

5-14-97 9:30 Mt. Lowe, Inspiration Pt, Panorama Pt.
Henry.

From 210 take 2 to Red Box and go to bath room. Then proceede on Mt. Wilson Road to Eaton Saddle.

Area A-5, Trip 5 Mount Lowe

	Distance	3.2 miles round trip
	Total Elevation Gain/Loss	500'/500'
	Hiking Time	1 1/2 hours (round trip)
	Optional Maps	USGS 7.5-min Mt. Wilson
	Best Times	All year
Agency	ANF/ASD	
Difficulty	★★	

Late in the year, when the smog lightens, but temperatures still hover within a moderate register, come up to Mt. Lowe to toast the setting sun. You can sit on an old bench, pour the champagne, and watch Old Sol sink into Santa Monica Bay.

Start from the roadside parking area at unmarked Eaton Saddle, mile 2.4 (counted from Red Box Station) on Mt. Wilson Road. This popular trailhead may be jammed with cars on the weekends. Walk past the gate on the west side and proceed up the dirt road (Mt. Lowe fire road) that carves its way under the precipitous south face of San Gabriel Peak. Rainwater shed from these slopes falls to Eaton Canyon below, where it quickly tumbles down-canyon toward the L.A. Basin near Altadena.

As you approach a short tunnel (0.3 mile) dating from 1942, look for the remnants of a former cliff-hanging trail to the left of the tunnel's east entrance. At Markham Saddle (0.5 mile) the fire road starts to descend slightly—don't continue on the road. Instead, find the unmarked Mt. Lowe Trail on the left (south). You contour southwest above the fire road for about 0.6 mile, and then start climbing across the east flank of Mt. Lowe without much change of direction.

At 1.3 miles, make a sharp right turn. Proceed 0.2 mile uphill, then go left on a short spur trail to Mt. Lowe's barren summit. Mt. Lowe was the proposed upper terminus for Professor Thaddeus Lowe's famed scenic railway (see Trip 10). Funding

ran out, however, and tracks were never laid higher than Ye Alpine Tavern (later named Mt. Lowe Tavern), 1200 feet below. During the railway's heyday in the early 1900s, thousands disembarked at the tavern and tramped Mt. Lowe's east- and west-side trails for world-class views of the basin and the surrounding mountains. Some reminders of that era remain on the summit of Mt. Lowe and along some of the trails: volunteers have repainted, relettered, and returned to their proper places some of the many sighting tubes that helped the early tourists familiarize themselves with the surrounding geography.

Area A-5, Trip 11 Inspiration Point

	Distance	6.0 miles
	Total Elevation Gain/Loss	1500'/1500'
	Hiking Time	3 1/2 hours
	Optional Maps	USGS 7.5-min Mt. Wilson
	Best Times	October through June
	Agency	ANF/ASD
	Difficulty	★★★

This trip rambles down to Inspiration Point the back way—via Mt. Lowe. It's a down-and-up route, so save most of your energy for the trip back. On the way down and later back, you'll have a chance to use both the east and west trails on the slopes of Mt. Lowe. These were among the best used trails during the era of the railway, and both have been brought back into service in recent years.

As in Trip 5 above, proceed 1.3 miles to the trail junction on Mt. Lowe's east flank. Go either way (straight for the east trail, sharply right for the west trail), but plan to use the other trail on your return.

Either way you'll end up descending to meet the Mt. Lowe fire road at a point above Mt. Lowe Trail Camp. Go south on the fire road to Inspiration Point, where the view, I'm happy to report, is still inspiring when

over the marine inversion layer lies low across the L.A. Basin—a fairly common occurrence early in the day. On clear, dry days the ocean horizon can be seen behind the gap at Two Harbors on Santa Catalina Island, and San Clemente Island sprawls indistinctly just left of the leftmost tip of Santa Catalina.

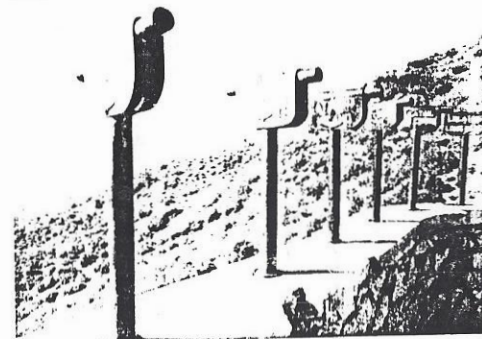
If you're interested in side trips, you can climb the 4714' peaklet just west of Inspiration Point. Or you can travel 1 mile south-east on the flat fire road going out to Panorama Point, the ridge overlooking Eaton Canyon. Starting around 1915, tourists could traverse this stretch on board a mule pushed (not drawn, so passengers could avoid dust) observation car that rolled along narrow-gauge rails. This O. M. & M.

