

World Wide Web Address: <http://lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/pcs/>

General Meeting

Date: August 8, 2006
Time: 7:30 pm
Where: Peninsula Conservation Center
3921 E. Bayshore Rd.
Palo Alto, CA

Program: Summer Rain
Presenter: Lisa Barboza

Come join us for a sojourn to Goddard Creek and the Black Divide - For the 2005 Climborama, we climbed 7 peaks over a 6 day period - some peaks in the rain with a foggy view from the summit- This backcountry trip with no trails had stunningly beautiful, not-the-Sierra scenery, frozen lakes at 12k feet in August, and daily afternoon thundershowers - nonetheless, it was a great time and made some of us re-think using a summer bivi.

Directions: *From 101:* Exit at San Antonio Road, go east to the first traffic light, turn left and follow Bayshore Rd to the PCC on the corner of Corporation Way. A sign marking the PCC is out front. Park behind.

PCS Trips

PCS trips must be submitted through the Scheduler (see back cover for details).

SING PEAK, GALE PEAK

Dates: August 5-6, 2006
Peaks: Sing Peak(10,552), Class 2
Gale Peak(10,693), Class 2
Map: Yosemite High Country (Tom Harrison)
Leader: Kelly Maas, 408-378-5311, kellylanda@sbcglobal.net
Co-Leader: wanted

These two peaks are on Yosemite's southern boarder and are reached relatively easily over Chiquito Pass (~8000 ft) from a trailhead on Bearsore Rd., which is reached from the west. We may camp at either Spotted Lakes or Chain Lakes. Beginners welcome.

Mt GODDARD

Dates: August 12-16, 2006
Peak: Mt Goddard (13,568')
Class: 2-3
Leader: Debbie Benham, H: 650/964-0558
deborah05@sbcglobal.net
CoLeader: Ted Raczek, H: 408/532-7732

A west side entry from Florence Lake, THEN we'll hike on the John Muir Trail to Goddard Canyon. We'll climb Goddard from Martha Lake via the southwest ridge. 8 on permit.

MUST have prior backpacking experience. \$5 nonrefundable permit fee required to hold your spot. Contact Debbie to sign up.

MT WARREN, LEE VINING PEAK

Dates: August 19-20, 2006
Peaks: Mt Warren (12,327')
Lee Vining Peak (11,690')
Class: 1-2
Leader(s): Debbie Benham, H: 650/964-0558
deborah05@sbcglobal.net
Chris MacIntosh, H: 650/325-7841
cmaci@sbcglobal.net

Come and enjoy lovely Yosemite National Park at Crane Flat Campground for the weekend! Saturday, we'll hike up both peaks as they're right next to each other, then, return to the campground for general imbibing! Sunday, we'll pick a peak. We've reserved two side-by-side campsites at Crane Flat (Fri/Sat nights). 10 participant limit. \$10 nonrefundable campsite fee holds your spot. Contact either leader to sign up. This trip is great for newcomers!! :-)

Dates: August 19-20, 2006
Peaks: Mt Silliman
Class: 2
Leader: Tim Hult, 408-970-0760
Group size 4. This is a straight forward ascent up a classic peak with easy access via class one trails.

Dates: August 25-27, 2006
Peaks: Mt Ritter, Mt Banner 12,945'
Class: 3; ice axe, crampons
Leader: Tim Hult, 408-970-0760

Group size 4. We will access this spectacular part of the Minarets area going in from Agnew Meadows (Devil's postpile) via the spectacular high Trail. 10 plus miles in on Friday, all day climb on Saturday, Walk out and drive home on Sunday. There is a fee to ride the shuttle bus to Agnews' meadows.

Dates: August 25 – 27 (Friday – Sunday)
Peak: Mt. Gabb (13,741')
Class: 2
Leader: Charles Schafer c_g_schafer@yahoo.com
408 354-1545
Co-Leader: Aaron Schuman climberaaron@comcast.net

Friday we'll hike in over the Bear Creek trail and make camp at Lake Italy. Saturday we get to climb the peak, and on Sunday we hike back out. The area is pretty spectacular, and the hike along Bear Creek is really nice. We should be able to get some scenic views from the summit of Mt. Gabb as well.

This trip should be suitable for relative newcomers who are in good physical shape.

