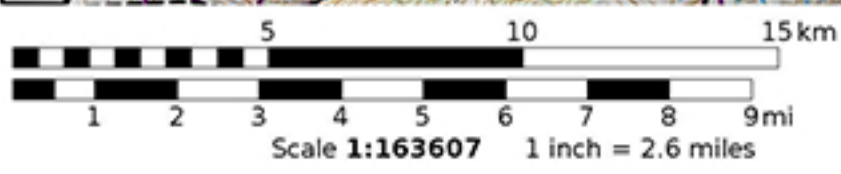
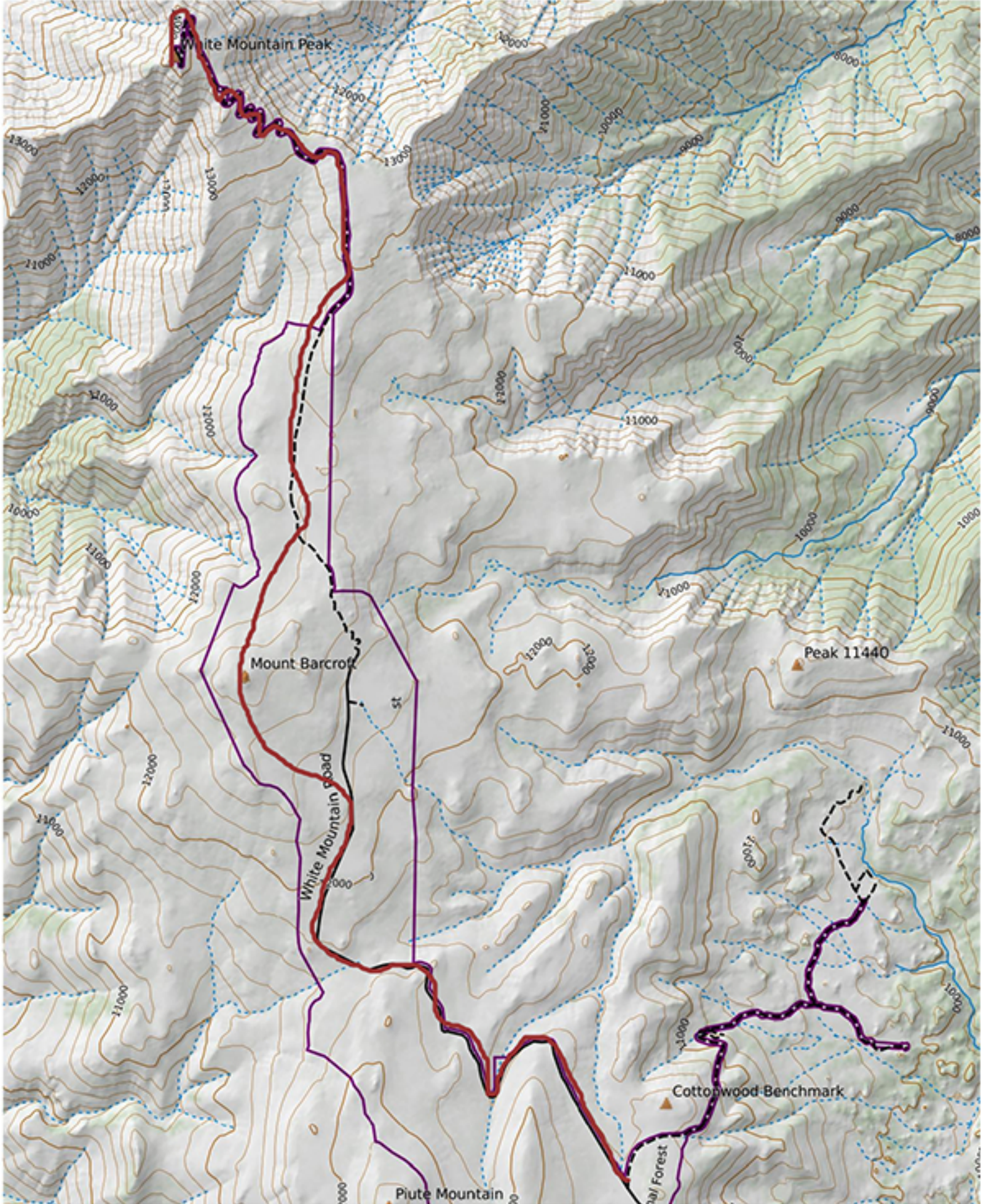


