

Long - Term Trekking



Offered by the
HIGH ADVENTURE TEAM
Greater Los Angeles Area Council
Scouting America

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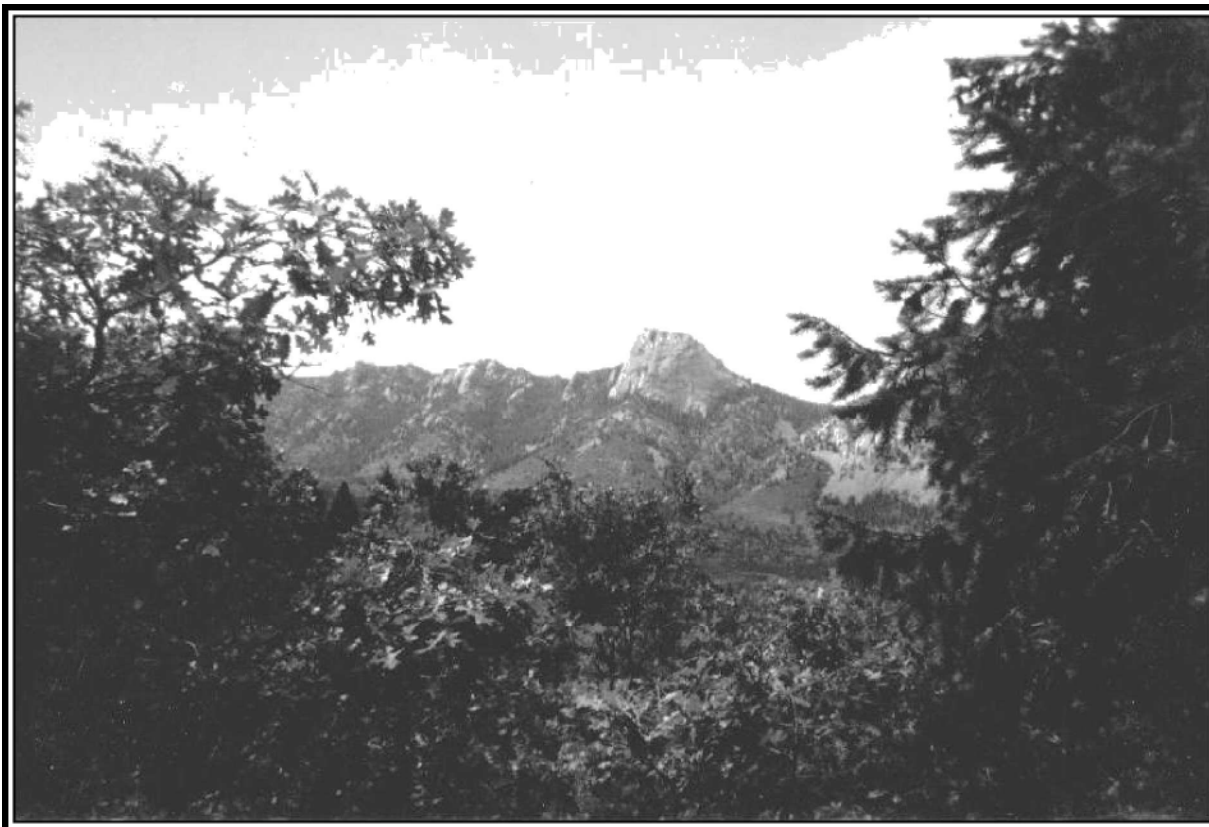
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The High Adventure Team (HAT) of the Greater Los Angeles Area Council (GLAAC) of Scouting America is a volunteer group of Scouters which operates under the direction of GLAAC-Camping Services. Its mission is to develop, promote and conduct challenging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

Anyone who is interested in the GLAAC-HAT and its many activities is encouraged to direct an inquiry to the GLAAC-Camping Services or visit our web site at <https://glaac-hat.org/>. The GLAAC-HAT meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm in the Cushman Watt Scout Center, 2333 Scout Way, Los Angeles, CA 90026. These meetings are open to all Scouters.



	REVISIONS	
February 2025	General update. Checked awards. Updated references. Removed Log Cabin. Added reference to Program Announcement 41.	André Coulombe, Tom Thorpe
February 2016	Maintenance release.	Tom Thorpe
July 2015	Moved some of the material between this <u>Hike Aid</u> and <u>Hike Aid 12</u> . Added several long-term descriptions.	Tom Thorpe Dick Rose
June 2005	This new <u>Hike Aid</u> includes <u>Program Announcements 1</u> , "The Silver Moccasin Hike", <u>4</u> , "John Muir Trail", <u>5</u> , "High Sierra Trail", and <u>15</u> , "The Golden Big Horn Trek".	Lyle Whited, John Hainey



Tooth of Time - Philmont Scout Ranch

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Published by the
HIGH ADVENTURE TEAM
of the
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Forward

The Greater Los Angeles Area Council is the pioneer in long-term trekking in this area. Over 60 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.

Virtually limitless opportunities are available to a Scout Unit in Southern California to take a long-term backpack. The trailhead may be as close as Chantry Flats, above Arcadia, or as distant as the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in south central Utah or the northernmost entry to the John Muir Trail. Many fine guides to trails throughout the West are available at most specialty backpack stores. Get one for the location of interest and use it to learn more about your route.

Some of the High Adventure awards sponsored by local Councils, including the GLAAC, require that a long-term backpack be taken on a specified route. Others, including the National Council's award "50 Miles Afoot-Afloat", allow the Unit Leadership to design its own route. Whatever the route, there is certain to be a long-term award, not previously earned, that can be awarded to each participant.

With the variety of routes and awards that are available to the Unit, an annual long-term backpack trip can truly be the crown jewel in its High Adventure Program. This Hike Aid identifies and discusses the differences and additional requirements of long-term versus weekend backpacking trips. This Hike Aid also includes route suggestions from GLAAC-HAT. A number of routes are included to provide the Unit Leadership with a variety of locations. A complete discussion of the factors to consider in selecting the route of a long-term backpack trip and of the detailed planning and preparation that are required are contained in the syllabus for Adult Leaders Backpack Training. All topographical maps mentioned are from the USGS 7 1/2 minute series.

Long-term 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 superfluous. 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, they 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 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, repackaging, 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 compatibility. 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. National Council recommends adding chlorine and boiling. 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

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 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

- ◆ Scouting America 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.

Southern Sierra Council

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

Verdugo Hills

Dinky Lakes Loop Trail	5 nights/25 hours	Sierra Route
Silver Fir Trail	5 nights/25 hours	Sierra Routes

Western Los Angeles County Council

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

Grand Canyon Council

Grand Canyon-Rim to Rim	3 nights/47 miles	Grand Canyon Routes
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National Council

50 miles Afoot-Afloat	5 nights/50 miles	Anywhere
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A couple of general 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 14,505' 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.

The Silver Moccasins Hike

This special High Adventure long-term backpack has been offered by the Greater 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.

Angeles National Forest Route

In 2017, in an effort to save the mountain yellow-legged frog the forest service shut down the trail between the Burkhart Trail and Eagles Roost. A detour was created and is discussed in GLAAC-HAT Program Announcement 41.

The Silver Moccasins Trail in the Angeles National Forest was developed in the 1930's and given this name about 1947, at the same time as the GLAAC-HAT sponsored Silver Moccasins Trail Award was established. It is the classic long-term backpack route for Scouts in Southern California. The Trail, from Chantry Flat to Vincent Gap, is through the heart of the Arroyo Seco District of the Angeles National Forest. Hot, dry, a challenge for even the well-conditioned hiker, the experience is equal to that of any route that a Unit might select elsewhere. However, it offers a rare advantage of having the hiker never more than five miles from a highway and help, in the event of an emergency. Yet there are locations when hiking and camping where the feeling of remoteness approaches that of the Sierras.

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. See the accompanying map. 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 snow pack 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, 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.

Special Award:	Silver Moccasins Trail Award (GLAAC)
Trailheads:	Chantry Flat, above Arcadia; Vincent Gap, near Wrightwood
Topo Map Coverage:	Mt. Wilson / Chilao Flats / Waterman Mtn. / Crystal Lake
Trail Guide Coverage:	<u>Trails of the Angeles</u> by John Robinson, Wilderness Press, Berkeley, CA, 2000,
Required Permit:	Fire
Miles/Elevation Gain:	50 / 14,300
Scheduled Hours:	39.5

Sequoia/Kings Canyon Routes

These two routes must be taken as shown on the accompanying map, 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.

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. 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 will 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.

Silliman Crest

The Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are the location for this scenic loop route. It begins and ends at a manageable elevation (6,800 feet) among the sequoia trees at Lodgepole but quickly takes the hiker into the classic High Sierra terrain. Camping is not permitted between Lodgepole and Calhoon Meadow. There is an optional route for one section; the loop may be hiked in either direction. Most of the trail is above 8,000 feet, with a high of 10,100 feet, barring any optional peak climbs. These are moderate elevations, by Sierras standards.

