

OTP Hike for 1/17/96 Start: 9:30 AM

Hike leader: Jim Spotts

OTP Hike #0312

Fall Creek Trail

This looks like a moderate hike. I made it into a round trip rather than the one way shuttle the write-up describes. Looking at a contour map, I estimate that you go up approx. 550 ft. at first and then drop approx. 1200 ft. to the creek. Start is at Hidden Springs Picnic area on Ang. Forest Hwy just north of the tunnel.

	Distance	5.5 miles	7.5 miles round trip
	Total Elevation Gain/Loss	1600/1600'	1750/1750'
	Hiking Time	2 1/2 hours	?
	Optional Map	USGS 7.5-min Condor Peak	
	Best Times	October through June	
	Agency	ANF/TD	
Difficulty	★★		

Threading the steep, north wall of Big Tujunga Canyon above Big Tujunga Reservoir, the Fall Creek Trail offers unique vistas of Big Tujunga's Narrows and the looming "skyline" beyond—Josephine and Strawberry peaks. ~~This makes a good one-way trip down into Big Tujunga Canyon, and back up the other side. Remember, though, that flood conditions could render Big Tujunga's creek unsafe to ford.~~

~~Both end-points of the hike lie on virtually the same elevation contour, so it makes little difference which way you go. Mornings, you may prefer going west to keep the sun out of your eyes; afternoons,~~

~~going east is probably better. Assuming you go from east to west, You'll start the hike at Hidden Springs Picnic Area, on Angeles Forest Highway just north of the tunnel. The trail doesn't start here, but rather from the road shoulder about 300 yards north. It goes up along a small canyon (North Fork Mill Creek) a short distance and then veers left along a brushy hillside. After gaining roughly 800 feet in 1 mile, the trail levels, contours for another mile, and then begins dropping steadily into Big Tujunga Canyon.~~

You're almost never out of sight or sound of the curling ribbons of asphalt and traffic below, but at least the trail smells of

wilderness and wild chaparral. The sun-warmed slopes reek of pungent yerba santa and sage. While you're descending, enjoy the view up the V-shaped gash of Big Tujunga's Narrows to the east.

At 3.5 miles, the footpath you're on ends at a junction of dirt roads. The left branch leads 200 yards east to Fall Creek Trail Camp (a former work camp—tables, stoves, and ornamental plantings gone wild), while the middle branch (our route) descends to the gravelly floor of Big Tujunga Canyon.

Lunch at the creek. Back out the same way we came in.

