JPL Hiking+ Event

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Zaca Lake Carcamp

Saturday and Sunday, 5-6 May 2001

Leaders: Elaine Chapin ec@ieee.org (818)545-3771 and
Susan Merrill Susan.J.Merrill@jpl.nasa.gov (818)354-9209

Zaca Lake: Zaca is one of only a handful of natural, freshwater, year round lakes in southern California. This privately owned lake is nestled in the San Rafael Mountains, north of the Santa Ynez Valley. (See topo map). Although small, covering just 25 acres, it is a wonderful destination for the whole family. Zaca Lake is a such a special place that there is even a Chumash myth about its creation.

Activities: Northern Santa Barbara County has a wealth of potential things to do, and what you do is up to you. You might choose to go wine tasting in the Santa Ynez Valley or Foxen Canyon. You might choose to go hiking in the surrounding Los Padres National Forest. You might decide to ride you bike down to the town of Los Olivos and the Wilding Art Museum. You might stay up all night viewing the brightly moonlit eta-Aquarid meteor shower. Or you might choose to just hang out at the lake. Swimming is popular, and a buoy line designates a swimming area and rocky beach at the south end of the lake. The lake has canoes, row boats, kayaks, and small sailing dinghies that all guests are free to use. You are welcome to bring your own non-motorized boat if you wish. If you are an angler, you are out of luck though; no fishing is allowed in the lake.

Directions: Zaca Lake is about 40 miles north of Santa Barbara, and about a 3 hour drive from JPL. A 7 mile paved private road with five stream crossings leads to the lake. The turnoff for the private road is on the west side of Foxen Canyon Road between the Fess Parker Winery and Vineyard and the Zaca Mesa Winery.

Chumash Cave: Since we will be driving over San Marcos Pass to get to Zaca Lake, we might as well stop and see the cave at Chumash Painted Cave State Historic Park. The park itself has very little interpretive material. We are currently trying to arrange for a docent for our group. More information will be available at the pre-trip meeting.

Carcamping: Camping at the lake is rustic. There are picnic tables, porta-potties, and one spigot for non-potable water. No dogs are allowed, and no wood fires are allowed in the camping area. Saturday evening we will be eating together at "the Alamo", an area at the western corner of the lake, where there are facilities for barbequeing and fires. During our visit the cabins and lodge will be used by a yoga retreat, and we are asked to be respectful of our fellow visitors.

Cost: The cost is $30 per car camping. Cost includes camping and a communal meal Saturday night.

Trip Limit: 6 cars

Pre-trip Meeting: You must attend the pre-trip meeting or make previous arrangements with one of the trip leaders if you wish to go on this trip. The meeting will be Tuesday 1 May 2001 at JPL in 300-221. If you don't have a JPL badge and want to attend this meeting, please contact a trip leader in advance.