Special Award:	Silver Moccasins Trail Award (GLAAC)
Trailhead:	Lodgepole, Sequoia National Park
Topo Map Coverage:	Lodgepole / Mt. Silliman / Muir Grove
Trail Guide Coverage:	<u>Sierra South, Backcountry Trips in California's Sierra Nevada</u> by Kathy Morey, Mike White, Stacy Corless, Analise Elliot Heid ,Chris Tirrell, and Thomas Winnett (2006)
Required Permit:	Wilderness
Miles/Elevation Gain:	41 / 8,500
Scheduled Hours:	29

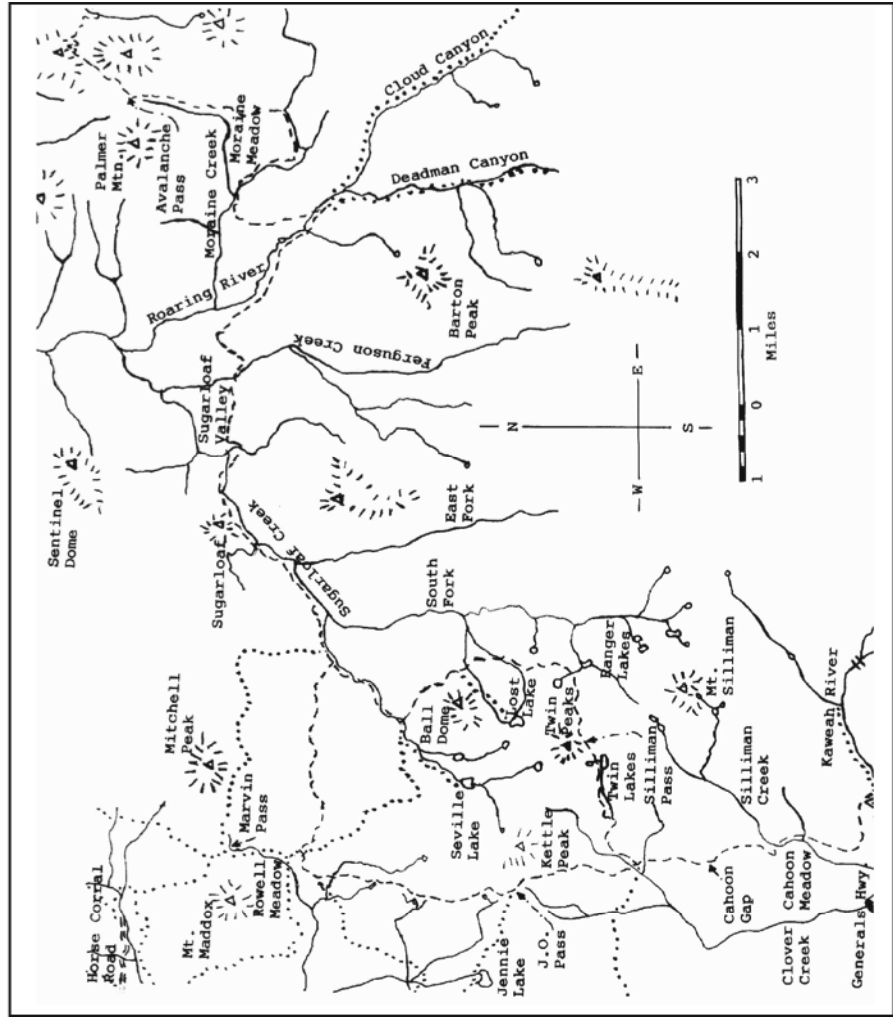
Sugarloaf Valley

This route also takes the hiker through the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. It shares many of the characteristics of Silliman Crest, yet differs in that one trailhead lies deep within Kings Canyon, alongside the swift flowing Kings River. The hiker faces the challenge of either beginning or ending below 2,000 feet, while spending much of the time above 9,000 feet.

Special Award:	Silver Moccasins Trail Award (GLAAC)
Trailheads:	Lodgepole, Sequoia National Park; Roads End, Kings Canyon National Park
Topo Map Coverage:	Lodgepole / Mt. Silliman / Sphinx Lakes / The Sphinx
Trail Guide Coverage:	<u>Sierra South, Backcountry Trips in California's Sierra Nevada</u> by Kathy Morey, Mike White, Stacy Corless, Analise Elliot Heid ,Chris Tirrell, and Thomas Winnett (2006)
Required Permit:	Wilderness



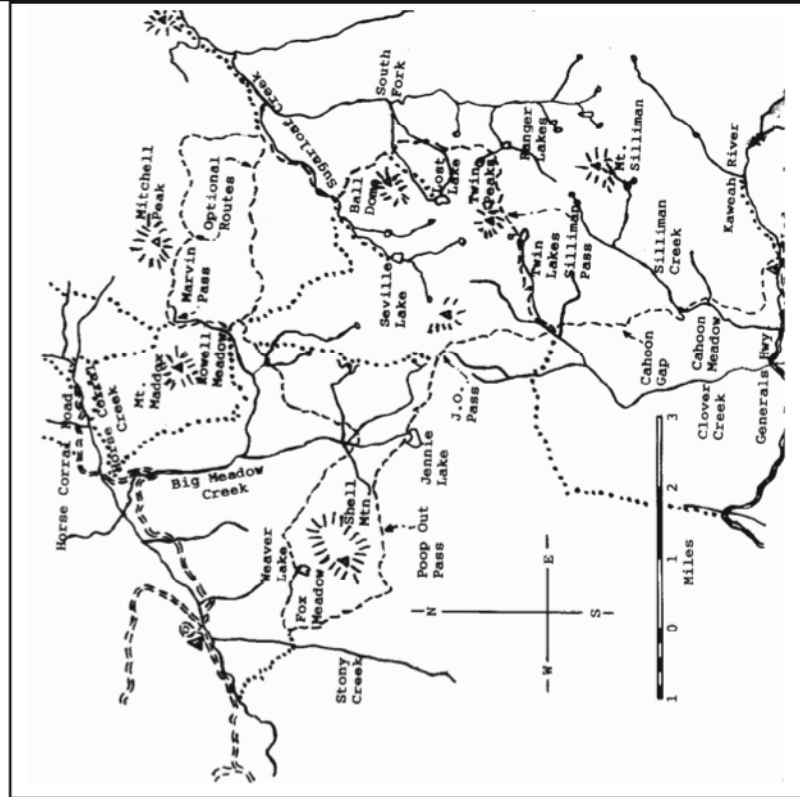
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA The Sugarloaf Valley Backpack



• • • • • Other Trails



The Silliman Crest Backpack



----- Silver Moccasins Routes

John Muir Trail

“Our generation owes much to John Muir.” – Theodore Roosevelt

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.

John Muir Trail

Another classic hiking route that runs through the heart of the High Sierras, and to the summit of Mount Whitney. This trail extends for over 200 miles along the crest of a 430-mile long tilted block of the earth's crust that averages 60 miles wide. Along it is a grand crescendo of peaks and high passes, including the highest in the Continental United States. As you hike along any part of the six treks into which it can be broken, the hiker has as a constant companion the rushing sound of water, the blue of many fishing lakes, the glisten of white snow fields, and the song of the winds on the high passes. Participation in a long-term backpack of this type presents the Scout with the opportunity for physical and mental growth and the adult with a time for a rebirth of physical and mental well being.

The Award Program

Early in its existence, the GLAAC-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 John Muir Trail Award and a Strip which identified it. Overuse of the John Muir Trail in the 1970's caused the GLAAC-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 instead of the John Muir Trail itself. 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 Award and Strips are shown on the back cover.

A long-term trek on the John Muir Trail usually involves one of the following six segments, identified by their trailheads. See the accompanying map.

- ◆ Yosemite Valley - Red's Meadow
 - ◆ Red's Meadow - Rock Creek
 - ◆ Rock Creek - North Lake
 - ◆ North Lake - South Lake ("Outside" magazine's best California hike, April 1996)
 - ◆ South Lake - Onion Valley
 - ◆ Onion Valley - Whitney Portal, with an optional side trip to the summit of Mt. Whitney
- Segments may be hiked in either direction and in any sequence.

