

Troop 212, San Bernardino Peak Backpack Trip, January 29-31, 2016

Dear Scouts and Scouters,

Our January 29-31 backpacking adventure involves hiking up the San Bernardino Trail from Angeles Oaks to Limber Pine Bench Trail Camp. The total hike is approximately 12 miles, over two days, and is located in the San Gorgonio Wilderness. This will be an intermediate level backpacking trip (more difficult than recent all-troop hikes) and some experience and training is highly recommended. You should plan to attend the conditioning hike held this coming Saturday (Jan. 23) unless you have recently logged significant miles backpacking. We have been teaching the basics of backcountry backpacking during the past year and will have one more teaching demo during the January 25th meeting. There will be more demos during the actual trip as well.

On Friday evening, January 29th, we'll meet at 7:00 pm at the Church parking lot and drive to Camp Tahquitz where we will camp the first night. Camping at Tahquitz will allow our bodies to acclimate to the higher elevation allowing for a safer outing. On Saturday morning we break camp and drive to the trailhead located about 15 minutes away in Angeles Oaks. Please make sure all hiking canteens are filled at Camp Tahquitz before departure because there will NOT be water available at the trailhead. Our start elevation will be at 5960ft. We will hike approximately 5.75 miles to our Base Camp, Limber Pine Bench at about 9280ft. Scouts will make camp at a backcountry undeveloped site where we will review and determine what makes for good tent and kitchen locations.

Once at camp, two options are available to each hiker. Advanced hikers (carrying snacks and the 10 essentials) may continue to up to three points beyond (Washington Monument, San Bernardino Peak and San Bernardino East Peak), an additional 6.4 miles round trip for all three points. They will return to base camp for the evening. All other hikers will stay near camp working on winter camping skills and enjoying free time. Unfortunately, fires are NOT allowed in the San Gorgonio Wilderness.

Sunday morning we will eat breakfast, break camp, making sure we practice our best Low Impact Camping skills, and hike back to the parking area. We will stop for lunch on the drive home. **Scouts are to bring money for lunch.** Backpackers will organize and re-store troop gear the same day at the Church parking, with the exception of the troop backpacks, which are to be returned the next day, Monday, during the troop meeting.

Possible PLAN B:

In the event that snow and ice make the trail treacherous and too dangerous for hiking, we will stay at Camp Tahquitz the entire weekend. We will engage in numerous activities such as snow hut building, snowshoeing, hiking, possibly cross-country skiing, and other exciting activities as developed by your SPL and staff and that conditions allow. All other details of this weekend remain the same: Thursday pack check, food and equipment distribution, Friday departure time, Sunday return time, backcountry camping and cooking (NO TROOP TRAILER), etc. Troop leadership will inform the troop as soon as possible if this should occur. **Otherwise, presume that the hike will proceed as described above.**

Important Days and Costs:

\$30 / \$10 30 covers 1 trail dinner and 2 trail breakfasts, 1 trail lunch + \$10 for gas. **Please bring \$40 cash (drivers \$30) to the troop meeting on Monday, January 25th, with the standard permission slip,** which can be found on the website. Troop packs will be checked out at this meeting.

Thursday, January 28th at 7:00 PM – our standard mandatory final “bag check” will be held at the church at 7pm, room location to be determined, where we will also distribute the backpacking food, stoves, fuel, maps and tents, enabling hikers to finish loading their packs for final weigh-in.

Friday, January 29th at 7:00 PM – Church parking lot. Please arrive promptly before departure for a quick visual pack inspection and vehicle loading.

Sunday, January 31st, at approximately 3:00 PM, back at Church Parking Lot. Please do not depart for home until all troop gear has been accounted for and your SPL has dismissed you.

Equipment:

As a minimum, the following items should be packed in a backpack (NO black duffel bags):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate clothing (Day mid-40's/Night-teens)<input type="checkbox"/> Brim Hat and warm hat for nighttime<input type="checkbox"/> Pocket Knife<input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight (small is best)<input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen and Chapstick<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit<input type="checkbox"/> Compass<input type="checkbox"/> Hiking boots, extra socks<input type="checkbox"/> Boot spikes/crampons<input type="checkbox"/> Trek/ski poles (spiky)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Ground Cloth<input type="checkbox"/> Poncho/Rain Gear<input type="checkbox"/> Small baggy of Handy-wipes, Toothbrush & paste<input type="checkbox"/> Toilet paper & trowel<input type="checkbox"/> water bottle ("camelbak" not recommended)<input type="checkbox"/> Mess Kit (utensils, bowl, mug, etc)<input type="checkbox"/> Whistle<input type="checkbox"/> Trail Map (download Troop website)^Δ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Warm Jacket<input type="checkbox"/> Matches or Flint<input type="checkbox"/> Pencils, Pens, Notebook<input type="checkbox"/> Rope – 10 Feet<input type="checkbox"/> Warm Sleeping Bag and Pad<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Small towels<input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses<input type="checkbox"/> Money for Sunday lunch
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Important Equipment Notes:

1) Hiking conditions at present are 12-30 inches of snow that is in a "freeze-thaw" state. That is, the snow melts in the daytime and re-freezes at night. This results in an icy crust that can be very slippery, especially in the shade. **Two pieces of equipment are highly recommended:** 1) ice spikes for your shoes, and 2) a pole with a spiky end, such as a trekking or ski pole. Two poles may be advantageous over just one. (If you have a ski basket on the end, better, but not necessary.) Please note: a standard hiking staff (such as we often distribute at the trailhead) will be insufficient as the end is not pointy. Both pieces of equipment can be purchased at a reasonable cost. If El Nino develops as predicted, these may be needed for the May backpacking trip, as well.

2) Some scouts have expressed the desire to use snowshoes. Depending upon the recommendation by the Ranger, it will be allowed. **However, snowshoes cannot replace ice spikes.** If you rent snowshoes and **share** with other troop members, the troop will reimburse your cost. The troop owns six sets. Those interested may wish to borrow from the troop rather than renting.

3) January temperatures will range from the teens at night, to the low 40's during the day. This is a ridgeline hike with potential a wind chill factor - prepare accordingly

4) Please keep in mind that a full backpack should be no more than one-fourth the weight of the scout carrying it. Remember to plan for your share of food and troop gear distributed Thursday.

Important Driver Notes:

1) California State Law requires that all vehicles traveling into the mountains between Nov. 1 and April 1 carry tire chains, even if no snow is on the road. This includes 4WD vehicles. Depending upon the conditions, we may need to "chain-up" so be prepared by having chains in your vehicle. If you do not own chains, check with other T212 parents who may be willing to loan a set to you (must fit your tires).

2) An "ADVENTURE PASS" is required for parking each vehicle at the trailhead. If you do not have a pass, check with other parents for sharing. The troop must ensure that all vehicles have passes. You will get a ticket – the San Bernardino sheriff responsible for this area is based in Angeles Oaks, right where we park!

John Douglas

^Δ The map is available in two forms: a single page or a RIGHTSIDE and LEFTSIDE. Printing the two sides will give you better resolution for finding your way.