

NEWSLETTER MONTHLY

October 2011



MSS NEWSLETTER

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Cover Shot:
Jim and Fedz at their wedding at Abercrombie.
Photo by Jim Crockett

NEWSLETTER OF THE METROPOLITAN SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY INC.
P.O. Box 178, THORNLEIGH, NSW, 2120

Society News

MSS AGM

The next MSS meeting, which will include the AGM, will be held on the 10th of November at Rod Smith's place. Please contact Rod (0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com) if you are going to attend or send through anything you wish to be considered at the meeting. We will be voting for the committee positions, including the new Website Manager position.

ASF Conference

The ASF Conference planning committee has most positions filled, but there are still plenty of ways you could assist, including the position of convenor, which has been recently vacated. Please contact Jim Crockett (0407 284 256, jmtcrockett@unwired.com.au), Rod Smith (0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com) or Chris Johnstone (0401 988 096, chris_johnstone@hotmail.com) if you wish to assist in any way.

Trip update

Danielle has created a proposed schedule for the Tasmania trip later this year. The schedule is attached as appendix 1. If you're interested in this trip then please have a look and provide Danielle (0404 305 878, danielle.lewin1@three.com.au) with any feedback you have.

Club EPIRB

Just a reminder to all trip leaders that we have the new EPIRB and this should be taken on every trip. Our Equipment Officer, Jim (0407 284 256, jmtcrockett@unwired.com.au), has this, so please coordinate with him to collect it before your next trip.

Caving in Sri Lanka

During Jim's trip to Chillicon he found out there may be an organised trip to Sri Lanka next year to study and explore the caves there. If you are interested in possibly joining this trip then let Jim know (0407 284 256, jmtcrockett@unwired.com.au)

Trip Reports

Abercrombie – Wedding of Jim and Fedz

15th October 2011

Report by: Jim Crockett

Photos: Jim Crockett



We had begun planning for our Wedding some time ago and we had the original plan to have it at a lookout somewhere in the Blue Mountains. That seemed like a really nice idea, although one problem was if the weather was not good then we would have to make alternative plans.

Then some new ideas came to mind how could we have an outdoor wedding but still be covered should the weather be bad. The most obvious answer was to have the Wedding in a cave.

As I had been too many trips to Abercrombie caves over the years the Abercrombie Arch was the ideal location, just enough dark zone to make it a cave, natural light filtering in for nice effects, the appeal of the natural cathedral like structure with a bubbling stream below, large statue like formations and the miners dancing floor to add a historic flavour and a nice level platform.

This had to be the ideal location for an outdoor wedding but also perfect for the guests, most of which had never previously been to Abercrombie Caves the only drawback being the long drive from Sydney.



The date was set and I had made a preparatory visit to Abers to make sure I had all angles covered.

Rising up early on the day of the wedding I had the first obstacle to overcome. We had a guest who was arriving from Melbourne who was also going to be one of the 2 witnesses.

He had arrived on Friday afternoon and elected to stay in a city motel and was intending on

catching the train before finding his way to our local train station. The problem was that this first visit to Sydney and he was running late as he had got lost on the Sydney train system. So down to the local train station to wait for him and make sure we could have the quickest possible departure.

So we were all soon on our way for the 37 hour trip to Abers. We were running a little late but still had some time up our sleeve to make it with enough time.

We made Abers in the quickest of times expecting to see most of the guests has already arrived there before us but somehow we had beaten most of them and started making preparations for the ceremony.

I had this grand idea to add additional extra lighting in the cave by using 100 LED tea light candles which look identical to the real thing, but don't emit smoke or wax. This seemed to add a nice ambience and path for the bride and gave the kids something to do. So it was back out of the cave for a change of clothes into a suit (Not a caving suit today).

I proceeded to the Abercrombie arch dance floor to wait for my bride.

To add to the occasion some of the younger guests wore glow sticks which added a nice effect.

Soon my bride arrived accompanied by friends, her 2 sons Bon-Ivan and Kris- Lawrence and the flower girl.





