

1996 Season Report

Hockett Meadow Ranger Station

Lorenzo Stowell Hockett Meadow Ranger

June 3rd to October 12th 1996

June 3rd to June 7th - Horse Training - Informative.

June 10th to June 14th - EMS, and Law Enforcement Training, Informative.

June 17th to June 21st Further N.P.S. Training.

June 23rd (at last) Hiked to Hockett Meadow Ranger Station, Trails and meadows throughout the Area Free of Snow. Water levels in checks safe and creeks easy to cross.

Statistics For 1996:

Public Contracts: Backpackers: 233

~~Day Users~~ Foot: 8

Stock Users: 145

Day Use - Stock 12

Lamas - 4

405 total.

Law Enforcement: During the 1996 season I only met 2 groups in violation, I resolved these problems using the lowest level of enforcement. Information and education. Both groups were stock users entering the Park via Snake Camp who got their permits from the U.S.F.S. in Porterville.

SO - Verbal Warnings - Two (2)

Medicals - 0

SAR's - 0

Arrests - 0

Vis. for Assists: Two (2) Deliver messages.

USE PATTERNS MANY OF THE USERS ARE BACKPACKERS WITH 48 OF 65 GROUPS WITH PERMITS FROM WINTERAL KING, 13 OF 23 GROUPS OF STOCK USERS GOT THEIR PERMITS FROM TIM SHAW BALCH PARK PACK STATION. MOST OF THE STOCK USERS ARE "LOCALS" FROM NEAR THE PARK, (TULANE, SPRINGVILLE, VISALIA, BAKERSFIELD ETC.) ALL TYPES OF USE WERE LOWER THAN IN ANY OF THE OTHER YEARS I'VE BEEN HERE (1991-1994) NO PRIVATE OR COMMERCIAL STOCK GROUP GRAZED ON HOCKETT MEADOW THIS SEASON - ONLY N.P.S. STOCK GRAZED ON HOCKETT MEADOW IN 1996, ADMINISTRATIVE USE WAS HELD TO THE RANGERS Z HEAD - THE TRAIL CREW WHO DIDN'T USE THE ADMINISTRATIVE PASTURE AT ALL AND TWO TRIPS BY STEVE LEWIS KERN SURV DISTRICT RANGER. MOST OF THE TRAIL CREW STOCK GRAZES OFF THE HOCKETT MEADOW AS THEY MOVE AWAY WHEN RELEASED AND GRAZE IN AREAS WELL OFF HOCKETT MOW.

SO - ADMINISTRATIVE USE HOCKETT PASTURE - 152 NIGHTS.

The electric fence was used mainly to good effect when the trail crew packers left on SATURDAY AND RETURNED TUESDAY AFTERNOON. WE PUT THREE (3) "RING LEADERS" INSIDE THE FENCE AND FOUND THE LOOSE STOCK MORE OR LESS NEARBY IN THE MORNING.

MOST OF THE PRIVATE AND COMMERCIAL STOCK USE TOOK PLACE AT HIDDEN CAMP, ROCK CAMP, UPPER CAMP (CAMPS 1 & 2 THERE) OR SOUTH FORK MEADOW AND SOUTH FORK PASTURE. ALL USE WAS LOWER THAN IN THE PAST AND IMPACTS REFLECTED THAT.

Hockett meadow

Natural Resources: I've seen six (6) different Bears this season three (3) of which have been observed at the site of "Beth" the mule who died in the Hockett pasture on or about Sept. 24th. The "local" Bear was observed often until the arrival of the Trail crew on July 23rd and wasn't seen again until Sept 12th. There were no bear problems anywhere in the Hockett area this season. Bears present but well behaved. Due to two (2) wetter seasons in a row the vegetation in the Hockett area was thick, heavy, plentiful and lovely this season. The floral display was explosive and beautiful. The meadows looked and still look in very good condition.

All the recorded archeological sites were visited, observed and any changes observed from previous visits were recorded on 343's. Few changes were observed. The two (2) historic structures Hockett R.S. and Outpost R.S. are in good condition. The plumbing at Hockett (the sink is "draining" very slowly) needs repairs. The water pump could use a new gasket. The pump sink ~~has~~ worked all season long. There are no drift fences in the Hockett area.

