Extra Credit – Kitchen Creek Falls Hike

Important Considerations Before Hiking:

* Tell your parents where you are going. Give them a copy of this paper, so in case something happens, they can help rangers locate you.
* Go with someone (it’s more fun and safer). Take your parents (they will enjoy it) or a friend. Your dog is allowed on the trail and may enjoy the walk. Great for kid brothers and sisters (family event?).
* Take your cell phones.
* Take plenty of water.
* Always watch out for rattlesnakes.
* Follow the directions for the trail.
* Think about taking a lunch and relaxing for a while at the pools.

Hiking Distance: About 5 miles round trip (you can probably go there and back in 2 ½

hours, if you don’t stop at all. My advice, however, is to go slow and enjoy being in the beautiful outdoors.

Hike Difficulty: Moderate.

**Notes of interest:** This hike takes you to a hidden series of water cascades on Kitchen

Creek. The dry, water-polished rock on either side of the cascades usually provides fair traction, but be careful, they may be slippery.

Driving to the trailhead: Go Interstate 8 East for 15-20 miles past Alpine. From

Interstate 8 East, exit at Buckman Springs Rd (exit 51). At the end of the offramp, turn right. Go about 100 feet, then turn left on to Old Highway 80, the frontage road. You’ll be heading parallel to interstate 8. Go for about 1.9 miles and you will see a parking area on the right (an extended, paved shoulder). If you get to the Boulder Oaks Campground entrance on the right, you’ve gone too far - it’s a couple hundred yards before that.

Parking: You are supposed to have an Adventure Pass to park here. They are $5 for a 1-

day use and can be purchased at the Ranger Station in Alpine (3348 Alpine Blvd), or the gas station off of the Pine Valley off-ramp (just North of the freeway).

Trail Directions (FOLLOW CAREFULLY): Read all the way through these directions

first, then refer to them as you hike. From your parking spot, cross the street and walk across a small ditch to find the trail. Find a 3-ft high plastic marker in that area that indicates it’s the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT). You will start walking on the trail heading back the way you drove from. Note the time on your watch or cellphone, to help you judge the approximate walking time before you will leave this main trail. Follow the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) as it begins to wind under the two freeway bridges (within the first 10 minutes). After some tight switchbacks, you will settle into a gradual winding ascent. Stay on this main trail. If you see trails veering off to the right, don’t take them. You will come across such a trail that is marked by two plastic markers, approximately 15 feet apart. Stay on the main trail. You will never take a trail off to the right. Between 50 minutes to 1 hour on this main trail (depending how often you stop and how fast you walk), you will come to another set of markers that are 15 feet apart. Look to your left, and there should be a pile of rocks (somebody piled them up as a marker). You will take one of those trails off to the left that will abruptly drop about 200 feet to the cascades below.

To Confirm Extra Credit: Take some pictures of yourself along the way and at the

cascades to prove you were there. You don’t have to print them, just show me them. Write a short, one paragraph reflection. Was it fun? Who did you go with? What did you think of the cascades? What did you do there? Were you very tired after the hike? Etc, etc.