Dates: August 26 – 27
Peak: Mt. Julius Caesar (13,196), Class 3
Class: 3
Leader: Kelly Maas, 408-378-5311, kellylanda@sbcglobal.net
Co-Leader: wanted

Named after its first ascender, this is one of the Sierra's classic peaks. Or is it? We'll find out. Starting from the Pine Creek trailhead north of Bishop, an 8 miles approach lands us in Granite Park. The peak should provide fine views and wet your appetite for other peaks such as Seven Gables, Bear Creek Spire, Gabb, Hilgard, etc.

Dates: August 26-28, 2006
Peak: Mt. Langley (14,026 feet)
Class: 2
Map: USGS Mt. Langley topo, 7.5'

Leader: Tom Driscoll (650) 938-2106
TDriscoll@eooinc.com

Co-Leader: Nancy Fitzsimmons (650) 938-2106
pkclimber@aol.com

A leisurely trip to climb California's southernmost fourteener. We'll hike in on Saturday and camp near one of the Cottonwood Lakes. Sunday we'll dayhike the peak via Old Army Pass, and hike out and drive home on Monday. This is suitable as a beginner's trip as most of the route is on trail or use trail.

Limited to 6 people.

Dates: September 2-?, 2006
Peaks: Piute, Pettit, Volunteer, Rodgers, Electra and Forester
Class: 3; ice axe, crampons
Leader: Tim Hult, 408-970-0760

Start September 2.

Part 1 (start 9/2/06): Saddlebag Lake to N. Yosemite Peaks: Piute, Pettit, Volunteer (2nd and 3rd class)

Part 2 (permit for 9/8/06): Rush Creek to Thousand Island Lake objective to climb Rodgers, Electra & Forester (12058)

These 9 days will be free form in their schedule, involving possible car shuttles, and a change of trailheads in the High Country of East Yosemite. We will start on the non- quota trail out of Saddlebag lake moving cross-country to the vicinity of Piute, Pettit and Volunteer peaks. This country is little visited, but previous reports have it as beautiful in its emptiness. High snow this year should see this area uncharacteristically loaded with wildflowers however making this late season trip particularly attractive. None of the peaks are terribly challenging, but the XC travel may tax some. The group will decide if we will return to the same trailhead or turn this into a shuttle trip with a car(s) parked at Twin Lakes or in Tuolumne meadows. Our goal will be to complete part one by September 5th.

Part 2 of this unique trip is a bit free form as we will either use the permit I have on the Sept 9th (a safety permit I secured as an insurance policy), or get a new one on Sept 7th or 8th. This will allow us to take one day off (Sept 6th?) to get cleaned up in town and reposition ourselves for part 2. An early start date for part 2 is preferred as it too is challenging in its scope with long distances of XC travel involved. This early start option assumes securing a permit in the middle of the week, after a holiday for non- popular trailheads will not be hard. As planned, we will do the long hike up Rush creek to Thousand Island Lake (10+ miles), then ascend North Glacier Pass (class 2) to access the seldom visited and remote headwaters of the San Joaquin River / Lake Catherine area for our attempts on Rodgers, Electra & Forester a run up to Mt. Davis is possible from the pass as well. If the group decides this plan is not optimum for whatever reason, alternative permits, trails, objectives or scenarios may be discussed, including moving the trip to a West side entry via Clover Meadow ranger Station for a hike to Isberg pass (see Eckert Report on climber.org on this approach).

Participants may leave the trip after part 1, but joining the trip for part 2 may require extreme flexibility on the part of the joinee.

Dates: October 7-8, 2006
Peaks: Mystery Peak (6,687 ft)
Class: 1-2
Leader: Debbie Benham, H: 650/964-0558,
deborah05@sbcglobal.net
Co-Leader: Joerg Lohse, JoergPCS@gmail.com

Come meet the bad boy bears of Hetch-Hetchy! Come enjoy the last clear days of the Sierra with this late season carcamp at Hodgdon Meadows Campground. Saturday, we'll hike up our Mystery Peak; Sunday we'll find something to summit. \$5 nonrefundable campsite fee holds your spot. Contact either leader to sign up.
PS: Feel free to come for the day if you're not up for camping!

