

# Pisgah Crater Campout

Mojave Desert

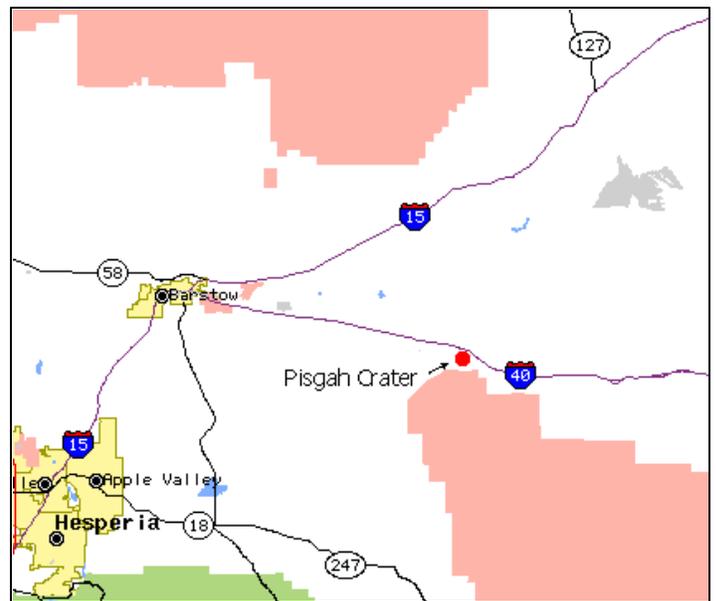
40mi East of Barstow

**P**isgah crater is off hwy 40 about 40 miles southeast of Barstow. The crater and cinder cone are very young, under 100,000 years old. Cinder cones usually only erupt once, another eruption will form a separate cone, in this way, large clustering of cinder cones can form, like the one in the northern Mojave with over 40 cinder cones stretching over 26,000 acres. Pisgah crater is off on its own, 30 miles northwest of the next cinder cone, Amboy crater. Pisgah is easy to get too. A quarry road leads half way up the cinder cone, and is surrounded by 10 miles of lava flow. No one is quite sure why these cinder cones form in the desert. They are made of basalt magma. Basalt is what makes up the islands of Hawaii. It is typified by a dark appearance (mostly black with some red or gray), very low viscosity, and mild, flowing, eruptions. The eruption first throws out tephra, a porous rock heavier than pumice, which builds the cone. After the volcano is done erupting tephra, a lava flow begins. The tephra cone isn't strong enough to support a tube of magma, so it flows out of the bottom of the cone.



## The Drive in

**W**e will be camping on BLM land adjacent to Pisgah Crater. To get there from San Bernardino we will take hwy 215 West to the hwy 15 junction in Devore and then take the hwy 15 North to Barstow. In Barstow we will connect with hwy 40 and travel East about 40 miles to the Hector Road off ramp. From Hector road we will jump to the frontage road that parallels the South side of the hwy. Traveling East again for about two miles we will pass a line of power transmission towers and turn south on the next dirt road. This dirt road will follow the line of transmission towers out into the desert. It is out on this part of the desert BLM land we will find a spot to camp.



## To Camp

**W**hile camping out on the sandy desert we will not have a campfire, but that's OK. The weather should be very good. These wide open spaces will give an opportunity for younger scouts to practice their Orienteering skills and everyone will want to take the nighttime opportunity to stargaze. Clear dark night skies of the high desert will give the star-studded heavens crystal clarity. On past campouts we have raced RC cars across the camp, honed our target shooting skills, or just sat around the night playing games. Tomorrow, though, we head for the big crater and the lava fields.

