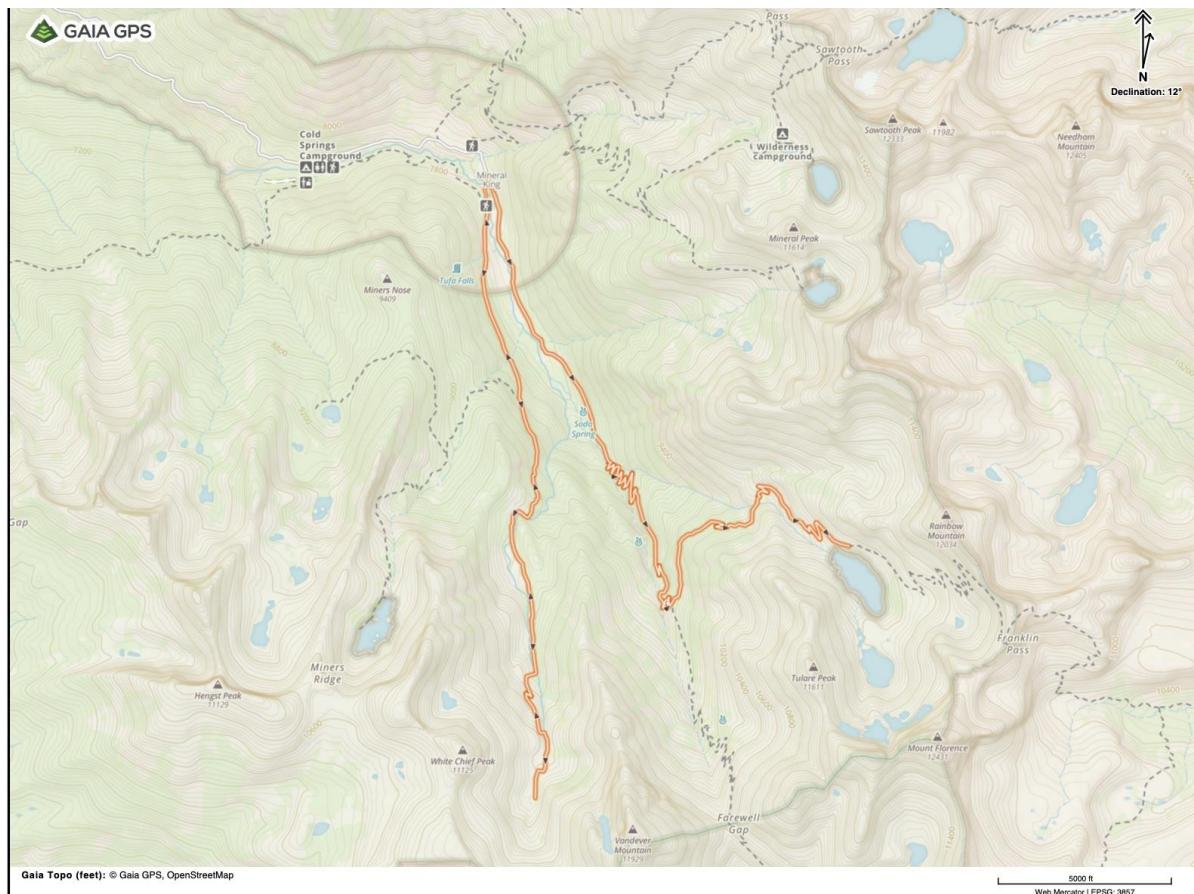


JULY 16-20

WALKING OVER CAVES MINERAL KING, SEQUOIA KINGS CANYON NP



Description

The Sierra Nevada range is home to hundreds of cave systems, including 225 in the southern Sierra alone. These underground spaces formed as rain seeped through pores and cracks in the limestone, picking up carbon dioxide on its journey through plant matter, soil, and stone. Pooling at the level of the water table, this weak acidic solution excavated cavities and passageways later drained of liquid as the water table naturally sank.

On this trip, we will explore the Mineral King area, known for several different systems. In the White Chief area specifically, many openings to the cave system are visible and while we might peer in, we will not enter. Instead we will walk considering the potential of these spaces underneath, the mountains' negatives. If we normally encounter mountains as solid accumulations of matter, how does our experience change if we walk with a conscious attention to the caves, the negative forms of mountains cushioning that perceived solidity underneath? Interested in the porosity of the mountain.

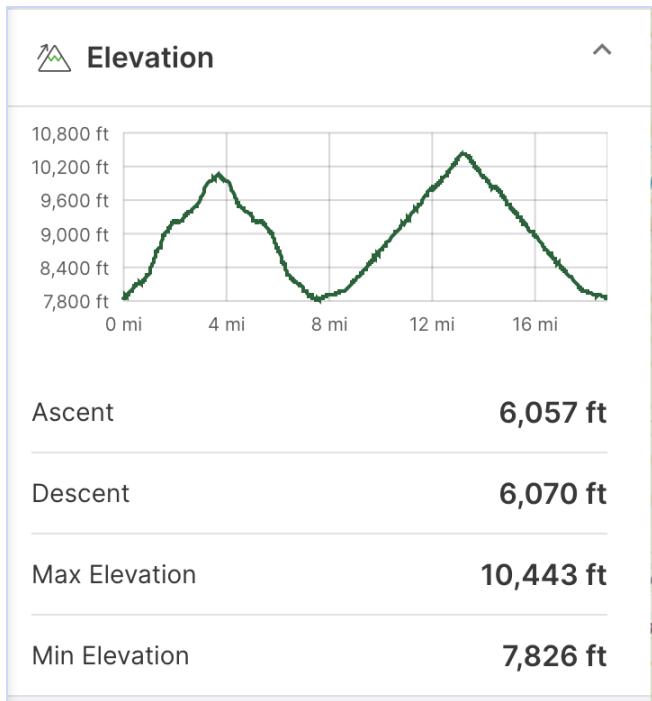
Trip Details

Itinerary

Day 1	Drive to trailhead, hike to White Chief Mine	3 mi
Day 2	Explore White Chief area	0 mi
Day 3	Hike to Franklin Lake	9 mi
Day 4	Explore Franklin Lake, upper lake, bowl, try to find Panorama Bowl Caves	0 mi
Day 5	Hike out, drive home	6 mi

Total Mileage: Approx 18 miles

Difficulty: Moderate. The mileage each day is very manageable, but we will be starting from a 7800 ft elevation and occasionally climb to 11,000 feet.



Expected Conditions

- Weather
 - Expect mild days in the 60s-70s with nights in the 30-40s
- Trail
 - Should be free of snow with dry winter
 - Defined but rocky, with possibility of off trail exploration around cave areas
- Water
 - Readily available in streams and lakes, 2L carrying capacity is sufficient
- Gear Considerations
 - Bug protection. Early season in the Sierra is playing Russian Roulette with the skeeters. Head net, spray, permethrin-treated clothes all recommended

Getting to the Trailhead

- Meet up: [White Chief Trailhead](#)
 - July 16, 12 pm
- Permits:
 - Group Size: 6
 - Permit cost: \$15 per person

Additional Notes

Mineral King is world famous for persistent marmots that like to chew through car parts. Each driver will need to bring a tarp big enough to wrap your vehicle like a burrito as well as rope. I recommend Harbor Freight for big, cheap tarps. NPS link here:

<https://www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/marmots.htm>

