

*Long - Term*

*Trekking:*



*Program and Awards*

Offered by the  
**HIGH ADVENTURE TEAM**  
Los Angeles Area Council  
Boy Scouts of America

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The High Adventure Team of the Los Angeles Area Council-Boy Scouts of America is a volunteer group of Scouters which operates under the direction of the LAAC-Camping Department. Its mission is to develop and promote outdoor activities within the Council and by its many Units. It conducts training programs, sponsors High Adventure awards, publishes specialized literature, such as Hike Aids and The Trail Head, and promotes participation in summer camp, in High Adventure activities such as backpacking, peak climbing and conservation, and in other Council programs.

Anyone who is interested in the HAT and its many activities is encouraged to direct any enquiry to the LAAC-Camping Department. The HAT meets on the evening of the first Tuesday of each month at the LAAC Service Center. These meetings are open to all Scouters.



This HIKE AID is newly prepared, to include Program Announcement 1, “The Silver Moccasin Hike”, 4, “John Muir Trail”, 5, “High Sierra Trail”, and 15, “The Golden Big Horn Trek”. Those Announcements are withdrawn as of this date.



Tooth of Time - Philmont Scout Ranch

*Long-Term Trekking  
Program and Awards*

Published by the  
HIGH ADVENTURE TEAM  
of the

Los Angeles Area Council  
2333 Scout Way

Los Angeles, CA 90026

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June 2005

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## **Foreward**

A challenging outdoor program, combined with leadership, skills, and character development, makes the Boy Scouts of America unique among organizations for young people. The BSA-National Council provides a lot of material on outdoor activities, but leaves the nature and extent of the Unit's program to its leadership. A goal of the High Adventure Team of the Los Angeles Area Council (LAAC-HAT) is to encourage and assist that leadership in making backpacking a major part of its program.

The Los Angeles Area Council is the pioneer in long-term trekking in this area. Over 50 years ago, members of its Units inaugurated week-long backpacking with a trek from Big Pines to Chantry Flats. The Silver Moccasins Award was initiated to recognize those who completed that strenuous journey – the first of now numerous long-term trek awards.

The diversity of California's mountains and deserts provides the opportunity for unequaled challenges and experiences. A weekend backpack trip is possible for any Unit, each month of the year. Scouts who participate develop hiking, camping, and conservation skills, become environmentally aware, and grow physically and emotionally. An annual long-term trek can be the crown jewel of every outdoor program. This Hike Aid identifies and discusses the differences and additional requirements of long-term versus weekend backpacking trips. Included are the requirements and other materials for four LAAC-sponsored long-term trek awards. The LAAC-HAT offers other Hike Aids and the Full Dimension High Adventure Training Program to assist and encourage the Unit leadership in developing and expanding its outdoor program.



## **Similarities and Differences**

The basic skills, techniques, clothing, and equipment that are necessary for a safe and enjoyable long-term trek are essentially the same as for the typical weekend backpack. However, as a long-term outing is generally one that involves a minimum of four night and 25 scheduled hours of backpacking, the amount of and care in planning and preparation will be greater. It's just not that one is longer than the other, there are also the matters that:

- ◆ the trek will be more strenuous, not just because of the distance but also because of the heavier packs. This means that every participant must be in good health and in adequate physical condition.
- ◆ there are likely to be more, different environmental conditions and risks for which provision must be made.
- ◆ if things are not as you expected, you can't just pick up and be off the trail in a few hours.
- ◆ it may take days to summon help or arrange for an evacuation.
- ◆ the crew will likely be smaller, limited by permit restrictions.

The enjoyment of the wilderness and the feelings of accomplishment make it all worth while.

The remainder of this section covers some of the more important differences between a short- and a long-term backpack. As you do the planning and preparation, particularly if it is your first, be especially sensitive to them. Taking them into account in advance can make it significantly easier to deal with one while on the trek. Unexpected incidents sometimes do occur, but those you handle on the basis that they are something that you reasonable could not have anticipated.

One last bit of advice. Don't overdo it, either one day or the totality of the trek. The underlying purposes should be to challenge the participants and to expose them to a spectacular wilderness environment. However, this should never be at the expense of an enjoyable, safe experience for everyone. The memories will last a lifetime, and it's up to the Trek Leader to ensure that they are universally positive. Many a person has come off the trail with an entirely new attitude about his/her life.

### **Conditioning**

All persons making a long-term backpack must be healthy and physically able to handle the rugged nature of such an outing. The trek leader must use the several weekend trips to be taken prior to it to learn this. A person who has difficulty with an eight hour, weekend trek at 8,000 feet in the local mountains will most certainly have a problem on a six-day trek, at 10,000 feet, in the Sierras. Time was when this matter of conditioning was mainly a concern for adults; more and more, it applies to the Scouts. Therefore, the trek leader should strongly suggest that all potential participants begin a personal conditioning program at least two months before the trek. This program should emphasize aerobic exercise (e.g., jogging, bicycling, etc.) for 45 minutes, at least four times a week. A person won't experience much measurable benefit for about six weeks – but it will happen. Even those already in good condition will benefit.

Everyone going must also have a physical examination before the trek. The adults should probably have one before beginning the conditioning program. These are definitely matters of due diligence. Many persons are evacuated from the mountains each year because of a medical problem related to poor physical condition. Taking these actions in advance will help to avoid one of these tragedies, with the anguish and expense that they involve.

### **Lead time**

The planning and preparation for a long-term backpack for the following year should begin as the Unit finishes its current year, summer program. The syllabus for Adult Leaders Backpack Training has a sample of a calendar of tasks - and there are many. Use it as a guide, or make one of your own for the trek, as the first step in preparation for it. Adequate, complete planning and preparation have their payoff on the trail. Beginning the process early is the best way to get it all done.

### **Equipment**

The Trek Leader is faced with a set of conflicting criteria when determining the type and quantity of equipment, personal and Unit, to be taken on a long-term. The over-riding requirement is that, individually and collectively, the items are adequate and sufficient for the conditions and activities that the Unit is likely to encounter. The desire to keep weight down by not taking something must be evaluated against the recognition of its worth to deal with an unexpected incident. Tents to protect everyone mean weight, but the protection against rain or an early snowfall – both regular events in the Sierras, is priceless. Try substituting light-weight tarps and ground cloths on the weekend outings before the trek; just carry something in the way of weather protection. (Forget the backwoods myth about rigging a tarp between two trees – never happen.) The weight of the equipment, plus personal clothing and food, is ultimately limited by the carrying abilities of the participants. Cut corners where you can, no knives and forks – spoons only, but never to the point of compromising personal or Unit safety.

When you get down to it, equipment for a long-term isn't any different than for a weekend; you must carry everything that the Unit may need and you must not carry anything that is superflu-

ous. Quantities of supplies will be greater because of the longer period, but that's obvious. Everything must be clean and in good condition, or it will probably fail to some degree after a few days. Doing a field repair is usually a lengthy, frustrating experience, made more so when it is something that the person should have fixed before the trek. The other requirement is that every participant must be trained and comfortable in the use of all equipment being taken: stoves, water filters, crampons, ice axes, climbing gear, etc. The safety of the individuals and the Unit may depend upon this.

One last factor is uniquely important for an item of equipment to be taken on a long-term trek. That is the use of down as the insulation in a sleeping bag. It is strongly recommended that all participants carry a sleeping bag that uses one of the newer synthetics as insulation. Down is wonderfully light and a great insulator, but requires great diligence to keep it dry. Get it wet on a weekend, no big deal; you get by, and then are back home. Get one wet on a long-term and you've got a big problem. It will take forever to dry; even when it does, you'll never get it to fluff out and provide anything like the needed insulation. If you have to pack and carry it while wet, you can easily be carrying several pounds of water – just what you do not need. Down in a parka or vest usually won't be a problem, provided that the person carries and uses rain gear. If the Trek Leader has any concerns, he should rule out its use here, also.

### **Clothing**

The natural tendency when putting together a clothing list for a long-term is to specify only a couple of changes of underwear and socks. This reduces weight and bulk, but assumes that persons will wash them as they are used. Here is one more reason why all-cotton items are undesirable for backpacking - they take forever to dry. The author has had cotton socks still damp after a day and a half at a bone dry, sun-lit, 9,000 foot elevation in New Mexico. While they are wet, you don't want to wear them and they are a nuisance to pack. Items made of synthetic fabrics will dry in a few hours; hung on a line, the water literally runs out of them.

Clothing should match the likely weather and overnight temperatures along the route of the trek. Regardless of the predictions and personal preferences, everyone must carry adequate rain gear and a hat. Wet can quickly become cold, particularly as most summer storms are pushed along by a strong breeze. Wet clothing makes hiking miserable. A hat with a wide brim is mandatory to protect against overheating and sunburn.

### **Boots**

You can get through a day hike or a weekend backpack with improper footwear, but a long-term trek is another matter. By the third day of carrying a pack that probably weighs a quarter of his/her weight, the person will be in agony, possibly unable to proceed. He/she won't be able to continue to carry the load assigned. The three factors that must be addressed when deciding on the suitability of boots for a long-term backpack are fit, weight, and condition.