The wedding ceremony proceeded pretty much as planned including the sand ceremony if anybody knows what that is. I pay credit to the Celebrant Denise Fahey who really did a fantastic job for us both and can't thank her enough.

Of course afterwards we had all the mandatory wedding photos at various locations inside and outside the cave, some of which we are still waiting to see.

So afterwards all the guests went to Blayney for an after wedding celebration at the Wellfed Cafe in the main street of town. The served us lots and lots of very scrumptious finger foods which went nicely with the Australian sparkling wines. All the guests said they enjoyed the unusual wedding location and so it was deemed a success..... *and they lived happily forever after*

Footnote. Barry Cubitt advises I am the 3rd MSS member to have a wedding at Abercrombie caves.

Barry and Lyn Cubitt in fact celebrated their 20th Wedding Anniversary only 4 days after our wedding, Barry was an MSS member at that time. He advises there was another MSS also wed there but he can't remember the names of the couple. If anyone knows who they were please advise me.

Jim and Fedz Crockett



Capertee National Park and Coco Creek Cave

22nd – 23rd October 2011

Report by: Rod Smith

Photos: Rod Smith

Participants: Bill 'Donkey', Courtney Boxsell, Lance Boxsell, Fletcher Etherton (NHVSS & BMSC), Natalie Etherton (NHVSS & BMSC), Ray Etherton (NHVSS & BMSC), Bob Horn (MSS), Bruce Howlett (OSS), Russell Howlett (OSS), Mike Lake (SUSS), Josh Little (NHVSS & BMSC), Rory Lomax, John Marshall (MSS), Brian 'Shrek' Reeves (NHVSS), Jill Rowling (SUSS), Rod Smith (TL) (MSS & NHVSS), Tom (NHVSS & BMSC)

The weekend began with the usual get out of Sydney at the earliest possible convenience. Thankfully I managed to do that before traffic got too bad.

I arrived at Capertee National Park to find Ray, Nat, Tom, Josh, Fletcher and Rory already there and setting up camp. Well, more accurately, Ray and Nat were setting up camp while the children amused themselves. We were joined later that evening by Shrek and Donkey.

Saturday morning Ray, Shrek, Donkey, Josh and I piled into Ray's ute for the short drive to the dig. The only real change since our previous visit had been the addition of the gate. The gate's not attached to anything and is only there to stop animals falling into the hole.



Ray rigged a tarp over the dig, which provided shade for the spectators rather than the diggers. Shrek and Donkey went for a wander of the karst while we removed the gate and renewed our downward progress. By the time Bob and John joined us we had removed the dirt and rocks that had fallen in since our previous visit and were working on new mud.

Shrek radioed to say he'd found a new possible dig site, so Josh and I went to help Shrek and Donkey at the new site while Bob and John got stuck into the existing dig. The new site looked promising, if we could remove the large boulders sitting on top of it. It looked like a job for ... "After Lunch!"



We returned to the dig site to find Mike and Jill, who had dropped in before doing the bushwalk arranged by the Bogee RFS unit. We arranged to meet them at 9am the following day for an inspection of Coco Creek Cave.

Shortly after they left we were visited by Dave Noble who informed us of more limestone at the northern end of the park and onto the adjoining property. This certainly got us all intrigued, so, after lunch, we made our way north to have a look. What we first found was the boundary and, looking across the fence, some nice looking limestone on the neighbours property. Bruce, who, along with Russell, had arrived at the end of lunch, and I headed east along the fence line to see if the limestone made its way past the fence. Arriving at a corner we hadn't found any limestone in the park, so took a short cut back towards the track. On the way we found some limestone, which picked up our spirits, so we followed. More limestone was found, but none looked great for a cave. There were a couple of spots that may open up with some persuasion, but, as someone said, the limestone looks better on the other side of the fence.





Back to the dig and we split into two groups. One group tackled the new dig site in an effort to remove the large rocks while the other group headed for the original dig. It took a lot of effort, but eventually the rocks were removed and a hole was uncovered. This hole went in about 1 metre, and most people could probably get their arm in it.

