

723

SWITZER FALLS TO BEAR CANYON TRAIL CAMP

18 AUGUST 2004

Hike leader: BILL TOWNSEND

8 miles round trip and 1000 foot loss and gain

We will meet for the usual start at 9:30 from the lower Switzer Camp Parking Lot.

DIRECTIONS:

Drive up the Angeles Crest Highway, route #2, 10 ½ miles from La Canada to the side road down to the Switzer Trail Camp Parking Lot. The route #2 turn-off is ½ mile east of the Angeles Forest Junction.

HIKE:

We start at the wooden bridge and follow the trail down-canyon for one mile to Switzer Trail Camp. We cross the creek and climb the hill along the west slope above the falls. Just past the falls viewpoint we bear left at the fork to proceed down the trail into the gorge of the Arroyo Seco below the falls to the creek.

We cross the creek and follow the creek down-canyon for ¾ mile to the junction with Bear Canyon (2 miles from the start). The trail turns east up Bear Canyon crossing from side to side. About 2 miles up the canyon, the trail climbs onto a forested bench on the south slope. Here we lunch at the Bear Camp tables. After lunch we return on the same path. People can have lunch anywhere along the trail as we all return the same way.

Some may prefer an alternate hike to Red Box and return because the return is totally downhill. The Bear camp return includes an uphill section to get around the falls. The Red Box hike is about 0.5 miles longer but no creek crossings.

I called the Angeles Park Service and was told the gate is open and hiking was permitted. I will check again the day before in case of change in conditions. In that case we will go to Red Box and hike to Switzer Campground in reverse.