### **Fit**

The author has seen claims that upwards of 50% of all boots do not properly fit their wearers. Fit is a particular concern for teenagers, where what fits today may not next week. However, the problem is more basic and more pervasive. Getting a proper fit at the time of purchase is not a task for amateurs, and it is here that most of the problem occurs. A boot that doesn't fit then won't fit any better when it gets broken in. Socks or inserts may help, but won't correct the situation. A tight fit across the toes may be relieved by having a skilled cobbler stretch the boot; however, the wearer will suffer until it is done.

The better strategy is to learn how to properly fit a boot, before you go out to buy a pair. You do this by taking the socks that you will wear when backpacking to a specialty outdoor store (REI, A-16, etc.) and having its employees show you boots. Observe the process and ask questions about how they determine that a boot fits properly. The employees are conscientious in satisfying you, as these stores will take back any boots that you find do not fit after you wear them on a backpack (try that with your typical shoe retailer or sporting goods store). Keep in mind that the same size boot from different manufacturers will probably have a slightly different fit. The same situation can occur for different models from the same manufacturer. Watch for sales, but a need for new boots may not coincide. Support your local specialty outdoor store; it will support you.

Foot problems are an all-too-common, and avoidable, condition on long-term treks. Properly fitting boots are the way to prevent them.

### Weight

Prevailing wisdom has it that a pound of footwear has the feel to the wearer of three pounds carried on the back. Substitute a three pound boot for a four pound one and you'll feel like you are carrying six pounds less. Try dropping that much weight with any other equipment, clothing, or food substitution. However, the weight of the footwear must not be the sole criterion for deciding what is adequate for a trek. Any boot must provide sufficient protection and support for the likely conditions to be encountered on the route. Most Units won't be doing crosscountry hiking or mountaineering activities that would require the all-leather, heavy lug-soled boots. Generally, a lighter-weight boot of leather and a composite will be satisfactory, provided that it has quality inner and outer soles and supports the ankle. Sport shoes are light-weight and might work for a weekend outing, but they cannot be allowed on a long-term.

### Condition

Whatever the boot, it must be in a condition that is adequate to the rigors of the route. It should be broken in, but not broken down. The lug soles must have enough tread to provide traction and protect the feet from the jolts and jars of hiking. The inner soles should have some resilience and be free of tears and excess wear, to cushion the feet and insulate them from the ground temperature. There can be no separation of the sole from the upper, no tears in the stitching, no cuts or holes in the upper. Three or four days on the trail, carrying a heavy pack, and one of these will probably cause a boot failure. You can improvise a field repair with the ever useful duct tape and baling wire, provided that the Unit is carrying some. This will get the wearer off the trail, but probably at some discomfort.

A big deal is usually made about having boots waterproofed. That's nice; but, quite frankly, it isn't that important during the summer. Any stream crossing where the water is more than six inches deep is going to result in wet feet. Waterproofing won't do anything to prevent water coming in from the top. Waterproofing has its place; just don't overstate its importance when assessing the adequacy of a boot for a long-term backpack.

### Recommendation

Have a "boot party" 4-6 weeks before the trek. All participants are to attend, wearing the socks and boots to be worn on it. Check them out for fit, weight, and condition. The hour or so that this involves should go a long way to keeping a boot problem from ruining the trek for someone. It will also allow sufficient time for acquiring and breaking in a new pair, if someone's current boots do not pass inspection.

Above all else, it's fit, fit, fit

### **Food**

The matter of trail food is covered in great detail in the various training programs and instructional books. Menu planning, quantities, where to buy, re-packaging, weight, ease of preparation and cleanup, nutrition – all are important considerations for a long-term trek. One more factor that has not gotten that much attention in the past must now be given more when preparing a menu, the matter of compactability. This is driven by the likely requirement to put all the food into bear-proof canisters. A canister weighs in the range of three pounds, and it's just dead weight – you do not want to carry more than absolutely necessary. Bulky, even perishable, items that are consumed at lunch and dinner on the first day are all right, but after that it's powdered, dehydrated, freeze-dried, add hot water and serve items. As the bears have learned that there are more people, and food, near the trailheads, the first few nights on the trail are when you are most likely to be visited, and your food is most vulnerable. Bear-proof boxes in the high country are nice, it's just that you are already carrying all those canisters. Oh, the bears know all about the boxes and don't bother visiting those locations. They learn and adapt very quickly – now if they had an opposable thumb.

### **Water Sources and Purification**

When properly performed, any of the three methods for treating water from backcountry sources – heat, chemical, filtration - will deal with the infectious agents in it. Boiling or applying chemicals will kill the bacterial, viral, and other micro-organisms. A quality filter will remove them. BSA-National Council recommends adding chlorine and boiling. Philmont Scout Ranch provides all Crews with a container of iodine crystals and encourages its use, independent of filtration. However, none of these methods will remove or neutralize chemical or toxic agents, such as mercury, lead, or DDT, that are in the water. In other words, a filter does not purify water. Some specific suggestions about water on a long-term trek are:

- ◆ Collect and purify it in one container. When the treatment process is done, pour the water into bottles or pans for use.
- ◆ Always collect and treat water before members of the Crew begin to run out.
- ◆ Identify water replenishment points during your planning. Water is heavy – one pound per pint, so always carry what you need plus a reasonable reserve.
- ◆ Minute quantities of chemicals in water probably aren't harmful, but should be avoided. Watersheds that might contain them are:
  - below mining sites.
  - adjacent to a forest location recently treated with fire retardants or pesticides.
  - below the location of a recent forest fire.

Instruct everyone to avoid unnecessary contact with all untreated water. It only takes one organism to bring on a bout of giardia. As the intestinal disorder takes 5-8 days to develop, you could have someone sick with it before the end of your trek.



### **The Keys to Success for Long-Term Outings**

Those things that the Unit leadership does, and doesn't do, and how well they are done, beforehand, are major determinants to a safe and enjoyable High Adventure activity. Here are some absolute essentials to success for any long-term trek.

### Lead Time

- ◆ A year: as you finish the current year's trek, the Unit should begin planning for next year's.
- ◆ Longer, if:
  - This is the first one for the Unit Leaders.
  - This is a new type of activity.
  - The Unit wants to go to a BSA-High Adventure Base.

### Planning

- ◆ Type of activity: backpacking, rafting, canoeing, or bicycling.
- ◆ Where to do it.
- ◆ When do you want to go?
- ◆ Who may participate: specific, relevant, clear criteria, issued on a timely basis.
- ◆ Paperwork: permits; reservations; route profiles; schedules; menus; equipment and clothing lists, etc.

### Preparation

- ◆ Equipment: acquire, check, etc.
- ◆ Clothing.
- ◆ Medical exams.
- ◆ Weekend outings: develop skills relevant to activity.
- ◆ Conditioning programs:
  - For at least two months before activity.
  - Especially for adults (doctor's approval desirable).

### Training

- ◆ BSA required: Safe Swim Defense, Youth Protection, etc.
- ◆ Activity skills: swimming, canoeing, etc.
- ◆ Equipment: stoves, any new items.
- ◆ American Red Cross (ARC) community first aid and CPR: ideal situation, all adults hold current Certifications.
- ◆ Required for an outdoor award: For example, local Councils require an adult participant to have completed a BSA offered adult leader outdoor training program for the participants to be eligible for receiving one of their long-term trek awards.

### Communication

- ◆ Promote the activity.
- ◆ Keep potential participants informed as to what is happening and what each is to be doing.

Once the outing begins, success should be primarily a matter of careful execution of the Unit's plans and preparations. Unexpected incidents that are beyond the scope of these plans and preparatory activities can happen. However, the actions taken before the trek will go a long way to reducing their impact and enabling the Unit to overcome them.



### **When on the Trail**

Take your maps and planning materials and use them while on the trail. By continually moni-

toring your progress to them as you hike, you should know your approximate location at all times. Avoid becoming disoriented or lost by staying found. That's what maps and planning are for.

Secure your food, "smellables", and trash before you go to bed and whenever you are away from your campsite. Use care in attempting to scare off an animal. If one gets into some food, let it have it; discard any damaged packages as unsafe. Clear your campsite of all trash and garbage when you arrive and before you leave. Garbage attracts small animals, which attract rattlesnakes. Pack out all trash; do not attempt to burn or bury it. Purify all water.

Rattlesnake may be encountered below 8,000 feet in most locations. If you meet one, back off; it will do everything possible to avoid you. Do not harass, chase, or kill them; this is their home and you are just a visitor. Be watchful for them on or beside the trail in mid-morning, when they seek the sun to get warm.

While on the trail, keep your group together and under control at all times. The USDA-Forest Service and National Park Service do patrol and expect that all persons covered by a Permit remain together as a group. They also expect that a group show courtesy and good behavior toward other hikers, and follow no-trace hiking and camping practices. You will be cited for a failure to obey USDA-FS or Park Service rules and regulations. Such a failure may also endanger you, a member of your group, or another hiker.



### **High Adventure Awards**

A plethora of awards are now available to be earned for taking a long-term backpack trek. The Los Angeles Area Council was the local pioneer in this matter. Over fifty years ago, members of its Units inaugurated long-term backpacking in this area with a trek from Big Pines to Chantry Flats. The Silver Moccasins Trail Award was initiated to recognize those who completed this strenuous journey – the first of those in the following list.

