

Troop 212, Spring Backpacking Trip, May 18-20, 2018

The May backpacking adventure will take us to the rugged and beautiful Sespe Wilderness, near the Gorman exit of Route 5, not far from the Frazer Park area. This trip is designed for new, beginning backpackers, as well as offering an optional upgrade, more difficult hike trip for the advanced backpackers in the troop. This trip will traverse through part of the San Gabriel Fault zone with spectacular geological features (you KNOW John will be handing each of you a rock again and asking " what's this saying to you" ...!) , California Condor territory (keep your eyes open for this magnificent and largest North American bird in the vulture family...anyone have light weight binoculars?), chances to cross, walk, and dip in fresh water creeks, not to mention the infinite number of stars you will see in clear skies at night (opportunity for stars rank advancement ?)

Our journey will begin on Friday, May 18th, at 7:00pm, meeting at the church to pack the vehicles in preparation for a 2-3 hour drive into the northern parts of the Sespe Wilderness. We may stop a short time on the way for a refreshments break, so each person will need some spending money for this. Upon a late, in the dark, arrival, we will set up base camp in a local campground (Halfmoon), affording us the chance to rise early Saturday fully rested and acclimated to the 5000 foot altitude. Saturday Breakfast will be prepared by our base camp crew, to support our need for an early departure. Paper plates/cups/bowls and plastic wear will be provided due to low water opportunities for washing, and to speed up our departure.

Once base camp breakfast is complete, the hiking will commence with two options: the "Short Hike" or the "Long Hike":

The Short Hike , which we expect most of the troop will follow, takes us up the Little Mutau Trail following the Little Mutau Creek in the Shadow of San Rafael Peak. We will leave directly from our campground hiking 1.25 miles to the Johnston Ridge Trailhead. Here we will consult our maps together to determine our path, important geographical features to look for and junctions we expect to cross. From Johnston Ridge Trailhead to Little Mutau camp is a relatively easy hike of about 4 miles gaining around 650 feet in elevation. The total distance for the day will be 5.25 miles. The return trek on Sunday is the same distance.

For the Long Hike, we expect the advanced backpacking group will follow the identical trail as above, to Little Mutau camp then push further to Sunset Campground, a total of about 16 miles from our starting point. This group will have SPOT for their trail use. Sunday's route will take to the Piru Creek Trail eventually looping us back at Halfmoon Campground where we began our adventure Saturday morning. The total mileage for the advanced group will be a little over 24 miles with elevation gains of 3100'. Any experienced scout in Troop 212 is welcome to join the advanced backpacking group with permission from the Jr. Leader Trip Leaders, Owen and Kai.

The backcountry campsites for both hikes will be chosen by the Jr. Leaders and properly maintained campfires will be allowed, pending approval by the Forest Service at the time of the trip (depends upon posted Fire Conditions). Water is available along the trail from the stream at various points and near Saturdays camp, but must be properly purified before consumed via water filtration. You may wish to bring extra empty water bottles for storing cooking water. Each backpacker should carry a minimum of two (2) liters of water in backpacks for the hike. Advanced backpackers must have four (4).

If you wish to attend this trip, monies and permission slips will be collected **ONLY** on Monday, May 13, during our troop meeting. Backpacks can be checked out that evening from the Quartermasters for anyone who needs to borrow one.

Our standard mandatory final "bag check" will be held at the church at 7pm, Thursday, May 17th, in the large Hall. We will distribute the backpacking food for Saturday supper, and Sunday breakfast to each person, stoves with fuel tanks for each Team Pair, cooking pots for each Team Pair and water purifier kits to experienced Junior Leaders and Patrol Leaders, thereby enabling hikers to finish loading their packs that evening. We are encouraging each participant to load these completed packs into the blue van that night, if possible. Please remember each backpacker will be responsible for their own Saturday lunch, and trail snacks both Saturday and Sunday. Sandwiches that need refrigeration would be a poor choice.

Daytime temperatures are expected to be in the mid 60's, so brim hats and sunscreen are imperative. However, it could be cool at night – in the low 40's – **BE PREPARED**. Weather updates will be issued on Monday (13th) and Thursday (17th) by Owen and Kai, Trip/Theme leaders for this event.

