



# ASCENT OF MT. HARVARD 2023

INFORMATION SESSION  
MAY 18, 2023  
ZOOM

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PHILIP S. KOCH AB'78

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CHARLOTTE HORTON AB'13

*Please note: This session will be recorded*

*A link to a copy of the slides will be available after the session, on the Mt. Harvard event website*



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Introductions:

Harvard Class of 1978

- Philip S. Koch AB'78
- Kathy Haney Duffy AB'78

Rocky Mountain Harvard University Club

- Charlotte Horton AB'13

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Introductions

Thumbnail Description

Risks and Their Mitigation

Trek Specifics

Checklist of Items

Geology of the Area

Is this for you?

Q&A

Next Steps

# THUMBNAIL DESCRIPTION



## Thumbnail Description: Ascent of Mt. Harvard 2023

- **Ascent of Mt. Harvard (Sawatch Range, Colorado)**
- **Two groups, each on separate days**
  - August 19 for Class of 1978;
  - August 20 for RMHUC
- **Objective:** To hike the traditional Horn-Fork Basin Trail and summit the peak before midday
- **Peak Elevation:** 14,420 feet [~4,400 meters] (3rd highest in Colorado, 4th in Lower 48)
- **Trailhead:** North Cottonwood (elevation: 9,880 feet [~3,010 meters], SE of peak)
- **Approximate Round-trip Distance:** 13 miles [~21 km]
- **Elevation Gain:** 4,540 feet [~1,390 meters]
- **Trail Difficulty:**
  - It is a hike, not a technical climb: on scale Class 1-5 (5 = max),
  - trail is Class 1 (easiest) for first 85% then Class 2 (next hardest) for remainder
- **Target Population:** Adults in good physical condition
- **Acclimatization to altitude is highly recommended for those coming from any elevation below ~5,000 feet [~1,525 meters];**
- **Moderate practice hikes at elevation >7,000 feet also recommended in the days leading up to this event.**



# RISKS ... AND THEIR MITIGATION:

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## Risk Mitigation

- Fatigue
- Proper physical preparation, general health, rest before (and when needed),
- Proper hydration and avoidance of things that dehydrate (alcohol, caffeine, smoking anything, etc.)
- Altitude sickness
  - Arrive and stay at elevation (~7,000 feet / ~2150 meters, or higher)
  - at least 2 days prior to ascent,
  - proper hydration prior to ascent, and ...
  - avoidance of things that dehydrate (see 'Fatigue', above)
- Foul weather Backup date, weather awareness, reach tree line on descent by early PM, always follow instructions of event leaders
- Injury: Local first-aid assistance for simple matters, professional extraction summoned by satellite phone for anything severe

# LESSONS LEARNED FROM 2019 & PRIOR

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## Lessons Learned from 2019 & Prior Hikes

- Fewer hikers to register
  - Our goal is to give you the opportunity for a safe ascent, and we can reasonably support 25 hikers per day.
- Mid-station
  - Allows us to check in with you at treeline and provide water/snacks/place to rest
- Greater emphasis on staying on trail
  - Changing paths to summit Columbia will not be acceptable.
- More on-trail support
  - Hopefully to reduce the impact of any injuries or misadventure

## IDEAL HIKER PROFILE

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- Good or excellent physical health
- Willing to trust leadership in an emergency
- Excited to meet classmates and/or other Harvard Alumni
- Could benefit from the support we aim to provide

## BUDGET

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- Tickets - \$50 (vs. \$10 or \$20 in 2019)
- Communications
  - Walkie-talkies
  - Satellite Phones
- Snacks at midstation
- Water at midstation
- Friday night meal & meeting