The information shown for these long-term backpacking awards:

- ◆ Sponsoring Council.
- ◆ Name of the award.
- ◆ Minimum number of nights and either scheduled backpack hours or backpack miles required.
- ◆ Location of the route to be taken.

The general requirements for earning any of these awards are listed in the next section.

Each of them usually has one or more specific requirements that must also be satisfied.

Please refer to [Hike Aid 6](#), "High Adventure Award Program", for complete information about the awards that are sponsored by the LAAC. [High Adventure Awards for Scouts and Explorers](#), Orange County Council, contains the requirements for the long-term awards in this list, plus all of the High Adventure awards that are sponsored by the Councils of Southern California, Southern Nevada, and Arizona.

#### Los Angeles Area Council

Silver Moccasins Trail	5 nights/25 hours	Angeles NF; Sequoia/Kings Canyon NP
John Muir Trail-6 segs.	6 nights/50 miles	John Muir Trail

Sierra North	4 nights/25 hours	Sierras
Sierra South	4 nights/25 hours	Sierras
High Sierra Trail		
Giant Forest-Mineral King	5 nights/ 25 hours	Sierra Route
Mineral King-Mt. Whitney	6 nights/25 hours	Sierra Route
Golden Bighorn	5 nights/25 hours	San Bernardino NF Route
High Adventure	4 nights/25 hours	Anywhere
Explorer Mountaineering	5 nights/50 miles	Anywhere
<u>Los Padres Council</u>		
Far-West Adventure	5 nights/25 hours	Exclusive of Sierras
<u>National Council</u>		
50 miles Afoot-Afloat	5 nights/50 miles	Anywhere
<u>San Diego-Imperial Council</u>		
High Sierra Segments (10)	Concurrent w/any long-term award for Sierra locale shown	
<u>Southern Sierra Council</u>		
Monarch Trail	5 nights/50 miles	Sierra Route
Golden Trout Trail	5 nights/52 miles	Sierra Route
Paiute Trail	5 nights/55 miles	Sierra Route
Kern Plateau	5 nights/53 miles	Sierra Route
<u>Verdugo Hills</u>		
Dinky Lakes Loop Trail	5 nights/25 hours	Sierra Route
Silver Fir Trail	5 nights/25 hours	Sierra Routes
<u>Western Los Angeles County Council</u>		
Backcountry Exploration	5 nights/15 hours	Less used trails
Cross Country Backpack	5 nights/25 hours	Less used trails
Golden Arrowhead	5 nights/25 hours	Less used trails
Powderhorn Trail	6 nights/33 hours	Less used trails
Sequoia Trail	9 nights/50 hours	Sierra Routes
Silver Bear Paw	5 nights/25 hours	Sierra Route
Silver Cloud Trail	5 nights/25 hours	Sierra Route
Silver Knapsack	6 nights/25 hours	Sierra Route
Whitsett to Whitney	9 nights/50 hours	Sierra Route
Trans Sierra Trail-2 segs.	9 nights/50 hours	Sierras
<u>Grand Canyon Council</u>		
Grand Canyon-Rim to Rim	3 nights/47 miles	Grand Canyon Routes

A couple of additional rules that apply to awards for a long-term backpack are:

- ◆ Only one award may be given to a participant. The exceptions are the segments that San Diego-Imperial Council offers and the 14,495 Club award of Western Los Angeles County Council.
- ◆ When several awards apply to a trek, everyone need not be given the same one. For example, a backpack on the John Muir Trail could satisfy the requirements for the John Muir Trail, Sierra North, 50 Miles Afoot-Afloat, and High Adventure Awards. Let each participant select the award that he/she wants.
- ◆ These awards are not to be worn on the Scout uniform.

The Unit Leader is responsible for ensuring awards are given only to persons who have satisfied all of the applicable requirements. Any questions about a requirement for an award must be directed to the sponsoring Council. Your High Adventure Team may be able to assist you in getting an answer.

## **General Requirements for all Long-Term Awards**

These requirements apply to earning any long-term backpacking award, regardless of who sponsors it.

1. Award recipient to have earned two weekend awards within 90 days prior to trek.
2. Secure LAAC-HAT approval of a High Adventure Application at least one month prior to departure. A copy of the Trail Profile/Trail Schedule, the menu, and all other relevant planning material must accompany it.
3. Participating Scouts must be 12 or older; is recommended that they be 14 or older.
4. Each participant must have had a medical examination using BSA Form 4412-A, Personal Health and Medical Record-Class 3, within a year prior to trek. It is strongly recommended that each be current as to a tetanus shot.
5. One participating adult must have completed BSA-conducted Adult Leaders Backpack Training.
6. One participating adult must hold current American Red Cross Community First Aid and CPR Certifications. It is recommended that all adults hold them.
7. Obtain a Tour Permit.
8. Be familiar with the contents of Guide to Safe Scouting, issued by BSA-National Council, Hike Aids, issued by LAAC-HAT, and Trek Aids, issued by San Diego-Imperial Council.
9. Obtain and carry a Wilderness Permit and any other permits or reservations that are required by the administering agencies for the location for each hiking group or crew.
10. Have Consent to Participate and Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment forms, which cover this trip, for each Scout participant.
11. Observe the BSA-National Council rule of a minimum of two adults, one of whom must be over 21, and three Scouts in each hiking group or crew.
12. Practice Leave No Trace camping and hiking techniques; pick up and pack out your own and other persons' trash.
13. Require that the participants carry all food and equipment, without the use of pack animals or mechanical conveyance, except when a specific award or route allows a food drop.
14. Comply with all specific requirements for the award to be earned.

Once a hike has been taken, complete the High Adventure Application and have it approved by a member of the LAAC-HAT. Awards that are sponsored both by the LAAC-HAT and other Councils may be purchased at the Scout Shop at the LAAC-Service Center and at Cabrillo Beach.



## **The Silver Moccasins Hike**

This special High Adventure long-term backpack has been offered by the Los Angeles Area Council since 1947. The Silver Moccasins Trail Award is earned by hiking the Silver Moccasins Trail, located in the Angeles National Forest, or the Silliman Crest or Sugarloaf Valley Backpacks, both located in the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. The trails must be hiked as specified in this Hike Aid; modifications or substitute locations are not permitted. The Trail Award appears on the front cover.

## **Specific Requirements for the Trail Award**

1. Take a long-term backpack on one of the specified routes.
2. Comply with the conditions noted in the following section for the route that you select.

### **The Silver Moccasins Trail**

Chantry Flat Ranger Station, which is north of Arcadia, is the trailhead for this hike. It is 50 miles long, with 14,300 feet of elevation gain; it takes about 40 hours of hiking. The Silver Moccasins Trail is common with the Gabrielino Trail from Chantry Flat to West Fork Campground; it is common with the Pacific Crest Trail from Three Points to Vincent Gap. The hike must be taken from Chantry Flat to Vincent Gap; suggested stops are Devore Trail Camp or West Fork Campground, Chilao Campground, and Cooper Canyon and Little Jimmy Trail Camps. It is not approved for Easter Vacation. In years of late or heavy snowfall, the trail from Windy Gap to Lamel Spring can be covered with an icy snowpack until mid-July. This hike will not be approved under these conditions. A maximum of two food drops are permitted, at the time and place of your choice. One layover day is mandatory; a second is permitted.

This trail crosses Angeles Crest Highway eight times; this provides the opportunity to survey much of it by car, as a part of a Unit's planning. If you have any doubts about a section of trail, water, etc., hike in from the nearest highway crossing or from Chantry Flat, Charlton Flat, Chilao, Dawson Saddle, or Vincent Gap. One of these places is no more than five miles from any point on the trail. Besides the indicated topo maps, "Angeles National Forest", a map available at Ranger Stations, and the Automobile Club map, "Los Angeles County-Mountain and Desert Areas", are useful planning aids. John W. Robinson's book, Trails of the Angeles, Wilderness Press, Berkeley, CA, 2000, provides information about this trail and the general area.

**Be very careful when crossing Angeles Crest Highway; *do not hike on it at any time.***

A daily fee may be charged for the use of each campsite at the West Fork and Chilao Campgrounds. There is no limit on group size for this route; however, it is recommended that a group of more than 12 - 15 people be divided into two separate hiking and camping groups. Check with the USDA-Forest Service, Los Angeles River Ranger District about these requirements.

Be extremely careful with fire and scrupulously obey all rules on its use. Do not use water to extinguish a fire in a Klamath-type stove. Let the fire burn down to a bed of coals; close the door tight and it will safely burn itself out. Open fires are only permitted in a permanent fire ring constructed by the USDA-FS. When an open fire is permitted, keep it small; have a shovel and pail of water close by. Thoroughly extinguish any open fire before retiring for the night and when leaving the campsite. You may face civil liability for any forest fire that results from your use of fire.

Bears are now a problem in the San Gabriel Mountains. Read the literature which the Forest Service provides and follow its recommendations. Instruct every person in your Unit on bear prevention. Carry at least 100 feet of quality, 1/4 inch nylon rope; make "bear-bagging" your first activity each time you reach your campsite.

### **The Sequoia/Kings Canyon Routes**

These two routes must be taken as shown on the accompanying maps, but may be hiked in either direction. Silliman Crest is basically a loop. Sugarloaf Valley requires a car shuttle or a drop-off/pickup; note the route options. With Lodgepole as the trailhead, you can arrange to

camp at the Western Los Angeles County Council (WLACC) camp near the Wolverton parking lot. Make a reservation with the WLACC-Camping Department.