Dates: September 22-24
Peaks: Excelsior Peak, Glass Mountain
Class: 2
Leader: John Wilkinson, 408-947-0858, johnfw1@mac.com
Enjoy great views and easy scrambling as we climb these two contrasting peaks. We'll camp near Virginia Lakes on Friday and climb Excelsior on Saturday, Glass Mountain on Sunday. Whether we drive out to the start of the Glass Mountain climb on Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning remains to be determined. This is a very suitable trip for beginners. Contact leader to sign up. Limit 12.

Dates: September 22-24, 2006 (Fri-Sun)
Peaks: Hawksbeak Peak (11,134)
Ehrnbeck Peak (11,240)
Class: 3
Map: Buckeye Ridge, Tower Peak 7.5 min.
Leader: Pat Callery, haishan1@yahoo.com

Enjoy an autumn weekend in a secluded corner of Yosemite climbing these rarely visited peaks. Those who have approached Tower Peak from Leavitt area may recognize Hawksbeak peak as the stunning vertical fin visible above Piute Meadows at the head of Walker Canyon. We'll climb it from the other side, via the Class 3 south ridge, after hiking in from Twin Lakes trailhead. Depending on time and energy we'll consider tackling other local peaks like Ehrnbeck, Center Mountain, and Crown Point. Given the very long hike in and plethora of fine peaks in the area, we'll make this an enjoyable 3-day weekend trip.

Trip Reports

Thunderbolt – North Couloir

June 15-17

Rick Booth

Los Gatos, CA

My first peak climb in the Sierras was Thunderbolt via the North Couloir Route many years ago with long time friend Bob Hartunian. I had also climbed Thunderbolt from the Dusy Basin side several years ago with Ron Karpel and a PCS group but I have always been happier going into the Palisades from the north or glacier side. This year I thought a repeat trip to Thunderbolt from the Palisade Glacier would be a fun project.

On Saturday, June 15, Linda Sun, Arun Mahajan, Bill Holt, and I headed up the North Fork of Big Pine Creek trail with the goal of getting to Sam Mack Meadow. Ron Karpel and Greg Johnson had started on Friday and were expected to be there when we arrived. Tom Kopley was hiking in separately and would arrive somewhat later. After about six hours we arrived at Sam Mack Meadow. It was completely blanketed with snow except for one small patch near the water. Not wanting to camp on snow we headed up hill on the snow covered Glacier Trail and found a mix of bivy sites here and there amongst the rocks and junipers about 100 feet in elevation above Sam Mack Meadow. Later, Tom Kopley, who was packing an I-Tent, set up on the one bare patch in Sam Mack Meadow. The weather was somewhat windy but clear.



This is a view of the one clear patch in Sam Mack Meadow with Tom Kopley and his tent set up there.

Sunday morning we started out around 5:30 AM and headed up the right hand snow chute that comes into Sam Mack Meadow. This goes past the outlet from Sam Mack Lake, which was snowed in, and essentially continues straight on towards the North Couloir on Thunderbolt. We crossed the bergschrund on the far left and continued up the steep North Couloir in the soft snow.



This picture is courtesy of Greg Johnson and illustrates the steepness of the North Couloir.

The couloir has a Y branch near the top and the directions from Secor indicate to stay to the left. Well, we ended up staying too far left and had to work our way back to the right on the top of the ridge to get to a notch or gap to the west of the North Summit or Lightning Rod on Thunderbolt. We would have been better off by just going straight up instead of trying to make a real left branch of the Y in the couloir. Anyway, once attaining the gap we dropped down 30 to 50 feet and worked our way around a rock rib. There is an expertly placed duck at the ramp around the rib that is visible from both sides of the rib. Once around the rib we headed up towards a huge chock stone. The chock stone was iced up underneath it so we couldn't get to the easy class 4 face that leads to the summit block area so we just headed straight up from there. This is also class 4 but somewhat steeper than the face on the other side of the chock stone. Once past this obstacle we all set up in the gap below the summit block. We threw a rope over the summit block and I climbed up and ran the rope through the new looking locking carabiner attached to the new looking slings running to the two kind of manky bolts on the summit block. We all climbed the block and took pictures and goofed off.



Linda Sun is celebrating after climbing the summit block on Thunderbolt! Photo courtesy of Greg Johnson.