## History of Mt. Harvard



## History of Mt. Harvard



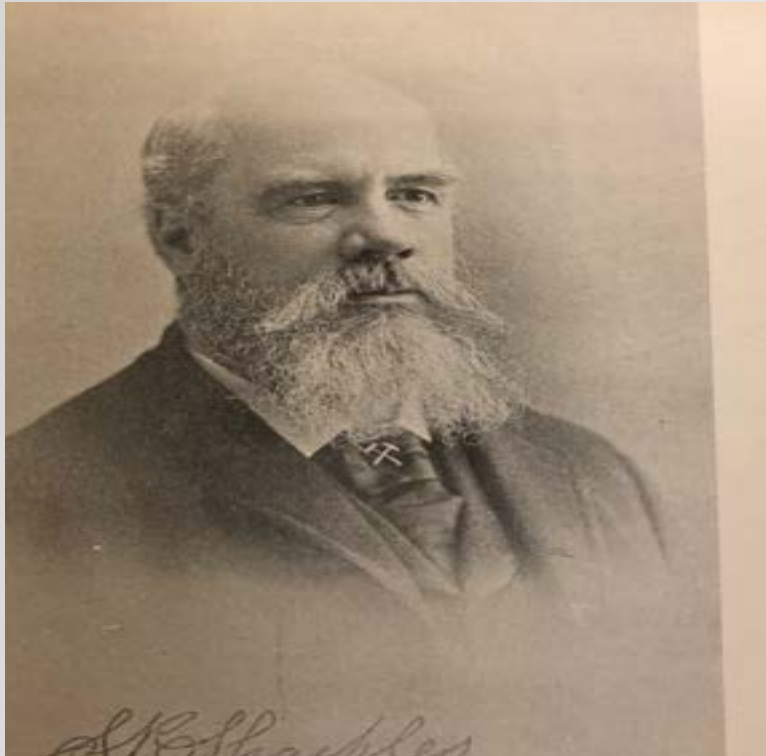
In 1869, Harvard sponsored a group to explore and survey peak elevations in the Sawatch Range. Long-standing rumors had it that some summits were in excess of 18,000 feet. Most members of this party traveled West on the newly opened First / Great Transcontinental ('Pacific') Railroad to Cheyenne, Wyoming, then went overland by stagecoach to Denver (which did not yet have rail service).

The Harvard Geographic Expedition of 1869 to the Colorado Territory did find peaks in excess of 14,000 feet, and named the two highest summits they encountered and ascended Mount Harvard (for their sponsor) and Mount Yale (for the alma mater of the two leaders of this expedition: Josiah Dwight Whitney (Yale, 1839) and William Henry Brewer (Yale, 1852)).

Both of these men and others of the party were heavily involved in similar, contemporary surveying of California. The group called these two the 'College Peaks'. After subsequent naming of neighboring peaks Mounts Princeton (1873), Columbia (1916), and Oxford (1931), they became and remain known collectively as the Collegiate Peaks. All but Mount Princeton lie within the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness Area.

# WHO FIRST CLIMBED MT. HARVARD?

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# THE HARVARD GEOGRAPHIC EXPEDITION OF 1869

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- LED BY JOSIAH DWIGHT WHITNEY, JR. (AGE 49)
- AMONG THE FIRST TO TAKE THE NEWLY COMPLETED TRANSCONTINENTAL RAIL LINE OF THE (UNION AND WESTERN) PACIFIC RAILROAD
- CHRONICLED IN LETTERS BY TWO MEMBERS:
  - WILLIAM HENRY BREWER (2<sup>nd</sup>-IN-COMMAND, AGE 40)
  - STEPHEN PASCHALL SHARPLES (AGE 27)



