AVOID VERBAL ORDERS

CIP
COST IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

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TO: COOKIE MUNCHERS & OTHERS	**DATE:** 30 JUNE 1993
ORG: Out-To-Pasture Hiking & Debating Society	**REF.** MONTH's END
SUBJECT: INSTRUCTIONS & DIRECTIONS TO TRAIL CANYON TRAIL TRAILHEAD, FALLS & ELSEWHERE	**FROM:** D.B. LILLBACK **ORG.** Trailmaster
Equipment: Hiking Boots, Water & Hiking Staff and maybe INSECT REPELLANT	**BLDG.** Your **LOC.** Home **MAIL STA.** Slot or **EXT.** Table

Los Angeles Times

HIKING

Following a Gold Path Through Trail Canyon

By JOHN McKINNEY

Trail Canyon Trail isn't quite as redundant as it sounds. The "Trail" in Trail Canyon refers not to a footpath, but to the "trail" left by tiny flakes of gold found in the gravel of the canyon's creek bed. Turn-of-the-century placer miners worked the creek, but the trail didn't lead to any riches.

The real wealth of Trail Canyon is in its scenery: steep canyon walls that conceal a bubbling creek and surprising waterfall. During dry months and drought years, the creek is still, but swollen by rain and runoff it becomes a lively, even raging watercourse. Because the path to the falls and trail camp crosses the creek numerous times, hikers should be careful of the occasional high water.

While not completely back to its former verdant splendor, Trail Canyon has recovered nicely from the 1975 Big Santa Anita Fire that blackened this part of the forest.

Beyond the falls, the trail leads to shady Tom Lucas Trail Camp, named for a grizzly bear hunter and one of the first forest rangers in that forerunner of the Angeles National Forest, the San Gabriel Timberland Reserve.

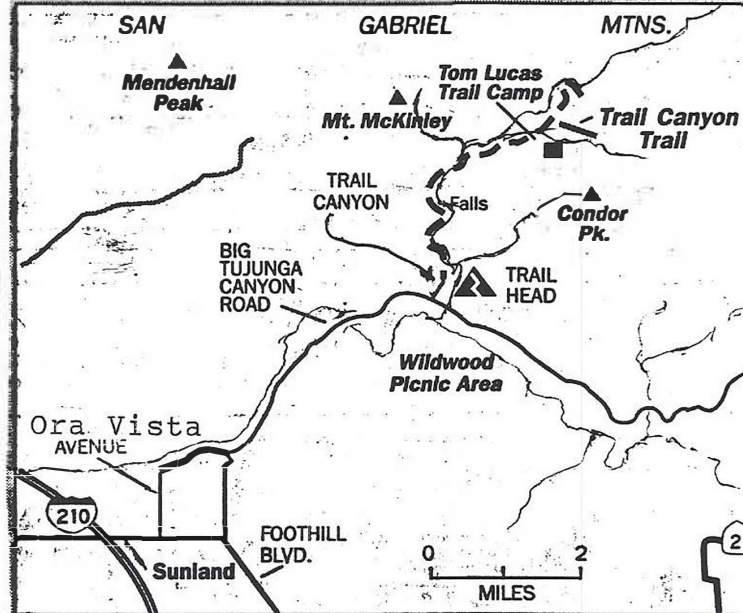**Directions to trail head:** From the Foothill Freeway (210) in Sunland, exit on Sunland Boulevard. Head east on Sunland, which soon merges with Foothill Boulevard. Continue to ORA VISTA AVE, turn north (left) and drive to its end at the "T" at Big Tujunga Canyon Road. Turn right and proceed five miles to a dirt road on the left, where a sign indicates parking for Trail Canyon. The road ascends a quarter-mile, then forks. Descend a quarter-mile to the right to an oak-shaded parking area.

The hike: The trail, a closed fire road, passes some private cabins that date from the 1920s and '30s, and arrives at the creek. The road ends and the footpath begins three-quarters of a mile from the trail head, at a creek crossing.

Trail Canyon Trail heads upcreek in the shade of sycamores, oak and alder. After half a mile, the path switchbacks up the canyon's chaparral-covered west wall. After a couple of bends in the trail, look for Trail Canyon Falls below.

The side trail to the falls is a precipitous path, made by use, not design; proceed at your own risk. An alternative route to the falls is to simply bushwhack up Trail Canyon from the point, back where the trail leaves the canyon. The latter route is safer, except at times of high water.

Past the side trail to the falls, Trail Canyon Trail drops back into the canyon, crossing and recrossing the creek for 2½ miles to Tom Lucas Trail Camp. This oak- and alder-shaded camp is perched on the edge of a meadow watered by the headwaters of Trail Canyon Creek. The meadowland is known as Big Cienega.

Energetic hikers will savor a late-afternoon or early morning assault on 5,440-foot Condor Peak. Ascend Trail Canyon Trail for a long, steep mile to a firebreak, then climb another long, steep mile to a point just below the peak. Clamber a hundred yards over fractured granite to the summit. Rewarding the peak-bagger are views of the San Fernando Valley, Santa Monica Bay and Catalina Island.

SAN GABRIEL MTNS.

Mendenhall Peak · Mt. McKinley · Tom Lucas Trail Camp · Trail Canyon Trail · TRAIL CANYON · Falls · Condor Pk. · BIG TUJUNGA CANYON ROAD · TRAIL HEAD · Wildwood Picnic Area · Ora Vista AVENUE · 210 · FOOTHILL BLVD. · Sunland · 2

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MILES

WHERE: Angeles National Forest.
DISTANCE: 3 miles round trip, with 700-foot elevation gain, to Trail Canyon Falls; 8 miles round trip, with 2,000-foot elevation gain, to Tom Lucas Trail Camp.
TERRAIN: Steep-walled canyon.
HIGHLIGHTS: A creek-side saunter, a visit to a waterfall and a restful trail camp.

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: Moderate.

PRECAUTIONS: Occasional high water at creek that crosses trail to the waterfalls and Tom Lucas Trail Camp.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Ca Angeles National Forest, Tujunga District Office, at (818) 899-1900.

POISON OAK IS AVAILABLE AND YOU CAN GO WADING IN THE CREEK!