After a little over an hour we decided to head back to camp. We set two ropes for the rappel down to the base of the chock stone and then headed over to the top of the North Couloir and walked and glissaded down to the glacier. We were back to camp in about 11.5 hours round trip.

The wind chased us back into our sleeping bags at an unnecessarily early hour but Tom had brought a bottle of wine and celebrated by bringing it up to the various bivy sites. The next morning we packed up and hiked out. On the hike out I encountered a woman leading two llamas up the North Fork Trail. I had heard of them being in the Sierras but this was the first time I had ever seen one, two, actually.



This is the second llama and his name is Otis Elevator.

Final Notes:

This is a fun approach to climbing Thunderbolt and makes for an excellent early season ascent. Camping at Sam Mack Meadow is more than adequate and it is not necessary to move higher as we had thought might be needed. 11.5 hours round trip from the meadow for seven participants indicates the Sam Mack Meadow camping spot is fine and it affords the luxury of water without having to melt snow, although the camping itself might be slightly problematic. Thanks to Linda Sun, Tom Kopley, Greg Johnson, Arun Mahajan, Bill Holt and Ron Karpel for a great trip. Special thanks to Greg Johnson for the pictures.

References:

Climbing California's Fourteeners, Stephen F. Porcella and Cameron M. Burns, The Mountaineers, 1998, ISBN 0-89886-555-7

The High Sierra, Peaks, Passes, and Trails, Second Edition, R.J. Secor, The Mountaineers, 1999, ISBN 0-89886-625-1

A Pinch-Hitter: Mt Morgan (South)

by Debbie Benham

While Emerson is my favorite transcendentalist, as a mountain peak, he remains elusive. Or, as that sage Secor admonishes in his south slope route description, "...a common mistake made on this route is to begin the ascent too far to the west" which allowed one participant to sigh, "Emerson's one big scree pile!" While sitting on the wrong ridgeline of Mt Emerson, watching the sun nearing the horizon and calling it a day, one could see Piute Pass covered with snow. What to do?? On to Plan B. This involved a deep discussion at the Bishop Sizzler's Restaurant at lunchtime the next day.



Charles suggested Mt Morgan (13,748') out of Rock Creek trailhead. Following a conversation about map contour lines and heavy snow concerns, off we went with new permit in hand. FYI: Bishop Ranger Station is open 7 days a week during quota period AND your five bucks covers reservation cost, not permit cost – that's free of charge. So... we packed in to Francis Lake and the next day, Monday, headed up and summited about mid-day. A note from Charles: "...stay on the northeast ridge and early too! This avoids the talus (running up the middle)." With the soft snow in the afternoon, most of us enjoyed a short glissade on some of the lower slopes.

Quotes from our eminent participants:

Chris: "Mt Morgan was great! Enjoyed the ridge hike out."

Ted: "Nice not to have a false summit."

David: "It's the first peak I've climbed without a trail. I enjoyed the views from the top!"

Charles: "Spotty snow in protected areas on Morgan. Plus, saw footprints of a 3-legged animal crossing the snow!"

Debbie: "Beautiful rock gardens of Sky Pilot at the top. And, *thank you* to David for providing a wonderful lunch of stoned wheat crackers and cheese on the summit!"



Flora and mountaineers spotted:

Coville's Columbine; Polemonium (Sky Pilot); White Orchids on Piute Pass; Indian Paintbrush; Wild Onions; Jeffrey Shooting Star; Meadow Penstemon; White-Bark Pine; and Foxtail Pine. As we neared the summit, coming down we ran into Debbie Bulger and Richard Stover! Small world, we peak climbers.

Lively trip events:

Chris dodged, luckily, a truly large rock on Emerson, then, bright and early, encountered a healthy-coated marmot chewing the handle of his walking stick! We saw trail runners, water bottles velcroed to each hand, scurrying up Morgan and our eyes widened. How do they do that??!



Another wonderful mountain climb in our beautiful Sierra with special thank yous to Charles and Chris for their leadership. Participants: Tom Abel, Debbie Benham (leader and scribe), David Chang, Rosalie Frankel, Chris Prendergast, Ted Raczek, Charles Schafer.

