

Adventurers! Saturday mega-ride!

Background: Adventure Rider <http://www.advrider.com/forums/> is a great place to "hatch plans" and find co-riders. Jeff (of Ridgecrest) responded to one of my posts, and off-we-went...



Pics in front of a road-grader? I had informed Jeff that courtesy of **Obama**, all dirt roads (if a "major thoroughfare") in America were being repaired/upgraded! We'd be on newly-graded roads most of the day...

Below, since this is a Saturday, and "dirt season" is here, you can expect sizable local-crowds. The "traffic solution" is to "put on miles" as the kids tend to stay very local...



The beauty of a co-rider is being able to safely explore areas you'd dare-not go yourself. Like Jeff here on top of a ridgeline...



We were looking for "Hidden Canyon". Never found it (hence "hidden"). In fact, we got hmmm "confused" on a series of ridgelines, unable to find a safe route down...



Below, Jeff's bike "very trick". Suzuki DRZ 400...



Below: True art...

Portrait of a Man With Dirty Face oh yeah this is headed for the Smithsonian... Note I am waaay-up-there...



Coming off the ridgeline, we found an old "perforated car"...



Unfortunately, we did not actually "get off the mountain"...



Looks like a cliff, huh? Yeah I thought so too :-)

Note we are **not** lost. We know exactly where we are (on top of this mountain) and we know exactly where we want to go (down to the valley below). Sadly, we have **zero idea** how to do this...



Jeff is a master of local flora/fauna, informing me that the below plant (honest) a bazillion years ago was seaweed...



...that has adapted to desert life. Amazing!

Point: So far (6 months) I have found desert-living a thrill. Plus, the small-town atmosphere is hugely relaxing, and for me (retired Navy) having major Navy base right here (Naval Air Station China Lake) is a **huge "plus"**!

The below pic "where we are" and our new goal is to get to that particular valley below (see the trailers just forward of my gloves?).



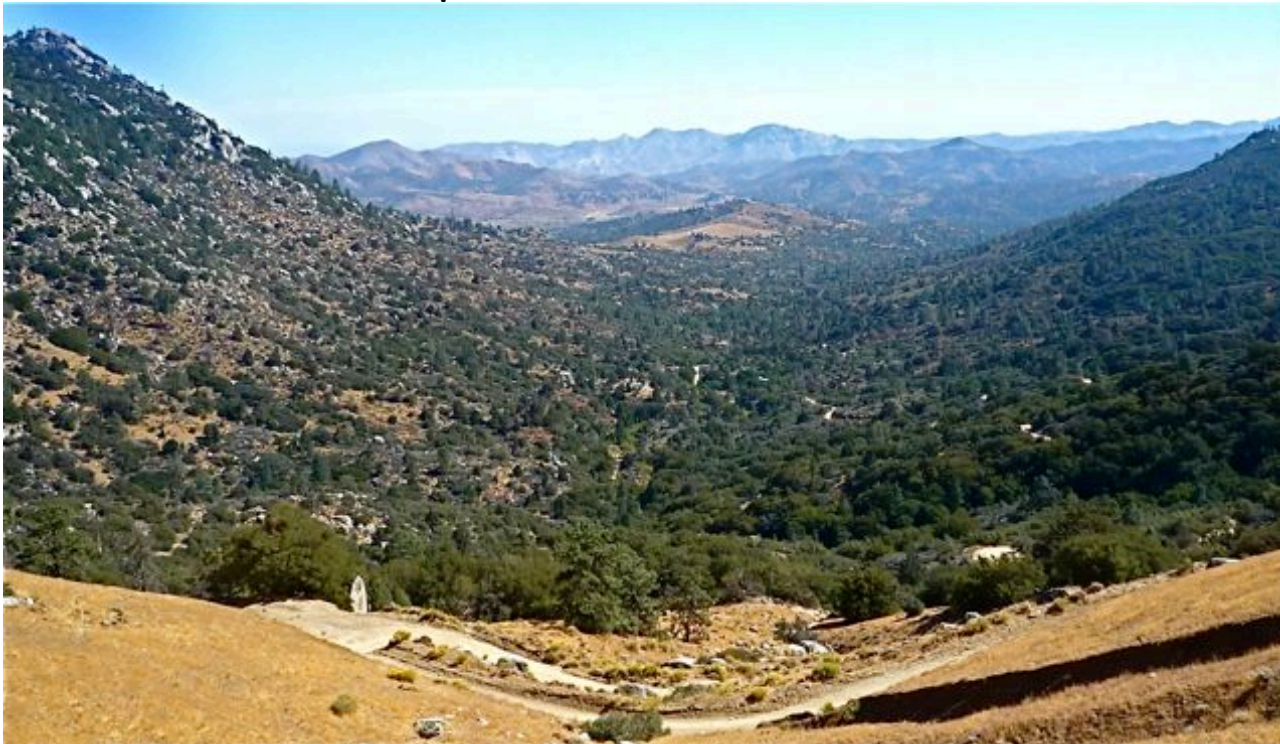
From the valley, we can head west (20 miles) up into the Paiute mountains (and forest). WooHoo! Made it!



Below: See the far mountain ridgeline? We just came from there...



