

Boundary Peak, NV, 13,140 ft. – October 6, 2014, HP #17: No Easy Ridgeline

October 5th, I left Provo UT at 6:15 a.m. and drove to the Nevada/California border, mostly via Highway 6, to the Queens Mine trailhead of Boundary Peak. Boundary Peak is the highest point in Nevada at 13,140 feet. It took about nine hours to get there, and since my plan was to climb the peak the next day, I had plenty of time on my hands. Having sat for those many hours my back was sore. I decided a walk might loosen my back, so I wandered up the trail for about 50 minutes to just shy of where the Trail Canyon route joins the Queens Mine route. In so doing I got a feel for what I would be up against the next morning. I did not see anyone else on the trail, but I thought I might as there was a van parked one switch back down from the trailhead.



When I got back to my vehicle, I moved it to a flatter spot as I planned to sleep in it. As I finished, a pick-up with two brothers pulled up. By now it was about 5:45 p.m., and they talked as though they were going to climb the peak that evening, and then drive to the Mount Whitney trailhead to hike the John Muir Trail to its peak the next day. As they prepared to start up a couple other hikers could be seen coming down. Soon after the brothers set off, the other hikers arrived at my camp. One gave me his card explaining he had lost his phone and asking me to contact him should I find it. Then they wandered down to the van.

I proceeded with cooking my dinner and arranging my SUV to sleep in the back. Before dark the brothers returned admitting the peak was out of reach so late in the day. They soon drove off leaving me again all alone. When darkness arrived, the early morning caught up with me. I laid down to sleep with my alarm set for 5:10 a.m. just then realizing I was no longer in the Mountain Time Zone meaning it was really only 7:30 p.m. I was soon asleep however I woke up multiple times throughout the night before my alarm sounded.

The next morning thanks to being on Pacific Time, I was able to turn off my headlamp at 6:15 a.m. as I left camp.

The hike to Boundary Peak consists of three sections. Section one leads from the trailhead to the ridge where the Trail Canyon path and the Queens Mine trail intersect; this took 65 minutes to cover. Next is a steep section up loose scree to the top of a false summit. This section was dusted with snow and also required about one hour of time. The final section is from the false summit to the true summit. Here the going became even steeper with just enough snow on it to make it dangerous. One and a half hours elapsed as I negotiated section three. Overall the one-way trip from the trailhead covered approximately three and a half miles while gaining close to 3,500 feet.



At the top of Nevada, tucked inside the summit register I found a paper with "Boundary Peak" print on it along with its elevation and a date of July 6, 2014 exactly three month prior. I set up my mini tripod and photographed myself holding the sign. The sky was clear, and the weather was calm. Even at over 13,000 feet the temperature was pleasant especially for October. The view of the desert below was expansive. Stretching from the south to the northwest the Sierra Nevada Range was

visible, with Mount Whitney (the tallest US mountain outside of Alaska) being just 88 miles away.

Off to the south, about a mile away and 300 feet higher stood Montgomery Peak in California. The ridge between the two peaks did not look difficult, and I was doing great on time, so I decided to make the trip to Montgomery Peak. The traverse was tougher than I had anticipated with a lot of loose rock and rock pinnacles to down climb and skirt around. In the end I had to gain close to 1,000 vertical feet to reach the 13,441-foot peak requiring over an hour from Boundary Peak.

On the return trip I decided to stay lower than the summit of Boundary Peak hoping for easier terrain. In so doing I down climbed too far, forcing me to regain the lost elevation and adding a half hour to my return time.

As I descended Boundary Peak, between the true summit and the lower false summit I noticed a solo hiker approaching however our routes never intersected. By 4:00 p.m. I returned to the trailhead. Just as there had been on both my hikes up, a lot of mule deer were present along the lowest section.

From the Queens Mine trailhead, I returned to Highway 6 and made my way to Lee Vining CA. The next day I travelled to Yosemite Valley National Park to enjoy a few days of rock climbing.

Photo Album : <https://photos.app.goo.gl/wkdqQgRDwX1LLGzeA>