ATTENTION Advanced scouts (and scouters) who plan to go on the June High Sierra backpacking trip: this is a MANDATORY shake-down and preparation trip. If you are unable to attend this Sespe Wilderness backpacking trip, you will need special permission from the Trip and Theme leaders (Toby and Sebastian) to still attend the June High Sierra

backpacking trip. Either option (regular troop or extended hike) may be taken to qualify.

In order to pack the backpacks properly, the following information tips should be helpful:

- Nothing is carried in your hands or around your neck.
- Keep weight down; bring as little extra as possible, but be sure to have the essentials from the list below.
- Having a small, light weight foam pad to sit on would be useful to avoid using backpacks as chairs.

Summary of Important Days and Costs:

Monday, May 13, at the Troop Meeting, please bring \$35 (\$25 / \$10) to cover the cost of 1 trail dinner on Saturday and 1 trail breakfast on Sunday, and 1 base camp breakfast on Saturday+ \$10 for gas. Please bring cash/check, with the troop permission slip, which can be found on the website. Troop packs will be checked out " rental style" for free at this meeting for those who have not already received their packs. Each backpacker will need to supply a personal lunch for Saturday and trail snacks for the hikes on Saturday and Sunday. Sunday lunch will be a stop on the way home.

Thursday, May 17th at 7:00 PM is our standard mandatory final “bag check” will be held at the church, where we will also distribute the backpacking food, stoves, fuel, tents, and maps enabling hikers to finish loading their packs for final weigh-in.

Friday, May 18th at 7:00 PM for meet up at the Church parking lot in our standard class A uniform to support vehicle loading and prompt departure. Please arrive promptly. (A scout is Courteous!)

Sunday, May 20th at about 5:00 – 6:00 PM is our estimated return at Church parking lot. Do not leave the parking lot until all troop gear has been accounted for and your SPL has dismissed you. Please keep in mind return times are always influenced by things beyond our control, such as how efficient we are during the Sunday hike, and Sunday pack up time, as well as general weather conditions, or just plain traffic conditions. Therefore, we encourage you to check the trip return **SPOT** screen on our troop web site to monitor our progress. As always, each scout will call home at about 30 minutes prior to arrival at the church parking lot. It would be helpful if each scout memorized their parents phone number to make this notification process easier.

Equipment:

As a minimum, the following items should be packed in a backpack (NO black duffel bags). Be sure to save room and weight for your share of the Team Pair and/or group gear. Remember: your TOTAL pack weight should be between 20% and 25% of your body weight. Keep the weight down and have a good time!

<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate clothing (Day mid-60's/Night-40's) <input type="checkbox"/> Brim Hat daytime and warm hat for nighttime <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses (encouraged) <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking boots, extra socks <input type="checkbox"/> Poncho/Rain Gear (can be used when cold as well) <input type="checkbox"/> water bottles or camelback filled at home – 2 liters minimum, 4 liters for advanced group <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen and Chapstick	<input type="checkbox"/> Whistle (only for emergencies) <input type="checkbox"/> Trail Map (troop will provide) <input type="checkbox"/> Compass <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit <input type="checkbox"/> Pocket Knife <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet paper & trowel <input type="checkbox"/> Matches in waterproof container <input type="checkbox"/> Rope – three 10 Feet lengths. to be combined with partner for bear bag hanging <input type="checkbox"/> hiking staff/trek/ski pole	<input type="checkbox"/> Pencils, Pens, Notebook <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight (small is best) <input type="checkbox"/> Warm Jacket <input type="checkbox"/> Warm Sleeping Bag and Pad <input type="checkbox"/> Ground Cloth <input type="checkbox"/> Mess Kit (utensils, bowl, mug, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Small baggy of Handy-wipes, Toothbrush & paste <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Small towels (optional) <input type="checkbox"/> Money for Sunday lunch and Friday night snack
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Important Driver Note:

Our campground for Friday night requires each vehicle to display the National Forest Service “ADVENTURE PASS” (or America The Beautiful pass). THERE IS NO PLACE TO PURCHASE THIS PASS ON-SITE OR ALONG THE WAY. You must purchase it before leaving. The pass costs \$30 and is valid for 12 months from the month of purchase; a “Second Car” pass is available for an additional \$5. It is suggested that two drivers split the \$35 and obtain both. Conveniently, any BIG-5 sells the pass.