The original dig continued with the hole getting bigger, and then ... we decided to pack up and get dinner.

The next morning, those of us wanting to do Coco Creek Cave, headed for Nioka to meet Mike and Jill. Before we even got there I found I needed to work on my "leading a car convey" skills. We were only about ten minutes late, but the property owner had already left for work. Mike and Jill, how had arrived early, had spoken to him briefly, and had been told that the cave was "that way". The assumption was that someone in our group knew where it was. That assumption was incorrect.

After a short search we realised the best option was a drive into Capertee to talk to the owner and get some directions. So I got a lift with Mike and Jill and we did exactly that.

Returning with the directions we informed everyone else that we weren't even close to the location. We jumped into our respective vehicles and set off. We pulled up about 3kms from where we were originally searching and renewed our search for the elusive hole in the ground. Thankfully, given the directions we had received, the hole didn't elude us for much longer.

Coco Creek Cave is unusual in that there doesn't appear to be any surface limestone and no other indication that a cave would be present, except for the hole. Climbing down through the entrance the cave then opens up to be mostly a walk-through with only a couple of tricky places. We were pleasantly surprised by the amount of decoration. Certainly not brilliantly, but we didn't really expect any at all.

According to the map we had, thanks Mike for printing out copies for everyone, we soon reached the end where there is a small upper section and a squeeze going on with a question mark about whether it continues. It didn't take much encouragement for first Josh, then Mike, Russell and Nat, to push the squeeze and find more cave beyond. One of the first things they found was that it connected to the upper section, but the climb up is rather awkward and the squeeze is smaller than me, so I don't know what else they found.

After that there was the simple exercise of exiting and going home.

A great trip was had by all and Ray is already planning the next trip to Capertee.

Upcoming Events

MSS Club Meeting, including the AGM, 10th November

Rod Smith's Place

Please contact Rod for more details

0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com

SUNDAY 13th November FIELD DAY

Trip Leader: Beth Little, 0450 226 811, littlebeth78@hotmail.com

Contact by: **10th November**

What's involved?

SRT training and instruction. Open to everyone, but there will be a focus on people getting their skills up for the coming Tasmania trip.

You will need:

Abseiling gear. Lunch. Water.

21st November – 22nd December TASMANIA

Trip Leader: Danielle Lewin, 0404 305 878, danielle.lewin1@three.com.au

Contact by: **ASAP**

What's involved?

Caving! Two weeks of it in some of Australia's premium caving areas. If you haven't caved in Tasmania, then you should. If you have, then you should go back.

You will need:

Caving gear, including SRT gear. Car camping gear. Camera.