(One Man and a Mule) Railroad became a popular side attraction for Mt. Lowe Tavern guests and day trippers.

Today's fire road out toward Panorama Point curbs south and ends at a cement water tank, where views of the L.A. Basin are more fantastic (in my experience) than from any other land-based vantage point. On a clear night, the view of millions of lights almost a mile of elevation lower is surreal. From this close-in point, less than two beeline miles from the edge of the city, the soft droning of a hundred thousand engines, accented now and again by an accelerating motorcycle or unmuffled car, floats upward on the updrafts.

Return the way you came, except in circling Mt. Lowe.

At Inspiration Point

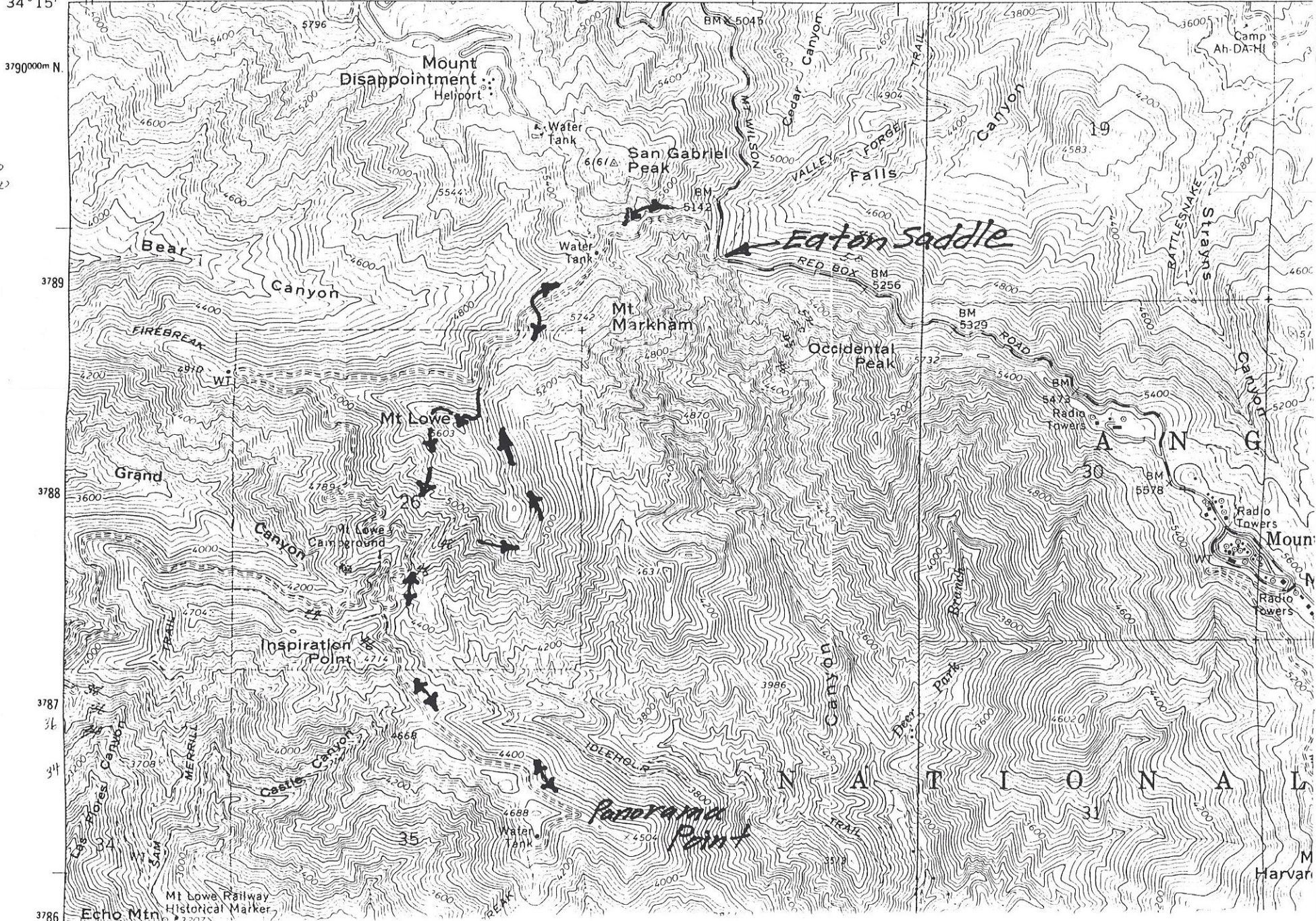


UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES

2352 I SW
CONDOR PEAK

118°07'30" 397000m E 398 LA CANADA 15 MI 1 MI. TO CALIF. 2 R 12 W 5' R 11 W 401 2352 (CHILAC)



5100-150
5200-110
4440

42.50
17.00