ANS! There is still no park boundary sign at Peck's Entrance. I mentioned this in my end of season report in 1991. There is still no sign of any kind

Hockett meadow

At the trailhead at Shake Camp. This is one of the main trails leading to Summit Lake and Tuohy Gap entrances. I also mentioned this in 1991.^(etc)

There are surplus signs in the area, however, eg. there are 3 signs & posts at the Tuohy Gap, Summit Lake Trail with "miles" that are almost all wrong. They should be replaced with one post, no mileages, and 2 small signs.

There are two (2) wooden signs near the wet meadow entrance that should be replaced. (See attached forms etc.)

It's from my experience that the removal of "Restoration site" signs is usually a mistake. As soon as the "R.S." sign is removed a campsite springs up and we're right back where we started. Two groups told me this season that they would've camped "there" except for the sign, stock groups at that!

TRAILS:

The trail crew arrived at Hockett mdw. on July 23rd and left Hockett mdw. on Aug. 10th. As usual they worked hard and we worked together on various activities. During the logging the trails phase I scouted the trails so the crew would know where (or not where) they needed to work. I went with the crew on one logging day when they were short one person. I helped move the bridge stringers for the new bridge the crew built on the trail to Evelyn LK. It took all six (6) of us to move the ranger out to a new location. I assisted with digging the new hole. I was available and fully participated in the wrangling the stock on the days when the

1976
Hockett meadow

Trail crew packer was not available (sun-tue).
 The crew finished ~~their time~~ by cleaning water bars and brushing the Atwell mill trail. In line with my views, I managed to contribute the following: I cut 33 trees out of the trail most of them before the trail crew arrived. I assisted one day with the crew and 14 trees were cut. As usual when patrolling on foot I "rock" the trails and removed 3000 lbs of stones from the trails. I also remove logs, limbs, and other debris from the trails. While on patrol I also moved 23 firepits from various camps and near the trails etc. I built one three (3) stone pit on the trail to Evelyn Lk. Due to the "nature" and low numbers of camps and firepits in this area I spend more time on fence repair and horseshoeing than on firepit cleanup. Firepits are not a real problem in this area. There are no serious trail problems in the Hockett area. However, "Horse Swallower Bog" on the High trail between Windy Gap and Wet Meadow entrance needs repair. The bog on Turkey Cr. near S Fork crossing needs fixing. There was cooperation and harmony between the Ranger and the trail crew - as it should be - we are all in the same boat - and it's easy to work together when we see the other persons problems as our own.



As requested I MARKED the Park Boundaries with new signs that made it quite clear where the Boundary is. I also monitored the 1000 Hour Fuel Sticks (7 times) until instructed BY Dave Yemm to stop, ON Sept. 26th to Sept. 28th I worked with CHARLIE SCHULTZ doing residual biomass in the Hockett Area. Perhaps this activity could be scheduled at a different time than the opening of deer season as has been the case the last two (2) seasons. The stock I had this season (J.R. & Mark) were sane, honest horses, who could be tied up, bridled, saddled, and packed up without Hobbles or Rodeos. First time ever in six (6) seasons with N.P.S. stock. Thanks! I put Eight (8) Horseshoes on their feet this season. I helped Steve Klump a bit as well, Steve Klump, Matt Grader and I worked on putting up new snow survey markers on the Atwell Mill, Hockett trail on Sept 22nd and 23rd. Summit Lake was patrolled on a regular basis and accounted for 20 lbs of the 25 lbs of visitor trash collected in the Hockett Area this season. Summit Lk & Blossom Lk will be dealt with separately in this report.

CAMP AREAS: There were NO problems in the camping sites this season in the Hockett Area. Sanitation can always be a problem, at the Hockett rdw, the two (2) pit toilets take care of most of that. I observed NO other problems of that ✓

Nature at any of the other camps. As stated above fire rings are not a big problem in this area if the ranger removes multiple rings from the established camps and other new sites that appear now and then. There is plenty of firewood available at most camp sites in the Hockett area. Food storage is not a problem here. However, the cables at Horse Creek (a bear box here would be good) and Hockett are worn out. I understand a new bear box is to appear at Hockett mdw soon. A bear box at the so. Fork crossing Horse camp would be a good thing as well. The impacts from camping in this area at least are mostly confined to existing sites with cables or bear boxes. There is little or no camping outside of these sites and the "impacts" show this reality, i.e. little or no new impacts.

