

### **Day 1 - HQ to Vaca**

This is a short ride. You start at the road and climb to the camp. Note that you will climb about 1000 feet that day even though you don't do many miles. Most advisors were puffing pretty hard some of the crew too. Vaca is a nice camp to start, there was good, pretreated water at the well in Harlan on the way to camp.

### **Day 2 – Vaca to Deer Lake Camp**

We got off early and had our breakfast at Harlan, then did their reloading and skeet shooting program after which we hung out until lunch. We cooked a dinner for lunch to save hauling water up to Deer Lake. You can get water from Deer Lake but I would avoid if possible. This is a pretty hard first real day on the trail. If it helps, I was 49 and did not die. Deer Lake Camp is on the mesa right next to the lake. It was one of the most beautiful spots we saw at Philmont, lots of wildlife, sunrise and sunsets are stunning.

### **Day 3 – Deer Lake to Ute Springs**

Nice hike, some of it down hill, you skirt along the side of the mesa. When you look back at Deer Lake Mesa, you won't believe how far you came. We picked up food at Ute Gulch Commissary. We returned nearly 25 pounds of food we did not want. Mostly drink mix and desert. Crew members had the option of keeping anything from the pile they wanted. This is when we saw our first bear. He made a Mid-day visit, on the porch of the staff's cabin. Good water available. This was our first trail camp without a ranger.

### **Day 4 – Ute Springs to Lambert Mine**

This was a long day but scenic. We went by way of Hidden Valley / Window Rock then toured the Hunting Lodge before trudging up the stream to Lamberts. Hidden Valley was one of our Crew's favorite parts of the trek. The view from Window Rock is amazing. Don't tarry too long at the Lodge because you have a long uphill stretch to Lambert. The campsites at Lambert Mine were the least "improved" of any that we saw. There was lots of dead falls and downed timber. The crew and my other advisor went around to the Stomp at Cypher's Mine after dinner, I stayed and cleaned up and loaded Bear Bags. It is farther to Cypher's than you think.

### **Day 5 – Lambert Mine to Mt. Phillips Camp**

This is hard day the way we did it. Over to Cypher's mine for water and gold panning then we headed for Mt Phillips Camp via Thunder Ridge and Comanche Peak. Good trail with lots of switchbacks but we climbed for hours. Sleet, hail and rain on the way. You camp at more than 10,000 feet so allow enough time for cooking. Water boils at mere 193 degrees at that altitude. Some went to the summit for sunrise and sunset. About 28 degrees overnight with a pretty strong breeze. There are two sets of campsites. The first map we came to only listed half the sites. At the time there was only one pilot/bombardier and it was way down the fence line from our campsite.

### **Day 6 – Mt Phillips Camp to Porcupine**

This is a good hiking day. Morning on Mount Phillips was great but the trail, which is off ranch property, to Clear Creek lacks switchbacks and is poorly maintained, lots of loose rock. Once you get back on ranch property at Clear Creek things are good and down hill to boot! We did the

blackpowder program at Clear Creek and had a good time. It was nice to be back down below 9,000 feet. Porcupine has campsites along the stream. It is a very nice area with plenty of water.

### **Day 7 – Porcupine to Beaubien**

We did our conservation project at Philips Junction and picked up food at the commissary. The swap box got a lot of action as well and there were fresh oranges! The hike to Beaubien has a lot of up to it but it was a pretty easy day.

### **Day 8 – Layover at Beaubien**

Great day, make sure you get to your horse backing riding reservations on time. No showers for us due to drought but they might be available. Chuck wagon dinner was a nice change from trail food. Campfire was fun. Our crew opted NOT to hike Trail Peak and side hiked Bonito Peak instead. I did the Trail Peak hike in 1967 and remember it as interesting.

### **Day 9 – Beaubien to Abreu**

We opted to head straight to Abreu via Lower Bonito. On a clear day you can see some of the wreckage on Trail Peak. I think we should have gone via Fish Camp. Much of our hike was through nice meadows BUT then you cut down a valley that has a trail which is steep and narrow. Narrow does not come close to describing it. Abreu was a relaxing stop for us. Goat milking and chicken chasing were popular. Great advisors coffee on the porch. The cantina was a nice reprieve from trail life. The Mexican dinner was good, fresh food with plenty of salsa. Because of the drought and fires this was our first shower on the trail. NICE!

### **Day 10 – Abreu to Miners Park**

We went via Crater Lake and made there by lunchtime. We did not do the program there but many crews did. We took an unintended detour that cost us nearly an hour around the Bear Caves camp. Make sure you get on the right trail to Miners Park. It is farther than you think. Several other crews had the same problem. The rock climbing program at Miners “closes” at 4 pm. Make sure you get there early. Showers and good water too.

### **Day 11 – Miners Park to HQ**

This is your longest day but what a way to end your trek! We carried the water we would need out of Miners and redistributed it before starting up Scheafers Pass. It is a pretty good climb up through Scheafers Pass to Tooth Ridge but everybody is in top shape by now. The hike along the ridge is fantastic. Every time you go around a corner there is another startling view. There is a bear cable and obvious stopping point at the base of the Tooth. Do the folks staying on the ridge a favor and get your smellables hoisted. The climb up the Tooth is a boulder scramble. Take your time it is worth the risk. NOTE: When I went as a Scout in 1967, I opted to NOT climb the Tooth of Time when I had a chance. I always regretted it. True, the crew leads but advise strongly that everybody climb the Tooth. From the Tooth into HQ is a long and winding hike. Unfortunately many of the switchback have been cut by crews in a hurry. Take your time and enjoy this great last day. You will actually walk past HQ and come back. We hit that final gate in pouring rain, but there were smiles all around.