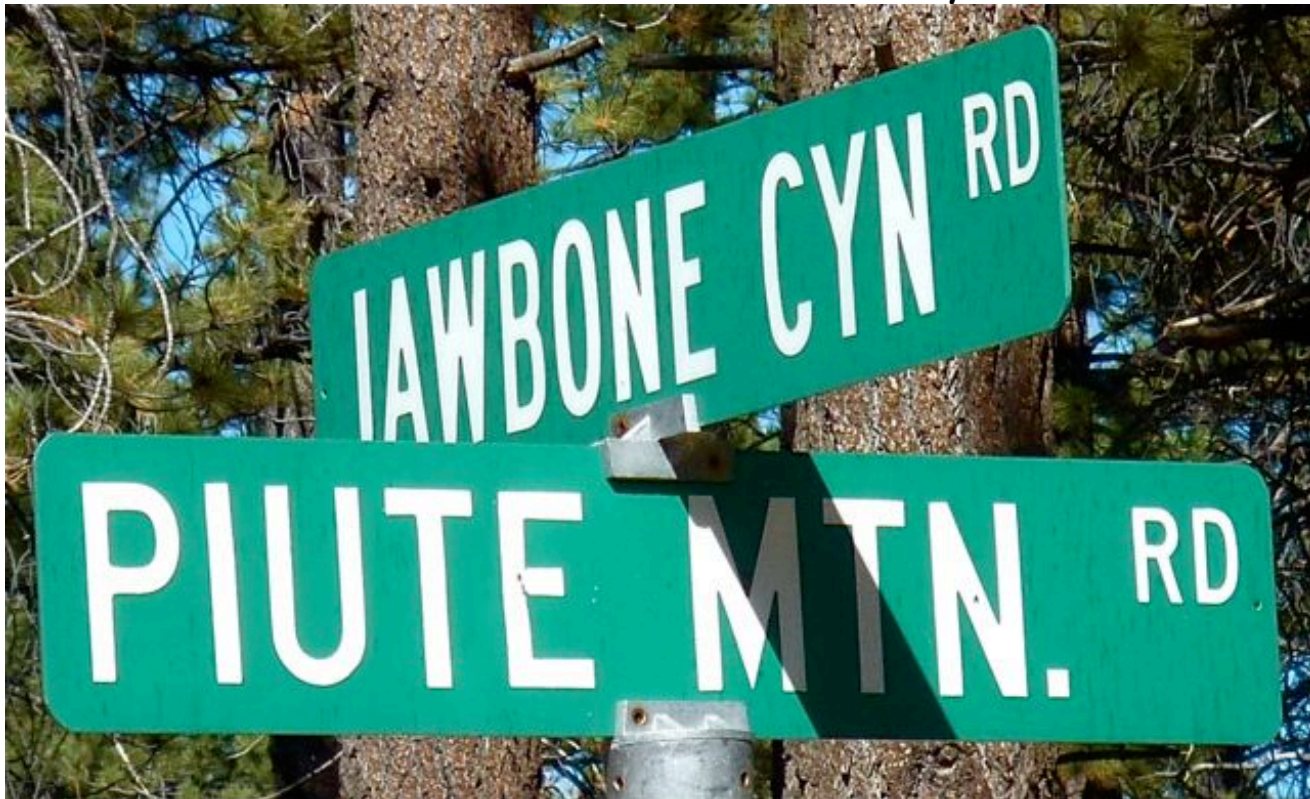
Climbing up above 6,000' (cold!) you can see our freshly-graded access-road (lower pic; thanks Obama!).



Below pic: Waaay up to 7,000' and into the Sequoia National Forest...



Known landmark! Terrific! We know exactly where we are!



At the above intersection we are 60 miles from home. And yes, this is "graded dirt road" :-)

"Somehow" there are plots of private land inside the National Forest. This area (did I mention "cold"?) is closed 6 months of the year due to deep snow. A beautiful area...



I'm human: Not everything went my way...



Below: Beautiful rock, "bad sun angle" so "washed-out pic"....



Beautiful view looking down into the town of Lake Isabella...



...yes "freshly graded dirt road". Now, "Why Lake Isabella?"

Because we wanted **Mexican Food!** This restaurant (known to the locals as "the really terrific place next to the Shell gas station") is awesome. This was just our appetizer!!!



For the 2nd consecutive Lake Isabella trip, due to "overly enthusiastic route-exploration" I had run low on gas, and not brought along my beloved **Red Line Racing 2-stroke Oil**. So, I bought "Brand-X" uh-oh my KTM did not agree w/that. **Me bad :-)**



The route home was (all-dirt) SC-130, freshly-graded (thank you, Obama) wow I love this road...



Please: No ugly comments about my bald rear tire. Please no emails **Bwah-hahahahah** how do you expect dirt-traction with **THAT!!!!** Yes, tires coming via UPS. Other spare parts too. Pity me, OK?

Within a hundred yards of home, I made a wrong turn (bet you never heard me say that before) and came upon a horse-track! Sure "seen better days" but the running surface was perfect...



Quite large, 1/8th mile at least.

This was a really terrific, 160-mile ride.

Big Thanks to Jeff, excellent guiding through the ridgeline sections, and a co-rider allows "serious exploration".

Most of this route will be snow-covered soon. Anyone wishing to make this loop... C'mon out!

Thanks for reading along!

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