa Springs artist Chad Haspels carved some of those fallen trees as a memorial.

Fishing

The southwestern half of the Weminuche Wilderness Area is drained by two major streams, the Los Pinos and Florida Rivers and their tributaries. Vallecito Reservoir, where water from the Pine and Vallecito Creek is impounded, is great for those seeking a less of a wilderness experience. It provides easy access and large fish such as rainbow, brown trout, walleye, smallmouth, Kokanee salmon and northern pike. Fish can be caught all year but mid-May through mid-June is best for trout and pike. The reservoir offers a good opportunity to fish in late spring, when the rivers in the area are high with runoff.

Hunting

The Weminuche Wilderness, which is easily accessed from the Vallecito Lake area, is Colorado’s largest, offering more than a half million acres of wild public land. In many respects, the Weminuche is an outdoor adventurer’s nirvana. Hunters and hikers alike can lose themselves for days on its 500 miles of trails. The area around Vallecito Lake is a top pick for hunting Elk, Mule Deer, Turkey and Bear.
Hiking Trails

Vallecito Creek Trail - Easy to Moderate
A stunning day hike, or a great four-to-five day backpack trip. You follow rapidly flowing Vallecito creek tumbling down a narrow glacial valley; the creek is among the loveliest in the West. In the first 2 miles you will rise more than 500 ft, above the creek with fantastic views, then the trail drops down right beside the creek. There are many side trails that lead to beautiful pools, great for fishing or relaxing. The first foot bridge, at 3 miles, is a great day hike. The alpine meadows are full of blossoming wildflowers in late July and in August. In the spring the creek is a constant, Class V+ whitewater for experts only. In the winter a popular snowshoeing trail.

Lake Eileen Trail - Difficult
Watch for the Forest Service Work Center on CR 501 north of the lake, the trailhead is on opposite side of road. A trailhead sign is visible from the road. Park on the east side of the road, the trailhead is on the west side. The trail passes through aspen forest to the small, shallow lake covered by water lilies and surrounded by aspen trees. A short climb to the ridge gives you great views of the lake and forests. All though only four mile round trip, there is a 1,140 ft. elevation gain, allow up to four hours.

The Lake Trails - Easy
Most portions of this trail skirt the edge of the lake. Watch for “Walk Paths” signs as you drive around the Lake. There are benches and picnic tables along the way and plenty of fine fishing spots. This is a “view from the lake” trails brochure available at many businesses to help you identify the wildflowers.

North Canyon, East Creek & Creek Grass Trail - Moderate
These trails head up the ridges on the east side of Lake, following creeks with water falls to open meadows.

Pine River Trail - Easy to Moderate
The Pine River alternates between meadows and canyon, frequently flowing peacefully on the flat valley floor. The boundary of the Westminister Wilderness is 2.7 miles, the fish are fantastic, and the turnoff to Emerald Lake is at mile 6.3 (Trail #528). The trail continues to ascend, sometimes gradually and sometimes moderately.

Cove Basin Trail - Most Difficult - map skills suggested
Drive up Middle Mountain Road (USFS Road # 724 - gravel) to 1,140 ft. elevation gain, allow up to four hours. of the year. Plan accordingly.

Where to Eat at Vallecito Lake

Vallecito Lake Country Market & Mexican Food – Fresh, local, organic meats, aquariums, hard to find wines, specialty coffees, ethnic & gourmet foods, fresh, local, organic meats, aquariums, hard to find wines, specialty coffees, ethnic & gourmet foods.

The Lake House Bar & Grill – Classic Colorado Tavern in Beautiful Lake Valley. Join us for homemade corndog, friendly service, live music and beautiful views.

Pura Vida Cafe – Snack bar in front of the marina. Caffeine for your morning, breakfast and Dinner; Green clean, gluten free, dairy free, vegan, locally sourced, organic, fence, locally raised, gluten free, dairy free, vegan.

Shopping & Services at Vallecito Lake

Vallecito Liquors & Country Market - Looking for some spirits during your visit? Check out our wide selection of wine, beer, and spirits in our full service liquor store.

Rocky Mountain General Store & Custom Meats - Catering to all your shopping needs. From fresh local cheeses to gourmet foods, from specialty teas to fresh baked goods. A great place to stop for lunch.


