



WEST FORK OF OAK CREEK

INFORMATION FOR FULL CANYON TRIPS

The entire trip from the top of West Fork (Forest Road 231) to Highway 89A is 14 miles long, requires swimming up to seven cold and deep pools and should only be attempted by individuals who are in **GOOD physical condition, GOOD swimmers, have proper survival equipment** and are **prepared for the unexpected**. There is **NO trail** beyond the three-mile point from Highway 89A in Oak Creek Canyon.

NOTE: Building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, campfire or stove fire is prohibited in the West Fork of Oak Creek Canyon. Backpacking stoves or propane stoves are allowed.

THIS TRIP IS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR A DAY TRIP.
DO NOT ATTEMPT THIS TRIP BY YOURSELF!

WITH THAT SAID, LET'S TALK ABOUT THE GOOD STUFF!!

- Swimming in at least 3 cold pools is required; a person must be a strong swimmer and well prepared. A floatation device such as a small inflatable raft, a river dry bag or two air mattresses works well. Water proof backpacks can also be used.
- Only occasional sunlight reaches the canyon floor, a hot day may still seem cool. Make sure you have
- Dry clothes and avoid hypothermia. This trip should only be attempted in warm weather (June through Sept). Do not attempt the trip if flood conditions are predicted.
- There are miles of difficult boulder hopping which causing trauma to the knees and numerous deep pools need to be waded causing a person to be wet and cold much of the time.
- Plan to do an overnight trip-- pack extra clothing, a warm jacket, a garbage bag, a sleeping bag, shelter, plenty of food, a water filter for filtering creek water, gym shoes for wading a hat and sunscreen and matches.

FOLLOW THE "A, B, C's" OF BACK COUNTRY TRAVEL

A. ALWAYS TELL SOMEONE WHERE YOU ARE GOING (SPECIFICALLY WHERE) AND WHEN YOU WILL RETURN.

B. BE PREPARED FOR THE UNEXPECTED.

C. CARRY A SURVIVAL KIT.



FOLLOW THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF "LEAVE NO TRACE"

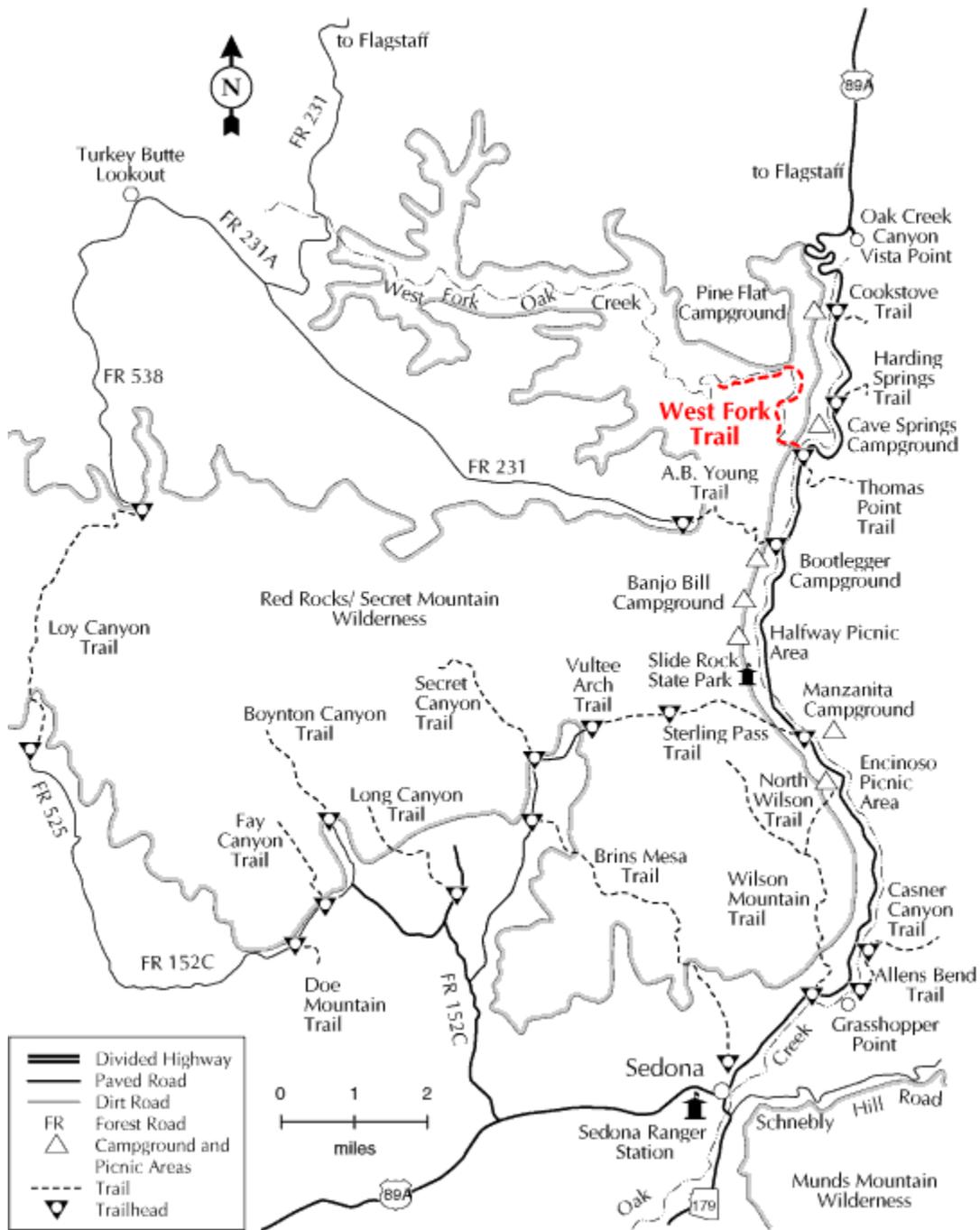
- 1. BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS**—Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience. Be courteous.
- 2. LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND**—Plants, flowers, animals, rocks, pottery shards and other natural and cultural treasures need to stay where you find them.
- 3. RESPECT WILDLIFE—THIS IS THEIR HOME**—Watch wildlife from a distance. Never approach, feed or follow a wild animal.
- 4. DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY**—Pack out what you bring into the forest. If you see trash left by others, pick it up too. Dispose of human waste responsibly—bury it six inches deep at least 200 feet from water and trails. Use toilet paper sparingly, and bury it deep and pack it out. Cigarette butts are trash too!
- 5. TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES**—Creating new trails destroys the fragile vegetation and soil. If you must travel off-trail, choose rock, gravel or sand surfaces.
- 6. MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS**—When camping, a stove is better than a fire. Trees and shrubs grow slowly. Minimizing campfires keeps the area more natural, the air cleaner and the risk of wildfires to a minimum.
- 7. PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE**—Check with a Forest Service visitor center for updates and information. Use maps and be prepared for extreme weather, hazards and emergencies.