Permit System: There are no problems with visitors passing through the N.P.S. Trailheads at Mineral King and Atwell Mill. In five seasons here the job done at M.K. has been outstanding! There are few visitors coming up the so. Fork, most of them have permits, but little else since the volunteers took over the quality of information has diminished. The visitors entering through the U.S.F.S are a mixed bag. It's not true that everyone knows that one must have a permit

For overnight use or that Pets (Always Dogs) and weapons are prohibited, many of these visitors both backpackers and stock users don't have clue! As stated above there's still no N.P.S. sign at the main trailhead there. (1P) These problems can be dealt with directly by personal contact by N.P.S. Rangers, at all levels with U.S.F.S. employees, user groups and Tim Show Balch Pack Pack Station Operator, an easy job and over time as we all know visitor behavior can be modified. Part of the problems at Summit Cr. can be attributed to this lack of information from the permit issuing offices at Springville and Yonkers.

Hunting Patrols are not yet over for this season however, hunters are entering the park through Tudy Gap and wet mdw. Entrances despite new boundary marker signs. I saw no sign of entry at Summit Cr. In the five seasons I've worked in this area I've seen no serious interest by the park in this regard. It's apparent that these encroachments can be stopped any time the park is willing to make an effort. An inventory has been turned in and a need list is on a separate paper.

Travel: The patrol aspect of this job takes the most work time and most of the public contact take place then. I make a good faith effort to visit the main camping areas on a regular basis.

Hockett mdw,
1996

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This kind of work, patrol and public contact, are to me at least, some of the most enjoyable parts of this work. This season my patrol horse "J.R." is a sane, honest horse (he's not perfect and he is "barn sour") who walks a little faster than I do and is okay for the longer patrols. "Mark" who was with me last season is a good pack horse, honest & sane. In light of the above I patrolled more with stock this season than last. SO: Miles Patrolled on Foot - 420
Miles Patrolled on Stock - 464
Total - 884

For the last two seasons the Park has initiated horse training sessions introducing a needed aspect of rangership. My view is that Backcountry Rangers should have knowledge of stock and stock management. This kind of information could present an opportunity to understand some of the problems of stock users in the backcountry. In light of this I would propose a five day backcountry pack trip (on Forest Service land) to introduce a variety of real problems to the backcountry rangers and others. I would be delighted to participate in some role in this teaching, learning experience. The B.C. Ranger point of view about stock and stock management should be represented. Minimum impact from the barn to the camp, including the equipment should be presented and practiced.

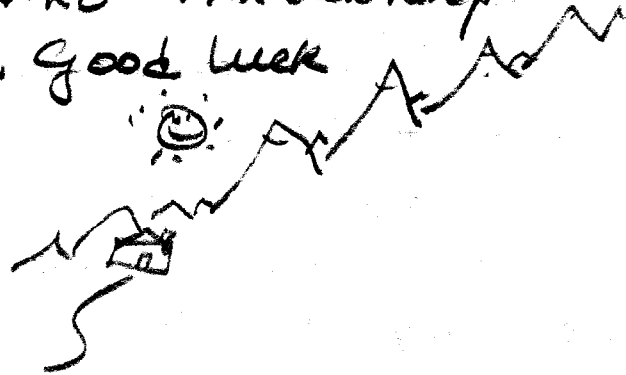
AFTER MY OBSERVATIONS ALONG THE PARK BOUNDARY DURING HUNTING PATROLS THIS SEASON ITS MY VIEW THAT THE PARK SHOULD GO AHEAD WITH ENDING THE PRIVILEGE GRANTED TO HUNTERS TO PASS THROUGH THE PARK WITH THEIR WEAPONS TO HUNT ON U.S.F.S LAND. AS STATED ABOVE HUNTERS ARE ENTERING THE PARK - STOPPING PASSAGE COULD HELP ALLEVIATE SOME OF THESE ACTIVITIES.

WORKING THIS SEASON IN THE HOCKETT AREA HAS BEEN A REAL DELIGHT. I REALLY ENJOY WORKING IN THE BACKCOUNTRY AND WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND MY HEARTFELT THANKS TO ALL THE PEOPLE AT ALL LEVELS WHO SUPPORT THE BACKCOUNTRY OPERATIONS AND MAKE MY PARTICIPATION POSSIBLE. THANKS!