Special Award: John Muir Trail, with a segment for each of the six treks (GLAAC)

Trailhead: See above

Topo Map Coverage: Numerous

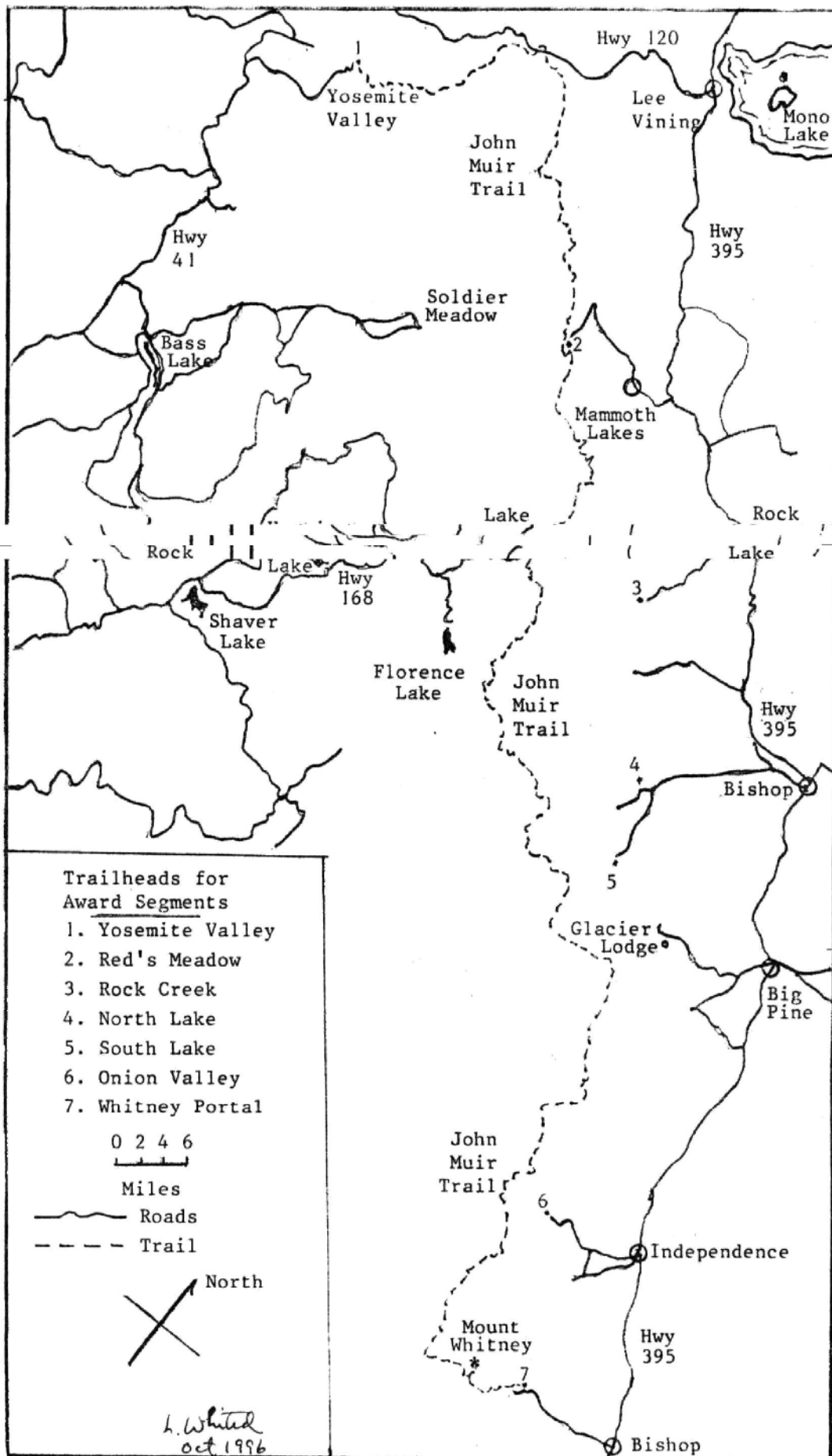
Trail Guide Coverage: Guide to the John Muir Trail by Thomas Winnett;
Starr's Guide to the John Muir Trail and the High Sierra Region,
published by the Sierra Club

Additional information: San Diego-Imperial Council-HAT (SDIC) Trek Aid 105, "Scouting High Sierra Treks"

Required Permit: Wilderness

Miles/Elevation Gain: 40-60 / 9,000-13,000

Scheduled Hours: About 30-40 (for each segment)



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 8,000 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. See the accompanying map. The award segments may be earned in any order; the routes may be hiked in either direction.

General Information

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 7,000 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 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.

Giant Forest to Mineral King

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 7,000 feet, which allows some acclimation before beginning a climb to Kaweah Gap at almost 11,000 feet. At 6.3 miles 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. This route can be hiked in either direction, but the recommended start is at Giant Forest.

Special Award: High Sierra Trail, with Giant Forest to Mineral King segment (GLAAC)
Trailheads: Giant Forest / Crescent Meadows / Mineral King
Both are in Sequoia National Park
Topo Map Coverage: Lodgepole / Triple Divide Peak / Chagoopa Falls / Mineral King
If you can find them, the 15 minute series maps (Triple Divide Peak, Kern Peak) are recommended for use in the field, to remain oriented as you hike.
Trail Guide Coverage: Starr's Guide to the John Muir Trail and High Sierra Region, published by the Sierra Club
Guide to the John Muir Trail, Thomas Winnett and Kathy Morey
Hiking The Sierra Nevada, Barry Parr
Additional information: San Diego-Imperial Council-HAT (SDIC) Trek Aid 105, "Scouting High Sierra Treks"
Required Permit: Wilderness
Miles/Elevation Gain: 44 / 8,000
Scheduled Hours: 30

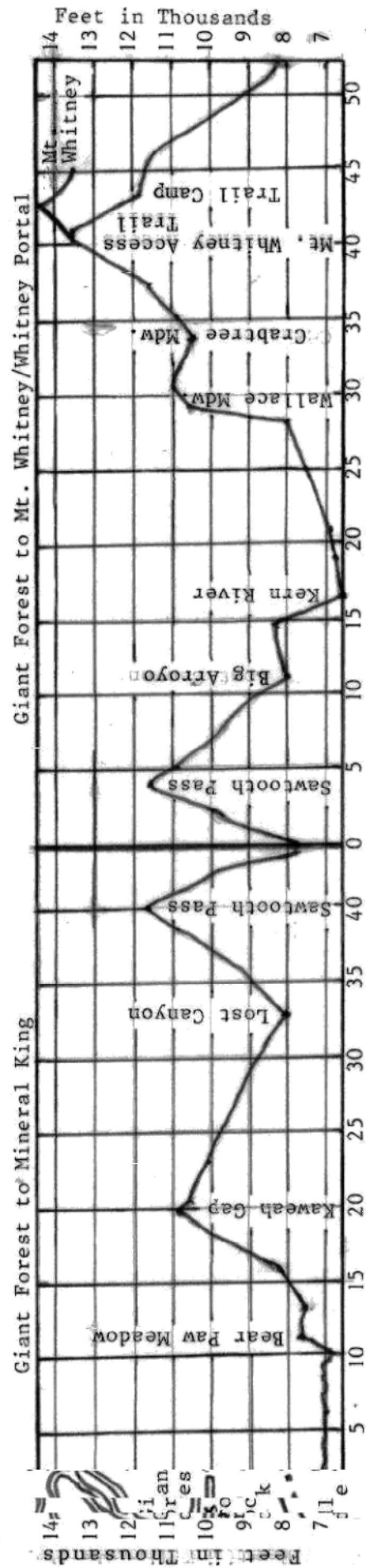
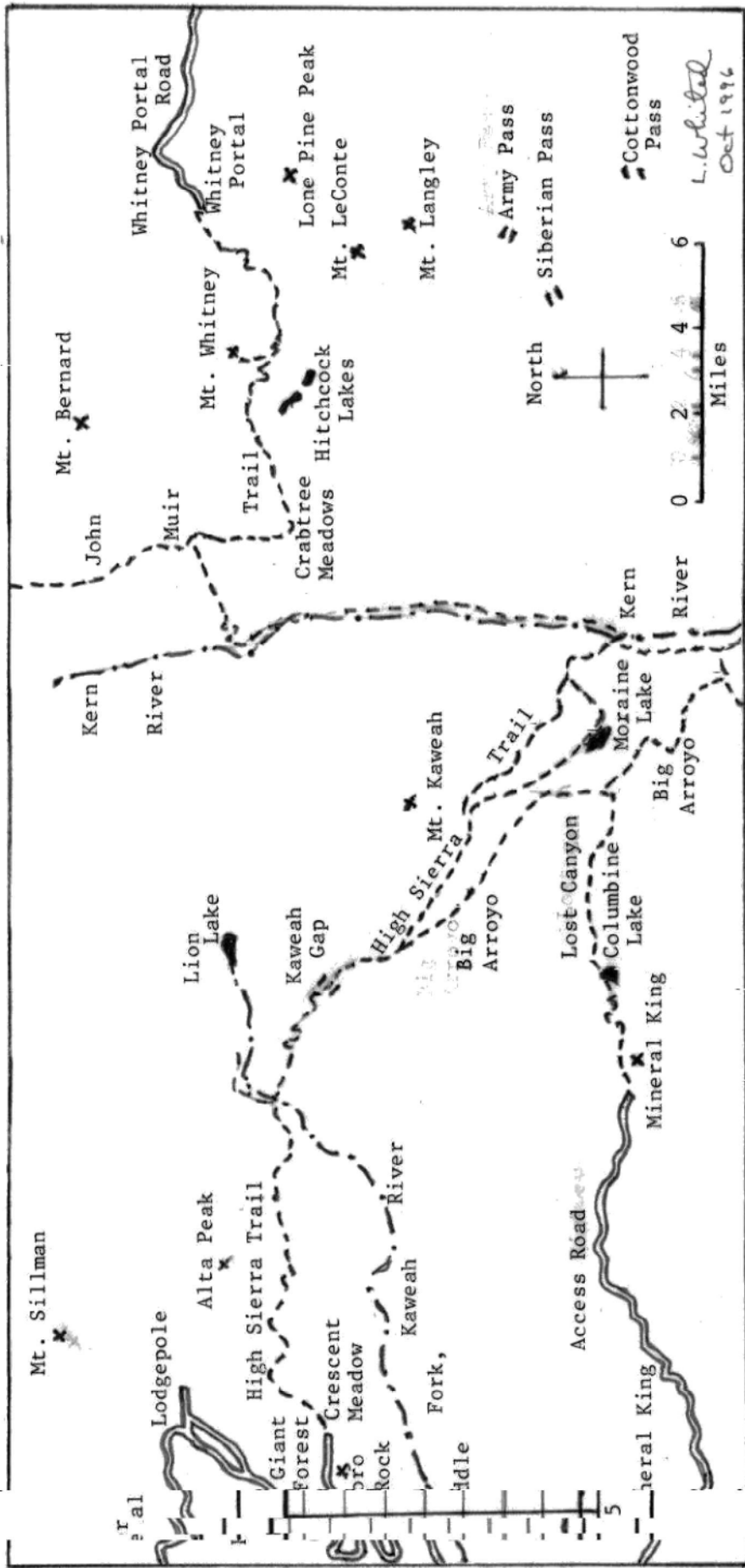
Mineral King to Mount Whitney

