



**1) Was your route completed as planned? If there were changes, why?**

We originally planned to cross Bubbs Creek at Junction Meadow in order to hike up to East Lake. However when we arrived at the wilderness permit station, we learned that Bubbs Creek was high (in late July) and that fording was not recommended. We revised our route to include additional nights at Sphinx Creek camp. This allowed us to enjoy several day hikes, including a memorable hike to Avalanche Pass.

**2) What were you most inspired by?**

As we hiked up the Sphinx Creek canyon toward Avalanche Pass, we were greeted by other hikers who told us about some interesting switchbacks ahead. Built into the trail are rugged granite staircases, which we were told were installed during the 1930s Depression era. It was inspiring to study the construction and imagine the labor and care that went into placing each stone. Peering over the edge you could see how strenuous the assembly would have been. Although we were told these steps were 80+ years old, the stairs show little wear, which is a testament not only to the quality of the work, but to the priority of the National Park Service to provide access to these parks and their natural beauty. Although we were able to explore many impressive parts of Kings Canyon and its rivers, we were inspired by the quality and vastness of the trail system. You could nearly spend a lifetime returning again and again.

**3) Any advice for other backpackers?**

I was surprised to see so few women backpacking in Kings Canyon. I would encourage other women to look into planning a trip, even if it seems ambitious at first. It is incredibly relaxing to leave it all behind and appreciate the serenity and peacefulness of nature.

A good approach for beginners is to hike into the backcountry, set up camp and plan several day hikes with a lighter pack. A great general introduction to backpacking is “The 2-Ounce Backpacker” by Robert S. Wood (available through SNHA online bookstore). This guide provides great tips and ideas for planning and enjoying your time in the backcountry.

**4) What was the most useful product from the SNHA?**

The SNHA field hat is essential gear for day hiking in Kings Canyon. It keeps you shielded from intense high elevation sun and even snaps up in case of rain to keep water off your pack. I wore it continuously on the trail.

However I'd say the most useful product I received from the SNHA was the field bag. It is sturdy enough to protect a manual lens camera and has handy compartments for your map, pen, and any other small items you need on the trail. This bag made it convenient for us to access our camera on the trail, so we always were able to capture photos of the

beautiful scenery around us. The adjustable straps made it simple to wear across my shoulder or to secure and fasten to the top of our packs.

**5) Additional comments about your experience with the Hike Big program or the History Association**

Learning about the SNHA and its role in supporting Sequoia and Kings Canyon gave us further appreciation of the history of the parks. I hope that our membership in the SNHA and our participation in the Hike Big program can contribute to the SNHA mission.