"THE BODY TORMENTS THE MOUNTAINS; AND THE SPIRIT IS SET FREE". HSU HSIA-KO 17th century

Fair weather, Good luck

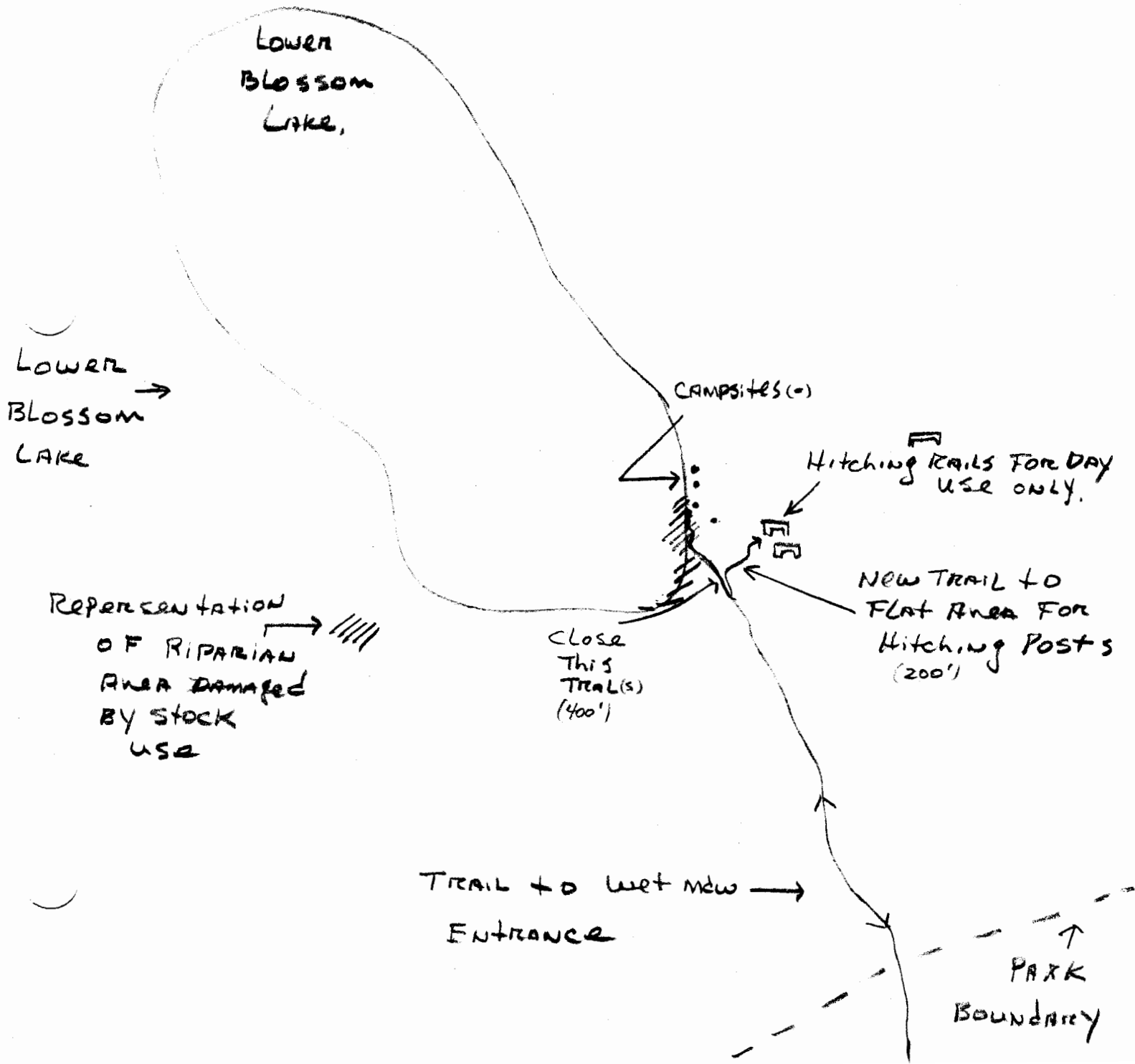
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Lorenzo Stowell
Hockett Meadow Ranger
1996