## The Lava Fields

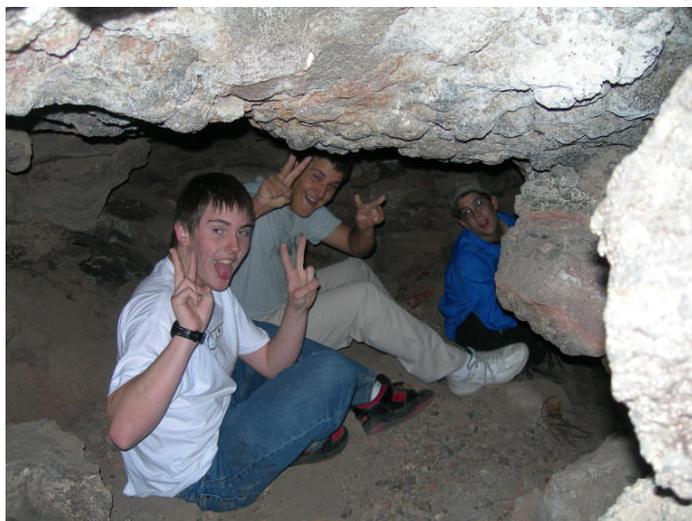
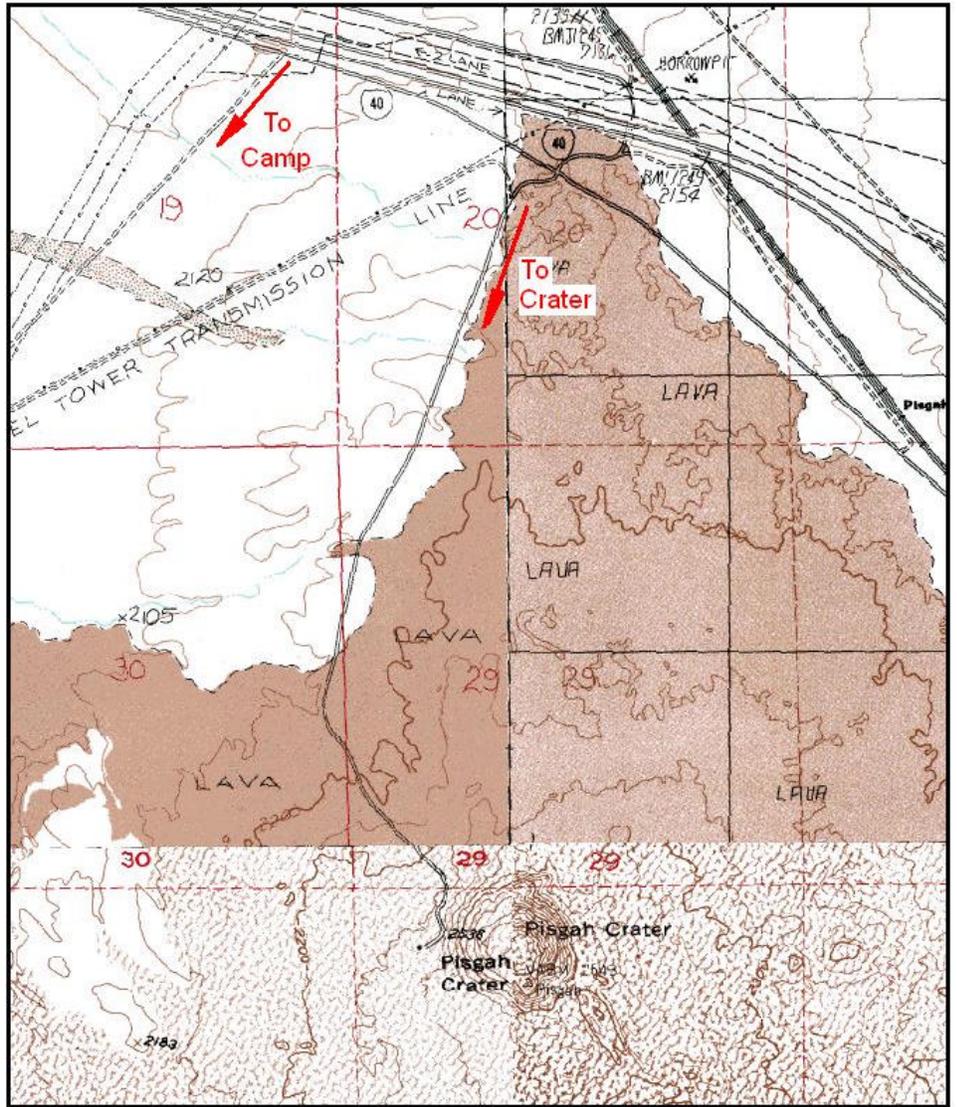
From Camp we will return to the frontage road and continue a short distance East to the next dirt road. This old poorly paved road goes out to Pisgah Crater which can be seen a short distance away.

Drive all the way around to the east side of the crater and park in the large flat parking area. There used to be an old outhouse here, but it is gone now. This entire area is unimproved. There is no water, trash pickup or facilities so pack it out.

Bring gloves and sturdy jeans as the lava is both rough and sharp in places. Also be prepared to get dirty as the lava caves and tubes will many times have dirt floors. Oh, you will also want to bring flashlights or headlamps for exploring in the dark.

## Troop Preparations

This campout was chosen for both its cool lava caves and for its variety of scouting opportunities. There will be no campfire on this campout, but scouts may choose to bring cook stoves for food prep. Times for departure and return will be set as we get closer to the camp



date. BE PREPARED, and show up with all your gear, so we can stow our gear and leave in a timely manner. The days are getting shorter and we would rather not take the time to gather early and then waste the evening



shopping and getting forgotten gear, leaving us to setup camp in the dark. All-in-all this should be a really good campout, and we are looking forward to having a large group participating this month. - RFS