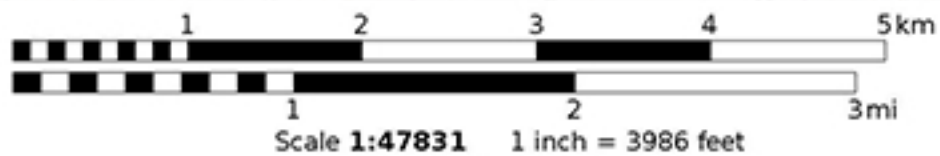
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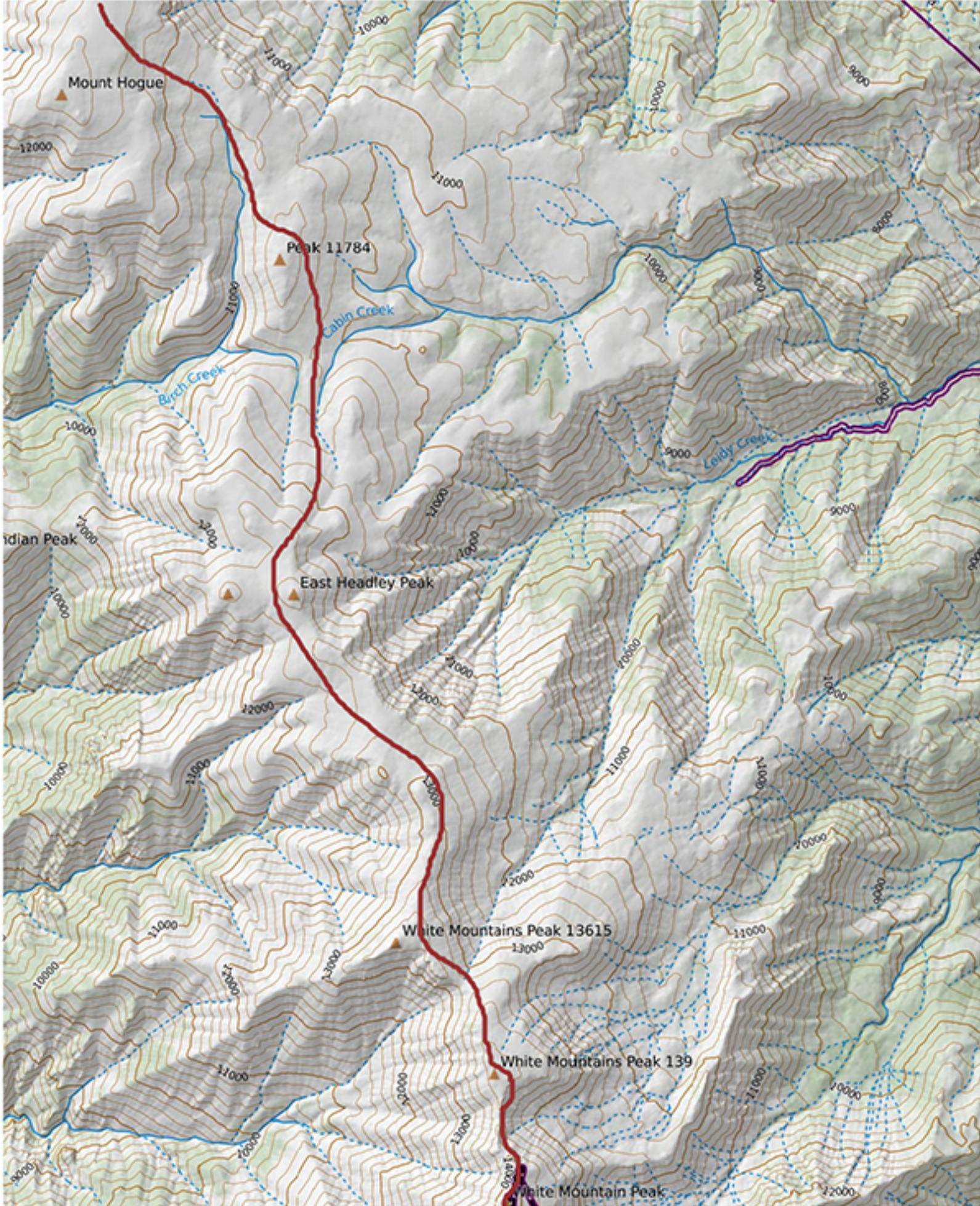