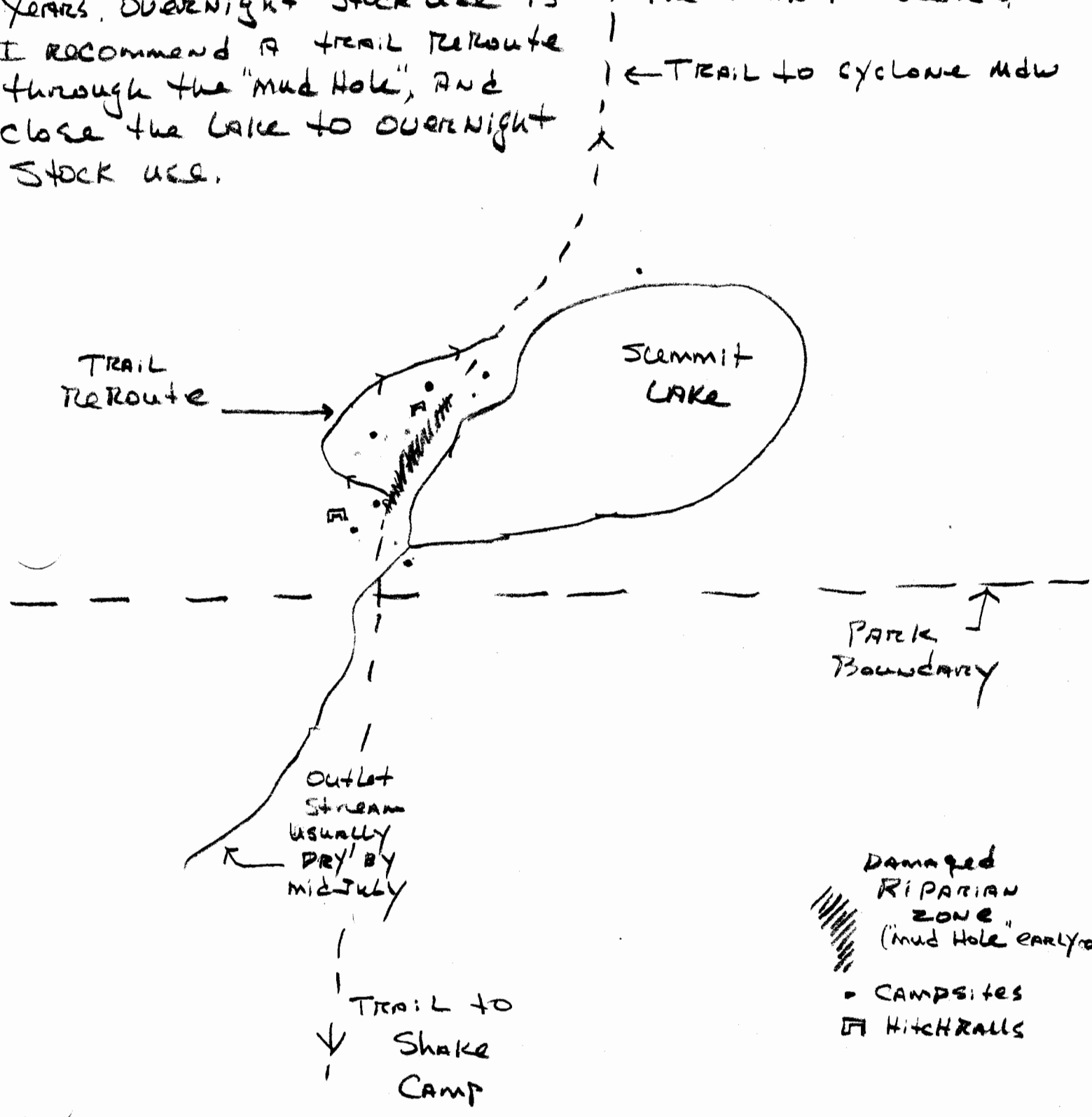
Lower
MAP OF Blossom Lake, 1996

An acceptable impact has been occurring at this lake for years. Overnight stock use is the main problem. I recommend that a new short trail be constructed to some hitch trails for day use only, the old trail closed and the lake closed for overnight stock use.



MAP OF Summit Lake 1996

ACCEPTABLE IMPACT has been occurring here FOR YEARS. OVERNIGHT STOCK USE is the main PROBLEM. I RECOMMEND A TRAIL ROUTE through the "Mud Hole", AND close the LAKE to OVERNIGHT STOCK USE.



There's one propane tank left.

at Stouffville
Hockett Ranger 1996

Need List Hockett R.S. 1996

- 1- Super glue
- 1- 8 LB MAUL
- 10 Burlap Sacks (10 TPs)
- 5 Propane Gas Bottles (For entire season)
- 2 Cases Propane Gas Cannisters For lanterns
- 8 New type mantles for Propane lamps
- 4 rolls "Jute" style twine for fence work
- 2 New Flashlights for ~~use~~ inside the cabin etc.
- 10 "0" (zero) sized horse shoes
- 1 Real Chainsaw - 30" BAR minimum!
- 1 Real pair of shoeing chaps
- ~~Box Fence staples (for wooden post fence)~~
- *12* Teflon Skillet with lid * (really needed!!)
- 1 New Flag.
- 1 Sack grain for horses
- 1 Salt Block SOLD
- 1 Whisk Broom.
- 1 New mop "Head"

Demo Flight
10/96

✓ over.