Contact **Sequoia/Kings Canyon National Parks, Three Rivers, CA 93271**, early in the year about obtaining a "Wilderness Permit". Applications are usually accepted about March 1. You can specify several start dates on a single application. For the Silliman Crest route, show either J. O. Pass or Silliman Pass as the trailhead. As Permits are limited and generally over-subscribed each year, learn the procedure, make your application at the earliest date permitted, and specify several options as to date and route; use the rules to your benefit. Pick up your Permit, as specified in the notification, and carry it in a safe place while hiking. The Permit limits the group size and requires that two or more groups (each with its own Permit) remain separate at all times.

Topo maps in the 7-1/2 minute series for the Silliman route are Lodgepole, Mt. Silliman, and Muir Grove. For the Sugarloaf route, you need Lodgepole, Mt. Silliman, Sphinx Lakes, and The Sphinx. Sierra South, by Thomas Winnett, et al. Wilderness Press, Berkeley, CA, 2001, contains information on this area. Camping is not permitted between Lodgepole and Cahoon Meadow. Open fires are not permitted in the National Parks.

Food drops are not permitted on these routes. One layover day is strongly recommended (enjoy the splendor of the Sierras); a second is permitted.

Bears have become such a problem in the Sierras that you may be required to carry all food (and garbage) in bear-proof canisters. If not, carefully follow the Park Service recommendations for protecting it. Instruct every person in bear prevention; make it your first activity each time you reach your campsite.

### **Medal Requirements:**

- ◆ Earn the Silver Moccasins Trail Award.
- ◆ Perform 12 hours of LAAC-HAT approved trail conservation work in the Angeles National Forest (Units not in the Greater Los Angeles area may request alternate arrangements from the LAAC-HAT).
- ◆ Work must be done in the calendar year of the hike.
- ◆ Project is arranged by contacting the LAAC-HAT a minimum of six weeks before the date when you wish to do it. LAAC-HAT will make arrangements with the USDA-FS and assist you with the planning.
- ◆ A minimum of two registered adults, one of whom must be 21 or older, and three Scouts must participate in the conservation project.
- ◆ Obtain a "Local Tour Permit" from your local Council for the conservation work.
- ◆ These hours may not be used to earn another conservation or outdoor award or to satisfy an advancement requirement.



### **John Muir Trail Award**

For most of us, the name, John Muir is synonymous with the mountains of California. However, this internationally recognized naturalist explored many other ranges in the Western United

States and Alaska, plus those in the other continents, excepting Australia and Antarctica. Born in Scotland in 1838, his family and he moved to Wisconsin in 1848, where he explored the surrounding country. When an accident in a carriage shop in 1867 caused temporary blindness, Muir began to aggressively pursue his interest in nature. After hiking throughout the East on a trek of 1,000 miles, he took a ship to Panama, walked across the Isthmus, and took another ship to San Francisco. He arrived in 1868 and immediately inquired "... for the nearest way out of town." Directed east, he made his way to Yosemite Valley. By 1874, Muir knew the Sierras, from Tuolumne Meadows to Mount Whitney, as well as anyone of his day.

John Muir married in 1880, had two children and a home in Martinez - a California State Park, and resumed his wanderlust. He died while visiting Los Angeles in 1914. His compassion for the alpine forest and wildlife, and for their preservation, influenced the protection and National Park status for Yosemite, Sequoia, Mount Rainier, the Grand Canyon, and the Petrified Forest. He helped to organize the Sierra Club, to continue the preservation and protection of wild and scenic places. Our gratitude can be shown by enjoying these gifts as concerned visitors, whose conduct insures preservation. John Muir left only footprints, and a high standard for the rest of us.

"Our generation owes much to John Muir." – Theodore Roosevelt

### **The Award Program**

Early in its existence, the LAAC-HAT developed this program to honor Muir's activities and to encourage Scouts to explore the mountains and experience the wilderness that he so loved. The John Muir Trail was divided into six sections; persons who hiked one would earn the Trail Award and a Strip which identified it. Overuse of the John Muir Trail in the 1970's caused the LAAC-HAT to withdraw this popular program and to substitute the John Muir Award. The purpose of this change was to encourage Units to hike lesser used trails in the Sierra, as the Award required their use. This change was not popular, with few requests for the new award. Popular demand, and the USDA-Forest Service's permit system to control usage of the Sierra trails, made reinstatement of the John Muir Trail Award in the 1990's an appropriate action. The John Muir Award is withdrawn, although the patch will be used for the Trail Award until the current inventory is sold. The Award and Strips are shown on the back cover.

### **Specific Requirements For This Award**

1. Take a long-term backpack on the section of the John Muir Trail, as specified on the Segment sought; trek to begin and end at the locations stated on the Segment.
2. Backpack distances are in the range of 50 miles per Segment.
3. Seven days, six nights, minimum duration. One additional layover day is recommended.

The John Muir Trail patch is awarded only once, when the first Segment is earned. Segments may be earned in any sequence; routes may be hiked in either direction.



### **High Sierra Trail**

"Unending strings of lakes (each full of trout); streams and rivers cascading down polished granite cliffs or meandering through the green meadows sprinkled about the endless forests; the starkly unreal world above timberline ... sky-piercing peaks with their shawls of snow and

glaciers.” (source unknown) The hearty individuals who take the High Sierra Trail will experience this special place.

The two segments of this High Adventure Award Program cover strenuous terrain, at elevations above 8000 feet and with trailheads at 7,000, 7,800, and 8,200 feet. It culminates in a grand crescendo atop Mount Whitney, the highest mountain in the contiguous United States at 14,496 feet. Two separate, one-week treks, Giant Forest-Mineral King and Mineral King-Mt. Whitney, are required, because of the length and difficulty of the trail. The award segments may be earned in any order; the routes may be hiked in either direction.

### **General Information**

Obtain 7 1/2 minute series topographical maps to prepare a Trail Profile and Trail Schedule for your route.

- ◆ The Giant Forest-Mineral King trails are to be found on Lodge Pole, Triple Divide Peak, Chagoopa Falls, and Mineral King.
  - ◆ For Mineral King-Mt. Whitney, you need Mineral King, Chagoopa Falls, Mt. Kaweah, Mt. Whitney, and Mt. Langley.
  - ◆ Giant Forest-Mineral King: Triple Divide Peak, Kern Peak.
  - ◆ Mineral King-Mt. Whitney: Mineral King, Kern Peak, Mt. Whitney, Lone Pine.
- If you can find them, the 15 minute series maps of the routes are recommended for use in the field, to remain oriented as you hike.

These two guides contain excellent discussions to the routes and surrounding terrain.

- ◆ Guide to the John Muir Trail, Thomas Winnett, Wilderness Press, Berkeley, CA, 1998.
- ◆ Hiking The Sierra Nevada, Barry Parr, Globe Pequot, Old Saybrook, CT, 2005.

Also, consult other Scouters who have hiked them. Learn everything that you can before backpacking these trails.

The most favorable time of year to make these treks is between July 15 and September 15. Of course, this is the most popular time for hiking and camping in the Sierras. Submit a request for a Wilderness Permit at the earliest date allowed, and specify several alternate start dates. Contact the Park Superintendent's Office at Three Rivers, California, for information, as procedures change from year to year. Arrive at the campground for the entry trailhead as early in the day as possible. Most require a fee; some set aside space for overnight use by backpackers. When you pick up the Wilderness Permit, learn all that you can about current conditions along the route, e.g., trail hazards, weather, water, bears. Expect to be required to carry and use bear-proof canisters in which to store all food. Leave a copy of your itinerary with the Ranger. Always carry clothing and equipment to handle "bad weather", as afternoon thunder storms and snowfall as early as mid-August are common events. The prudent hiker is off the peaks and high ridges by 1:00 p.m.

Get an early start the first day of the trek, regardless of the trailhead. Each is above 7000 feet, so the Unit will need to take it easy as it acclimates to the elevation. This is also the time to instill order and discipline, which set the tone for the balance of the trip. The rules for safe hiking and camping should have been established, discussed, and agreed to as a part of the trip planning. Above all, keep the Unit together, members within sight and sound of one another, at all times. Upon reaching the exit trailhead, check out with the Ranger. Report any hazards and problems, particularly with bears.

The Giant Forest trailhead is at Crescent Meadows, three miles by road from Giant Forest, Sequoia National Park. Overnight camping is not permitted there, but several drive-in campgrounds are located nearby. The first day is long, if relatively flat. At 6.3 mile out, you come to the Alta Peak access trail. As this peak is on the Peak Bagger Award list, the Unit may want to take the time to climb it.

The Mineral King trailhead is at the end of a difficult, 25 mile road east of Highway 198, the southern access to Sequoia. A campground is located there. Day one takes the Unit quickly up and over Sawtooth Pass, a strenuous five miles and 3700 foot elevation gain. Snow sometimes remains here late in the summer. The trail continues down into the Kern Plateau and out over Trail Crest. The Mt. Whitney access trail is a quarter of a mile before this point. Bagging the peak requires a 4.6 mile day hike; allow sufficient time in the Trail Schedule for this day.

