

Stockton Flats Campout

Stockton Flats

Lytle Creek



The first residents in Lytle Creek Canyon were the Serrano Indians who lived in the San Bernardino Valley and adjacent mountain areas. It is believed the Serranos moved from the San Bernardino Valley during the hot summer months to the cooler Lytle Creek area where they gathered acorns, fished and hunted.

Later, as California become a Mexican Territory, explorers and eventually early settlers came to the area. The Mexican Government awarded large parcels of land to ranchers. Ranchers grazed their cattle along the hillsides of the present day Cucamonga Wilderness. Hunters and trappers also came with the promise of a new wild land, and wild and dangerous it was. One early trapper, Isaac Slover, was killed by a grizzly bear in October 1854 near the present day Lone Pine Canyon Rd.

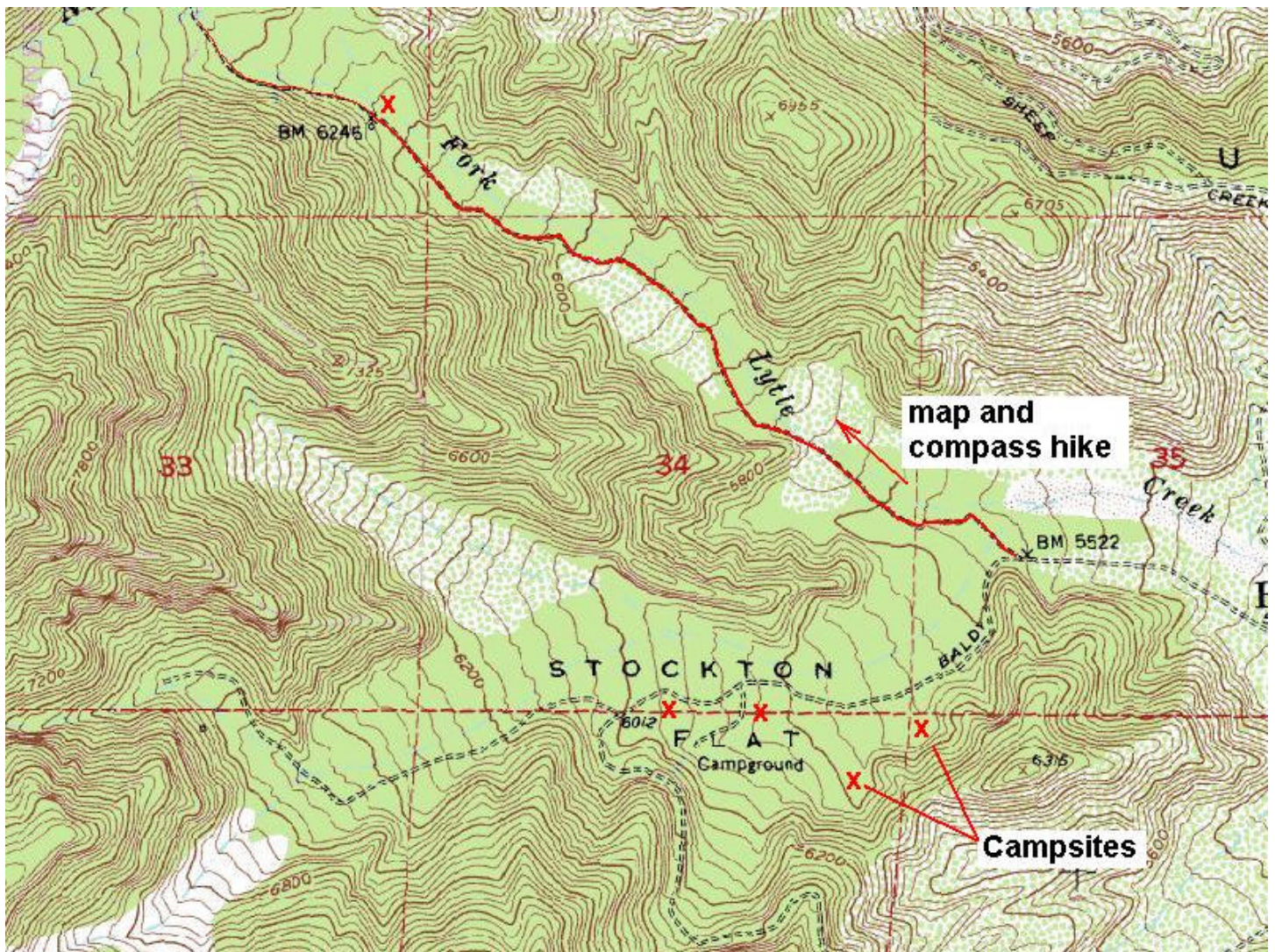
The Mormons were the first who showed any real interest in establishing a permanent settlement in Lytle Creek. In 1851, Brigham Young sent three companies of Latter Day Saints to assist in the war with Mexico. By the time they got to the area, however, the war was nearing an end so they established settlements. In June of 1851 they posted camp at the mouth of Lytle Creek Canyon, in a grove of Sycamore trees, surviving by hunting the land and fishing the waters. Captain Andrew Lytle was one of the commanding officers from which "Lytle's Creek" or Lytle Creek got its name. Though Captain Lytle did not stay long, others remained in the area establishing small farms.

Lytle Creek and its three main forks tumble down rugged wilderness canyons on the southern slope of the eastern San Gabriel Mountains. This is part of the San Bernardino National Forest but it's not too far from its border with the Angeles National Forest. The San Andreas Fault is only a valley away so this area is under the constant threat of earthquakes, not to mention flash flood, rock slides, and fire. But it is beautiful nonetheless.



The Drive in

Take the 10 Freeway west from San Bernadino and the 15 Freeway north toward Barstow. About 3mi before the intersection of the 15 and 215 Freeways in Devore, exit the freeway at Sierra Avenue following the sign for the Lytle Creek Recreation Area. Drive north past Nealey's Corner toward Lytle Creek. You will pass the Lytle Creek Ranger Station (on your right) and pass through the town of Lytle Creek. The paved road proceeds out of town following the Lytle Creek until you reach the shooting area. The road then turns to dirt and will be rough all the way to the gate at the creek. Turn left and cross the creek bed, then proceed up the road to Stockton Flats. Camping is only in the "Yellow post" sites.



Map and Compass Hike

Though there is no water in any of the yellow post sites, if you cross the river bed and follow the dirt road up the North Fork of the Lytle Creek you will reach a point where the creek goes to ground after its long trip down the mountain. That makes this road a good route for young scouts to take when learning their map and compass skills. The valley is good for plant and animal identification, practicing camp craft skills, and generally doing scout stuff. This can be a “cool” camp when the warm days give way to cool nights through the fall months, so bring warm clothing, and sleeping gear when the season demands. Do not camp here in the rain because flooding will cut you off from the road out of the valley. We once camped in a cold drizzle and woke up in the morning covered in 12 inches of new snow. We came prepared for a little rain and were shocked to wake up in a winter wonderland.

Troop Preparations

This campout was chosen for both its beauty in location and for its variety of scouting opportunities. It has an easy hike for the young scout, yet provides extended hiking and exploration for the experienced venturer. 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