

FAGES II 20-miler Hike Preview – Sat 6/6/09

(Remember – Leave No Trace !)

This preview is hereby provided in an effort to have you look out for some neat things you might see along the way, as well as to provide some answers to questions you might have when the trail and map just don't quite match. Please print this preview and the map. Learn how to work back and forth between this preview and the map provided. This will make the info useful when there are questions along the way.

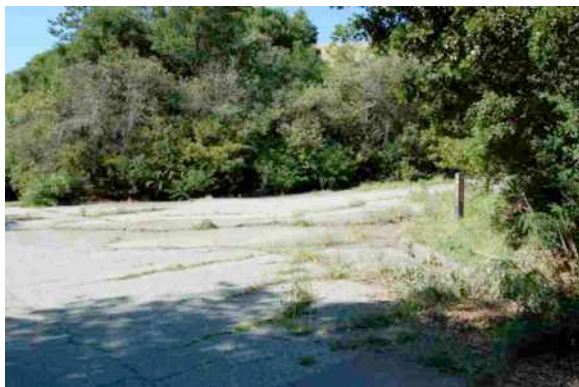
In short, the hike starts at elevation 780', goes up and down to 380', up to 1060', across & up to 1200', across & up & across & down & up to 1790' ... all before lunch. Boy, does it feel good to finally get to the lunch site ! After lunch it's mostly all downhill, or across, back down to 380' before the climb back towards Camp Herms at the very end.

From **checkpoint 1-[Herms]** to **2-[Bottom of Rifle Range]** at the very, very least, the map should be mostly self-explanatory. No preview commentary is hereby provided. If your unit can't make it out the gate from registration to **#2** without oral assistance, you folks, as well as staff, are in for a very long day !

Just before #2, there is a flat area off to your left at the bottom of the hill, just before you cross the creek. This was the site of one of the Indian Villages that Captain Pedro Fages' expedition encountered in 1772.

Cross over Wildcat Creek and at **#2**, turn left onto Wildcat Canyon Trail, headed for **3-[Bottom of Belgum Tr.]** You will encounter pavement getting to #3. This was from an ill-advised development project back in the 1950's or so. Late soil-sampling, revealing a shale-based landscape, halted the project before it got going too far.

At #3, turn right and start the LONG, uphill climb up the Belgum Trail toward **4-[Top of Mezue Trail]**.



3 – turn right



3 – Belgum Trail signpost zoomed in

Somewhere around **#3a**, you might spot palm trees and building foundations and traces thereof, off to your right. This was originally the site of an 1800's hacienda. Later on in 1914, it also served some other purpose.



Don't dawdle, though. Please keep moving. It's a long, tough hill but we need you to keep heading toward **#3b, 4, 4a, 4b, 6 & 7** as fast as your group is able. **Everyone has to make the 9.7 miles to 7-[Inspiration Point], as an absolute minimum distance, and as quickly as possible.**

Continuing up, at **#3b**, don't take any of the 3 roads that fork here. (The left fork takes you away from the hike. The middle fork takes you down so you can hike even farther back up. And the right fork dead-ends.) So instead, take whatever deer trail the deer use these days to go up the middle of the right 2 roads, and get up on the San Pablo Ridge trail, headed for **4-[Top of Mezu Trail]**.



3B – veer left and then take the deer trail opposite the Clark-Boas Trail signpost

Continue “map-south” along the ridge toward **#4a**, up on the plateau.

Checkpoint **#4a** is the old Nike radar site which served the Nike missile launch site near **#4b**. Hike up over this knoll and imagine what once was ... and why. Or you can just follow the road around it, if you so choose.

At **#4b**, we won't be going up to **5-Wildcat Peak** anymore, **unless the front-running units (only)** feel so inclined. It is indeed a great vantage point with a great view. Otherwise though ... at **#4b** ... you will otherwise veer left, short-cutting directly over to **6-[Top of Laurel Canyon Tr.]** Then continue map-south along Nimitz Way towards **7-[Inspiration Point]**.