Hercules Finger

March 27, 2006

Rick Booth

Hercules Finger. So, you never heard of Hercules Finger? Well, neither had I until I saw a picture of it on the bulletin board at Planet Granite a long time ago and wondered about it. A few questions to my old friend Al got me started. His answer: "It is in the middle of nowhere", but, fortunately, it is close to Joshua Tree National Park. A search on the web came up with an archived trip report by Eric Beck which fortunately gave some directions for how to find the thing.



Hercules Finger. Not sure why it is called "finger" but....
Photo: Matt Laue archive

I decided to tack on an attempt on Hercules Finger on one of my Joshua Tree trips that was going to incorporate driving. On the drive back from one of these trips, Matt Laue and I headed in to climb Hercules Finger.

The crux to this project is finding it in the first place. Starting with Eric Beck's directions, <http://angeles.sierraclub.org/dps/archives/dps00575.htm>, we left highway 247 and headed north on Camp Rock Road. These directions are somewhat out of date so here is what we did. We headed straight out on this road without any turns until we hit the power line which is visible in the distance. At the power line we turned right onto the power line road. After about two miles we came to a gate which for inexplicable reasons the owner of this ten acre patch in the middle of hell's half acre has decided to keep locked. This has not deterred previous four wheelers and there is a track around the left side of this fenced patch that brought us back to the power line road. Once back on the power line road keep heading out to the east. In a few minutes Hercules Finger should be visible on the left. Now comes the tricky part. The problem is to find a decent 4x4 track

leading away from the power line road to the base of Hercules Finger. We tried two and had to back out. The third attempt worked, although it was useful to have Matt's Xterra with its high ground clearance and four wheel drive. My guess is a high clearance two wheel drive vehicle can make it in there as long as the correct, that is, easiest road is chosen.



Nowhere, USA. The 4x4 roads into Hercules Finger
Photo: Rick Booth

Oh yeah, the climb. We climbed a 5.7 on the back of the pillar visible in the pictures. It took about 6-7 quickdraws and that was it. The top of the pillar is festooned with cold shuts on all sides and there are a bunch of other routes, apparently ranging up to 5.12, which are on the other sides of Hercules Finger.



Matt celebrating on the top of Hercules Finger
Photo: Matt Laue archive

This is a fun project and can be used to fill in a part of the day for those driving to and from Joshua Tree from the Bay Area. The climbing is easy and it is possible to set a top rope on other interesting routes if you have the time.

Castle Rock Spire and The Fin

June 8-11, 2006

Hal Tompkins and Rick Booth

Jim Curl, Rick Booth, and I started backpacking into the Castle Rock Spire area Thursday morning at around 8 AM. Jim had climbed Castle Rock Spire in 2002 with Bob Suzuki and had been so impressed by the Fin that he actually wanted to repeat the approach hike in order to climb the route Silver Lining on the Fin. He had warned us of the fields of poison oak that would be unavoidable on the approach. The recommended defense was a Tyvek suit along with gaiters and gloves. Strangely enough, Rick and I were still game.



The Fin, Castle Rock Spire, and the Castle Rock group from the old Castle Rock Trail. Photo: Hal Tompkins

The approach began at the Buckeye Flat campground (2800 foot elevation) and spent less than a mile on a trail before starting up a steep ridge. We donned our Tyvek suits here. After gaining ~2000 feet we reached a local highpoint and began searching for the abandoned Castle Rock Spire trail. This trail was supposed to have been built in the 1930's but had been abandoned by the Park Service later. We found remnants that we were able to follow and eventually it got pretty easy to navigate. Of course there were still plenty of fallen trees across the trail to negotiate and other places where the trail was badly overgrown. Finally we reached the first water at around 2:45 PM. At this point we all stopped and washed our clothes and ourselves with Technu in hopes of removing the dreaded urushiol oil from the poison oak. We stashed the poison oak garb here and continued to the gully that descends from between Castle Rock Spire and the Fin. Another two hours of slogging uphill and we reached the "improved" campsite beneath a large boulder. It was a ten-hour day for us.



