

1950 High Trip

(The 45th High Trip)

**High Trip 1 – Campsites for the first two weeks – Virginia
Lakes to Buckeye Creek - July 17-29**

High Trip 2 – Buckeye Creek to Tuolumne Meadows – July 31 – August 12

High Trip 3 – Dana Meadows to Lake Ediza – August 14 – 26

To get people into the mountain wilderness, to enable them to explore and enjoy it and thus know well the importance of protecting it, a full series of summer wilderness outings is presented once again. There will be twelve two-week periods in all – total capacity, 800 persons – between July 3 and August 27. Further details about each type of club trip are given in the Member's Handbook, which also contains comments and list on outing equipment. The following announcements consist of itineraries, procedure for making reservations, and keynote drawings are by Milton Hidlebrand.

The High Trips

A New Kind of Trip to Seldom-Seen High Yosemite Country



There must be a better word than “drastic” to describe the change planned for the 1950 High Trip to the little-known but magnificent backcountry in Yosemite’s High Sierra. Whatever the word is, the change is sweeping and, we believe, all for the good. The trip will be physically easier to make than ever before, even though it will still be a traveling trip – very much so. The new plan for operating the trip will cut the burden on Sierra Meadows just about in half. And the cost is substantially reduced. The one foreseeable disadvantage is that we shall not be able to travel so far between camps as has been required in all High Trips since 1902.

What Have We Done?

Most Sierra travelers have probably seen pack trains go by in which the ratio of mules to men has been about four to one. This summer the Sierra Club will just about reverse that ration – surpassing two-fold its own unsurpassed record for packing the most people through the mountains with the least grass. This year no regular moving days will exceed 7 miles in length. The shortness of the move will allow the stock to move equipment in the morning, then double back and bring up dunnage in the afternoon. We are announcing now that this ought to be a be-kind-to-mules summer, for to make this type of trip possible the mules must walk four times as far as the people. Since the footburners will average 42 miles for each of the three two-week periods, this means that the packers will have ridden nearly 500 miles to serve the trip.

Where Do We Go?

So much for the revolutionary changes. Still the same will be the general plan of the trip – a plan that has brought the enjoyment of traveling through wilderness to thousands of persons since William E. Colby invented the trip at the beginning of the century. Mules carry the load – the food, dunnage, and commissary equipment.

Skilled hands (old-time High Trippers are happily familiar with the names of Jim Harkins, Charlotte Mauk, and Paul “Digger” Kaufmann) will prepare their mountain repasts. And the High Trippers, carrying a minimum of noon-time needs, will explore the Sierra countryside or laze around to suit their tastes. Each period of the trip will follow the successful pattern for maximum enjoyment of the mountains. We come into a campsite from one point of the compass, lay over in that site for a couple of days to enable everyone who wishes to explore two more points of the compass, then we leave by the fourth point for a new campsite, where horizons are new. Each campsite is one in which several days could be enjoyed, from which many fascinating side trips could be made; but we like to leave each site while we are still wanting more of it, to be tantalized into wanting to come back to it again another year, to show it then to someone else. We are willing to leave one scene fairly soon because there are so many more Sierra scenes yet to become familiar with.

*Campsites for the first two weeks –
Virginia Lakes to Buckeye Creek,
July 17-29*



Virginia Canyon. One of the most beautiful in northern Yosemite National Park. A fine base for side trips to Mount Conness, Little Lost Valley of Shepherd Crest, McCabe Lakes, Spiller Canyon. A good possibility for a knapsack route to Benson Lake via the Matterhorn and Slide Canyon.

Matterhorn Canyon. Traditionally good fishing. Beautiful views of Sawtooth Ridge, with its Three Teeth, Cleaver, and Doodad. Miles of broad glaciated canyon to explore, and some of the finest mountain hemlocks in the Sierra.

Benson Lake. The Benson Lake beach is without peer in the Sierra. Neall, Rodgers, and Smedberg lakes are readily accessible. There are fine climbs right in camp for the Polemonium Club, and the presidential route hasn't been touched since 1941. A fine meadow at the base is ideal for spectators. Ask anyone who has been in the Benson Lake country.

Lower Kerrick Meadow. One of the broad, granite-rimmed grasslands for which northern Yosemite country is famous. Side trips to Rock Island Lake, Tower Peak, Suicide Ridge, and Crazy Mule Gulch. Four-weekers may want to strike out for Tilden Lake from here while waiting for the second two-weekers to join the party.

The Roughs. Across Buckeye Pass, at the head of Buckeye Creek. A chance to explore peaks which have long been blank on the Mountain Records Committee's map. Here we'll try to discover how the place got its name, first two-weekers will go out, and the second group will come in from the roadhead out by the Bridgeport ranger Station.

*The Second Period – Buckeye Creek to
Tuolumne Meadows – July 31 – August 12*

The Roughs. An easy day up a gradual glaciated canyon and a chance to acclimatize while the mules move the food stores over Buckeye Pass.

