

PHYSICAL GEOLOGY

Catskill Field Trip
Fall, 2007

OCTOBER 9-10, 2007

THE FOCUS OF THE TRIP IS ACADEMIC...

One of the great things about the study of geoscience is that it's here, all around us, all the time. To most people, however, much of the story hidden in the landscape is misunderstood or more often not even noticed. The trained eye, on the other hand, will find details that raise questions, provide answers, and present new puzzles in even the most bland of landscapes. *The goal of this trip is to train your eye!*

We will hike a section of trail at North Lake State Park in Hunter, New York. Along the way we will stop to examine and discuss various geologic structures, features, and processes evident in the rocks and topography around us. We will see erosional and depositional evidence of past Ice Ages, and talk about the inferences we make from that evidence. From our vantage point 3000 feet above the Hudson Valley we will imagine the creation and erosion, between 450 million and 300 million years ago, of a great mountain range to the east, and the deposition of the sedimentary rocks that today are called the Catskill Mountains. We'll visit the highest waterfall in New York State, and try to understand why it exists. And we'll cap the trip with a mile long hike in an undeveloped limestone cavern.

Your responsibilities on this trip will include being an active participant in all aspects of what we do for those two days. You'll have to really put your nose into the rock outcrops we examine, and you'll have answer and ask questions. You'll have to sketch diagrams of things you see, and record what you learn - your observations, thoughts, and ideas - in a field notebook.

A major part of your first quarter grade will be the Catskill Field Trip Report - a report written by you that any reasonably bright classmate could take into the mountains and with it see and understand our work during the two days.

...BUT IT'S FUN, TOO

The trails we follow offer some of the most breathtaking scenery in the East. We'll eat lunch at Artist's Rock, a favorite site of the artists of the "Hudson River School" in the mid 1800's. We'll climb to almost 4000 feet at North Point, where on a clear day we can see north past Albany to New York's Adirondack Mountains and the Green Mountains of Vermont. Turning south, we'll see the billion year old Hudson Highlands near Beacon, New York.

We've rented campsites in a developed campground. There are picnic tables at each campsite. Flush toilets, sinks with mirrors and electrical outlets, and hot showers are available. We'll also set up a communal kitchen and dining area under a roofed pavilion. Of course, you'll have to set up and take down your own campsite, and you're welcome to help me and Mrs. Woodell out in the "kitchen" as we cook and clean up the *best dinner you've ever had*.

After dinner (and weather permitting) we'll do a nighttime trek up to the site of the old Catskill Mountain House on the cliffs overlooking the Hudson to watch the constellations of the 7 Sisters, Taurus, and Orion rise over the Berkshire Mountains 80 miles to the east. Shooting stars and polar orbiting satellites will also entertain us. On past trips we've seen porcupines, raccoons, and skunks, bears, and one night we heard coyotes howling in the distance. Very cool.

On day 2, we'll visit Kaaterskill Falls and then travel to Middleburgh, NY for some exploration in wild Schoharie Cave.

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW...

Mountains make their own weather. Temperature and precipitation forecasts are at best unreliable, and it is quite possible for daytime temperatures to reach into the 80's and nighttime temperatures to fall into the 20's. On more than one occasion we've had snow on this trip, and other times we've spent the entire time in tee shirts and shorts. One trip included so much rain that several miles of trail were knee deep in water. For that reason it's important - for your enjoyment, comfort and safety, as well as that of the rest of the group - that you are properly prepared for the hike and a night in the woods.

HYPOTHERMIA is the medical condition caused by lowered body temperature. Most cases occur when the victim gets wet and has no warm shelter or dry clothing to change into - and occur in the spring and fall when temperatures are above freezing! Cotton - jeans, sweatshirts - figures in many hypothermia cases. A pair of jeans or a heavy sweatshirt, once wet, will draw heat from your body much faster than you can produce it. **IF YOU WEAR COTTON, BRING GOOD RAIN GEAR AND EXTRA DRY CLOTHES.** If at any time during the trip you shiver for more than 10 minutes, or find yourself stumbling when you shouldn't, you're getting too cold.. Unrecognized, untreated, or improperly treated, hypothermia is a dangerous and potentially fatal condition. We have treated a few cases over the years, and don't mind if we never have to again.

Caving has its own requirements. You will be **TOTALLY SOAKED IN COLD WATER WITHIN MINUTES OF ENTERING THE CAVE**...shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and sneakers. You'll do some crawling, too, and will want some protection for your hands and knees. You'll need 2 flashlights with fresh batteries to see, and a helmet is essential to cushion the inevitable head banging.

STUFF TO BRING (all this or you don't go!)

