



29TH ANNUAL SDSU GEOLOGY ALUMNI FIELD TRIP

TERTIARY RED BEDS, MANGANESE & GEODES

SATURDAY & SUNDAY MARCH 14 & 15th 2015

Our 29th Annual SDSU Geology Department Alumni field Trip/Campout will be in the Lower Mojave Desert, west of the Palo Verde Mountains, southwest of Blythe, California. **Bill Elliott, SDSU Graduate and longtime local Engineering Geologist** has been doing some mapping in this area and has volunteered to show us some poorly publicized, but amazing geology.

On Saturday morning, we plan to leave camp about 9:30AM for an approximately 30-mile round-trip to see folded and faulted early Tertiary Red Beds, an inactive manganese mine, and the Hauser Geode Beds.

At the Black Widow manganese mine, you will have an opportunity to collect pyrolusite (manganese oxide) and psilomelane (barium manganese oxide hydroxide). For our stop at the Hauser Geode Beds, bring your digging bar, rock hammer, and other assorted tools of mass destruction to assist you in your search for spherical silicon dioxide treasures.

Sunday morning we will look at the basal limestone member (including basin-edge tufa) of the ~5Ma Bouse Formation; it is exposed at our camp site – on both sides of the wash. For those with extra time on Sunday afternoon, we have planned an optional visit to a slot canyon cut into the early Tertiary Red Beds. With good weather some of us may stay until Monday.

We will be **Primitive Camping** in a dry wash about a mile west from SR-78. Low clearance vehicles will need to be cautious! Four by four vehicles with towing straps will be available in the unlikely event that someone gets stuck. Bring your own food, water, and firewood. Trailers and RV's are not recommended in our dry-wash camping area due to the presence of soft sand and tight turns. However, you can park within about 100 yards of our dry-wash campsite, on an abandoned fan surface, or at nearby Midway Well.

Camp coordinates are: 33° 17' 28.53" North; 114° 47' 29.81" West. Temperature ranges average lows in the 50s and highs in the 80s, but it could be in the 40s to the 90s! So, plan accordingly and be sure to bring warm'ies for the evening and sunscreen for daytime.

Directions to Camp site. From SDSU take I-8 east past El Centro to Ogilby Road (S-34). Turn left (north) onto Ogilby Road for 25 miles to SR-78. Right turn (east) on SR-78 and go about 16

miles to Milpitas Wash Road (on your left – west). En route, you will pass a Border Patrol Inspection Station and the turnoff to Midway Well. If you see the turn off to Walter’s Camp Road (on the right) you have gone about a half mile too far. On the gravel Milpitas Wash Road go about a mile and look for the half-hidden Old Palo Verde Road sign on right – tucked into some bushes. Turn right (north), and go about 0.75-mile to a hard right turn down (south) into the wide dry wash and our campsite. SDSU Geology signs and flagging will be posted to help direct you to camp. There will be someone in camp Friday afternoon so come early if you can.

Supplies/Services/Fuel: FYI, top off your fuel tanks in El Centro at the 4th Street Exit. There are fast food places and fuel on both sides of the freeway and a market on the south side. Closest fuel from the camp site is at Palo Verde, about 15 miles north on SR-78 (this station is, however, only open during daylight business hours).

Communications: AT&T and Verizon cell phone service is sporadic in and near our camp site. On Saturday, however, we will be driving through an area where cell service is available. Family Service Radios (FRS) channel 4 with no “tones” will be monitored and used during caravanning. Just call for the SDSU Geology Field Trip Group and remember that the range on FRS radios is limited to a couple of miles!

For those with 2 Meter Amateur Radio capability, the Monument Peak and Black Mountain repeaters are linked. Monument Peak is good for San Diego to El Centro, and then Black Mountain is good for the rest of the weekend. In the unlikely event that Black Mountain is down, try 146.880 -, pl. 162.2. Close to camp, use 146.520. Call for N6SZO or K6GHN.

As Always.... If any of you SDSU Geo-Alums are interested in becoming involved with our Alumni Activities such as planning for our Annual Banquet (April 24th this year on campus), our monthly lunch meetings, or would like to assist with future Field Trips, or, have a special place in mind that would be good for a future Alumni Field Trip, please let me know. If you have any questions regarding this trip e-mail or call me. If you think you have a better than 75% chance of attending try to let me know by March 10th -- so we can have enough handouts for everyone and set up car pools for the Saturday excursion. Thanks,

Joe Coronas, SDSU Geology Alumni Field Trip Chairman, jcorones@gmail.com, Home 858.484.3582, Cell 858.603.5545