Upper Kerrick Meadow. The general scene is essentially the same as described for the first period. There will be the same places to explore. For those who were not on the first period, there will be opportunity for a knapsack trip to the next camp via Benson Lake and Camp Creek.

Upper Slide Canyon. The most spectacular part of Northern Yosemite. Camp will be right under Sawtooth Ridge. Mountaineering galore, and a chance to explore the many glaciers that descend north from the ridge. You can say you climbed the Matterhorn – and get away with it – provided that people don't press you too closely. The trail down Slide Canyon has long been abandoned (we come in via Snow Pass), and fabulous fishing should be unavoidable.

Matterhorn Canyon. See description for first period. There will be two routes from Slide Canyon to here: one, over Burro Pass and down canyon to camp; two, for those who want something unusual, via the abandoned Slide Canyon Trail past Tallulah and Shamrock lakes.

Virginia Canyon. See description of first period. The mules go out via Cold Canyon and Glen Aulin. Those who wish may go out to Virginia Lakes and pick up dunnage by driving up the Tioga Road to the Sierra Club Soda Springs property.



*The Third Period – Dana Meadows to
Lake Ediza – August 14 – 26*

Parker Pass. The Parker Pass Trail is misnamed. It should be the Koip Pass Trail, inasmuch as Perker Pass is hardly perceptible and Koip is one of the most spectacular in the Sierra. We'll camp as close under Koip as we can, and make the most of a rare opportunity to explore Mono Pass and Bloody Canyon, the Helen Lake country, and the Parker and Koip glaciers.

Alger Lake. Here on the edge of a lake-filled shelf overlooking Reversed Creek and the Mono Craters we can learn the last mysteries of the unclimbed peaks of Koip Crest and study the geology where old roof pendants and granite meet.

Rush Creek. A wild undisciplined basin, heading in Rodgers Peak and Mount Lyell, Yosemite's highest, which bears the second largest glacier in the Sierra.

Garnet Lake. Truly a gemlike lake, with a vista of alpine splendor unequaled in the Sierra. No other peaks have quite the rugged quality of Banner and Ritter.

Lake Ediza. A last chance, perhaps, to see this region as you'll want to remember it – unspoiled. A new view of Banner and Ritter, plus the spires of the Minarets, Iceberg Lake, and the Minaret Glacier. It seems almost inevitable that this country is to be turned inside out for its mineral resources. See it, and rack your brain for a way to save the region as you strike out for the Agnew Meadow roadhead and look back!

The trip has been softened, yes; younger and older people can handle it. The age bracket through the years has been 8 to 80, so we shouldn't expect to push the extreme limits very far. More people who themselves are

pushing the extremes should, however, feel fewer reservations about traveling High Trip style. But you needn't feel that there will be too little exercise to keep your appetite up. We'll start pushing those who show signs of flagging appetites out on more and more side trips.

Of course there'll be plenty to do – natural sciences to study in their habitat; mountaineering; climbing, camping, and map-reading instruction; fishing, photographing, campfire entertainment And there'll be plenty not to do for those who feel strong need for a quiet place in the half shade of the high country, far from ringing telephones.

Commissary

Most of the commissary faces will be familiar; the Browsers and the Goldsworthys leading and assistant leading; menu watcher-overers as listed above; Bruce Morgan, Ike Livermore's right hand man, watching over the mountain transportation and calling mountain dances when we find enough flat granite; Toni Bristow seeing to it that the right cases of food are set out to go to the right places; Bob Golden, Don Scanlon, Steve Jory, Sam VanWyck, Ted Ginno, Helen Smith, Sally Harkins, and a few other old faces and new, uncommitted as yet.

The commissary crew has to be large on any moving trip (it takes manpower to make and break camp), but it is never larger enough. As long as there's a High Trip there'll always be ample opportunity for volunteer wielders of ax, shovel, and hotcake-or-trout turner!



How to Rationalize the Deposit

The deposit is good news - \$60 per two week period, \$45 for children under 14 (but check with the management to see how far under they can be and still be likely to get along). The substantial saving over the last year's figures results from our having so revised the trip that we'll be using no more than six strings of mules. Otherwise this year's trip would have cost \$65 - \$80 per period.

A High Trip shouldn't be very hard to rationalize if from the modest deposit you deduct what your expenses at home would have been for meals at home or taken out, entertainment, city transportation, and medical attention for body and nerves. For example, a very economical, carless couple we know lives on \$150 per month, excluding rent. Since two can live as cheaply as one, it follows that a single person would spend \$70 per two weeks to stay home and would therefore save \$10 by going on the High Trip. A car owner would save even more, since expensive city driving could be eliminated. So you can't afford to stay out of the mountains!

Excerpt taken from the *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1950
Illustrations by Milton Hildebrand.