Whitney Portal is a zoo all summer long, with parking spaces and campsites at a premium. If the Unit uses this as an entry trailhead, consider limiting the first day of backpacking to reaching Trail Camp.

### **Specific Requirements For This Award**

1. Take a long-term backpack on the section of the High Sierra Trail specified on the Segment sought. Trek to begin and end at the locations specified on the Segment.
2. Backpacking distances: Mineral King-Whitney Portal, via Lost Canyon and Big Arroyo Trails - 52 miles, plus 4.6 mile day hike to Mt. Whitney summit; Giant Forest-Mineral King, via Lost Canyon and Big Arroyo Trails - 44 miles.
3. Seven days, six night duration, Mineral King-Whitney Portal; six days, five night duration, Giant Forest-Mineral King. One additional layover day is recommended for each trek.

The High Sierra Patch is awarded only once, when the initial Segment is earned. Segments may be earned in any sequence; routes may be hiked in either direction.



### **The Golden Bighorn Trek**

This special long-term backpack award is earned by hiking the route in the San Bernardino National Forest that is specified in this [Program Announcement](#). Route modifications or substitute locations are not permitted to receive the Golden Bighorn High Adventure Award.

### **Background**

In years past, the Los Angeles Area Council offered the Golden Arrowhead Trail Award for taking a long-term backpack through the San Bernardino Wilderness, from Mill Creek to Lake Arrowhead. However, the route was less than satisfactory in that portions were along highways, and the award was discontinued. Later, the Western Los Angeles County Council adopted the award for a long-term backpack in the Los Padres National Forest. Now that the route is closed by Pyramid Lake, the award may be earned by taking a long-term backpack in any location. The LAAC has, for some time, been looking for an alpine wilderness backpacking experience in our local mountains as the basis for a new award.

When the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) began consideration of a trail along the Santa River from Angeles Oaks to the eastern edge of Barton Flats, Mary Ann Shuker, a member of the

LAAC-HAT and a volunteer with the USFS, recognized the opportunity that this would provide for Boy Scout Units. She proposed the location as suitable for a new outdoor award; the LAAC is proud to offer it.

### **The Location**

The Golden Bighorn Trek takes its name from the bighorn sheep that inhabit the San Bernardino Mountains. Your trek takes you through an ecological range of 6000 feet, culminating on the summit of Mount San Gorgonio (11,449 feet), the tallest peak south of the Sierras. The area is also home to coyotes, bobcats, mountain lion, deer, bear, raccoon, beaver, and numerous species of snakes and birds. The vegetation varies from chaparral into cool alpine forests of pine and fir. Numerous springs and streams flow in the vicinity of the route.

### **Taking Your Trek**

Your route is a 39 mile "loop", which begins at the Barton Flats Visitor Center and ends at Angeles Oaks. At such time as the Santa Ana River Trail (SART) between Angeles Oaks and Barton Flats is upgraded and one or more sites along it are identified by the USFS for camping, the starting trailhead will be moved to Angeles Oaks. This will close the loop and extend the route to 52 miles. A Unit has the option of using it now, but its Leadership must hike this section and discuss any potential campsite with the USFS before making a final decision.

From the Barton Flats Visitor Center, cross Hwy [38] and proceed north, through Barton Flats Campground. At the northwest corner of it is a trail going north that dead-ends at the SART after about half a mile. Turn right and proceed east along the northern edge of Barton Flats, then south, re-crossing Hwy. [38] into Heart Bar. Enter the San Gorgonio Wilderness and hike west, up Fish Creek, along the San Gorgonio Ridge to San Bernardino Peak and down past Manzanita Springs to Angeles Oaks. One food drop is permitted, which the Unit will probably want to have just before entering the Wilderness.

When the Unit enters the Wilderness, the regulations that cover your stay in it must be closely followed. These regulations require a Wilderness Permit, issued by the USFS, for entry. It limits the group to the number shown (maximum of 12). A larger group must split into two or more crews, each with its own Permit. Members of multiple crews must not co-mingle at any time. Camp only at the specified locations. Obtain the Permit(s) for the day that the Unit will enter the Wilderness, not the day that it will begin to hike.

Conditions along the route warrant taking the following precautions:

- ◆ Bear bag all food and garbage with the same diligence as you would in the Sierras.
- ◆ Discard and carry out any food packages that are damaged by an animal.
- ◆ Be extremely careful with fire; scrupulously obey all rules for its use.
- ◆ Plan your water replenishment points with care.
- ◆ Purify all water, except when taken from a faucet.
- ◆ Hike and camp together, within sight and sound, at all times.

These actions are vital to the health and safety of all of the participants.

The Santa Ana River Trail, being fairly new, may not appear on topographical maps or in John Robinson's book. As a part of the trip planning, check with the Mill Creek Ranger Station or the Barton Flats Visitor Center for current literature that shows it. If interested in Angeles Oaks as the trailhead, check out the access route along the dirt road northeast of the store, that goes past the enclosed maintenance yard and around to the SART.



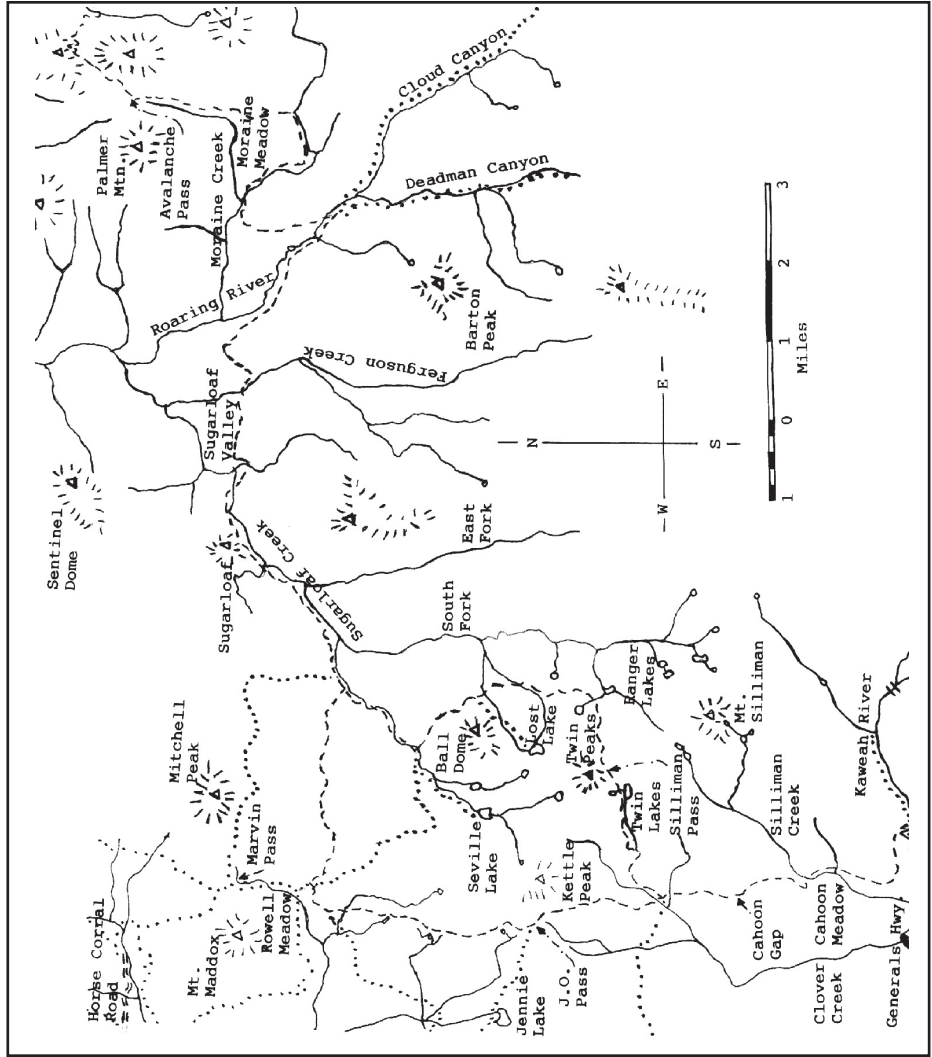
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"The mountains have always held a special significance to man.  
 They have inspired in him awe and wonder...  
 In all, mountains have been a great source of human fulfillment."  
 John Robinson, San Bernardino Mountain Trails





