

## Troop 212, Fall Backpacking Trip, September 24-26, 2021

### CRITICAL NOTICE

*As of August 31, 2021 CALFIRE has closed all National Forests in California (except Humbolt-Toiyabe) through Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>. If this closure is extended, as it was last year, this particular location will be abandoned for another location. Stay tuned for updates over the coming weeks.*

The September 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, more difficult hike for the advanced backpackers in the troop. We will traverse through part of the San Gabriel Fault zone with spectacular geological features, California Condor territory (keep your eyes open for this magnificent and largest North American bird in the vulture family, not to mention the infinite number of stars you will see in clear skies at night (opportunity for the Star rank advancement).

Our journey will begin on Friday, Sept. 24, at 7:00pm, meeting at the church to pack the vehicles in preparation for a 3 hour drive. Expect a stop along the way for a refreshing break. Upon a late, in the dark arrival, we will set up base camp at Halfmoon Campground, affording us the chance to rise early Saturday fully rested and acclimated to the 4700 foot altitude. On Saturday, our BaseCamp crew will prepare hot water for each hiker to eat hot oatmeal and drinks, to allow for an early departure. Paper plates/cups/bowls and plastic ware will be provided due to low water availability for washing, and to speed up our departure.

### THE HIKES: Two Options

The Short Hike: The trail starts in camp, follows Piru Creek as it meanders along FR 7N03 miles climbing an easy 200 feet in about 4.25 miles to Thorne Meadows, our camp for the night. On Sunday, we will retrace our steps to the vehicles at Halfmoon Camp. Most of the troop will complete this hike.

The Long Hike: The advanced backpacking group will proceed along the same route but take a turn up the Fishbowls Trail to investigate Cedar Creek, the Fishbowls, and, perhaps, the magnificent view from Pine Mountain. The group will retrace its steps, eventually stopping for the night at Thorne Meadows, the same camp as the rest of the troop. Total mileage for the day will range between 11 to 15 depending upon the group decision. Any experienced scout in Troop 212 is welcome to join the advanced backpacking group provided that he has completed a minimum of three training hikes on Signal Hill and has permission from the ASPLs Owen and Hayden in consultation with his patrol leader. (ADULTS: we need additional adult participation for the advanced hike. See Chuck Smith.) This group will carry SPOT for their trail use.

Sunday, an additional hike up to Thorne Point, elevation 6935', will be an option before returning to the vehicles at Halfmoon Camp.

### BASECAMP OPTION FOR ADULTS

Non-backpacking Adults: Basecamping at Halfmoon is a wonderful experience. If you'd rather not backpack, we strongly recommend that you stay the weekend with other T212 adults. Minimal responsibilities will include preparing breakfast early Saturday morning. Otherwise, the days are free to enjoy birding, exploring the area, working on bush craft, and improving your scoutmaster-in-training napping skills. Please note: trailers are not recommended at this camp due to its difficult access.

### OTHER DETAILS

Backpacks can be borrowed from the Troop on Monday, Sept. 20. See the troop quartermaster.

Our standard, mandatory final "bag check" will be held at the church at 7pm, Thursday, Sept. 23 in the gym. We will distribute the backpacking food for Saturday supper, and Sunday breakfast to each person, stoves with fuel tanks for each Team, cooking pots for each Team. Water Purifier kits to experienced Junior Leaders and Patrol Leaders, thereby enabling hikers to finish loading their packs that evening.

Water is not available at camp: all water for backpackers and base campers must be brought from Long Beach. The troop will supply containers for driver distribution and delivery to the camps.

Fires in camp and on the trail. All charcoal and wood fires are prohibited in the Los Padres National Forest. Cooking is allowed only by stoves, and only in specifically named campgrounds, including Halfmoon and Thorne Meadows. **STOVES ARE NOT ALLOWED OUTSIDE OF THESE CAMPGROUNDS.**

Daytime temperatures are expected to be in the mid 70's, so brim hats and sunscreen are imperative. However, it could be cool at night – in the 40's – **BE PREPARED**. Weather updates will be issued on Monday (20<sup>th</sup>) and Thursday (23<sup>rd</sup>) by Owen and Hayden, the ASPLs.

Meals: Two separate meal plans: backpackers and base campers.

Backpackers: Included in the cost of the trip will be (1) Saturday morning camp breakfast, (1) freeze-dried backpacking dinner, (1) breakfast pack (oatmeal), along with hot chocolate packs, snack bars, trail snacks, baggies to carry everything. You are responsible for Saturday lunch, and additional snacks, soups, beverages that you would like. Sandwiches or other foods that need refrigeration would be a poor choice for this trip.

Base Campers: Included in the cost of the trip will be Saturday and Sunday breakfasts, Saturday Lunch and Saturday dinner. The base camper meals will be decided by those who attend the Adult Planning Meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>. Show up so you get to eat your favorite camp meals, and to assist the troop in the various logistical matters for this trip (such as the required Adventure Pass noted below). Shopping duties will be arranged at the same meeting.