Two thirds of "Team Tyvek" heading up the ridge to the Castle Rock Trail

Photo: Rick Booth

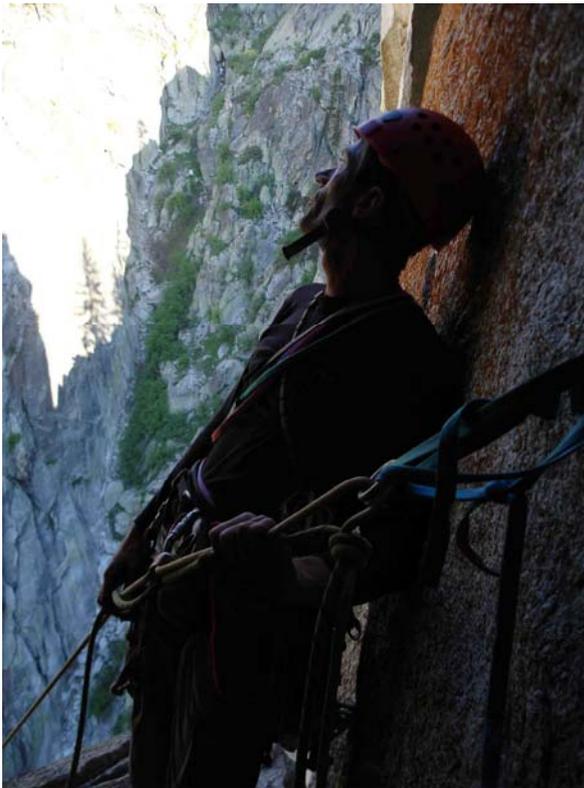
Friday morning we were up at 5 AM for the approach to the Fin. The guidebook said it was a 45-minute approach and that seemed about right. We screwed up the start a little bit but by 8 AM Rick was most of the way up the first pitch. I led the second pitch and Jim led the third pitch. We kept this rotation going for the entire climb, which gave us each three pitches to lead. Depending on the source, the route was rated 5.9 R/X or 10a R/X and there were many leadouts of 30 feet or more above the last piece of protection. Bolts were scarce (four protection bolts on the entire climb); most protection was from overlaps or cracks that would occasionally appear. The route wandered extensively, taking advantage of weaknesses in the angle of the rock. Several pitches had long traverses that were poorly protected for both the leader and the followers. Several pitches also had medium runouts right off of the belay. Plus, some of the belays involved gear behind flakes of questionable quality. In general the moves were characterized by positive edges on steeper rock as opposed to friction climbing. The crux was on pitch 6, and I thought it was much harder than 5.9. Fortunately it was right at a bolt and was well protected. I never could figure out the move but eventually solved it by pulling on the bolt. Pitch 7 was a big corner and was the only well protected pitch on the climb. We topped out a little after 6 PM and spent a short time perusing the summit register. The previous ascent was in 2004 and the one before that was in 2002. We think that our ascent was number 13! For reference, there is an excellent trip report on climber.org by Craig Clarence. His topo is much more accurate than the one in Moser, Vernon, and Hickey. We used 60m ropes as recommended by Clarence. The descent was (fortunately) uneventful. Seven rappels got us back to the ground. We were back in camp by 9 PM.



Hal on "Silver Lining" in about the same place as the picture in the Moser guide.

Photo: Jim Curl

Saturday found us up again at 5 AM and heading further up the loose gully to the regular route on Castle Rock Spire. One obstacle in particular resulted in lots of lost time, whimpering, and rappelling back into the gully. So we didn't get a very early start on the route. Rick led pitches 1 and 5, Jim led pitches 2 and 4, and I led pitch 3. Most of the aid climbing was on pitch 2 and 4 (with a little bit of aid on pitch 5 as well). Again the rappels went well (we rappelled the route) and the rope never hung up. The sun had set before we started down the gully but we managed to finish the (only) rappel in the gully before it was completely dark. We staggered back into camp at 10 PM.



The end of the day. Jim Curl waiting at the last rappel station on Castle Rock Spire

Photo: Rick Booth

Relishing the freedom to sleep in on Sunday, we didn't start the return trip until 9:30 AM. We retrieved our "haz mat" suits and started wading through the poison oak again. Then we wasted an hour overshooting the correct ridge and had to backtrack so it wasn't until 4:30 PM that we reached the Buckeye Flat campground. First was another Technu bath for hands and face and then we lined the seats with garbage bags and put our packs in more garbage bags. Only then was it safe to drive off in search of a trailer park to take another Technu shower. Amazingly enough, all of these precautions actually worked pretty well..

