800

OTP HIKE FOR APRIL 26, 2006. 9:30 START

HIKE COORDINATOR: Jim Spotts

HIKE: Switzer Picnic Area to Switzer Trail Camp, Arroyo Seco, Bear Canyon, Bear Canyon Trail Camp. Approx. 8 miles round trip and 1000 feet loss and gain. This is the same hike that I coordinated on Dec. 7th last year but I thought that a rerun during the "high water" season would make it different enough to appeal to people. Actually, I don't think the water will be all that high but we will all get to scout it together (what an adventure!).

DIRECTIONS TO TRAILHEAD: Drive up the Angeles Crest Hwy. 10.5 miles from La Canada and go thru the (hopefully open) gate on the right and drive down to the Switzer Picnic Area parking lot (don't be alarmed if you see a man dressed in Arab garb waiting for you, he is harmless). The turnoff to the gate is approximately 1/2 mile past the junction of Angeles Crest Highway and Angeles Forest Hwy.

DETAILS OF THE HIKE: Cross the wooden bridge out of the parking lot and go downstream 1 mile to the Commodore Switzer Trail Camp. Cross the creek and climb the hill along the west slope above Switzer Falls. Keep left at the fork and proceed down the trail and rejoin the Arroyo Seco. We turn right (downstream) for approx. 3/4 miles to the point where Bear Creek flows into the Arroyo Seco (this is about as far as you can go down the Arroyo Seco using the route). We then turn left (upstream) and proceed up Bear Creek Canyon. About 2 miles up Bear Creek, the trail climbs onto a forested "bench" on the right side of the creek where the Bear Canyon Trail Camp is located. This is a good spot for lunch. After lunch, we will return by the same route.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE MAIN HIKE: There are two main alternatives. One is to take the trail to Red Box and back from the parking lot. The other approach is to just go part way to the Trail Camp and have lunch at some scenic spot and come back. A good short sidetrip would be to go to the base of Switzer Falls. The Falls should be running pretty well at this time of year.