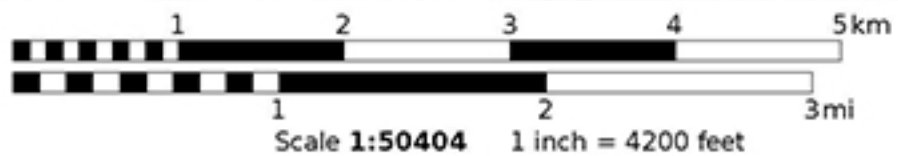
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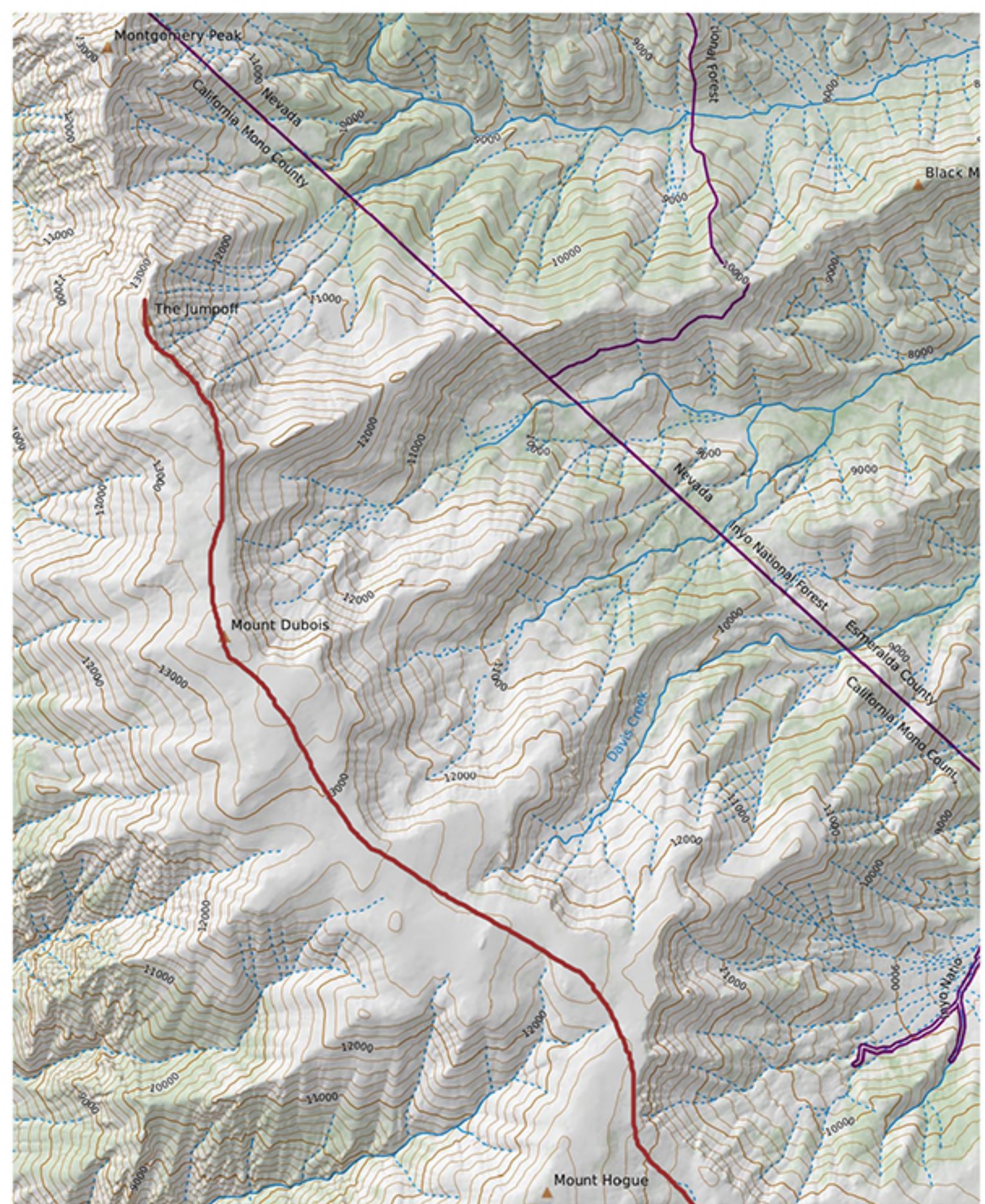