Excerpts from Zane Grey's Novel - Call of the Canyon . . .

. . . "There's good trout fishin' along heah a little later," he said, pointing to the stream. "Crick's too high now. I like West Fork best. I've ketch'd some lammin' big ones up thertaking to the trail, she stepped out briskly, now giving attention to her surroundings. The canyon had widened, and the creek with its deep thicket of green and white had sheered to the left. On her right the canyon wall appeared to be lifting higher--and higher. She could not see it well, owing to intervening treetops. The trail led her through a grove of maples and sycamores, out into an open park-like bench that turned to the right toward the cliff. Suddenly Carley saw a break in the red wall. It was the intersecting canyon, West Fork. What a narrow red-walled gateway! Huge pine trees spread wide gnarled branches over her head. The wind made soft rush in their tops, sending the brown needles lightly on the air. Carley turned the bulging corner, to be halted by a magnificent spectacle. It seemed a mountain wall loomed over her. It was the western side of this canyon, so lofty that Carley had to tip back her head to see the top. She swept her astonished gaze down the face of this tremendous red mountain wall and then slowly swept it upward again. This phenomenon of a cliff seemed beyond the comprehension of her sight. It looked a mile high. The few trees along its bold rampart resembled short spear-pointed bushes outlined against the steel gray of sky. Ledges, caves, seams, cracks, fissures, beetling red brows, yellow crumbling crags, benches of green growths and niches choked with brush, and bold points where single lonely pine trees grew perilously, and blank walls a thousand feet across their shadowed faces--these features gradually took shape in Carley's confused sight, until the colossal mountain front stood up before her in all its **strange, wild, magnificent ruggedness and beauty.**

"Arizona! Perhaps this is what he meant," murmured Carley. "**I never dreamed of anything like this. . . .**

WEST FORK TRAIL #108



07/18/03
 Coconino National Forest
 Red Rock Ranger District - Tel. 928-282-4119



Oak Creek Canyon Access: From the junction of Routes 89A and Hiway 179, take 89A north 10.5 miles to the Call of the Canyon day use area on the left at milepost 384.7 **NOTE:** (\$9 Parking fee per day-per vehicle)

Description: This very popular trail begins at the southwest corner of the parking area and leads a short way to Oak Creek which is crosses using a new iron footbridge. The trail leads south for ¼ mile, passing the ruins of historic **Mayhew Lodge**, to the mouth of the West Fork of Oak Creek. **The trail is wheelchair accessible to this point.** **Mayhew Lodge:** As early as 1895, Lou Thomas turned Bear Howard's cabin into a two-story hunting fishing lodge. It was there that Zane Grey was inspired to write his book Call of the Canyon, which he turned into Sedona's first movie. In 1925, the property was sold to Carl Mayhew who operated it as Mayhew's Lodge. It became a favorite destination for prominent movie stars, politicians, and writers. Guests included Lord Halifax, President Herbert Hoover, Clark Gable, Susan Hayward, Cesar Romero, Jimmy Stewart, Walt Disney, and Maureen O'Hara. The U.S. Forest Service acquired the property and made plans to renovate the structure, but tragically the lodge burned to the ground in 1980.

The area was also used as the backdrop for the 1923 Victor Fleming silent movie "The Call of the Canyon," which was based on Zane Grey's novel – "Call of the Canyon".