-- Hal Tompkins

A conversation with Rene Ardesch:

Rene Ardesch is a member of the Southern Sierra Climbers Association and has held an interest in the old Castle Rock Trail for years. Rene indicates the original start for the Castle Rock Trail starts approximately one to one and one half miles further down the Paradise Creek Trail from where we left this trail. Apparently there is a cut into the embankment next to the tail where the original Castle Rock Trail heads away from the Paradise Creek trail. This is apparently very overgrown now. The origins of the trail are unknown, Rene indicates it was either a Park Service Trail or a CCC trail put in sometime in the 30's. The cut out in the embankment is a characteristic of the Park Service, however. The trail was abandoned in the 70's, probably for budgetary reasons. Rene indicates that there is usually water at the campsite area year round except in drought years.

This is a link to the Southern Sierra Climbing Association website. I have run into these people at Joshua Tree and they are a good group.

<http://www.southernsierra.org/sscahome.html>

Final Notes:

This is a great adventure type project! It is not very often that you can be the 13th ascent party on a route that is twenty years old. Both The Fin and Castle Rock Spire are easily seen from the southern entrance to Sequoia National Park and they are awe inspiring when seen from the road.

Get a permit. The office opens at 8 AM and is behind the visitor center on the south entrance. A permit can be reserved three weeks in advance but you still have to pick it up at the backcountry office. If you go before Memorial Day you can self register. An early start is strongly suggested since it gets hot early at this low elevation.

The car can be parked just off the road on the road into Buckeye Flat campground. There are two spots on this road, one at a turn to the left and one near the top before the road heads downhill to the Buckeye Flat campground. Don't leave food in your car, bears are all over this place.

Visit the link to the Bruce Bindner report and copy the GPS waypoints onto a map. The most important one is the waypoint indicating the point where to leave the Paradise Creek Trail. This is waypoint three. Once you hit this waypoint head straight uphill. This will eventually intersect a section of the old Castle Rock Trail. We followed this and somehow missed a turn off of it to contour around Bump 5170, as indicated on the map and Bindner's waypoints. Oddly enough, there was a trail that went over the top of this bump, or at least very near it. The trail gets indistinct after this and heads back down the backside of Bump 5170 to a plateau where it eventually rejoins the trail. Mark this junction with a cairn. When returning, this junction is

easily missed (we missed it) . The trail on the return hike takes you along the trail that contours below Bump 5170. This is a hellish area of poison oak and it is not recommended to use this trail. As Hal and I were standing on a slope absolutely paved with poison oak trying to find a trail remnant, Hal commented, "This is a fearsome place", and he was right. If possible, go back up over the top of Bump 5170. Finally, when returning, the trail stays in good shape right up to the end of it which terminates in a good sized cairn. Unfortunately, this is too far, although it is possible to go down from there, according to Rene. Back track a ways and start looking for use trails that leave the main trail and bring you back to the top of the ridge that was used to ascend to this trail. There are no ducks or cairns marking this so it might be a good idea to put one in on the ascent, if possible (if there are any rocks there). There are a few ducks to mark the trail up and down the ridge which were apparently put in last December.

Get a real Tyvek clean room suit. I ordered mine over the internet and they were a little late arriving so I bought what looked like a haz-mat suit at Home Depot. It was very porous and I am convinced I would have been in big trouble if I had used that suit. Fortunately, the "real deal" showed up. Soak or spray the suit in Permethrin. This should help to keep the ticks off. These suits tear fairly easily. Either bring some tape to patch the suit or bring an extra suit. Jim brought an extra suit and I think that is a better idea. Also, the reports indicate there is no poison oak past the stream crossing before going up hill. This is no longer accurate. An extra Tyvek pair of pants only for this section would be handy and should weigh very little. Bring gloves and gaiters. Wear a pair of decent boots that are stiff enough to get a bite on the edge. I used approach shoes and that was a big mistake. The trail is soft in some places and I slid off several times. Furthermore, going up and down the ridge requires hiking through steep grass which is slipperier than Teflon and having the extra bite in my boots would have saved me from several more butt slides. Finally, there have been reports of rattlesnakes and bears in this area and although we don't think we ran into either, some critter scattered Jim's clothing and suit which was left behind at the stream crossing.