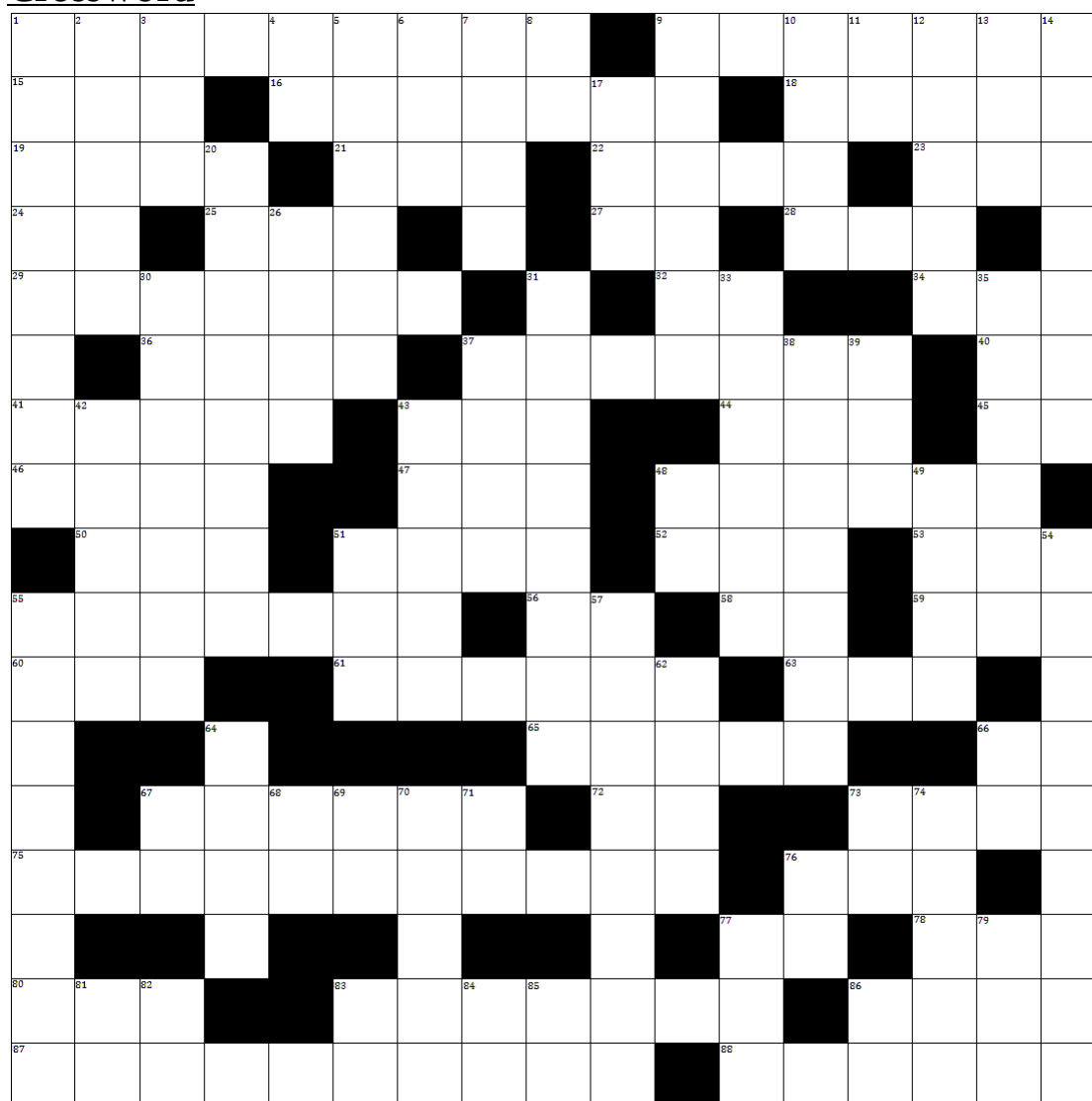
Other, Non-MSS, Events

Radical Reels are a selection of high adrenaline short films from the Banff Mountain Film Festival. The films are showing at a number of venues across Australia in November. For details of where and when the films are showing, go to:

<http://banffaustralia.com.au/dates-venues.html>

Tickets are \$30 each and are available now from the website.

Crossword



Across

1. Engross
9. Succeed
15. Speed
16. Pertaining to a volcanic rock
18. Room in roof
19. Vex
21. An edible mushroom
22. Closed Circuit Television
23. Headwear
24. Teachers College
25. Estimated Time of Arrival
27. Electrical Engineer
28. Environmental Performance Index

29. Indian flat bread
32. Past Participle
34. Feline
36. Land projecting into ocean
37. Commemorative inscription
40. Roman 6
41. Vinegars
43. An occurrence
44. Rubbish dump
45. Intensive Care
46. South America monkey
47. First woman
48. For each person, per ____
50. Vacuum Cleaner
51. A whit
52. Unreturned serve

53. Seventh Greek letter
55. Quick succession of beats
56. Information Appliance
58. Astatine
59. Vigor
60. Expert
61. Roofing material
63. Hot beverage
65. A day's march
66. High Tide
67. Arouse
72. Information Technology
73. Eighth Hebrew letter
75. Relating to a likely outcome
76. Annoy

77. Physical Education
 78. Hole in ground
 80. Tropical fish disease
 83. Graduated tube for liquid transfer
 86. Cab
 87. Enable
 88. Plan