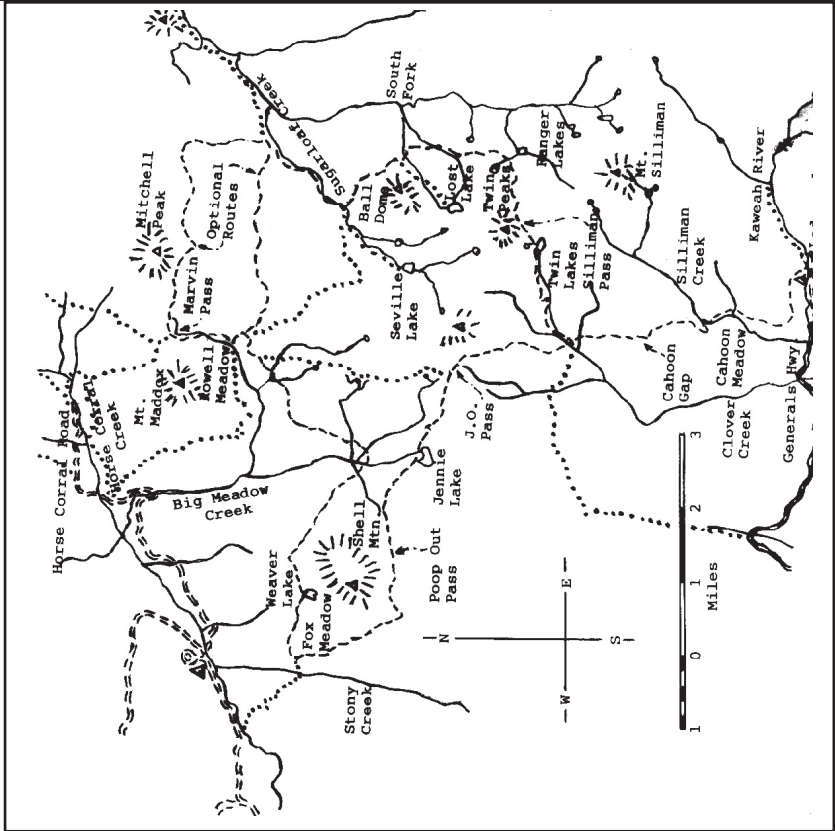
**BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA**  
**The Sugarloaf Valley Backpack**



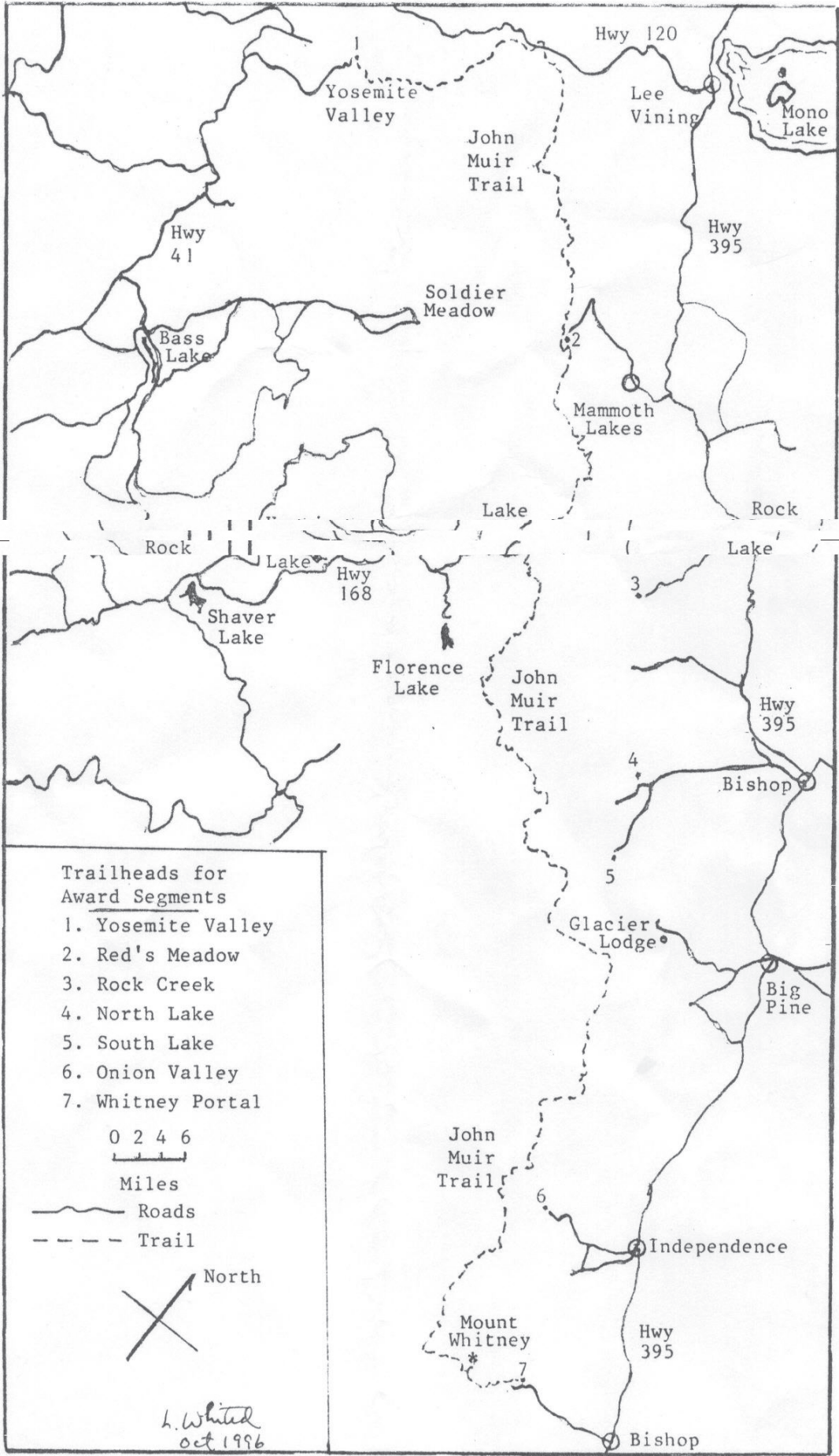
• • • • • Other Trails

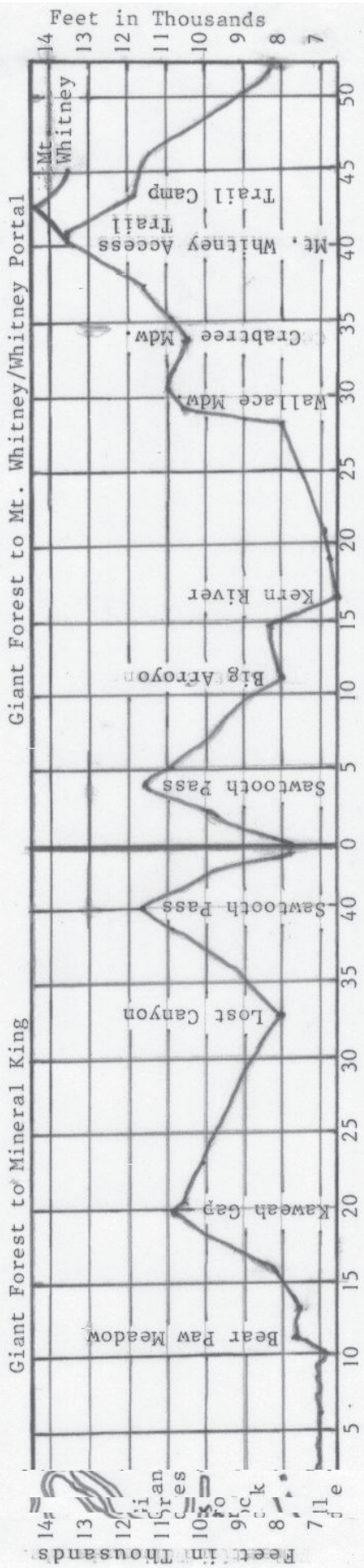
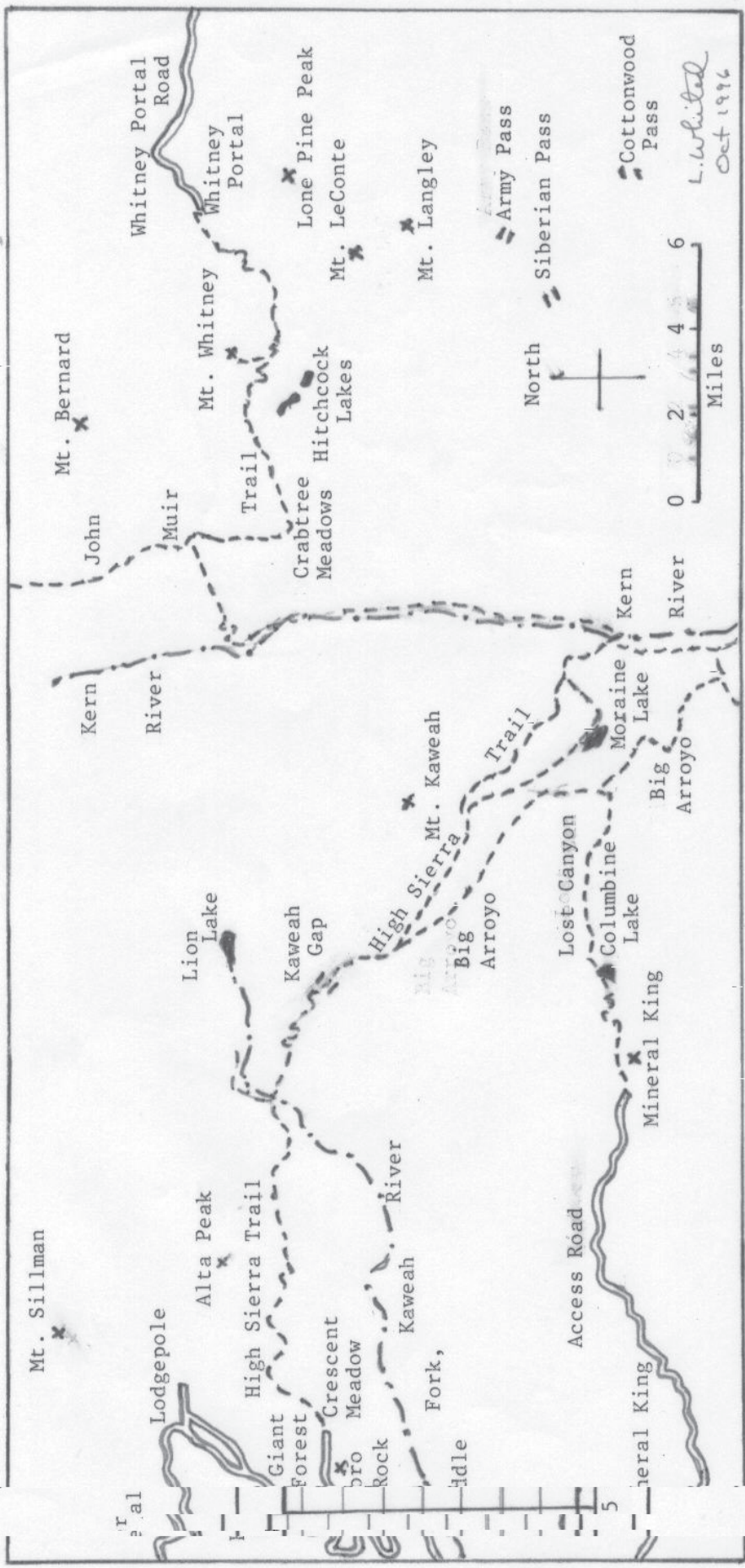


