

The 1954 High Trip

(The 49th High Trip)

**Two two-week periods starting July 4 and 17. Mineral King
The Great Western Divide, and the Kaweahs; Forester Lake,
Lost Canyon, Nine Lakes Basin, Little Five Lakes, Moraine Lake**

Move a day through the Sierra sky-land, rest a day or two in an alpine spot, then move on to new horizons. Let the mules carry the heavy load while you sport a light knapsack, sack, help a little while skilled hands set up camps and mountain banquets. Enjoy the mountains and watch others enjoy them, setting your own pace, traveling with whom you will, sauntering out into high open space, where spring has just come in July, to soak in its quiet beauty. Climb a peak, fish a stream, or help hold a meadow in place all day if you'd rather. Then, at night, throw another log on the fire -- and another pine cone out from under your bag.

That's the high High Sierra the way the High Trip takes it in, essentially as it has been doing since the century began.

Almost anyone can enjoy the high world this way, if his legs will do what they were built to do without groaning too audibly. No one has yet discovered a better exercise than walking, and this is an inspiring way to rediscover how great the rewards can be. Eighty-year-olds have done it, and six-year-olds -- but if you're within four or five years of either extreme, you might check first to see how well this year's itinerary is likely to get along with you.

The places you'll stop at:

Mineral King (7,831), still one of the most charming of primitive road ends in the Sierra -- and it ends quite a road-with a few Giant Sequoias to see en route. No shuttling of cars will be necessary. Walking starts and ends here.

Forester Lake (10,300), east of Franklin Pass, a scenic little lake with a fine panorama of high peaks high above Kern Canyon, with well-watered open meadows at hand, and timberline.

Lost Canyon (10,400), one of the jewels of the High Sierra -- one of the pleasantest of surprises for those who haven't it before. Fine peaks surround it, and the highest peaks in the range parade along the eastern horizon.

Nine Lakes Basin (10,400) is in the open sky-land country where, if you like to imagine things, you feel the timberline foxtail pines are happy to have your company. From here, side trips to Precipice Lake (which Ansel Adams made famous with one photograph), Hamilton Lakes, the Kaweahs -- Black, Great, Red, and Mount. Or down Big Arroyo, over by knapsack to Kaweah Basin, or to Moraine Lake (if it's not scheduled for your two weeks).

Moraine Lake (9,900), kingdom of reflections, where the Sierra is quietest, and just a Clark crow's flight from a place with perhaps the happiest name of all -- Sky Parlor Meadow. Here, too, is Chagoopa Plateau, country the great glaciers spared, the better to show you what they could do in the Kern when they really tried.

Little Five Lakes (10,500). If there were Indian legends for this country, one of them would have to go like this; when the Great Spirit had built the high wall of the Kaweahs, he searched all around to find where he could look upon them best. When he found that spot, he ran just the right-sized stream through it, put just the right number of trees exactly where they should be to leave room for just the right number of lakes -- fifteen. Then man came along and named the place, but before he had learned to count above five.

Itinerary

First two weeks (July 4-17): Cross Franklin Pass (July 5) to Forester Lake; pass Little Claire Lake and Soda Creek to Lost Canyon; past Big Five Lakes and up Big Arroyo to Nine Lakes Basin; back to Little (Five) Lakes; out to Mineral King via Blackrock Pass or via the 1949 route past Columbine Lake and over Sawtooth Pass.

Second two weeks (July 17-30): Cross Sawtooth Pass (July 18) to Lost Canyon; past Big Five Lakes to Little Five; up Big Arroyo to Nine Lakes Basin; along the High Sierra Trail to Moraine Lake; in and out of Big Arroyo and up Soda Creek to Forester Lake; out over Franklin Pass to Mineral King.

NOTES: The second two weeks start an and end one day early to give people and equipment time to head for the Teton and Glacier High Trip.

The commissary crew will be nearly the same as last year's, led by Dave Brower and Pat Goldsworthy. The cost is up slightly owing to the need for deadheading our mules across the Sierra to Mineral King -- but you won't notice at all if you've been budgeting, since the last trip ended, 25 cents a day for the chapter in your life entitled "High Sierra. 1954." Further rationalization supplied upon request.

Lead-with-chin Dept. This is the summer in which we shall not be troubled by rain in the High Sierra. California is sending all its summer rain east to alleviate a rumored shortage in Utah.

Excerpt taken from the *Sierra Club Bulletin*, March 1954