You will need a double 50 meter rope system for The Fin and it is needed for Castle Rock Spire for the rappels. We brought a rack of double stoppers and cams from tiny aliens up to #2 camalot. We added one #3 camalot and one #4 camalot. The #4 is used on the offwidth on the first pitch of Castle Rock Spire and can be used on the crux on the 5.11b second pitch. We ascended the first pitch of Castle Rock Spire directly and did not use the 5.6 traverse as indicated by the Bruce Bindner topo. This makes the first pitch about 200 feet.

The times listed by Hal for the hike in and out are long. Bullet hiker types can do this much faster as long as they don't have a 59 year old weasel going with them. Jim and Bob Suzuki made it in eight hours on their first trip and Ron Hudson has reported 6.5 hours of time to get to the bivy site. This assumes some reasonable competence in keeping close to the trail.

References:

This is a link to Bruce Bindner's description of the Castle Rock Spire routes:

<http://www.summitpost.org/mountain/rock/153485/castle-rock-spire.html>

This is a link to Craig Clarence's description of the Silver Lining on The Fin route:

<http://www.climber.org/TripReports/2002/874.html>

Craig has a nice topo of the Silver Lining route but the web accessible .jpg does not seem to have super good resolution so either email Craig or me to get a copy.

<http://www.summitpost.org/images/original/11435.jpg>

Southern Sierra Rock Climbing: Sequoia/Kings Canyon, Sally Moser, Greg Vernon, David Hickey. Chockstone Press (now Falcon Publishing), 1993. ISBN 0-934641-51-X

This may be out of print or very difficult to find. Try Amazon used books.

-- Rick Booth

Private Trips

Private trips are not insured, sponsored, or supervised by the Sierra Club. They are listed here because they may be of interest to PCS members. Private trips may be submitted directly to the editor.

For the following trip listing, please contact:

Steve Eckert,
http://www.climber.org/WhosWho/Steve_Eckert.html
Bob Suzuki,
http://www.climber.org/WhosWho/Bob_Suzuki.html

•Date: August 12 - 20
Peaks: Gannett, Fremont, Arrowhead, Lester, Ellingwood, Stroud, Winifred, Elephant
Difficulty: class 3 & 4, ice axe, crampons, glaciers, rope
Location: Rockies

For the following trip listing, please contact:

Warren Storkman, 650-493-8959, dstorkman@aol.com

•Date: October 2006
Peak: Kala Pattar (18300')
Location: Nepal, Everest Base Camp

For the following trip listing, please contact:

Warren Storkman, 650-493-8959, dstorkman@aol.com

•Date: January 2007
Peak: Kilimanjaro
Location: Tanzania, optional safari following

Elected Officials

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Tom Driscoll / pcschair2006@sbcglobal.net
2149 Junction Ave #3, Mountain View, CA 94043
650-938-2106 home

Vice Chair and Trip Scheduler:

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Scree is the monthly journal of the Peak Climbing Section of the Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter.

Our official website is [http:// lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/pcs/](http://lomaprieta.sierraclub.org/pcs/)

Email List Info

If you are on the official email list (lomap-pcs-announce@lists.sierraclub.org) or the email list the PCS feeds (pcs-issues@climber.org), you have a free EScree subscription. For email list details, send "info lomap-pcs-announce" to "listserv@lists.sierraclub.org", or send anything to "info@climber.org". EScree subscribers should send a subscription form to the Treasurer to become voting PCS members at no charge. The Scree is on the web as both plain text and fully formatted Adobe Acrobat/PDF.

Rock Climbing Classifications

The following trip classifications are to assist you in choosing trips for which you are qualified. No simple rating system can anticipate all possible conditions.

Class 1: Walking on a trail.

Class 2: Walking cross-country, using hands for balance.

Class 3: Requires use of hands for climbing, rope may be used.

Class 4: Requires rope belays.

Class 5: Technical rock climbing.

Deadline for submissions to the next Scree is Sunday, July 23rd. Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.



Peak Climbing Section, 789 Daffodil Way, San Jose CA 95117

"Vy can't ve chust climb?" - John Salathe

First Class Mail - Dated Material