

GEOG/ES 195 – SAN ANDREAS FAULT AND BIG SUR COAST

This 1 unit field course into Central California will explore the Big Sur Coast seeing first hand California's most beautiful and dramatic coastline and the wildlife that inhabits it. After Big Sur, we will continue over the coast range inland to visit the Arroyo Seco River and its classic terraces, the rock spires of Pinnacles National Monument, and the amazing landforms and other evidence of the San Andreas Fault from Parkfield to the Carrizo Plain. This course includes studies of Central California geology, landforms, biogeography, and climate.

Field trip dates: Wednesday through Saturday, May 27-30, 2009.

Things you need to do:

1. **Register in GEOG195 class #31642, or ES195 class #31867 for the Spring 2009 semester.** Since this is a late start class, you may register at any time. However, you must register for the class no later than **May 4, 2009**.
2. **Take care of the following—Return all forms (yellow) to Doug Key or Patty Deen:**
 - a. **Fill out and return both (2) enclosed liability waivers**
 - b. **Fill out and return the enclosed Student Information Sheet**
 - c. **Pay \$20 camping fee to the Cashier's office** (covers camping at Big Sur and Arroyo Seco). **Return the payment form and cashier receipt.**
3. **Begin to arrange transportation.** Students should share rides if at all possible. Ride sharing reduces your costs for the trip and greatly reduces logistical problems created by having too many vehicles for camp sites, gas stops, parking, etc. Participant lists developed from the rider/driver information will be sent to you as the trip nears. Use this list to arrange rides.

Where does the trip start?

The trip starts at the entrance to the Washburn Campground; San Simeon State Park. It is located approximately 24 miles north of Morro Bay on California Highway 1. The distance from Palomar College to our starting point is about 345 miles. Depending on traffic through Los Angeles, it will take between 6 and 8 hours to get there. We would strongly suggest that you arrive at the campground on the evening of Tuesday, May 26 rather than try to drive up from San Diego County very early Wednesday morning. Washburn campsites are \$15 per night and can take up to 2 vehicles. Please fill your gas tank in Morro Bay or Cambria prior to arriving at the Washburn Campground. Be sure to be at the meeting place before 8:00am, our start time.

Gas stops and supply stops

The areas we will be visiting are surprisingly remote. When we stop for gas, be sure to fill your vehicle all the way up. Your vehicles should be able to go at least 250 miles between fill ups. Also, you should plan on taking all of your food and supplies, and some water with you as stores may be hard to find. Total driving distance for the field course including getting there and returning home will be about 950 miles.

Camping

We will be camping on this trip. Facilities at the campsites range from limited to very good. The tentative camping plans are as follows:

May 26 (evening before start of course) - Washburn Campground \$15/night, 2 vehicles per site, nice, new pit toilets, and water. Reservations may be made through Reserve America for this

campground. It is part of San Simeon State Park. Sites are assigned when you arrive. I will try to get one as close as possible to campsite #231.

May 27 - Fernwood Resort and Campground. Nice facilities with flush toilets and showers.

May 28 - Arroyo Seco Campground. Facilities include flush toilets and showers.

May 29 - Coalinga Mineral Springs County Park. This campground is primitive with pit toilets and no running water.

Weather

Our weather on the trip will probably be dry. Temperatures will range from highs of 65 to 90, and night-time lows in the 50's. We may encounter fog along the Central California coast.

2-way radios

If you have or can borrow a 14-channel 2-way radio, please bring it. Otherwise, we do have a limited number to check out to vehicles.

Hiking

We will be doing lots of short to moderate length hikes on this trip. None of the hikes are longer than about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Maps

AAA maps of Los Angeles County, San Luis Obispo County, Kern County, and the Monterrey Bay area will be useful.

Do not bring

Alcohol, drugs, or firearms. Also, playing a stereo while driving is fine, but is not permitted at stops or while camped at night.

Driving

When driving, obey all traffic regulations. When we stop; park off of the pavement. Please be very careful while driving. Do not pass the instructor (lead vehicle) unless specifically told to do so.

Vehicles

Most any vehicle will be fine as most of the roads are paved or very well graded gravel. However, some roads are narrow and winding. Trailers, large motorhomes, or very low-slung vehicles are not recommended. Make sure your vehicle is in excellent condition with a full-size spare tire.

Potential Hazards

Particularly, when we are out hiking, please be careful about the following:

1. **Poison oak** - there can be lots of it around. We will identify the plant for you.
2. **Snakes** - they are on rare occasions encountered when hiking. Be careful where you put your hands or feet.
3. **Falling** - some of our hiking will be in areas that are steep or have sharp drop-offs. Be careful of your footing and stay on the trails.

Grades

Grades are based on active participation and your answers to 4 essay questions that will be given out on the trip. For those not answering the essay questions, active participation on the trip will earn you a grade of C, or credit if you are taking the course credit/no credit. To get an A or B, you must answer the questions.

Questions?

If you have any questions regarding this trip, please contact one of the instructors.

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