"The Trans-Sierra route"; the one to brag about; the longest of the treks with an GLAAC-HAT sponsored special award with the bonus of bagging Mt. Whitney (D).

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 3,700 foot elevation gain. Snow sometimes remains here late in the summer. After that, it's the pleasure of the Sierras at their best. The trail crosses both the western and eastern divides of 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. The route may be hiked in either direction, but the recommended start point is Mineral King. Allow 5-7 days of backpacking, plus an additional 1-2 layover days.

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.

Special Award: High Sierra Trail, with Mineral King to Mt. Whitney segment (GLAAC)
Trailheads: Mineral King, Sequoia National Park;
Whitney Portal, west of Lone Pine
Topo Map Coverage: Mineral King / Chagoopa Falls / Mt. Kaweah / Mt. Whitney / Mt. Langle
If you can find them, the 15 minute series maps (Mineral King, Kern Peak, Mt. Whitney, Lone Pine) are recommended for use in the field, to remain oriented as you hike.
Trail Guide Coverage: Starr's Guide to the John Muir Trail and High Sierra Region, published by the Sierra Club, 1970
Guide to the John Muir Trail, Thomas Winnett and Kathy Morey
Hiking The Sierra Nevada, Barry Parr
Required Permit: Wilderness
Miles/Elevation Gain: 52 plus 5 for day hike to Mt. Whitney summit / 11,000, plus 1,000
Scheduled Hours: 37



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 [Hike Aid](#). Route modifications or substitute locations are not permitted to receive the Golden Bighorn High Adventure Award.

Background

In years past, the Greater 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 GLAAC-HAT 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 Ana River from Angeles Oaks to the eastern edge of Barton Flats, Mary Ann Shuker, a member of the GLAAC-HAT and a volunteer with the USFS, recognized the opportunity that this would provide for Scouting Units. She proposed the location as suitable for a new outdoor award; the GLAAC is proud to offer it.

The Location

The Golden Bighorn Trek takes its name from the bighorn sheep that inhabit the San Bernardino Mountains. A Sierra-like environment is what the hiker will experience on most of this route. Your trek takes you through an ecological range of 6,000 feet, culminating on the summit of Mount San Gorgonio (11,499 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 “semi-loop”, which begins at the Barton Flats Visitor Center and ends at Angeles Oaks. See the accompanying Map and Trail Profile. A Unit has the option of using Angeles Oaks as the trailhead which will close the loop and extend the route to 52 miles.

The start is currently at the Barton Flats Visitor Center. 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 Santa Ana River Trail (SART) after about half a mile. Turn right and proceed east along the northern edge of Barton Flats, then south, recrossing 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. Apply for a Wilderness Permit not more than 90 days in advance in writing to the Forest Service (USDA-FS Mill Creek Ranger Station, 909-382-2882). Or in person at any Ranger Station or Visitor Center in the Mill Creek/Barton Flats area.

Conditions along the route warrant taking the following precautions:

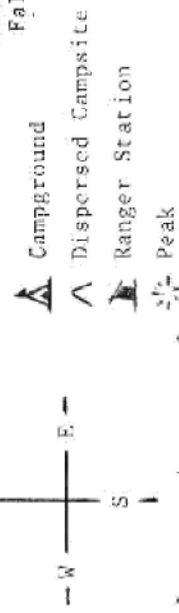
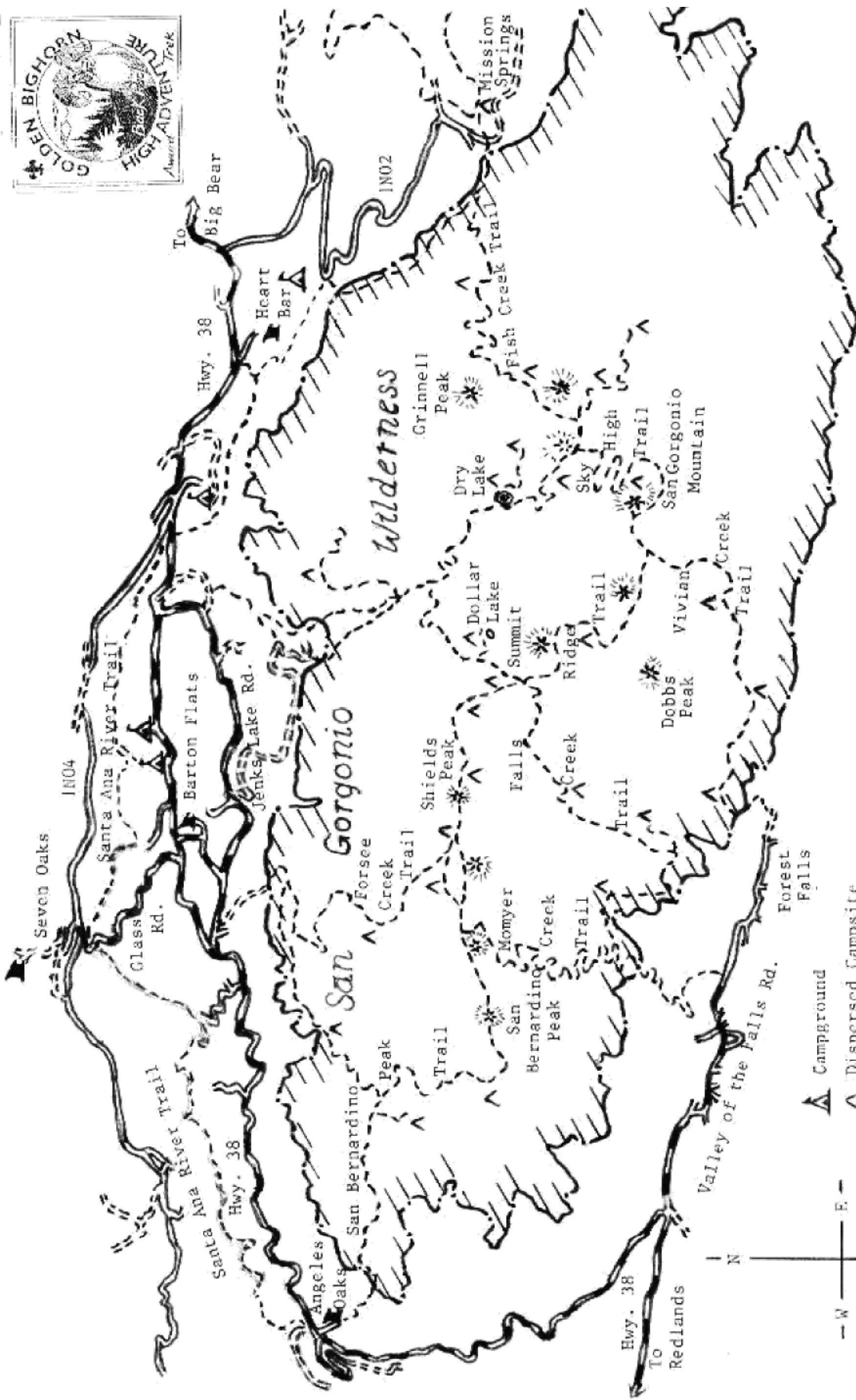
- ◆ Protect all food and garbage with the same diligence as you would in the Sierras.
- ◆ Discard and carry out any food packages that are damaged by an animal.
- ◆ Be extremely careful with fire; scrupulously obey all rules for its use.
- ◆ Plan your water replenishment points with care.
- ◆ Purify 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.