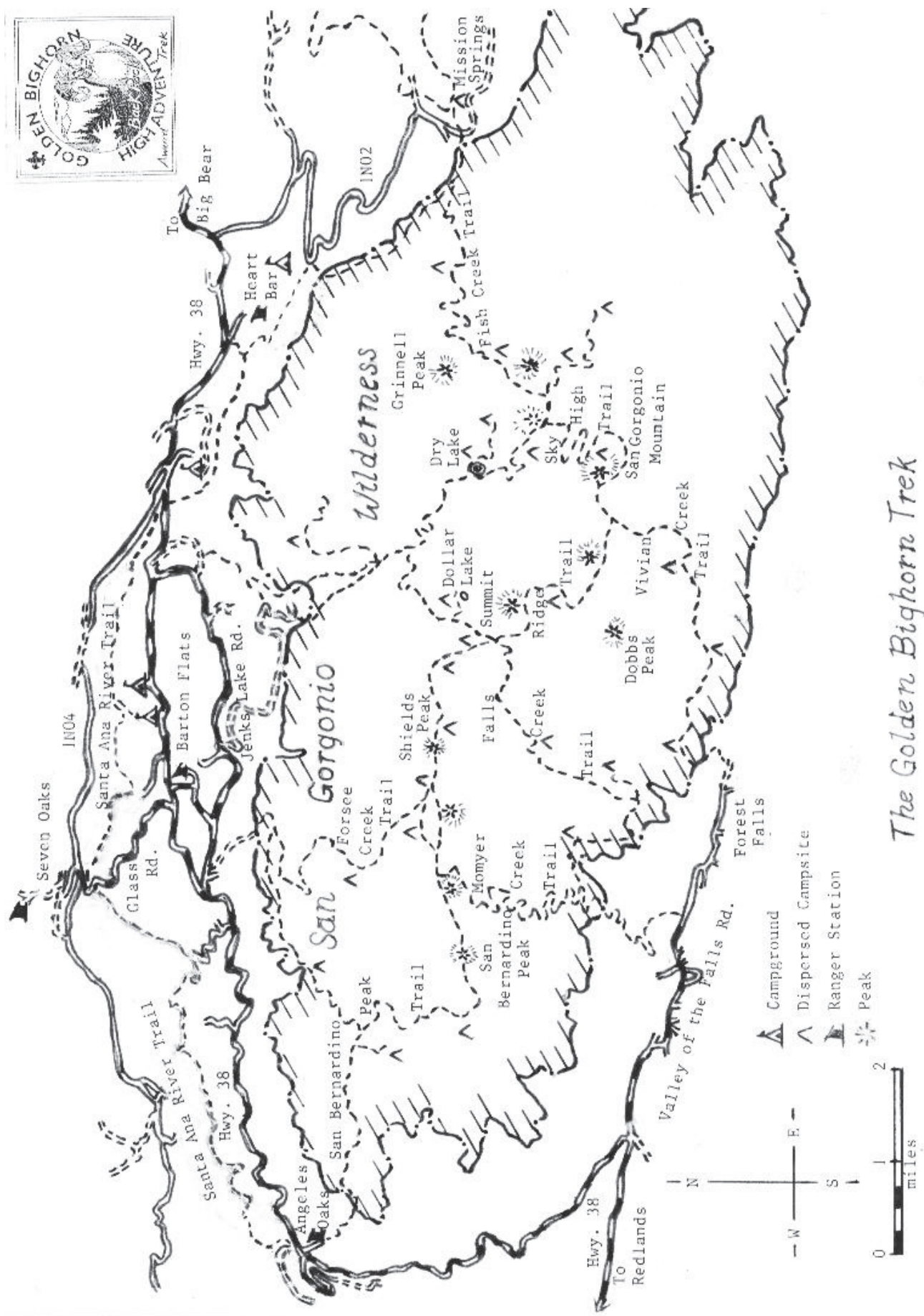
**The Silliman Crest Backpack**



--- Silver Moccasins Routes

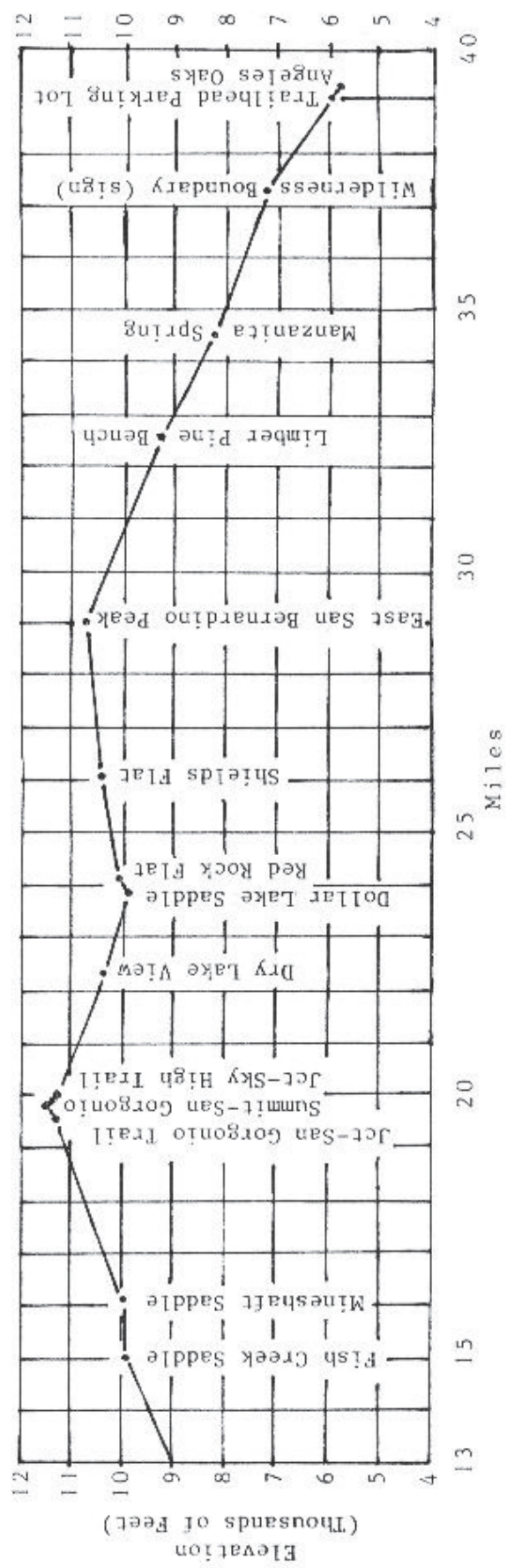
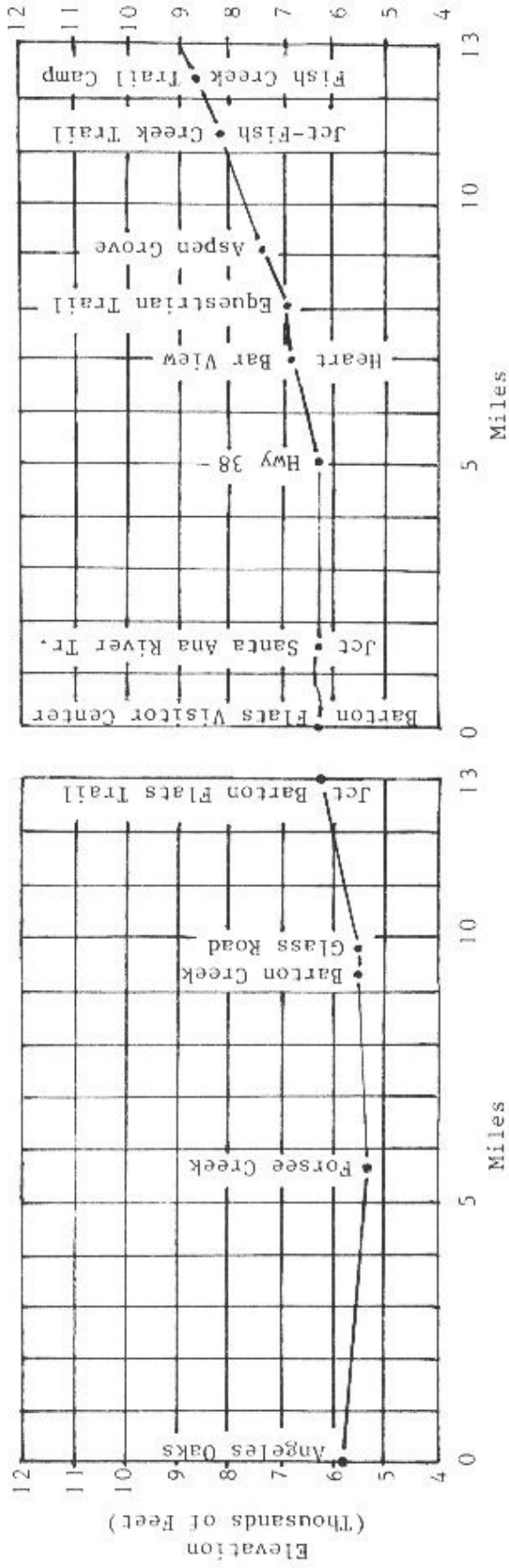