# Q & A

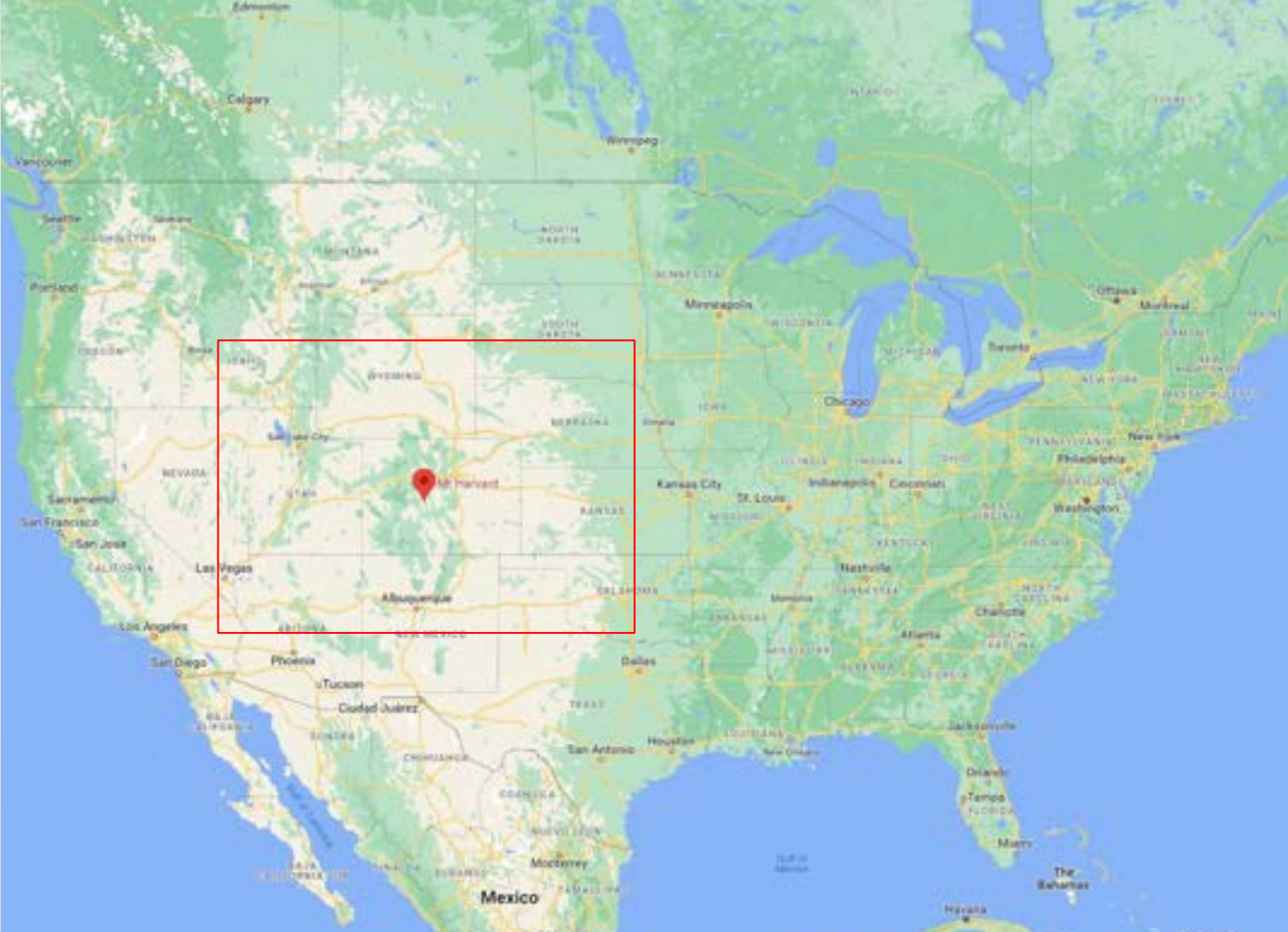
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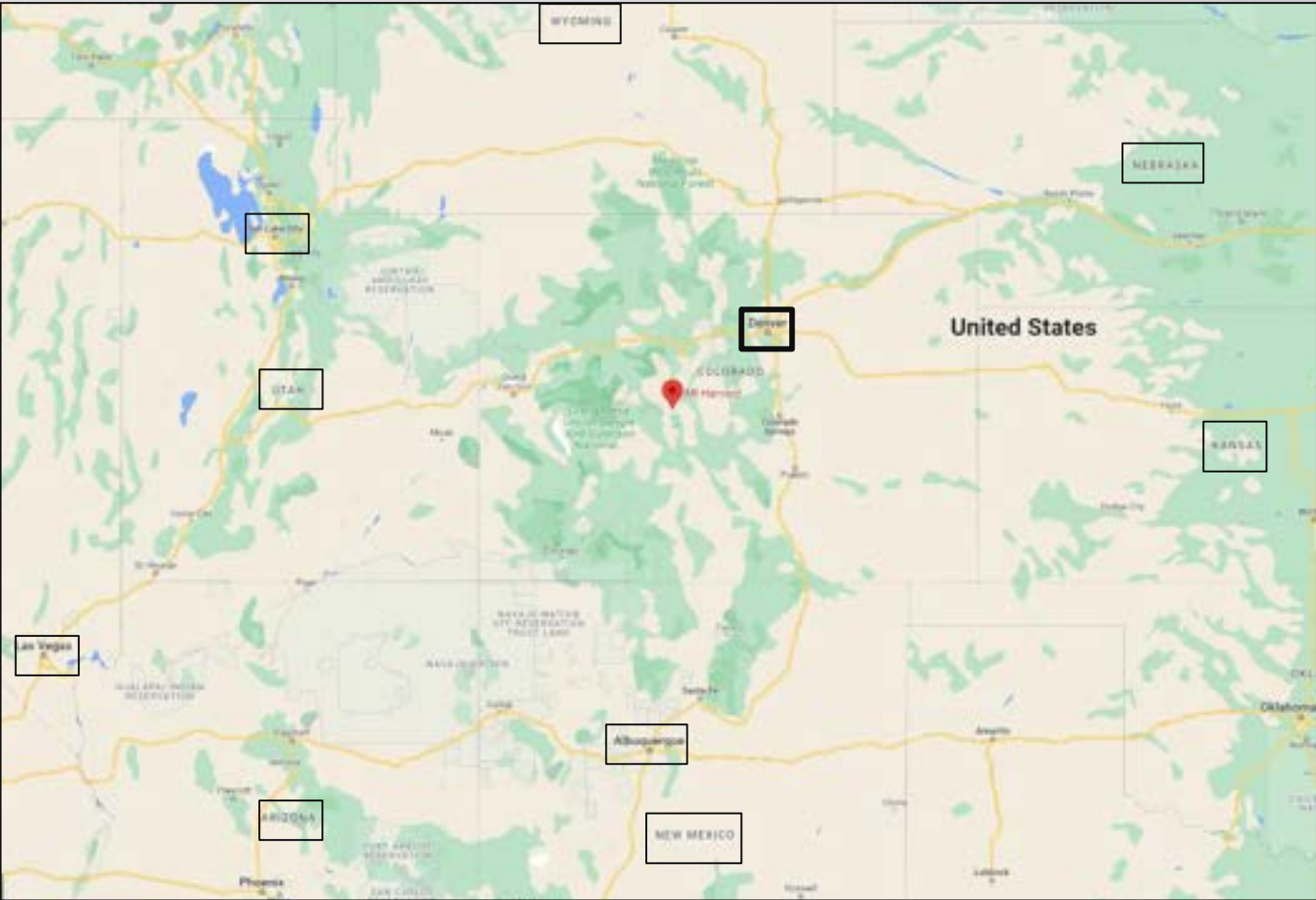
# Mt Harvard Location