While on the trail, each crew must be kept together and under control at all times. The USFS regularly patrols the Wilderness and expects that all persons covered by a Permit be together. It also expects that a group show courtesy and good behavior toward other hikers and follow Leave No Trace hiking and camping practices. You can, and will, be cited for a failure to obey USFS rules and regulations. Such a failure may also endanger you, a member of your crew, or another hiker. This hike is not approved for Easter Vacation. In years of late or heavy snowfall, the trail from Fish Creek to Manzanita Springs can be covered by an icy snow pack until mid-July. The hike is, also, not approved under those conditions.

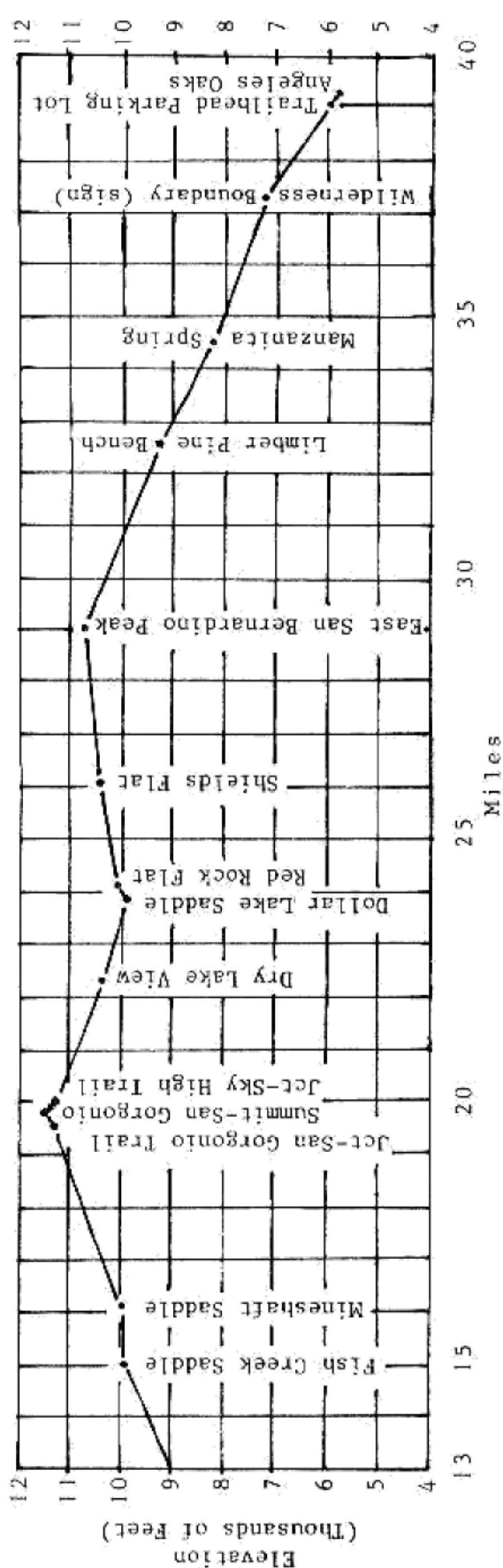
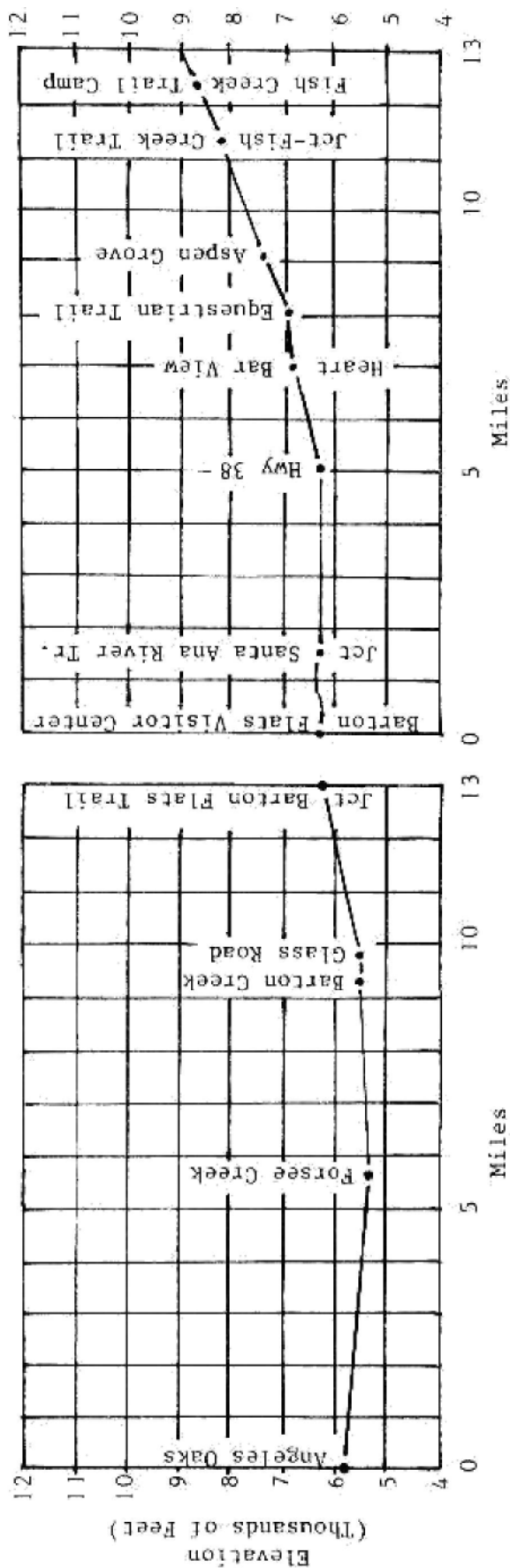
The Santa Ana River Trail, being relatively new, may not appear on topographical maps. As a part of the trip planning, check with the Mill Creek Ranger Station or the Barton Flats Visitor Center for current literature that shows it. If interested in Angeles Oaks as the trailhead, check out the access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

Special Award:	Golden Bighorn High Adventure (GLAAC)
Trailhead:	Barton Flats Visitor Center or Angeles Oaks
Topo Map Coverage:	Big Bear Lake / Forest Falls / Moonridge / San Geronio Mountain
Trail Guide Coverage:	<u>San Bernardino Mountain Trails</u> by John Robinson
Required Permit:	Fire / Wilderness
Miles/Elevation Gain:	39 / 6,200 (Barton Flats trailhead) 52 / 7,200 (Angeles Oaks trailhead)
Scheduled Hours:	26 (Barton Flats trailhead) 33 (Angeles Oaks trailhead)



The Golden Bighorn Trek

Trail Profile: San Bernardino National Forest/San Gorgonio Wilderness



The Golden Bighorn Trek

Rae Lakes Loop

This trail takes the hiker into some of the most scenic backcountry in the Sierras. Whether starting at Cedar Grove, in the Kings Canyon National Park, or Onion Valley, in the Owens Valley, by traveling the entire loop he/she will come to know a great cross-section of the Sierra Nevada Range. Here are great glacial canyons and magnificent forests, lovely green meadows and lush wildflowers, sun-spangled lakes, and high, rugged peaks. Starting at Cedar Grove provides a moderately difficult, by Sierra's standards, yet exhilarating backpack. The loop, which may be hiked in either direction, has an entry elevation of 5,000 feet, reaches a high point of 12,000 feet, and uses a portion of the John Muir Trail.