ACADEMIC:

- Field notebook (a small (5x8?) spiral type is handy)
- The packet I'll hand out at the campground *
- A pencil, pen, and a few colored pencils
- A daypack to carry the above + your lunch + your rain gear on the trail

I CAN PROVIDE ITEMS
MARKED WITH A "*"

CAMP

- Sleeping bag rated to 20°F
- Pad or air mattress to sleep on (the ground is cold)
- Tent* (or arrangements to share a tent)

CLOTHING and PERSONAL ITEMS (best packed individually in zip lock bags)

- Warm wind resistant jacket or coat
- Heavy wool sweater or poly fleece jacket*
- Long pants (essential), and shorts (optional)
- Waterproof (not resistant) rain gear (we'll go rain or shine)
- A change of clothes in case you get wet
- Underwear, socks, etc.
- A hat even if you think it makes you look stupid. Kluge looks stupid in the picture above, but he's warm. (you lose a lot of heat from your head, especially when you're thinking hard) Over the ears is good!
- Gloves
- Sturdy boots, shoes, or sneakers. No ripped sneakers, sandals, loafers, etc. We walk over some pretty rugged terrain
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, towel



CAVE CLOTHING / EQUIPMENT(Bring a garbage bag to carry wet clothes home in)

- Old clothing, including shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and sneakers that can get wet and dirty
- Gloves (leather gardening gloves are good, but anything will do)
- Kneepads (optional for this cave, but you might appreciate them)
- Helmet (I have a few, you might have to find an old bike helmet)
- 2 FLASHLIGHTS with NEW BATTERIES! Small is good, so we can tape it to your helmet.

FOOD

- Bag lunch for the trail on day 1
- Cold breakfast for day 2. Bagels and peanut butter and jelly are my mainstays on short trips like this. It's nutritious, and the bagels don't get all squashed like bread does.
- Hot chocolate mix, snacks for the evening and morning
- Any utensils you'll need (plastic is OK)
- Bag Lunch and late afternoon snack for day 2 on the bus if you can't eat McDonalds.
- \$ for McDonalds lunch on day 2 and a snack stop on the way home. (or bring your own food for lunch on day 2)

EXPECTATIONS

You are expected to be an enthusiastic and participating member of the geology class. You are also expected to cooperate with Mr. Kluge, Mrs. Woodell, Mr. Patrick, and any other adults along on the trip. In particular, you are expected to:

- ⇒ Be in *your assigned campsite* from the time we return from stargazing until wake-up the next morning.
- ⇒ Keep your campsite neat and clean, and clean up after yourself in the pavilion.
- ⇒ Respect others in the campground by keeping noise to a minimum, particularly after park “quiet hours” begin at 9 PM.
- ⇒ Keep the Walkmen/ipods at home or in the tents (they are NOT allowed on the trail during the field trip!). You leave them in your tents during the day *at your own risk!*
- ⇒ Take notes thorough enough to prepare a good report on the content of the trip.
- ⇒ Finally,

WE ARE ZERO TOLERANCE ON DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

All school rules with regard alcohol and drugs apply on this trip. So do all state laws and park regulations.. If you are found using or in possession of either, I will turn you over to the park rangers and from there you are on your own (you can arrange for transportation, lawyers, etc. with your parents from the ranger’s office). No kidding here.

ITINERARY

DAY 1

Leave Fox Lane at 7:45 AM
Arrive at North Lake at 10:00 AM
Set up camp at North Lake
Study the geology of the area as we hike through the park
Eat dinner prepared by Mr. Kluge and Mr. Patrick around 6:30 PM
Hike to the site of the old Catskill Mountain House for stargazing and storytelling
“Lights out” at 11PM.

DAY 2

Rise and shine at 7:00 AM
Wash up, eat, clean your campsite, and pack up all your stuff (except your field notebook) by 8:00 AM
Meet the bus at 9:30 AM for the trip to Schoharie Cave
CAVE!
Arrive back at Fox Lane around ??? PM.

COST

The cost of the trip, including round trip bus, park fees, and a big dinner is **\$40.00**

Make checks payable to **FOX LANE HIGH SCHOOL**

PHYSICAL GEOLOGY
Catskill Field Trip
Permission Slip



In signing this form, I give my son/daughter, _____, permission to participate in the Physical Geology Field Trip to North Lake State Park in the town of Hunter in the Catskill Mountains of New York State on Thursday and Friday, October 9-10, 2007.

I certify that I have read the 4 page packet outlining the purpose and describing the requirements and expectations of the Field Trip and have spoken to my child about his/her responsibilities. I am satisfied that he/she is properly prepared as outlined in the "Stuff to Bring" checklist.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Please circle the appropriate **DO** or **DO NOT** for each question below:

I **DO / DO NOT** give my permission to Mr. Kluge or Mr. Patrick to administer acetaminophen, ibuprofen, or aspirin to my child

I **DO / DO NOT** give my permission to Mr. Kluge or Mr. Patrick to request emergency medical treatment from qualified personnel should the need arise.

In the space below, please note/describe any medical conditions your child may have that the chaperones should be aware of or may need to attend to. Use the back of this sheet if you need more room

Please provide the following information:

Emergency Phone #(s) _____

Health Insurance Company and Policy # _____

Parent/Guardian Sign Here

STUDENT AGREEMENT

In signing this form, I certify that I have read the 4 page packet outlining the purpose and describing the requirements and expectations of the Field Trip, and that I will be properly prepared for it. I have spoken to my other teachers and made arrangements to make up any missed work. I agree to cooperate fully with Mr. Kluge and Mr. Patrick and finally, I agree to behave in a normal, reasonable, and responsible manner during the trip.

Student please sign here