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# Mt Harvard in Region

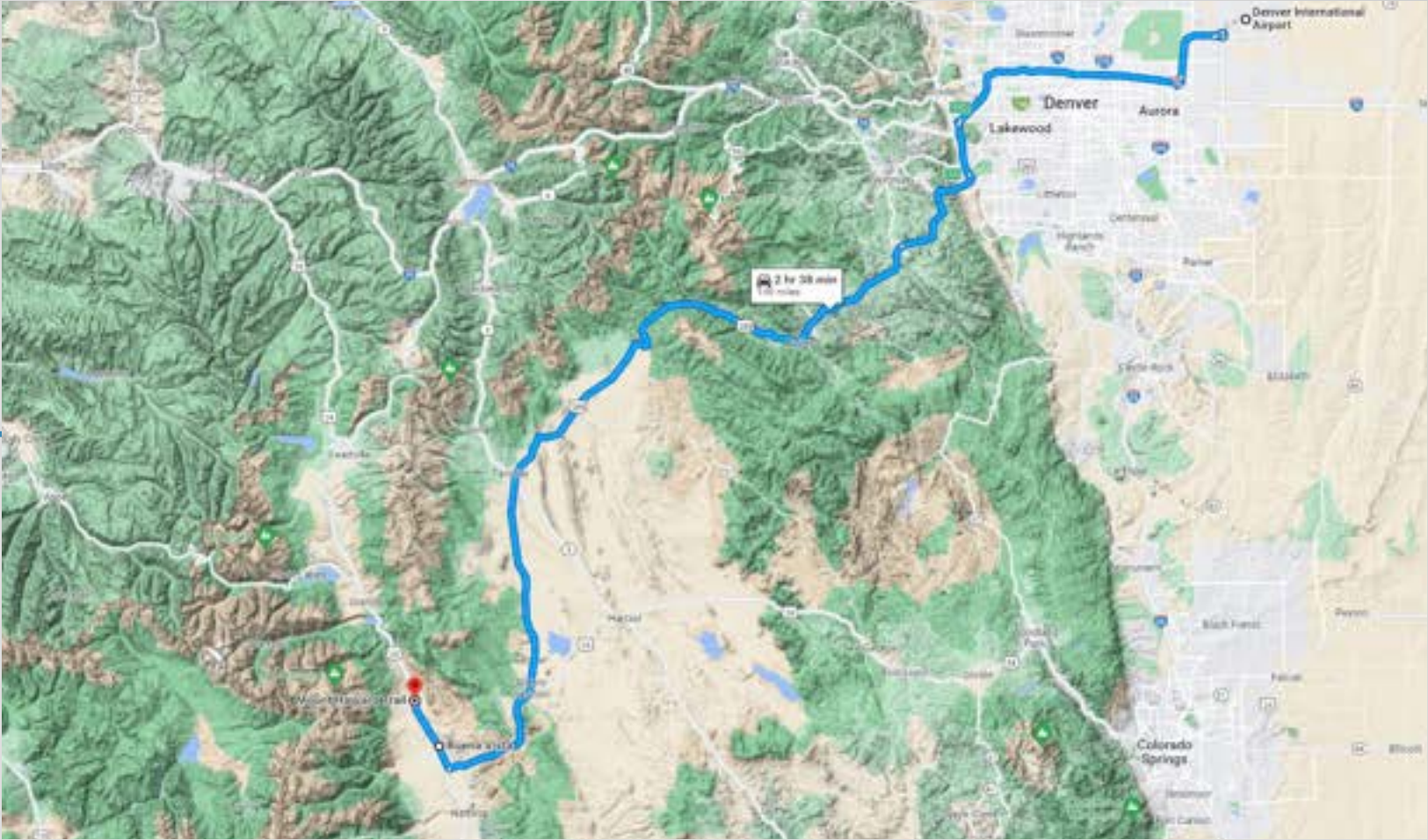
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# Mt. Harvard