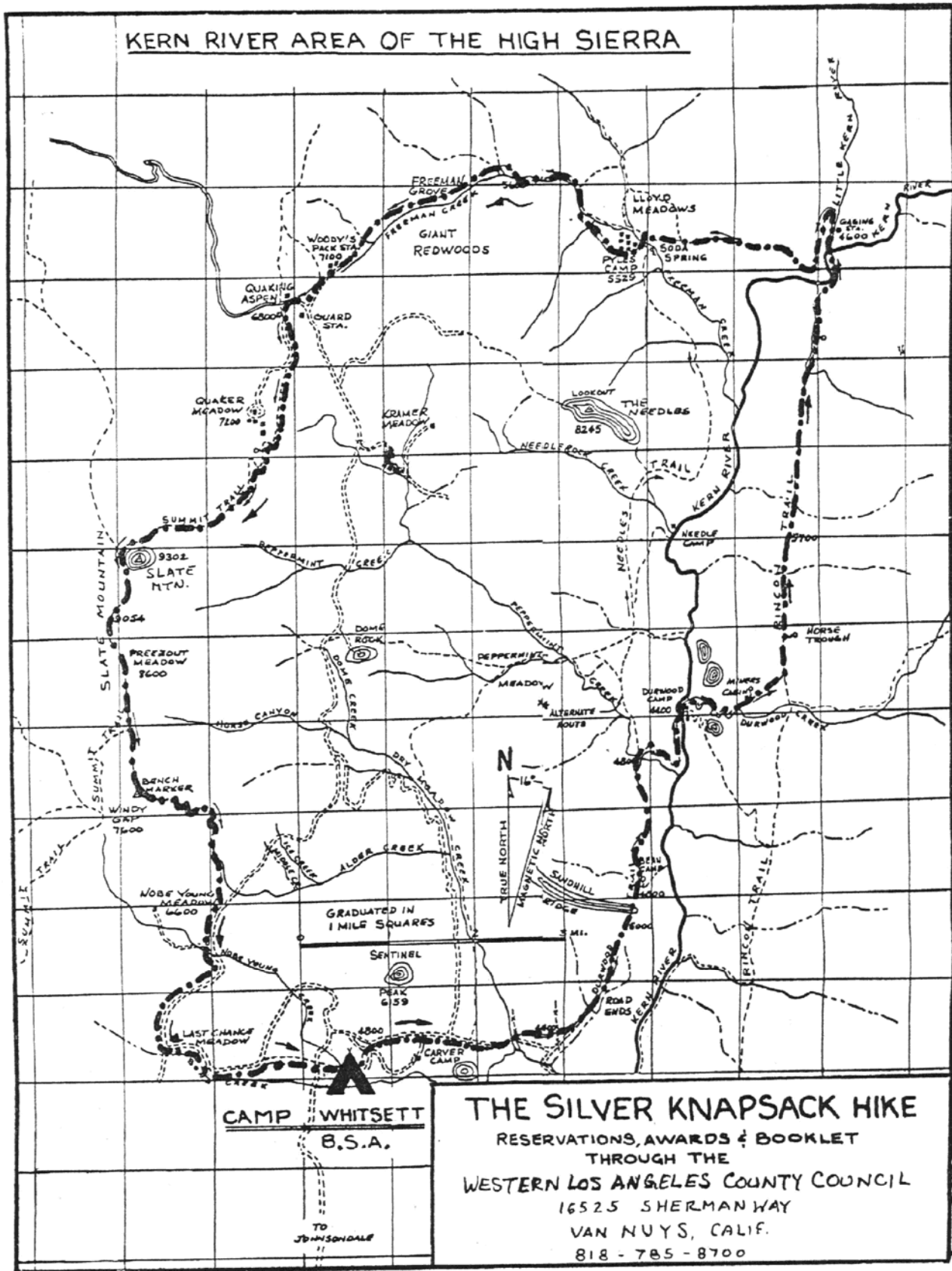
Special Award: None
Trailheads: Cedar Grove, Kings Canyon National Park (recommended);
Onion Valley, west of Independence
Topo Map Coverage: The Sphinx / Mt. Clarence King / Mt. Brewer / Kearsarge Peak
Trail Guide Coverage: Sierra South, Backcountry Trips in California's Sierra Nevada by Kathy Morey, Mike White, Stacy Corless, Analise Elliot Heid, Chris Tirrell, and Thomas Winnett (2006)
Additional information: Hike Aid 13, "The Rae Lakes Loop"
Required Permit: Wilderness
Miles/Elevation Gain: 43 / 7,300
Scheduled Hours: 29 (Cedar Grove trailhead)



Kern Plateau Loop

A loop route through the southern end of the Kern Plateau. See the accompanying map. The trailhead is at Camp Whitsett (operated by the Western Los Angeles County Council), about 20 miles north of Kernville and Lake Isabella. A moderate Sierra hike, whose start and finish are at 4,800 feet, it offers the same profusion of wildflowers, rivers, lakes, and grand vistas of the routes further north. Additional information about this route is contained in a booklet available from the WLACC.

Special Award: Silver Knapsack (WLACC)
Trailhead: Camp Whitsett, north of Kernville
Topo Map Coverage: Sentinel Peak / Durwood Creek / Hockett Peak / Camp Nelson
Trail Guide Coverage: Exploring the Southern Sierras: West Side by J.C. Jenkins and Ruby Johnson Jenkins
Required Permit: Wilderness; also contact WLACC about its requirement for any reservation or advance approval
Miles/Elevation Gain: 46 / 6,000
Scheduled Hours: 29



Camp Whitsett to Mount Whitney

This is a long, challenging route through the heart of the Kern Plateau. The entry trailhead is at Camp Whitsett, near Lake Isabella. You come off the trail at Whitney Portal with a side hike to the summit of Mt. Whitney.

The altitude at Camp Whitsett is 4,640 feet, and the first half of this trek involves elevations in the 5,000 to 8,000 foot range, as the Unit proceeds in a northerly direction, generally following the Kern River. As you leave the Kern, the Unit gains elevation and meets up with the Pacific Crest Trail. The route takes you into Crabtree Meadows, elevation 10,600 feet, before the ascent of Mt. Whitney. This sets you up for a long day of hiking to the top and on to Trail Camp, albeit with light packs. Then an easy day, downhill to Whitney Portal.

Special Award: Whitsett to Whitney (WLACC)
Trailheads: Camp Whitsett, north of Kernville;
Whitney Portal, west of Lone Pine
Topo Map Coverage: Sentinel Peak / Durwood Creek / Hockett Peak / Kern Lake / Kern Peak / Johnson Peak / Mt. Whitney / Mt. Langley
Trail Guide Coverage: Exploring the Southern Sierras: West Side by J.C. Jenkins and Ruby Johnson Jenkins;
Pacific Crest Trail, Vol. 1: California by Jeffrey P. Schaffer, et al.
Additional information: WLACC-HAT brochure, "The Whitsett To Whitney Award"
Required Permit: Wilderness; also contact WLACC about its requirements for a reservation and advance approvals
Miles/Elevation Gain: 95 / 12,000
Scheduled Hours: 57



Cottonwood Lakes to Mount Whitney

This trip lets the hiker ease up on Mt. Whitney from the south and west, after 5-7 days of conditioning and with almost empty backpacks. Elevations are mainly in the 10,000 to 11,000 foot range, a high route. There are many streams and lakes so that your campsites are always near water. Besides Mt. Whitney, other easily climbable peaks en route are Mt. Guyot and Mt. Hitchcock. This is another popular trail, so expect to share campsites and meet lots of hikers. A complete discussion of the planning and preparation for taking a long-term backpack on this route is contained in the syllabus for Adult Leaders Backpack Training.

Special Award: None
Trailheads: Horseshoe Meadow, southwest of Lone Pine;
Whitney Portal, west of Lone Pine
Topo Map Coverage: Mt. Langley / Mt. Guyot / Mt. Whitney
Trail Guide Coverage: Starr's Guide to the John Muir Trail and High Sierra Region, published by the Sierra Club
Additional information: San Diego-Imperial Council-HAT (SDIC) Trek Aid 105, "Scouting High Sierra Treks"
Required Permit: Wilderness
Miles/Elevation Gain: 41, plus 5 for day hike to Mt. Whitney summit / 6,400, plus 1,000
Scheduled Hours: 28

Pacific Crest Trail - Southern California

This storied trail extends for 175 miles across the high ridges and peaks of the San Bernardino and San Gabriel Mountains, from Highway 38, at the east end of Barton Flats, to Messenger Flats, on Sierra Divide Road just west of Mount Gleason. Elevations through here are moderate, staying in the 6,000 to 8,000 foot range. There are numerous peaks, including Mt. Baden Powell, sprinkled along the trail that are easy to bag as you hike it. Pick out a section and take a hike.

Special Award: Pacific Crest Trail, with Footprint (SDIC)
Trailhead: Unit designed
Topo Map Coverage: Numerous
Trail Guide Coverage: Pacific Crest Trail, Vol. 1: California by Jeffrey P. Schaffer, et al.;
Trails of the Angeles and San Bernardino Mountain Trails by John Robinson
Required Permit: Fire
Miles/Elevation Gain: Unit designed
Scheduled Hours: Unit designed



Grand Canyon - South Kaibab/North Kaibab Trail System

A little further from Los Angeles and a bit shorter than the typical long-term backpack, this route is definitely worth the effort. Take this 28-mile rim-to-rim hike from Yaki Point and avoid the hordes on the Bright Angel Trail. See the accompanying map. Plan the trip with one or two (preferable) layover days to explore and enjoy the beauty of the canyon. Scouting Units have a poor reputation because of past misdeeds committed in the Grand Canyon National Park. While there, Unit Leadership must carefully follow the rules, keep control of the group, and practice leave no trace camping.