Down

1. Idle talk
 2. Eighth letter
 3. Chest muscle
 4. Italy
 5. Leave
 6. Wood chopping tool
 7. American Indian tent (alternate spelling)
 8. Extra Terrestrial
 9. Agree
 10. Possess
 11. Pronoun used to represent an inanimate object
 12. Moral value

13. By way of
 14. Relating to duct distension
 17. Frozen water
 20. Plant belonging to the buttercup family
 26. Appetizer
 30. Salt of vinegar
 31. Desire for food
 33. Monetary unit of Macao
 35. Fly
 37. Roof edge
 38. Graduated tube for liquid transfer
 39. History of Present Illness
 42. Municipal
 43. First name of Australian star of The Dark Knight
 48. Calcium
 49. Triethylene Phosphoramidate
 51. Head covering

54. Emotionless
 55. Evoking pity
 57. Start
 62. Dislike
 64. Business person
 66. High Tension
 67. Extended Play
 68. Cubic Centimetre
 69. Internal Translator
 70. Silent
 71. Ethyl
 73. That man
 74. Citizen living in other country
 76. One of Odin's brothers
 77. Domesticated animal
 79. Innovative Exchange Inc.
 81. Chronological Age
 82. Horse Power
 83. Ratio of diameter to circumference
 84. Father
 85. Eastern Time
 86. Technetium

Last month's solution:

G A S H E R B R U M I P O E M S
 A T A C O M A L L O R Y T
 S L Y A T E K E I R E R
 H I L L A R Y M A X K 2 T A
 E V E R E S T A L S D E N
 R E H S U P P O S I N G
 B R O A D P E A K E H A Z E
 R M N D H A U L A G I R I
 U R A N I A A B H R S I N E
 M A N A S L U L O T H E G N
 I F P S I L E P T H A S
 I T U B Y E A S H P A C
 I R V I N E R E S E A R C H
 P E N N E C B S N T O
 E K A N G C H E N J U N G A O
 A P E I O N T I A M P L Y
 K I D N A N G A P A R B A T U

Trip Calendar

Thursday 10th November
MSS MEETING

Quarterly MSS Meeting – incorporating the AGM
To be held at: Rod Smith's place
Contact: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com

Sunday 13th November
Field Day

Lower Blue Montains
Trip Leader: Beth Little
Contact: 0450 226 811, littlebeth78@hotmail.com
By: 7th July
Grade: Instructional

21st November to 2nd December
2011
Caving

Tasmania
See the appendix for more details
Trip Leader: Danielle Lewin
Contact: 0404 305 878, danielle.lewin1@three.com.au
By: TBA
Grade: Easy-Hard (depending on the caves you do)

Monday 26th December
Canyoning

Mt Wilson area
Trip Leader: Jim Crockett
Contact: 0407 284 256, jim.crockett@reach.com
By: 23rd December
Grade: Easy

Tuesday 27th Decmber
Canyoning

South Bowens
Trip Leader: Jim Crockett
Contact: 0407 284 256, jim.crockett@reach.com
By: 20th July
Grade: Medium

Weekend 14th-15th January
Canyoning

Newnes
Trip Leader: Rod Smith
Contact: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
By: 11th January
Grade: Medium-Hard

2012 possibly March or April
Hiking/Tramping

New Zealand
Heaphy track – 78kms over 5 days
More details at:
<http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/tracks-and-walks/nelson-tasman/golden-bay/heaphy-track/>
Expressions of interest at this stage
Contact Johan Verhagen on: 02 4758 9811,
johan.verhagen@sydneywater.com.au

March 2012
Caving

Cliefden
Trip Leader: Jim Crockett
Contact: 0407 284 256, jim.crockett@reach.com
By: TBA
Grade: Easy-Medium

May 2012
Caving

Wombeyan
Trip Leader: Rod Smith
Contact: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
By: TBA
Grade: Easy-Medium

2012
Caving

Sri Lanka
Expressions of interest at this stage
Contact Jim Crockett on: 0407 284 256, jim.crockett@reach.com