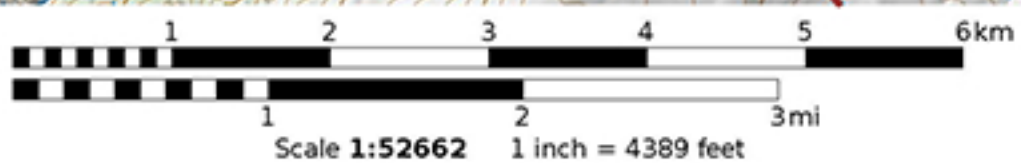
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## White Mountains

**Distance:**

61 miles (from Patriarch Grove); you can make this 8 or so miles shorter by driving all the way to Barcroft Gate

**Elevation Gain/Loss:**

18200'

**Altitude Range:**

11200' - 14250'

**Location:**

White Mtn Rd - Patriarch Grove or Barcroft Gate

**Suggested Map:**

Sierra Maps 'White Mountains' or relevant USGS 7.5' series maps

**Time Of Year:**

Late spring (in drier years), summer & fall

**Directions From Bishop:**

395 South to Big Pine, turn left on State Route 168 East to Westgard Pass, turn left (north) on White Mtn Rd, this road is paved to Schulman Grove then turns to a wide, graded but often very washboarded dirt road that continues north to White Mtn Peak summit, however the road is only open to the public to the Barcroft Gate, a few miles south of the Barcroft Research Station; allow approximately 1.5 hours to get to Barcroft Gate from Bishop

**Route Description:**

The White Mountains traverse is typically done as a point-to-point from Barcroft Gate to Queen Canyon Saddle but this involves an epic car shuttle. It is a classic route worth doing for sure but the out and back described here is just as sweet, although it doesn't include Montgomery and Boundary Peaks.

Starting at Patriarch Grove simply adds on several miles of dirt road walking over Sheep Pass to Barcroft Gate where the "trailhead" officially is located. I just really enjoy experiencing the sweeping alpine views that open up as you round the corner on Sheep Pass on foot. From Barcroft Gate you can simply hike the road past the research station and up to the summit of White Mtn Peak (7 miles) or you can peel off the road before the research station and head cross country up and over the summit of Mt Barcroft, eventually reconnecting with the road north of the research station.

From the summit of White Mtn Pk, the route is entirely cross country, following the crest of the range on mostly open, rolling and easy to travel high alpine terrain. The one exception is encountered quickly after heading north from White Mtn Peak in an area where the ridgeline

briefly narrows and steepens into a maze of crumbly rock and steep loose chutes. You have to pick your way carefully through this zone to keep the route in the 2nd to 3rd class realm. I have found that this is best done by dropping to the west of the ridgeline once the ridge itself becomes un navigable. I've never pulled this off exactly the same way twice and be forewarned that it looks entirely different when working your way through it on the return trip. This is definitely the crux of an otherwise very mellow cross country trip. Once through this continue north on at times rocky and at times tundra-like terrain, bypassing or crossing over the myriad high points along the way as you like. Eventually you will make a long descent to a broad saddle at 11200'. This low point is obvious from points west toward the Sierra when looking at the length of the Whites, as it separates the high plateau of Pellisier Flat from the high ridgelines extending north from White Mtn Pk. This saddle also contains the only reliable year-round source of water (other than seasonal snowmelt streams in very wet years) on the route. Creeks fed by springs on both sides run down toward the saddle before veering off into canyons on both the west and east sides of the range. Even in the falls of drought cycle years the flow in these creeks has never diminished. From the saddle it is easiest to begin the long climb up to Pellisier Flat by staying east of the creek drainage dropping in from the north and contouring up the east side of an obvious ridgeline, eventually crossing over and dropping in to follow the creek up past it's spring-fed sources and on up to the broad, rolling open terrain that signifies the southern end of Pellisier Flat. From here the climbing is more gradual as you eventually top 13000', passing a few named high points such as Mt Dubois. Eventually the plateau begins to narrow and drop off the west. It is best to stay along the eastern escarpment, following the ridgeline north until you reach The Jumpoff. This is a dramatic spot where the Pellisier Flat abruptly ends and plummets into a saddle separating the plateau from the steep, crumbly, chossy south ridge of Montgomery Peak. This out and back route turns around here and retraces its steps back south. The entire route is prime Desert Bighorn Sheep habitat so be on the lookout!