From Denver



## TREK SPECIFICS:



- Date: August 2023 (foul-weather backup: August 2023)
- Times: 05:00 AM: meet at trailhead,
  - stretch (any missing paperwork to be provided)
- by 06:00 AM: begin hike (will be dark, bring headlamp)
- late AM: photos at summit, lunch (each to bring own meal, water, etc.)
- ~12:00 noon: begin descent (reach tree line by early PM)
- ~17:00 (5 PM): leave trailhead for rest, recovery, and evening meals
- maps, trail profiles, possible places to stay (including camping alternatives), and
- liability waiver (signature required in order to participate)
- Stay tuned for further details on: suggested preparation (fitness, gear, supplies, etc.),

## CHECKLIST OF ITEMS

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### Must Have

1. Hiking boots, broken in (recommend with ankle support)
2. Wicking socks (recommend double, at least one pair higher than boot tops)
3. Wicking undergarments, inner shirt, outer shirt (long sleeved and collared, SPF 30 or higher recommended)
4. Trousers (recommend breathable, flexible full length with detachable legs)
5. Rain jacket
6. Sun hat (recommend full brim and with a chin draw-string)
7. Lunch, snacks, and any breakfast (caloric burn-rate ~300-600 cal/hr)
8. Water containers (recommend at least 5-7 liters [1.25-1.75 gals] and filled in advance,
9. Or less volume with proper ceramic water-filtration system)
10. Daypack of at least 20L per person, ideally with hip and chest straps
  - a. (to carry what you are not wearing, including water-bladder)

\* One per group is sufficient



## CHECKLIST OF ITEMS

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### Must Have

10. Trowel and toilet paper\*
11. Sunscreen (minimum SPF 25 for at least two re-applications)
12. Any prescribed meds you might need for the next 24 hours
13. First-aid kit and hypothermia blanket\*
14. If applicable, contact lenses (with extra saline solution)
  - a. or glasses (with 'nerd strap')
15. Headlamp (we will start before dawn)
16. Sunglasses, ideally polarized (recommend with 'nerd strap')
17. Unless wearing polarizing glasses,
18. Hiking pole(s)
  - a. (if you have any kind of leg injury, poles will help prevent a medevac, and even if you have no such injury, can prevent ankle twists)
19. Affirmative, energetic, respectful, and supportive attitude

\* One per group is sufficient

## CHECKLIST OF ITEMS

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### Optional

1. Bandana
2. Gloves (recommend light weight and water resistant)
3. Warm hat
4. Additional warm layer for torso (sweater, jacket, vest, etc.)
5. Rain trousers
6. Waterproof day-pack cover
7. Anklets / gaiters
8. Bug spray\*
9. Camera / phone
10. Maps (possibly loaded onto your phone with mapping software)
11. Hand sanitizer\*
12. Ibuprofen (or other pain reliever)\*
13. Roll of duct tape\*
14. Banners, flags, or pennants

\* One per group is sufficient

# Q & A

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# GEOLOGY

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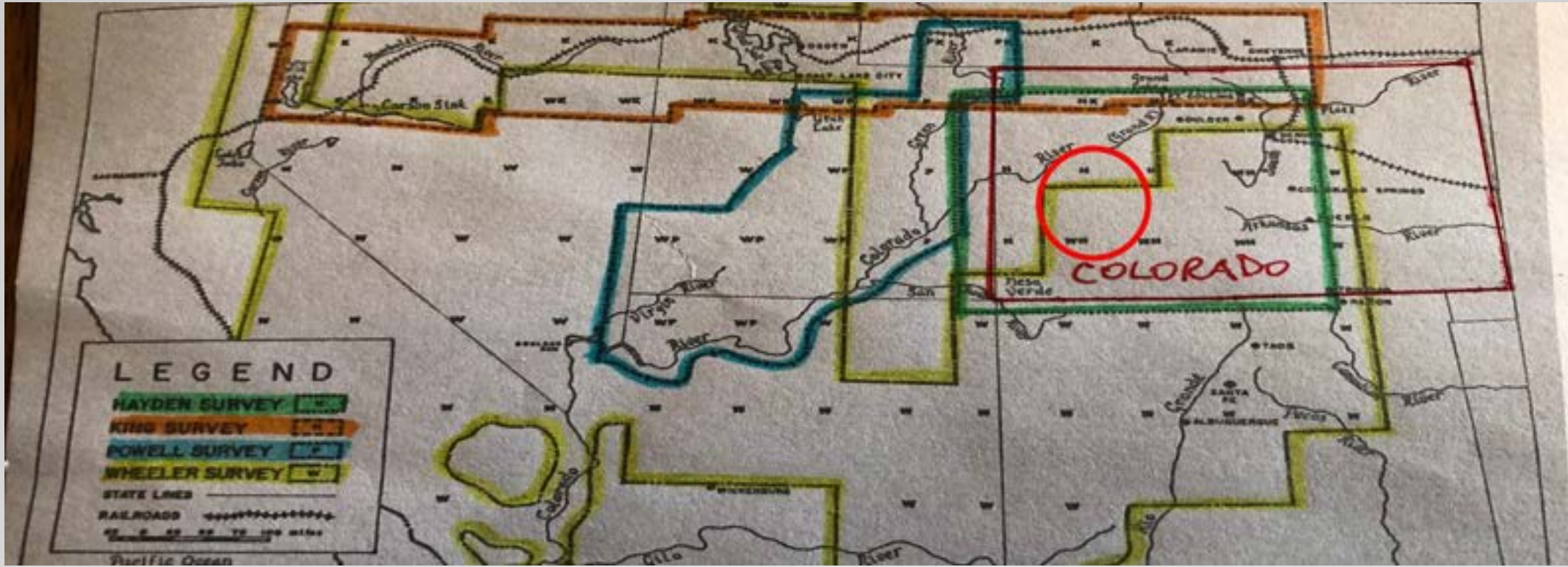