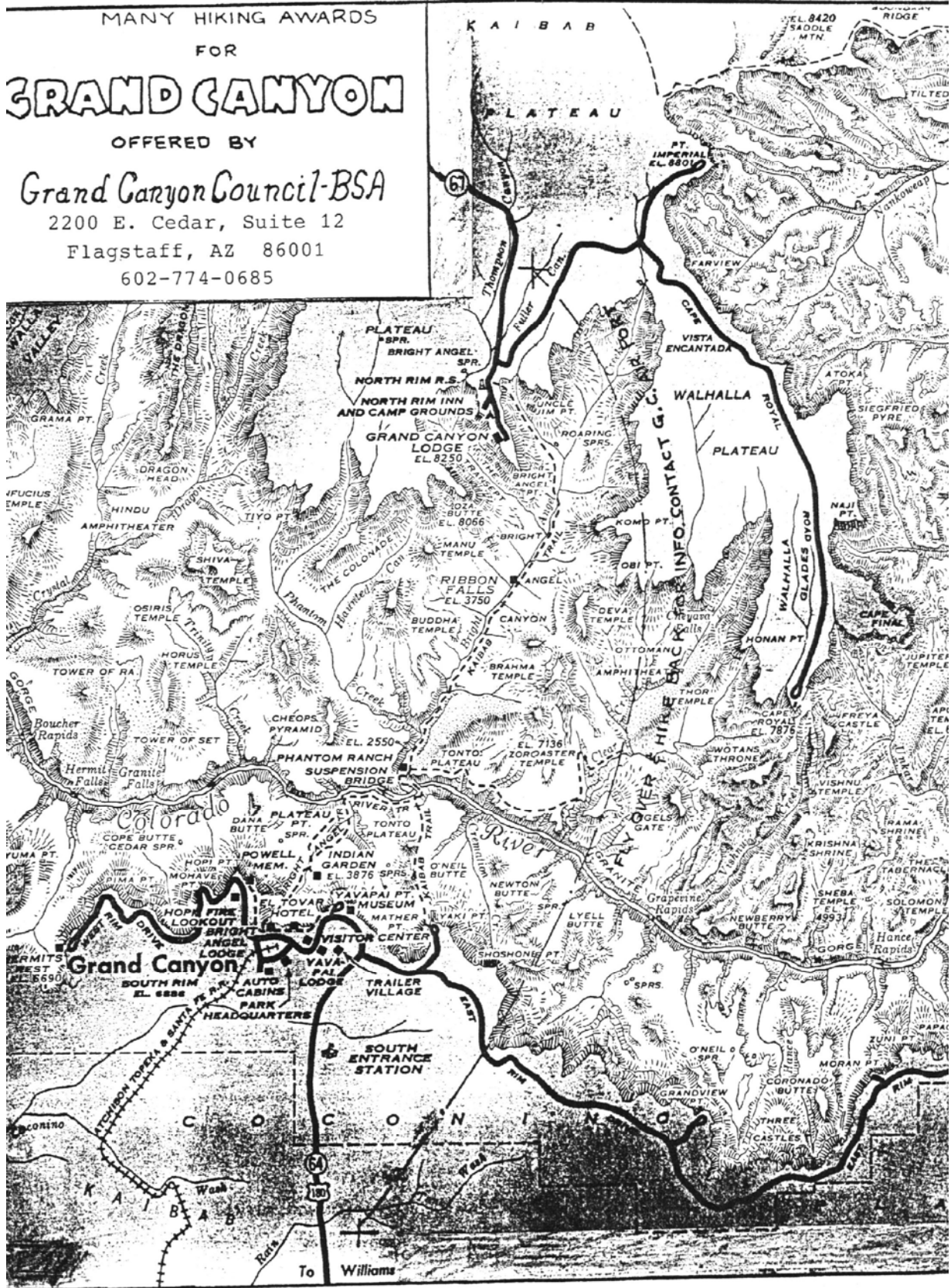
Shuttle service from the north to south rim can be arranged; in 2015 it was offered by [Trans-Canyon Shuttle](#), P.O. Box 348, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023, 928-638-2820. "Outside" magazine rated this as its best Arizona hike in the April 1996 issue. It is desirable to contact the Park Superintendent about nine months ahead to learn the permit application process for the coming summer.

Additional information about this route, and other routes and awards for the Grand Canyon, is contained in a booklet available from the Grand Canyon Council.

Special Award: Grand Canyon Trails, Rim-To-Rim (GCC)
Trailheads: Yaki Point-South Rim;
North Rim Ranger Station
Topo Map Coverage: Phantom Ranch / Bright Angel Point
Trail Guide Coverage: Hiking The Grand Canyon by John Annerino
Required Permit: Contact the Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent
Miles/Elevation Gain: 28 / 6,000
Scheduled Hours: 20

MANY HIKING AWARDS
FOR
GRAND CANYON

OFFERED BY
Grand Canyon Council-BSA
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Hoover Wilderness

A treasure of the Sierras, this is one of the least visited of Wilderness Areas. It has all of the Sierra features, emerald lakes, sparkling streams, imposing summits, glaciers, wildflowers galore, and ample fish - but few people. Obtaining a Wilderness Permit for the trailhead at the end of Green Lakes Road, therefore, is seldom a concern.

Summit Pass, at 10,400 feet, is the entry point to Yosemite National Park. However, Units desiring only a 2-3 day backpack can turn back from here to either the Green Lakes or Virginia Lakes trailhead. By continuing over the pass, the Unit arrives at the Pacific Crest Trail after five miles. Then, it's down through Cold Canyon to the Tuolumne River. The trek concludes by hiking along it to Tuolumne Meadows, for a trek of 26 miles.

Trailhead:	Green Lakes Road / Virginia Lakes Resort / Tuolumne Meadows
Topo Map Coverage:	Dunderberg Peak / Falls Ridge / Matterhorn Peak / Tioga Pass
Trail Guide Coverage:	<u>Sierra North: Backcountry Trips in California's Sierra Nevada</u> by Kathy Morey, Mike White, Stacy Corless, and Thomas Winnett (2005); <u>Pacific Crest Trail, Vol.1: California</u> by Jeffrey P. Schaffer, et al.
Required Permit:	Wilderness
Miles/Elevation Gain:	Optional to Unit, 12 to 26 miles
Scheduled Hours:	Optional to Unit

McGee Creek to Mosquito Flats

This trip can be done in either direction. If you have two groups send them in opposite directions and exchange car keys in the middle. There are six peaks along the way so be sure to climb some of them. One end starts at McGee Creek, goes over McGee Pass the second day. Red Slate Mt (E) is at the pass. The second night is at Tully Lake. Next day head for The Lake of the Lone Indian for a layover day if you like, or go for a killer day and go over Silver pass to Pocket Meadow. A small campsite is west of the stream where the water meanders over large flat rocks. The next day, hike up Mono Creek and camp in Pioneer Basin. A layover day here gives you a shot at four "E" peaks, Hopkins, Crocker, Stanford, and Huntington. You must do Hopkins, and it's the easiest of the four. It takes 1.5 hours to the top, and 15 minutes to run down the scree, assuming that you stop to catch your breath twice for five minutes. It's like skiing! After Pioneer Basin you hike out over Mono Pass, with Starr Peak (C) available at the pass, then out to Mosquito Flats.

Special Award:	Sierra North (GLAAC)
Trailhead:	McGee Creek or Mosquito Flats
Topo Map Coverage:	Mt. Abbott / Mt. Morrison
Trail Guide Coverage:	
Required Permit:	Wilderness
Miles/Elevation Gain:	40 / 7,600 (McGee Creek to Mosquito Flats) 40 / 5,500 (Mosquito Flats to McGee Creek)
Scheduled Hours:	28 (McGee Creek to Mosquito Flats) 26 (Mosquito Flats to McGee Creek)



Edison Lake to Pioneer Basin

This is an in and out trip that is designed for peak bagging. Hike around beautiful Edison Lake where there are numerous beautiful established camp sites. They are well hidden so you have to be observant. Stay at the far end of the lake for an easy first day. The second day hike up Mono Creek to second recess. Then proceed up to Pioneer basin which is surrounded by four "E" peaks, Huntington, Stanford, Crocker, and Hopkins. A layover day here gives you a shot at more than one of them. You must do Hopkins, and it's the easiest of the four. It takes 1.5 hours to the top, and 15 minutes to run down the scree, assuming that you stop to catch your breath twice for five minutes. It's like skiing! On your way back go up second recess and climb Gabb (E).

