

OTP Hike #492

OTP Hike 10 November 1999
Lower Rustic Canyon Loop
From Will Rogers State Historic Park (WRSHP)
Rich Frederick sponsoring

Distance: 6 Miles

Elevation gain and loss: 1000 ft

To get to WRSHP:

From 405 take Sunset Blvd. To the West for about 4 miles to signed entrance to the right/north (just past Rustic Canyon Rd.).

From PCH take Temescal Canyon north to Sunset Blvd, turn right/east and go about 1 mile to signed entrance to the left/north.

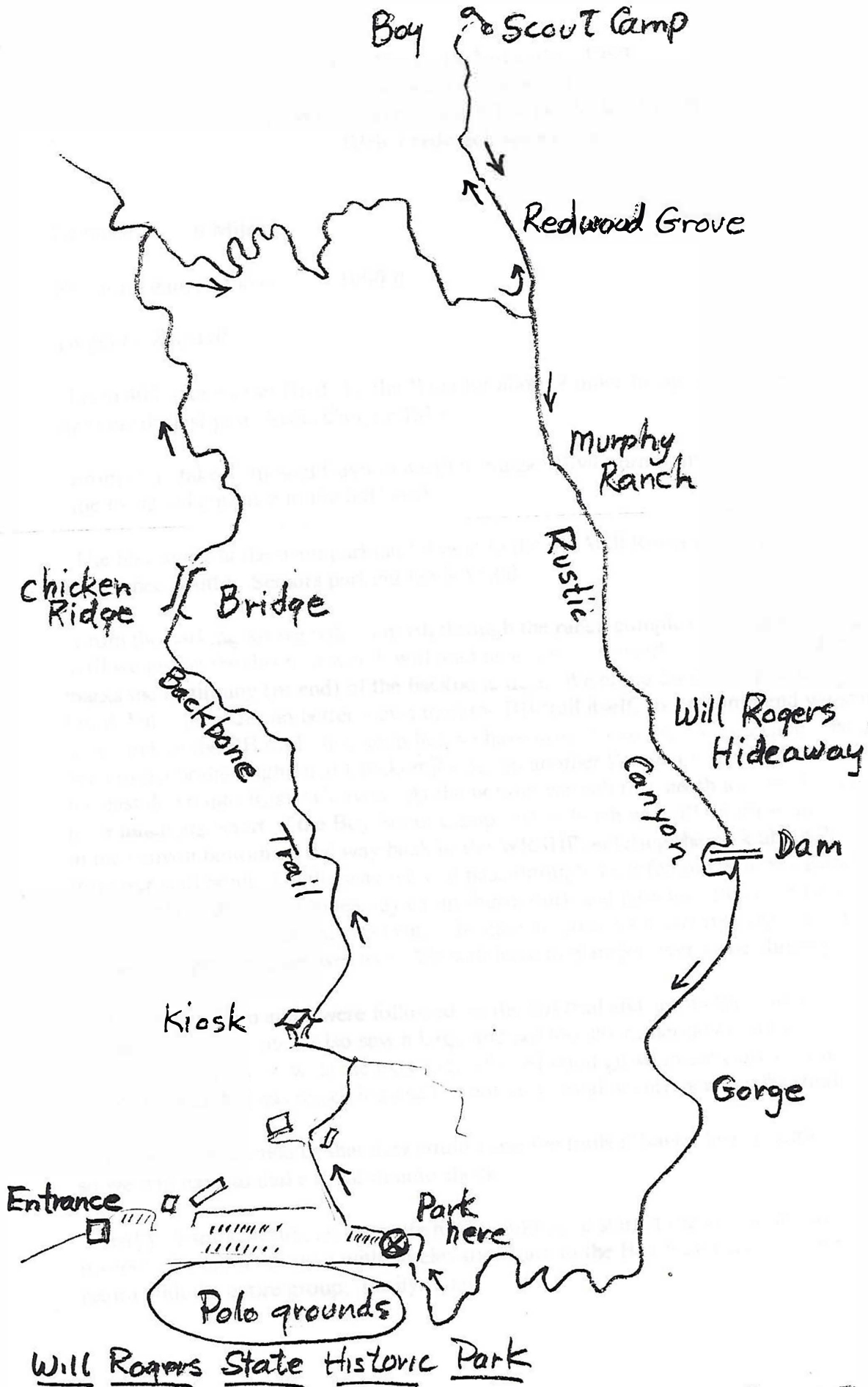
The hike starts at the main parking lot next to the old Will Rogers Ranch house (not lot at entrance booth). Seniors parking fee is \$5.00.

From the parking lot we will go north through the ranch complex staying to the right until we get on the dirt trail which will lead us left/west toward an obvious kiosk which marks the beginning (or end) of the backbone trail. We could do the loop to Inspiration Point, but it provides no better views than the BB trail itself, so I recommend we start north and up the BB trail. It's steep but we have done far worse. Views should be great. We cross a bridge high up at Chicken Ridge, go another ½ mile (+/-) and catch the trail to the east down into Rustic Canyon. At the bottom we will turn north for about ½ mile and have lunch just short of the Boy Scout Camp. After lunch we will return south and stay in the canyon bottom all the way back to the WRSHP, entering the park about 200 yards from our start point. On the way we will pass through the infamous Murphy Ranch ruins, pass the old Will Rogers hideaway cabin (burnt out), and pass the 1900 dam now silted in, but worth a short cut-back to visit. The canyon presents a narrow gorge with water, but not enough to require wet feet. We will have to clamber over some slippery rocks.

On the recon Tom and I were followed up the BB trail and across the bridge by a large and not too shy coyote. Also saw a large and not too shy rattler down in the canyon. Noteworthy, in my view, is the existence of a redwood grove in the canyon which was surely planted, but has re-seeded itself, a not very usual occurrence this far south.

The rangers informed us that they could close the trails if Santa Ana conditions dictate, so we will have to make a last minute check.

Finally, if some desire, an alternate hike would be to start at the end point, do the reverse hike up the canyon with no elevation gain to the Boy Scout camp for lunch and return with the entire group. Easily done.



NOT TO SCALE