At 7-[Inspiration Point], OA will meet you to provide your first water refill stop. This is also your first bathroom stop. **Please use the bathrooms.** (Next facilities are 5.8 miles away, ~2 hrs later, at **#11**). **You are now at 9.7 miles. You are 2 large uphill climbs and 2.9 miles from the lunch site. Everyone, please be honest with us, your unit, and yourself. This is the first car access to pull you off of the trail.**

From **#7**, head map-west a block or two along the right-hand shoulder of Wildcat Canyon Road. Cross the road carefully & courteously,



After # 7 (Inspiration point)

and head up, across, and down on the Sea View Trail towards **8-[Top of Big Spring Tr.]**.

At #8, absolutely do not turn right and head down Big Spring Trail. Please continue heading **straight & up**, onto that second BIG hill. You are now continuing map-south on the Sea View Trail toward **#8a**.

Getting from **#8a to 9-[Owl Picnic Site]** is sort of tricky. Please look for us as you near **#8a**. **Pay special attention here. Do not go up to Vollmer Peak !** We hope to be here at **#8a** to help you get to **9-[Owl Picnic Site]** and **LUNCH**.

At #8a, it is a right-turn across, (Close-up of sign post at #8a)



Turn left & up at this 1st post past 8A

Veer right and across at this 2nd post past 8A





2nd post again – veering right



at 3rd post – Turn right & down

[Pay attention here! Look for the OA red-arrow signage between #8a and the “Bikes” signpost getting you to #9 Lunch site. (Note above & below photos.) Make a left at the signpost that says “Bikes”. Absolutely **do not** continue north (straight) on the Vollmer Peak Trail -- **you are only 200’ from the lunch site !!!** Make a quick right crossing the road to the lunch site. And please cross South Park Drive **carefully and courteously**, no matter how hungry or tired you might be !



Turn left at the “Bikes” signpost



Don't go straight on Vollmer Pk. Trail



The “bikes” signpost



Across the road from # 9 - lunch site

At #9, this is also your 2nd water refill stop. But bathrooms are not quite nearby enough... sorry about that.

And this is also the second car access point to pull you off of the trail. You are at 12.6 miles now and you are another 4.7 miles from #12 (the last car-access dropout point). Again, please be honest with staff, your unit, and yourself !

After lunch, head one block up South Park Drive, and turn right heading into **Gillespie Grove Camp**.



Do not go all the way into the camp and disturb whoever might have it reserved. Turn left at the sign post onto Grizzly Peak Trail. A short up and then an across gets you over to **10-[Golf Gate]**. **Watch out for Poison Oak from #9 to 12.**

At #10, cross the road carefully and courteously and look around. The trailhead is not directly across the road. It's just a tad off to your left after crossing the road. And then the trail skews the hillside across & up to the right.



Approaching #10



#10 road crossing



Head a short up, across, and down on the Selby Trail. There are a couple of stray forks from **#10** to **#10a**. Pay careful attention to follow the Selby Trail signposts. Use your heads.

At #10a, this is a **seven-way intersection** (with 5 roads and 2 trails).



Unless rain dictates otherwise, do not take any of the 5 roads. Cross the intersection carefully and courteously, and continue on the Selby Trail down to **11-[Brazil Bldg Parking Lot]**.