Sunday Lunch will be on the drive home. It is strongly suggested that backpackers bring extra snacks for Sunday to "hold them over" until the lunch destination is reached. Remember to bring money for lunch at a food stop.

Important Driver Note: Our campground requires each vehicle to display the National Forest Service "ADVENTURE PASS" (or AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL PASS, or several other federally issued passes). 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, when purchased at the same time. Two two drivers should split the \$35 and obtain both. Conveniently, any BIG-5 and various other sporting good stores sell the pass. We will verify that all drivers have a pass during the Adult Planning Meeting on Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### Summary of Important Days and Costs:

**Cost:** Monday, Sept. 20, at the Troop Meeting, please bring money to cover the cost of your chosen activity:

Backpackers: \$30 + \$15 = \$45

Base Campers: \$35 + \$15 = \$50

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.

Note on the gas money: As a reminder, the \$15/per person gas money is collected from every participant on the trip, both scouts and adults, regardless of who drives a vehicle. The total amount collected in gas money is later divided equally amongst the vehicles used and dispersed at a Troop meeting following the trip.

Thursday, Sept. 23 at 7:00 PM is our standard mandatory final "bag check" in the gym. We will distribute the backpacking food for Saturday supper, and Sunday breakfast to each person, stoves with fuel tanks for each team, cooking pots for each team, water purifier kits to experienced Junior Leaders and Patrol Leaders, thereby enabling hikers to finish loading their packs that evening.

**Departure:** Friday, Sept. 24<sup>th</sup> 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.

**Return:** Sunday, Sept. 26<sup>th</sup> at about 5:00 – 6:00 PM to the 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 time we return to the vehicles on Sunday, or general weather and traffic conditions. Therefore, we encourage parents to check the trip return **SPOT** screen on our troop website to monitor our progress. Kkeep in mind that SPOT response is delayed about 15 minutes. As always, each scout will call home at about 30 minutes prior to arrival at the church parking lot. Therefore, each scout should memorize their parents' phone numbers to make this notification process easier.

#### Covid-Era Carpooling and Tenting

Carpooling: Due to the continued issue of Covid-19, Troop 212 is adjusting its policy on carpooling. For those drivers and riders who are comfortable riding together in a vehicle, carpooling is allowed with the limitation of a maximum of (2) riders per seat row. Wearing of masks will be determined by those driving/riding in each vehicle. Don't want to

wear a mask in vehicle? Choose a one in which masks are not required. Want to wear a mask? Choose a vehicle in which masks are required. Do not want to carpool? Families are welcome to provide transportation for their own scouts. As is all matters in Scouting, *courteous* and *kind* are vital elements to the Scout Law. Regardless of any individual preference or opinions towards this issue, all members and participants, and their decisions will be honored and respected.

Tenting: To continue Covid precautions, scouts sharing tents will be limited to those who live the same household, with limited exception. Otherwise, each individual scout or adult must tent alone. T212 has sufficient numbers of tents to accommodate those who need a tent (see the Quartermaster). Youth Protection Guidelines still remain in effect.

**Backpacking 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 your Team and Group gear. Remember: your TOTAL pack weight should be between 20% and 25% of your body weight, the lower the better. Keep the weight down and have a good time. In order to hike the properly, the following information tips are helpful:

- No gear is to be carried in your hands or around your neck.
- Keep weight down; bring as little as possible, but be sure to have the essentials from the list below.
- Attach a foam pad on the top or outside of your pack to sit on: we don't use our backpacks as chairs.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Individual Gear</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate clothing (Day mid-60's/Night-40's)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Brim Hat (day) and warm hat (night)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses ( encouraged)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hiking boots, extra socks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Poncho/Rain Gear (= windbreaker)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen and Chapstick</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Warm Jacket</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Warm Sleeping Bag and Pad</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Compass</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Trail Map (troop will provide)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight (small is best)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whistle (only for emergencies)</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Individual Gear</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> water bottles or camelback filled at home – min. 2 liters short hike, min. 4 liters long hike</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Food (lunch, dinner, breakfast, snacks)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mess Kit (utensils, bowl, mug)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Toiletries: Toothbrush &amp; paste, Handy-wipes,</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pocket Knife</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Toilet paper &amp; trowel</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Matches in waterproof container</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rope – three 10 Feet lengths to be combined with partner for bear bag hanging</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Individual Gear</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pen, Small Notebook</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Money for Sunday lunch and Friday night snack</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Optional Personal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> hiking staff/trek/ski pole</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 Small towels (optional)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Team Gear</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ground Cloth</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tent</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Stove, fuel, windscreen, Pot</li> </ul>
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\*Base Campers will need most of the same equipment, with the exception of items specific to backpacking such as bottles of water designed for packing, lightweight cooking gear, or specially packed food.

\*Any scout or parent who needs equipment should check with the Quartermaster or speak with Troop Leadership

Sincerely,

John Douglas