Steve: The "New" gasket for the water pump works - sort of - we do need at least one more bolt for the fittings - one of the bolts just "spins" around (the "front" hole facing the sink could also be the problem) and makes it difficult to "crank" the fitting down tight. The sink doesn't really drain and needs - maybe a "real" plumber or ?? - in any case the sink doesn't drain very much.

L. Stowell
Hockett Ranger

✓ Tack Shed Inventory 1996 July 21, 1996

- 2 Crow Bars
- 2 Antique Pipe Wrenches - 1 newer wrench.
- 2 Carpenter Hammers
- 2 " " Hand Saws
- 3 Pairs Fencing Pliers (one very worn out)
- 1 Pair Loppers
- 1 Hack Saw - 1 "sort of" Hack Saw - spare blades ^{to it} various -
- 2 Braces (no bits) - 2 kinds of braces - "vertical" ^{one} & "horizontal" ^{one}
- 1 Hand Maul
- 1 Chinking Hammer
- 2 Carpenters Levels (1 small, 1 large)
- " " Angles (" " " ")
- 2 Wire Brushes
- 2 Straight Line Chalk Reels.
- 2 Splitting wedges - needed 2 plastic "falling" wedges.
- 1 Horse Shaving Kit - shoeing apron - very unsafe! ^{one} Better "Alligators" needed.
- 2 Hand Limbing Saws - 1 large & 1 small: 1 long handled limbing saw
- 1 Rock Bar - standard trail crew type.
- 1 Fence Apron
- 7 Rolls Fencing wire
- 6 Safety glasses
- 1 Magnet
- 10' Copper tubing
- ✓ MOP - 1 MOP Bucket
- 1 "Sierra Magtag"
- 2 3 gallon Buckets
- 3 Steel Headed Rakes - 1 short handled - 1 antique type overly

- 1 Post hole digger
- 1 hoe
- 1 Sign - "Restoration site etc" & 1 sign post (metal)
- 5 mCloves
- 2 BRUSH HOOKS
- 2 PAIRS CHAINSAW CHAPS
- 6 SNOW SHOVELS
- 9 SHOVELS (VARIOUS)
- 3 DOUBLE BIT AXES (1 Sheath) 2 One new.
- 1 PeLaski
- 1 CRUISING AXE
- 1 8LB Sledge - Needed 8LB MAUL!
- 2 CROSS CUT (3') SAWS - one with "stinger"
- 1 PRAY, (Kerosene & applicator present) ↓
- 2 LEAF RAKES - one short handled.
- 1 METAL POST POUNDER.
- 1 CHAINSAW - with various files - some even work on the chain present
- 1 " " Sharpening tool - 2 "Screwdrivers"
- 3 WASH TUBS - 1 "BATH TUB" size (current RANGER never uses them)
- 2 50 gallon Barrels - 1 trash - 1 grain.
- NAILS - SCREWS, BOLTS, NUTS, etc VARIOUS - Needed 1 Box FRAXE STAPLES.
- 2 Boxes N.P.S. Boundary Markers (100+)
- 20 Gallons BLAZO
- CHAINSAW OIL - 3, 1 gal. Cans +
- PLASTIC BAGS - Plenty - BURLAP BAGS - 8
- 6 METAL FENCE POSTS
- WOOD - VARIOUS
- CHAINS, STRING, ROPE - MUCHO & VARIOUS.
- HORSE & MULE SHOES - MANY - Needed 2 Boxes "5 City" NAILS
- Shoes Needed "1 PL's" - 8-10 soon!
- HORSE "MEDICINE" - COMPLETE - Needed 1 Can Wipe
- PUMPING SUPPLIES - VARIOUS - OKAY FOR NOW.

- 2 CASES PROPANE FUEL TANKS 12 ea. ^{FOR} stove lanterns etc
- 1 Plumbing "Snake"
- 1 PRY BAR
- 2 SCOURING POWDERS
- 1 gallon BLEACH
- 2 ROLLS twine (1LB)
- Needed - Sisal twine or Parachute Cord
- 1 tool kit: OPEN ended wrenches - 1/4" to 1"
- 2 wheel BARROWS with Flat tires - Need AIR PUMP or?