Special Award:	Explorer Mountaineering 1-Week Backpack (GLAAC)
Trailhead:	Edison Lake
Topo Map Coverage:	Graveyard Peak / Mt. Abbott
Trail Guide Coverage:	
Required Permit:	Wilderness
Miles/Elevation Gain:	43 / 6,900
Scheduled Hours:	28

Kennedy Meadows Loop

This is an easy trip with plenty of peak climbing opportunities as there are six peaks along the way to choose from. The road to Kennedy Meadows is near the junction of 395 and 14 beyond Mojave. This area is administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The trail is a loop that starts at Blackrock Pass. The first camp is near the stream crossing. The trail continues north and turns right at the base of Templeton Mt. You can climb Blackrock Mt. (A) at the pass, 5 minutes from the trailhead, and Templeton (C) as you go past. Going east, you cross the south fork of the Kern. If you camp up the hill from Brown Cow camp you can spend a layover day and climb Olancho Peak (F). Then continue south to Monache Meadow climbing Brown Mt. (C) as you go past. The next day climb Monache Mt. (C), then hike over near the base of Deer Mt. (C). Climb it the next morning and hike out. There are many alternate routes (including the reverse direction) to tailor this trip to your Unit.

Special Award:	Backcountry Exploration (WLACC)
Trailhead:	Kennedy Meadows
Topo Map Coverage:	Templeton Mt. / Monache Mt. / Olancho
Trail Guide Coverage:	
Required Permit:	Wilderness
Miles/Elevation Gain:	35 / 4,300
Scheduled Hours:	22



Mineral King Loop via Franklin Pass / Sawtooth Pass

Hike south to Franklin Lake. The best camping spots are high up on the east side. The second day you go up to the pass, climb Florence Peak (D) if you are up to such things, then head down Rattlesnake Creek. Not too far, the trail branches to the left and goes to Forester Lake, another great spot for a layover day. Good swimming. Next, head north'ish via Soda Creek to Lost Canyon. Cut right and go to Big 5 Lakes for another half layover day. This is a great lake to build a raft using the logs at the end of the lake. It is a very popular spot for the Scouts. Next, go back to Lost Canyon and camp at the end of the trees, south of the creek. An early start will get you up over Sawtooth Pass by 10:00 a.m. You can climb Sawtooth Peak (D) as you go past. It's an exciting peak! Stay overnight at Monarch Lakes. Hike back to Mineral King from Monarch Lakes on the last day.

Special Award:	Sierra South (GLAAC)
Trailhead:	Mineral King in Sequoia National Park
Topo Map Coverage:	Mineral King / Chagoopa Falls
Trail Guide Coverage:	
Required Permit:	Wilderness
Miles/Elevation Gain:	36 / 8,500
Scheduled Hours:	27

Florence Lake to Evolution Valley

This is an in-and-out trip. Outside of this being a beautiful trip, one purpose is to bag Mt. Goddard (F). First day the hike goes the length of Florence Lake (there is a ferry if you are so inclined) to Piute Creek. Hike along rushing streams and waterfalls up to Evolution Valley. Stay at Sapphire Lake. From there you can bag Mt. Fiske (E) or Mt. Goddard (F). It is a long tough hike to do Goddard past Wanda Lake. A better approach is from the west side if it is only the peak you want.

Special Award: Sierra South (GLAAC) or High Adventure Backpack (GLAAC)
Trailhead: Florence Lake
Topo Map Coverage: Florence Lake / Ward Mt. / Mt. Henry / Mt. Darwin / Mt. Goddard
Trail Guide Coverage:
Required Permit: Wilderness
Miles/Elevation Gain: 44 / 5,500
Scheduled Hours: 27



Crescent Meadow to Mt. Kaweah

This is an in and out peak bagging trip to climb Eagle Scout Peak (E) and Mt. Kaweah (F). The first day hike about 10 miles to Bearpaw Meadow. The second day hike to Hamilton Lakes, and the third day hike past Precipice Lake, which is at the foot of Eagle Scout Peak, and over Kaweah Gap. You will see that this is not the side you climb as it is a 1500-foot cliff. The next day camp near the junction of the trail up to Big Five Lakes. Then take two layover days, one to go back to climb Eagle Scout Peak, and the other to climb Mt. Kaweah. Reverse the route to go back out to Crescent Meadow.

Special Award: High Sierra Trail (GLAAC)
Trailhead: Crescent Meadow
Topo Map Coverage: Triple Divide Peak / Mt. Whitney
Trail Guide Coverage:
Required Permit: Wilderness
Miles/Elevation Gain: 44 / 9,800
Scheduled Hours: 32



Crescent Meadow to Whitney Portal

This is a 10-day trans-Sierra trip that starts on the west side of the Sierra's and ends on the east side. The first day hike about 10 miles to Bearpaw Meadow. The second day hike to Hamilton Lakes, and the third day hike past Precipice Lake, over Kaweah Gap, to the junction with the trail from Big Five Lakes. Climb Eagle Scout Peak (E) in the way as it is one of the best in the Sierras! The next day continue on to Moraine Lake climbing Mt. Kaweah (F) on the way. Subsequent days camp at Junction Meadow, the junction to the John Muir Trail, and Guitar Lake. The last day get up early to climb up to Trail Crest and make a side excursion to climb Mt. Whitney (D). Descend to Outpost Camp for the night. The next morning exit at Whitney Portal.

Special Award: Trans Sierra Trail / West to East (WLACC)
 14,505' Club (WLACC)
 Trailhead: Crescent Meadow
 Topo Map Coverage: Triple Divide / Kern Peak / Mt. Whitney
 Trail Guide Coverage:
 Required Permit: Wilderness
 Miles/Elevation Gain: 74 / 13,600
 Scheduled Hours: 51



Mineral King to Evelyn Lake / Windy Gap

Take the Hockett Meadow trail southwest toward Horse Creek. It is ten miles the first day but it is relatively level. The second day head for Evelyn Lake, a great spot for a layover day. Good swimming spot. Then head southeast past Quinn Peak (C). Stay overnight near an old cabin foundation. Go over windy gap past Vandervere Peak (C) and stay at Franklin Lake. The best camping spots are high up on the east side. Florence Peak (D) is not too far. Then hike out to Mineral King.

Special Award: Sierra South (GLAAC) or High Adventure Backpack (GLAAC)
 Trailhead: Mineral King in Sequoia National Park
 Topo Map Coverage: Mineral King / Quinn Peak
 Trail Guide Coverage:
 Required Permit: Wilderness
 Miles/Elevation Gain: 39 / 6,300
 Scheduled Hours: 25



Concluding Comments

The Unit Leadership should exercise its imagination in selecting a general location for a long-term backpack and in planning a specific route. The only proviso is that it is strongly recommended, particularly when younger Scouts are to participate, to select one that uses well-established trails. Backpacking cross-country is very difficult and time-consuming, often twice or more than the scheduled allowance. Terrain conditions and vegetation are often encountered that are not apparent on maps.

Those who would go further afield should consider the unique awards that are offered by the Councils for Southern Nevada, Southern Utah, and Western and Northern Arizona. Contact those Councils directly for information about them and suggested/required routes.

A complete discussion of the awards program of the GLAAC-HAT is contained in Hike Aid 6, "High Adventure Awards Program". It lists each award that is sponsored by the Council and specifies its requirements.



Reference Materials

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Hike Aids, Greater Los Angeles Area Council - HAT, Los Angeles, CA.

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Trip Planning Aids

- ◆ Automobile Club of Southern California, "Guide to the San Bernardino Mountains" (map).
- ◆ Defenders of the San Gorgonio Wilderness, "Guide to the San Gorgonio Wilderness" (map).
- ◆ Robinson, John W., San Bernardino Mountain Trails, Wilderness Press, Berkeley, CA, 2016.
- ◆ USDA-Forest Service, "San Gorgonio Wilderness" and "San Bernardino National Forest" (maps).
- ◆ U.S. Geological Survey, "Big Bear Lake", "Forest Falls", "Moonridge", and "San Gorgonio Mountain", (7-1/2 minute topographical maps).

Hiking Guides

As recently as the seventies, there were few guide books about backpacking routes. Now, new ones continually appear, and they are almost universally of a high quality. Often there will be several that cover the route of your trek. The following list of books should include a description of the locales and trails that your Unit might consider for one. Use a guide book to learn about them, as you begin the planning and preparation. The specialty outdoor stores used to carry a good selection of them. Now days, you may have to ask them to order what you want from a warehouse.

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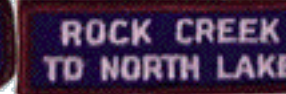
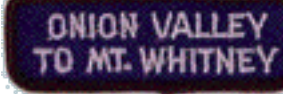
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- Schneider, Bill, Hiking Canyonlands and Arches National Parks, Falcon Press, Helena, MT, 2023.
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"Standing here in the deep, brooding silence all the wilderness seems motionless, as if the work of creation were done. But in the midst of this outer stead-fastness 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



"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*