# GEOLOGY

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- GLACIAL AND STREAM GEOMORPHOLOGY (EASILY SEEN)
- 'HARDROCK' / BEDROCK GEOLOGY CLEAR ABOVE TREELINE (A BIT HARDER TO DISCERN)





# COLORADO AS KNOWN JUST PRIOR

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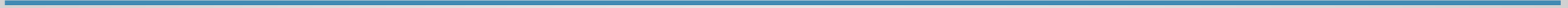




# Geology



# GEOLOGY



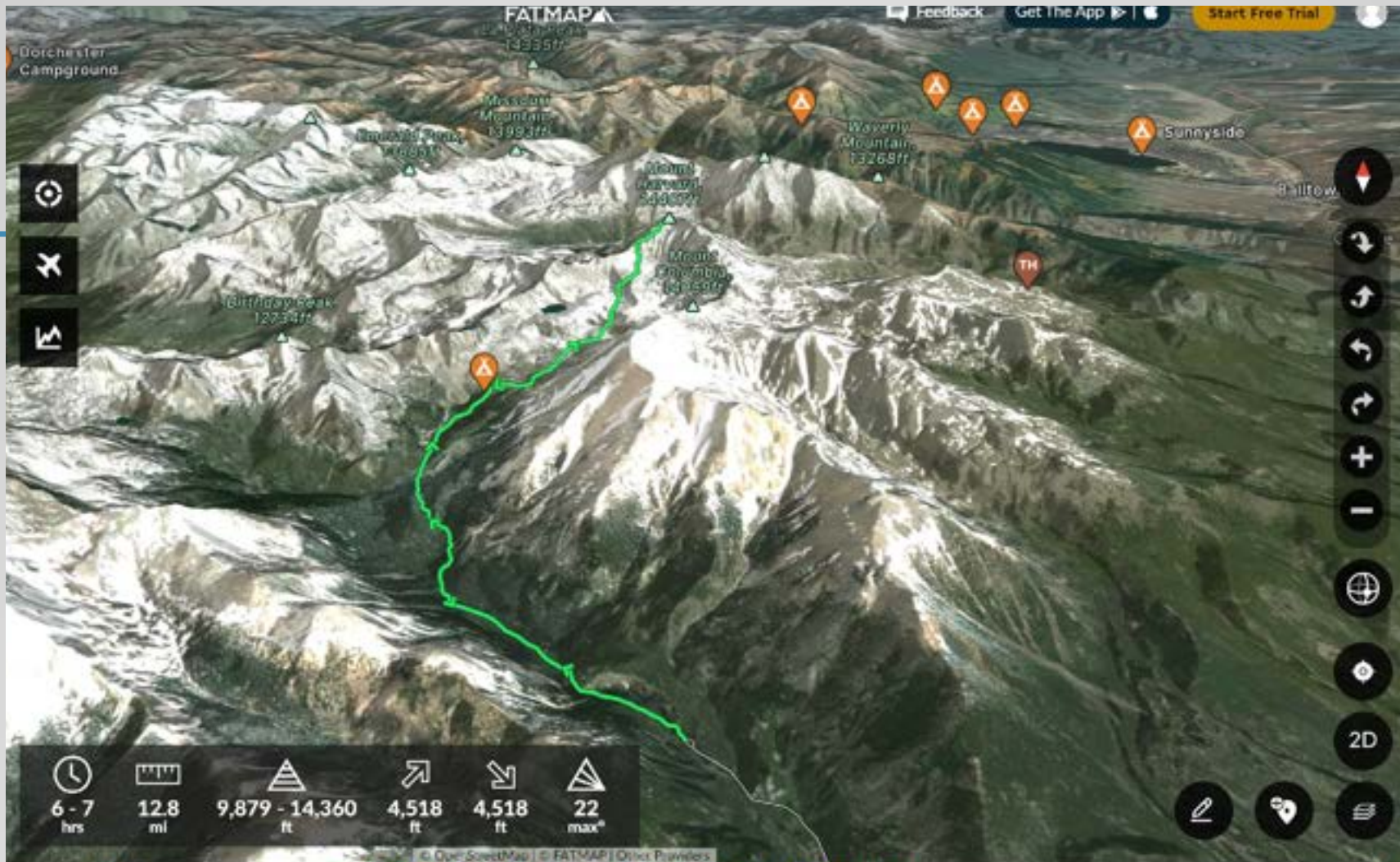
# GEOGRAPHIC SURVEYS OF COLORADO: 1870-1876/8