*The Golden Bighorn Trek*

Trail Profile: San Bernardino National Forest/San Gorgonio Wilderness



*The Golden Bighorn Trek*

## Glossary

These definitions represent the usage of the terms in a High Adventure Program.

accessory cord: a lightweight cord of kernmantle construction, 1-6 mm in diameter. Used for rock climbing and mountaineering. Also, Prusik cord.

alpine: the ecosystem typically found above the timberline.

altitude sickness: a generic term for illnesses that are caused by being at a high altitude; a condition typified by nausea, headache, weakness, and loss of appetite.

arete: a sharp, narrow mountain ridge or spur.

arroyo: a dry gully or ditch cut by an intermittent stream; a dry gulch.

attack point: see landmark.

barranca: ravine; steep canyon.

belay: a safety system that lessens the severity, or the distance, of a fall by a climber; the securing of a rope on a rock, other projection, or piece of climbing hardware.

bench: a natural, comparatively level platform or terrace, breaking a slope.

bergshrund: a crevasse that separates the upper portion of a glacier from the mountain that it backs into.

bivouac: a temporary or emergency camp, often made in an undesirable location because of an unexpected incident or harsh conditions.

bushwhack: to hike through brush when there is no trail. Not recommended for younger Scouts. Also, crosscountry.

cairn: a large pile of rocks, generally two or more feet in height, serving to permanently mark a trail, summit, boundary, claim, etc. *Leave it alone.*

ciénega: a wet or marshy location. Often shown on a topographical map as a marsh or intermittent lake; avoid when hiking.

cirque: a steep hollow, often containing a small lake or tarn, located in the upper end of some mountain valleys. Generally formed by glacial action.

Class 1-7: one of the rating systems that grade the difficulty of hiking and climbing conditions. Class 1, the easiest, is representative of hiking on a dirt road. Class 7, the most difficult, involves the use of the most technical hardware and rope work. Any activity that is rated Class 5-7 is not recommended for Scouts. All climbing/rappelling activities of the Unit must be in compliance with the BSA publication, Climb on Safely.

cornice: an overhang of snow on a mountainside, which can fall and trigger an avalanche. Avoid hiking or skiing near one.

crampons: metal cleats that are attached to hiking boots. Used when hiking on ice or frozen snow.

crew: a self-contained hiking group, with at least two adults and three Scouts.

crosscountry: a hiking route that is not on an established or maintained trail. Not recommended for younger Scouts. Also, bushwhack.

duck: three rocks on top of one another, serving as a temporary trail marker. Persons setting ducks are expected to remove them. Leave alone those that have been set by someone else.

due diligence: taking all appropriate actions and precautions that a reasonable person would take in preparing for and dealing with an activity or situation. To the adult leader, it means conducting a High Adventure Program according to the policies, procedures, and requirements of the Boy Scouts of America, and at all time ensuring the health and safety of the participants. Failure to exercise due diligence may be considered negligent behavior.

face: a steep side of a mountain, cliff, or mesa. Also, scarp, wall.

head: promontory or cliff.

hikemaster: the registered adult who is in charge of the High Adventure outing. It may be the Scoutmaster or another qualified adult.

howdy: the classic western trail greeting. Use it when meeting another hiker.

hubris: overbearing pride or presumption; arrogance. See Hike Aid 16, The Lure of the Summit.

landmark: a prominent natural feature or man-made structure, identifiable on a topographical map and in the field. Used as a reference point while hiking. Also, attack point.

massif: a large mountain mass or compact group of connected mountains forming an independent portion of a range.

montane: of, growing in, or inhabiting mountain areas.

moraine: an accumulation of boulders, stones, or other debris carried and deposited by a glacier.

mountaineering: the climbing of mountains for sport, generally with the use of technical equipment and climbing ropes.

peak bagging: climbing a mountain and signing the register in the summit box; to “bag” a peak.

pitch: a section of a climb; the distance between two points of protection.

Prusik cord: see accessory cord.

reasonable and prudent leadership: behavior that ensures a healthy, safe, and enjoyable experience for each participant in the Unit’s outdoor program. It includes thorough and complete planning and preparation and careful execution of each activity. It recognizes that risk must be considered in each one, and that appropriate provisions be made for dealing with known and potential occurrences.

reef: a steep ridge of rock rising above a relatively flat area and extending for some distance.

saddle: a low spot on a ridge; a gap between two adjacent peaks. Also, col, gap, notch, pass.

scarp: a steep slope or cliff. Also, face, wall. (alternate spelling - escarp)

scheduled hour of backpacking: the time required by the typical Unit that is hiking on a trail (Class 2) and carrying full backpacks to travel two miles; the time required to gain 1000 feet of elevation while carrying full backpacks, independent of and in addition to the distance traveled. Also, standard backpack hour. Excludes distance and elevation gained when carrying only a day pack.

scree: small rock debris; a slope of gravel or small rock at the base of a steep incline or cliff. Also, gravel.

sedge: one of the family of long-bladed grasses that grow in mountain meadows.

serac: a glacial ridge; a large mass of ice broken off the main body of a glacier and remaining behind in a crevasse.

sierra: a range of mountains having an irregular profile.

sub-alpine: the ecosystem that is typically found below the timberline.

summit: the highest point on a mountain or ridge.

summit box: a metal container generally found on the summit of mountains throughout California. Used to hold a register of hikers; sign and return it to the box.

sweep: see trail sweep.

talus: large rock or boulder debris; a slope covered with large rocks or boulders at the base of a steep incline or cliff.

tarn: a small mountain lake, generally in a basin (cirque) formed by glacial action.

trail sweep: the designated last person in a hiking group. This must be an adult or senior Scout who is responsible for accounting for everyone and keeping them ahead of him/her. He/she must stop the entire group whenever anyone has a problem. Also, sweep.

traverse: to travel across; Generally refers to crossing along the side of a steep ridge, rock face, or ice pack.

trek: a High Adventure backpack, usually of more than three days.

walk-up: a high altitude summit that requires no climbing skills to reach the top. Most of our local peaks and Mt. Whitney, via the John Muir Trail, are examples.

An extended glossary of terms is included in the syllabus for Adult Leaders Backpack Training.





YOSEMITE VALLEY  
TO REDS MEADOW

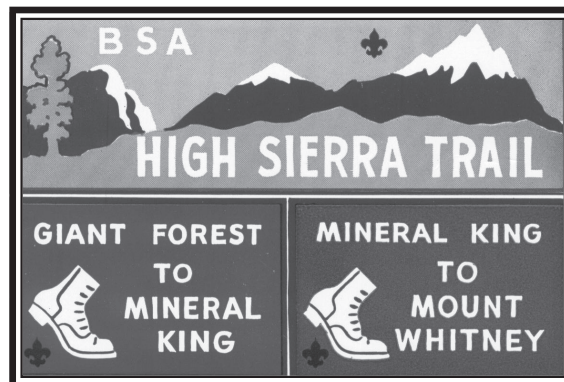
RED'S MEADOW  
TO ROCK CREEK

ROCK CREEK  
TO NORTH LAKE

NORTH LAKE  
TO SOUTH LAKE

SOUTH LAKE  
TO ONION VALLEY

ONION VALLEY  
TO MT.WHITNEY



*“Standing here in the deep, brooding silence all the wilderness seems motionless, as if the work of creation were done. But in the midst of this outer steadfastness we know there is incessant motion and change. Ever and anon, avalanches are falling from yonder peaks. These cliff-bound glaciers, seemingly wedged and immovable, are flowing like water and grinding the rocks beneath them. The lakes are lapping their granite shores and wearing them away, and every one of these rills and young rivers is fretting the air into music, and carrying the mountains to the plains.”*

*John Muir, 1868*