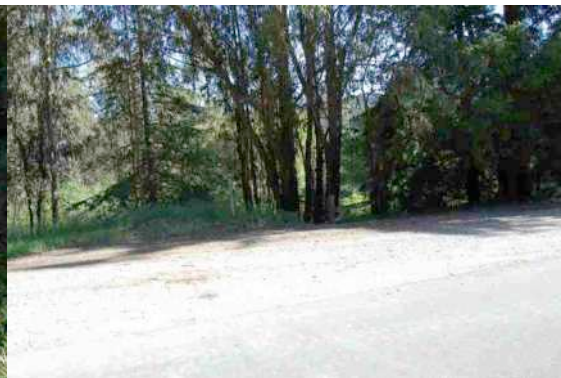


Coming from #10A, almost to #11

Checkpoint #11 is not where you think it is. After you again cross Wildcat Canyon Road, carefully and courteously, there are bathrooms nearby, up & off to your right. Use them. Otherwise, the hike continues east (straight) on the street-looking parking lot. On your left, the first sign-post says Selby Trail (both ways). Ignore this post. About a half block back on the parking lot /road, across from the start of the grassy area behind the Brazil Building is a 2nd sign-post. It says Wildcat Canyon Rd / Selby Trail. This is checkpoint #11. (Although we'll probably be at the first sign-post just to clear up any possible confusion). Also this may or may not also be a car access dropout point (15.5 mi). We hope it will be. We'll have to see.



The first signpost nearing #11



The second signpost at #11 (next photo – closer look)



The second signpost, a closer look

At this 2nd signpost (above), turn left and a short down to somewhat of a flat (with Lake Anza in sight through the trees]



Veer right here



Not this 3rd post off to the left



The 3rd signpost to Wildcat Gorge trail

You should find a 3rd sign-post off to your right that says Wildcat Gorge Trail. After a switchback up, down, and across Wildcat Creek, you'll be at canyon's bottom again heading north towards **12-[Bottom of Meadows Canyon Trail]** right along the east side of the creek. There are a couple of off-shoot trails here but stay by the creek as best you can. When you get to the bridge crossing at the south-east tip of Lake Anza (**#11A** on the map) please do not turn left across the bridge. Please stay on the east side of the lake. And stay right by the lake. Off-shoot trails again ... and it's rocky going in a couple of spots but it's relatively short.



East side of Anza looking back from the earthen dam

When you reach the earthen dam at the northeast corner of Lake Anza, you'll see a trail straight ahead and leading down. Please don't take this unmarked shortcut. Please turn left across the earthen dam. Just before you cross Anza's concrete spillway, there is another sign-post on your right that directs you down and north continuing towards **#12** on Wildcat Gorge Trail.



Continuing on the Wildcat Gorge Trail again, you'll pass a creek crossing on your left



Not quite to #11b yet

and the Curran Trail right-turn. Very shortly thereafter **at #11b** (check your maps) you might want to keep an eye out to your left and up (the trees are mostly in the way now ... but east of the Merry-Go-Round) for the cliff-caves that also served the natives, in part, back in 1772.



Nearing #12, there is a water faucet. Turn left onto street pavement (there are also portable bathrooms here on your right) and make the quick jog past the play field over to Central Park Drive and turn right. Depending on available parking, Checkpoint #12 will be somewhere between the water faucet and the Pony Rides. **And this is your last available car-access dropout point at 17.3 miles. Once you pass #12, you are going to finish the hike under your own power.**

After #12, continue north a couple blocks on Central Park Drive. Once you pass the Environmental Visitor Center & Little Farm (more bathrooms & water available) you'll be back on fire road and headed for **12a-[Bottom of Rifle Range]** (which was #2 in the morning). Between **#12 & 12a**, is Jewel Lake off to your left and bathrooms on your right. Continue north. Turn left across the creek and head up that one last monster hill that was so easy to come down in the morning ... toward **#12b**.

Depending, we will be at **#12b** to award you with your well-deserved **Fages II** 20-miler patch segment. **At #12b**, the end of the hike of 20.5 miles, we also plan to have cars available to help shuttle your unit the final 0.7 mile back to Herms. (After a 20-miler, this final 0.7 sure does feel like another 5 miles to most) Although some units are so tough they bypass the cars and hike the full 21.2 back into Herms. What studs !

Stay together (or at least regroup at all numbered checkpoints), be courteous, be safe, use your heads. At all checkpoints, report to the Ham Radio Operators or the Fages Staff. **At the morning-registration, the Checkpoints with staff will be announced** ... have a glorious hike !

Remember – Leave No Trace !



(Updated preview narrative provided by D.L. Scott – 1992 Fages II founder)

(All photos provided courtesy of W.W. Lew 5/2009. Thank you, Bill.)