2012
Caving

Buchan
Expressions of interest at this stage
Contact Rod Smith: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com

Appendix 1 – AGM Agenda

MSS 46th Annual General Meeting, 11/12/2010

Held at Roderick Smith's residence

Any Corrections to Previous Meetings Minutes:

Correspondence:

Committee Members Reports:

President –

Treasurer –

Equipment Officer –

Training Officer –

Librarian –

Elections:

President declared all positions vacant and called for nominations. Officers elected:

Position	Name
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President	
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Secretary	
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Treasurer	
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Equipment Officer	
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Librarian	
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Training Officer	
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ASF Liaison	
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Newsletter Editor(s)	
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Website Manager	
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Public Officer	
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Status of Action Items:

Constitution updating – Warwick Blake

Web site hosting – Rod Smith

Updating membership details - Jim Crockett

Back issues of Helictite – Cathi Humphrey-Hood

Other bank account options – Chris Johnstone

ESRI GIS Software – Jim Crockett

New Business:

New Trips -

Next Meeting:

Appendix 2 – Proposed Tasmania Trip Schedule

Tasmania Caving Trip

Proposed dates:

21 Nov - 2 Dec 2011

Sail to Tas: 19 - 20 November 2011

4 berth (\$140 per person), Car (\$79) each way.

Arrive Davenport - drive 5 hours to Ida Bay 280km + 2hrs from Hobart to Ida Bay.

Begin Caving trip In Ida Bay (Hastings Caves)

20 Nov - Settle in Day Ida Bay

Accommodation- Ida Bay Railway Carriages (\$30 single, \$60 couple, \$ 5 extra people ... use of communal cabin.)

21 Nov Ida Bay

Midnight Hole IB:11 to Mystery Creek Cave IB:10 (through to Exit Cave)

Time 4 hours

- vertical cave - good beginners abseil cave - relaxing vertical cave for experienced.

22 Nov Ida Bay - Mini Martin IB:8 to Exit Cave IB:14

Time 5 hrs - plus time to explore

- vertical cave - ascent and descent cave work required

- considerable bush walk in (7km - with steep parts).

23 Nov Ida Bay - Maydeena (drive / rest day)

Accommodation at Madena (checking out Junee homestead or Maydena youth hostel.)

Mt Field Park Government Cabins

6 bunks per cabin (mattress, cold water and toilet block. Fire wood etc provided. no electricity.)

Fuel stove required \$45 per cabin

24 Nov Junee - Florentine Cave area

Cave: Three Forty One JF:341

-limited vertical however visit for the formations in lower chambers.

-Time: 5 hours.

25 Nov JF Caving area

Cave: Satan's Liar JF:365

-time 5 hours

-Sporting cave; spectacular formations and absence of mud

-some vertical and climbing.

26 Nov JF Caving area - Rest day

27 Nov JF Caving Area

Cave: Serendipity JF : 344

-Sporty cave - 12 hours

- vertical / horizontal caving; endurance required.

28 Nov JF Caving Area to Mole Creek Karst Area

Rest / driving day

Accommodation:

camping unpowered: \$15 per one person / \$25 for 2 people

Cabin - one only beds up to nine people?

\$75 for 2 people / \$20 per couple / bed more.

29 Nov Mole Creek Karst Area

Kubla Khan Cave MC:1

Time: 7 hours

- some vertical predominant decorations and photography

30 Nov Mole Creek Karst Area

Caves: Croesus Cave MC:13

(horizontal, decorations)

Time 1 - 2 hours

Cave: Wet Cave (3 hours) MC:203

Good for beginners/ easy caving good decorations

1st Dec - travel to Davenport spare day

Catch Spirit of Tasmania 1930hrs or holiday / rest.

Key Costs:

Travel down to Tas. (dependant on mode; Spirit of Tas vehicle is \$79-\$96)

Accommodation:

Ida Bay (\$30 - \$40 per person/ per night)

June - Florentine (\$45 per night between 6 people = \$8 per person per night)

Mole Creek - (\$15 - 35 per person / per night)

Food / Fuel

National Park Entrance Fees