Bayfield Realty, Vallecito Branch - Contact us for your Residential, recreational, or investment real estate needs. Our local expertise and marketing expertise will help sell or purchase your property.

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Activities @ Vallecito Lake

See centerfold map for business location numbers.

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<tr>
<th>Altitude ATVs</th>
<th>Elk Point Stables &amp; Outfitters</th>
<th>Vallecito Lake Outfitters</th>
<th>Elk Point Marina</th>
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<tr>
<td>Altitude ATVs</td>
<td>“Cowboy and Cowboy Up!” Horse rides at a cool summer elevation.</td>
<td>Providing summer and hunting park, full packing service with your gear or ours</td>
<td>We offer a variety of rental boats. All rental boats come with the first tank of gas.</td>
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Activities in Durango Area

Bar D Chuckwagon - The Bar D Wranglers perform their Patriot Show after supper with songs of the west and the old west, country, western, and of course, the bar D Chuckwagon show. 8080 CR 250, Durango, CO 81301 • www.BarDChuckwagon.com

Durango - Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad - Authentic turn-of-the-century coal-fired, steam-powered, narrow gauge railroad operating the famous Durango-Silverton Line, offering more than 50 years of quality performance. 347.233 | 479 Main Ave, Durango, CO 81301 • www.DurangoTrain.com

Purgatory - Visit the Durango Mountain Resort website to view your round activities offered on “the mountain”... 370.605 | 101 Silver Place, Durango, CO • www.DurangoMountainResort.com

Henry Strater Theatre - The world-renowned Henry Strater Theater is one of the oldest and most prestigious continually running theaters in Colorado, offering more than 50 years of quality performance. 370.7160 | 699 Main Ave, Durango, CO 81301 • www.HenryStraterTheater.com

Duranglers - The premier fly shop and fly fishing guide service for Durango and the four corners region. Offering guided trips to the San Juan, Animas, Put, Dolores, Piceance, Rio Grande and Vallecito Lakes. 387.4812 | 223 Main Ave, Durango, CO 81301 • www.Duranglers.com • info@Duranglers.com

Mild to Wild Rafting & Jeep Trail Tours - Discover the amazing adventure packages for all ages and adventure levels. Please call or visit our website to reserve your Southwest Colorado vacation in a memory of a lifetime. 367.6495 | 5 Animas View Dr., Durango, CO 81301 • www.Mild2WildRafting.com

Durango Rivertrippers & Adventure Tours - Whether you want to walk on water with a paddleboard, ride in a cany with one of our experienced guides, or get in an Inn tube kayak, we have the trip to suit your needs. 255.6038 | 725 Main Ave., Durango, CO 81301 • www.DurangoRivertrippers.com

Mountain Waters Rafting - We believe that rafting one of the funnest things in the world you can do and we want to share that with you. We offer rafting along family friendly trips to challenging difficult whitewater. Having fun since 1991! 269.4191 | 643 Canary Del Rio, Durango, CO 81301 • www.MountainWatersRafting.com

Sky Ute Casino - Sky Ute Casino Resort is Southwest Colorado’s entertainment headquarters. Stay in our 140 room hotel and enjoy the rodeos, slots, poker, table, jazzy, and bars. Enjoy a great meal in one of our fine dining establishments. 567.3717 | 14304 Colorado 172, Ignacio, CO 81137 • www.SkyUteCasinoResort.com

Great Divide Outfitters - Come gear up on a 2 or 3 hr. horseback ride in breathtaking country. Bring your cameras to take home memories for a lifetime. $60 for 2 hrs. ride per person and $85 for 3 hrs. ride. We also offer fall hunting trips. 884.2572 | 2280 CR 243, Lores, CO • www.GreatDivideOutfitters.com

How Far?