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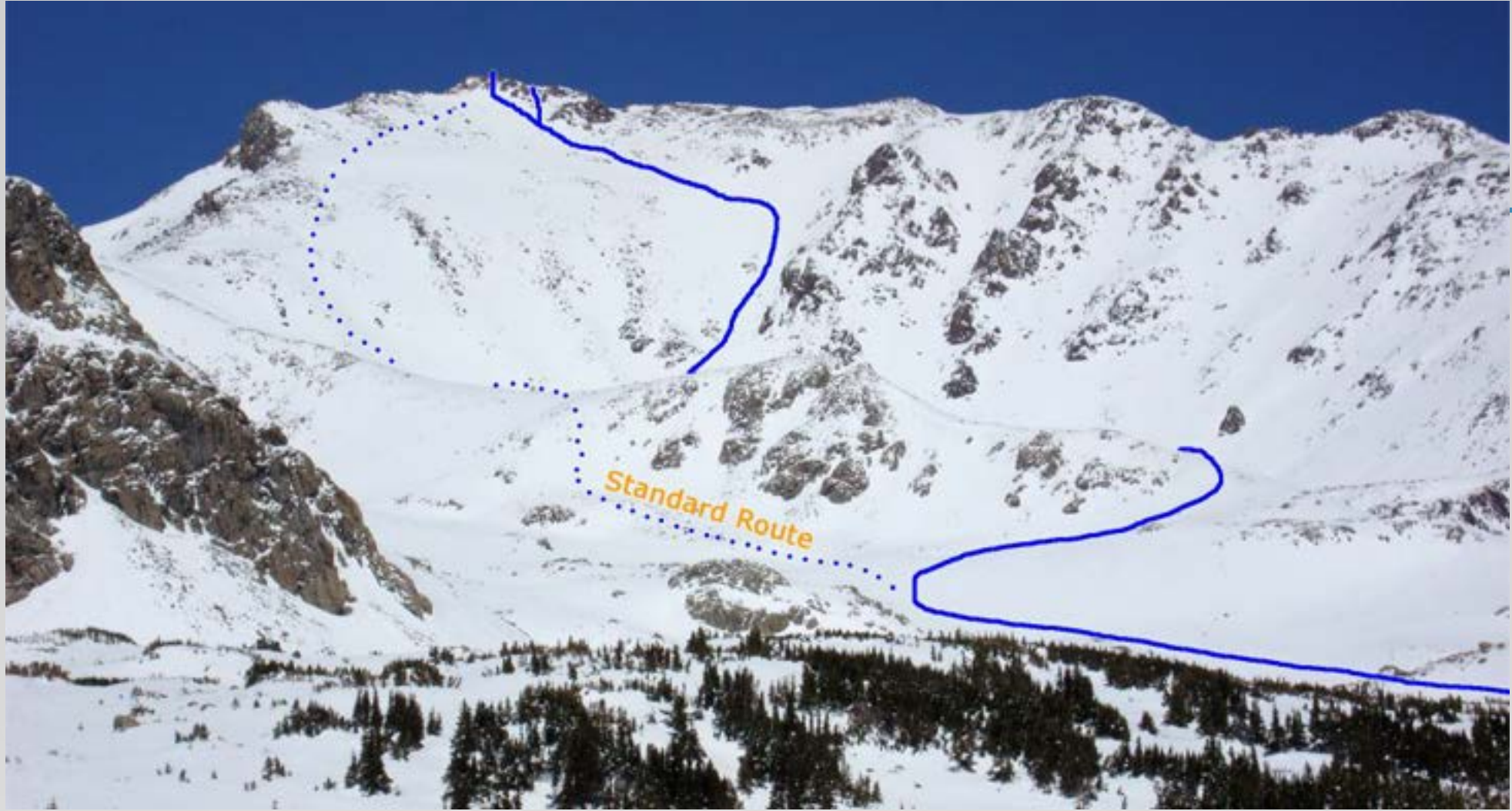
TWO MAIN (AND COMPETING) ONES:

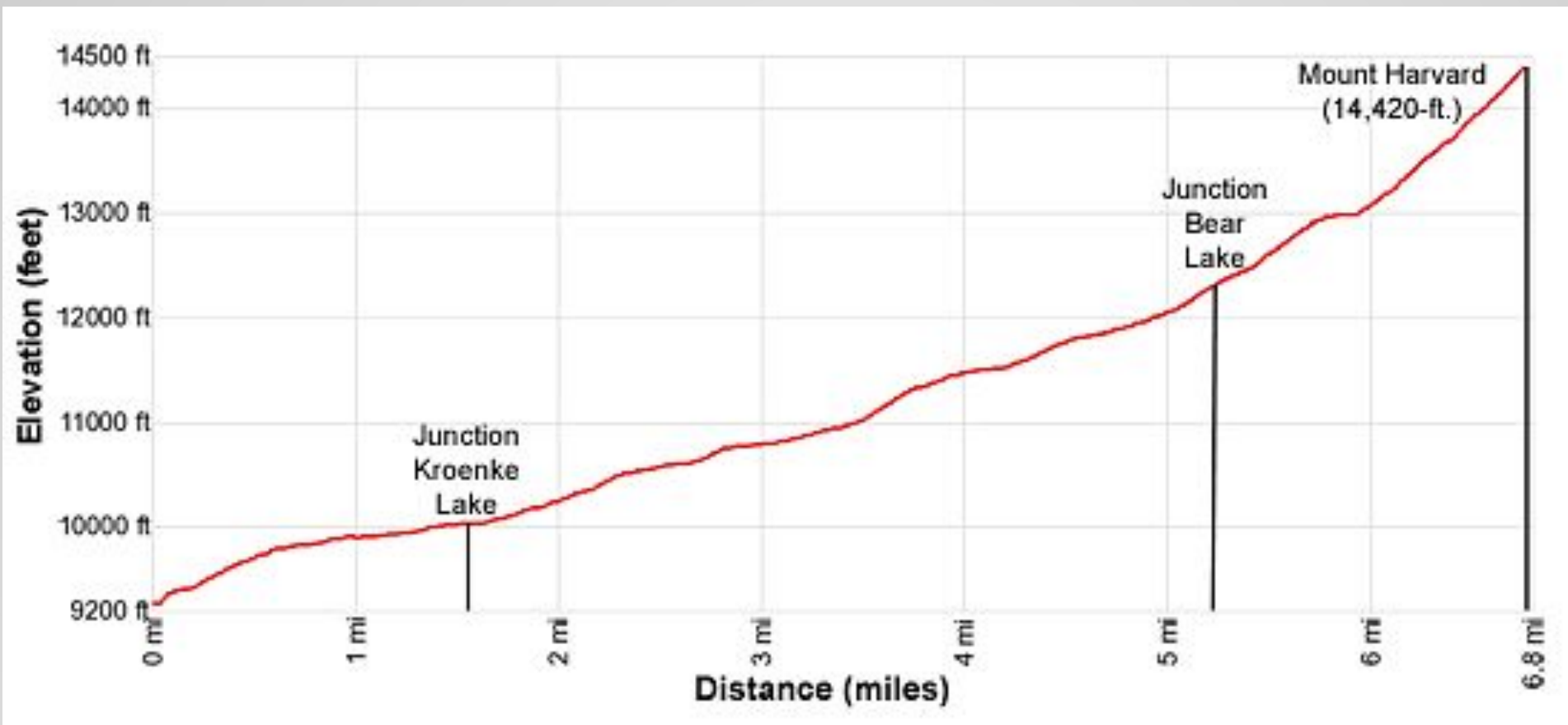
- THE CIVILIAN-RUN U.S. GEOLOGICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL SURVEY OF THE TERRITORIES (1869, 1873 AND 1876/8), LED BY (LT. COLONEL) FERDINAND VANDEVEER HAYDEN
- THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS SURVEY WEST OF THE 100<sup>TH</sup> PARALLEL (1870 AND 1871/5), LED BY LT. (LATER CAPTAIN) GEORGE MONTAGUE WHEELER















## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: LINKS ONLINE AT WEBSITE

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- Thumbnail description of the hike
  - (Does this appeal to you as a potential hiker? Supporter of hikers?)
- Suggested physical training for hiking at elevation
  - (Do you want to do this sort of preparation for this hike?)
- Suggestions for hiking at elevation
  - (Do you want to do this? What equipment and supplies do you lack, and can you acquire them easily?)
- Sketch map of the trail
  - (What do the geometry and ascent look like in map view?)
- Trail profile
  - (What do the geometry and ascent look like in vertical section view?)
- Possible places to stay at various price points and within easy drive of the trailhead
  - (Where shall I stay locally? At least the night before; two days before if coming from below about 5000 feet elevation.
  - I also recommend a day after to recover and decompress before leaving.)
- Liability waiver
  - (Signed version required of each hiking participant)



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EVERYONE  
GOES  HOME



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