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Vallecito Lake Chamber of Commerce
31077 CR 501, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122
970.247.1573

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Pronouncing Vallecito (vi-ya-see-toe)
Where to Stay @ Vallecito

Business Location Shown on Map at Right

1. **Blue Spruce RV Park & Cabins** - Enjoy the Colorado Mountains at the "Last Best Place?" RV sites. Cabin rentals, dining, store, laundry, GP, gas, hot tub & pool. Respects, cyber year.
   970 884 6041 • 17975 CR 501, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122 • www.bluesprucepark.com

2. **Eagle’s Nest Cabins & Homes** - Remodeled cabins with rustic charm and spacious appliances always clean. Quiet & beautiful setting with creek and crystal clear pond. Location has wonderful views and water features to enjoy.
   970 769 0250 • 126 CR 500, Vallecito Creek Road, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122 • www.eaglesnestvallecito.com

3. **Bayfield/Vallecito Lake Vacation Homes - Office** - Fully equipped 1-4 bedroom homes for a relaxing adventure in the mountains. Cabins located overlooking Vallecito Lake and the banks of the Vallecito River.
   970 884 2705 • 10804 CR 501, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122 • www.BayfieldVallecitoLakeVacationHomes.com

4. **Lone Wolf Cabins & Getaway** - Get off the beaten path and enjoy the beauty of the lake. Relax and enjoy our guest friendly areas and a beautiful view of the vast and diverse landscapes. 970 884 2190 • 82 CR 501, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122 • www.LoneWolfCabins.com

5. **Bear Paw Lodge Cabins & Homes** - Attractive 1-3 BR Cabins fully equipped, fireplace or woodstove, satellite TV, Free WiFi. On CR 501 or CR 26, 2 BR Vacation Homes fully furnished. Some by water. 970 884 2501 • 18105 CR 501, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122 • www.BearPawLodge.com

6. **Vallecito Lodge - Office** - Unique & bountiful pleasure fjords fully equipped for families or couples. Each home has either stream or lake view. All amenities: your cold breakfast, Welcome Bathrooms, great furnishings, & internet. 970 884 0514 • 210 CR 501, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122 • www.BayfieldVallecitoLake.com

7. **Meadowlark Cabins, RV & Tent** - Steps away from Lake with lake views, bordering national forest. 5 BR Cabins completely remodeled in 2016. 3 RV hook ups, 50 amp. Horse boarding on site. Also 1.5 bedrooms in the pines. 970 769 0241 • 19522 CR 501, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122 • www.MeadowlarkCabins.com

8. **Elk Point Lodge, Stables & Homes** - Enjoy our "get away from it all" place on the "Quiet Side". Lakefront/view cabins, riverfront views, 1-3 bedroom homes and all-suit private homes. Horseback trail rides, canoes, kayaks on site. 970 884 2641 • 19102 CR 501, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122 • www.ElkPointLodge.com


10. **Croll Cabins** - Lakeshore, large, modern 2-3 BR Cabins with full kitchens. Fishpools, EBO TV/VCR, WiFi, fire pits, picnic areas and playgrounds. Lake from setting with priest views. Paddleboat from your grassy lawn.
    970 884 2083 • 8671 CR 501-A, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122 • www.CrollCabins.com


12. **Views of Vallecito Cabins** - Fire-tube covered/waterfall view cabin with 3 BR, wonderful views of the lake and the San Juan mountain range.
    970 884 2802 • 11422 CR 501, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122 • www.ViewsOfVallecito.com

13. **Cooper’s Cabins** - Completely restructured & updated adorable log cabins just steps away from the lake. Amazing lake views, covered decks, fireplaces and fire pit, full kitchens, flat screen TVs & WiFi, 3 different size cabins.
    970 884 2023 • 14265 CR 501, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122 • www.CoopersCabinsOfVallecito.com

14. **Vallecito Resort - Office** - The closest resort at Vallecito Lake to Durango, Colorado. Vallecito Resort is your summer home in the Rockies’ offering camping, cabin, and full service RV Park for individuals and large groups.
    970 884 4628 • 13394 CR 501, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122 • www.vallecitoresort.com

    970 710 9241 • 7100 CR 501, Vallecito Lake, CO 81122 • horsemans@mydurango.net

Swimming
Vallecito Lake is a cold water lake but summertime surface temperatures can reach in the 60’s & 70’s. Swimming is allowed and there are a number of gently sloping areas where you can wade and swim.

Public Campgrounds
The U.S. Forest Service has a number of improved campgrounds around the area. See map on another page for locations. For complete information and reservations contact the USFS at www.recreation.gov or 877 444 6777.