

**Backpack - Hells Canyon, Snake River and High Trail Loop,  
May 1-7, 2021**

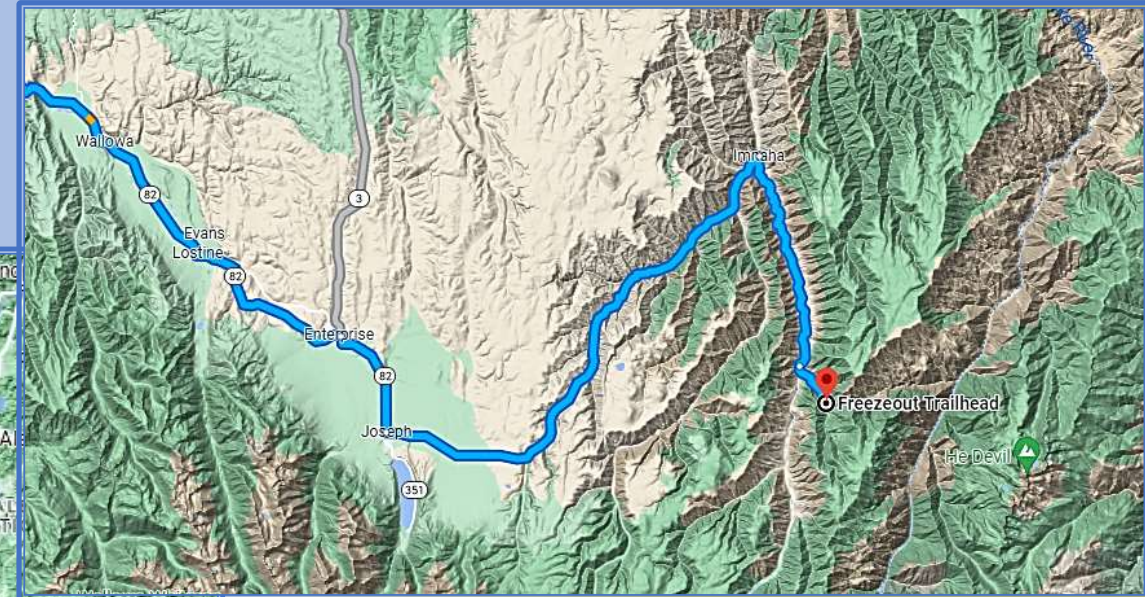
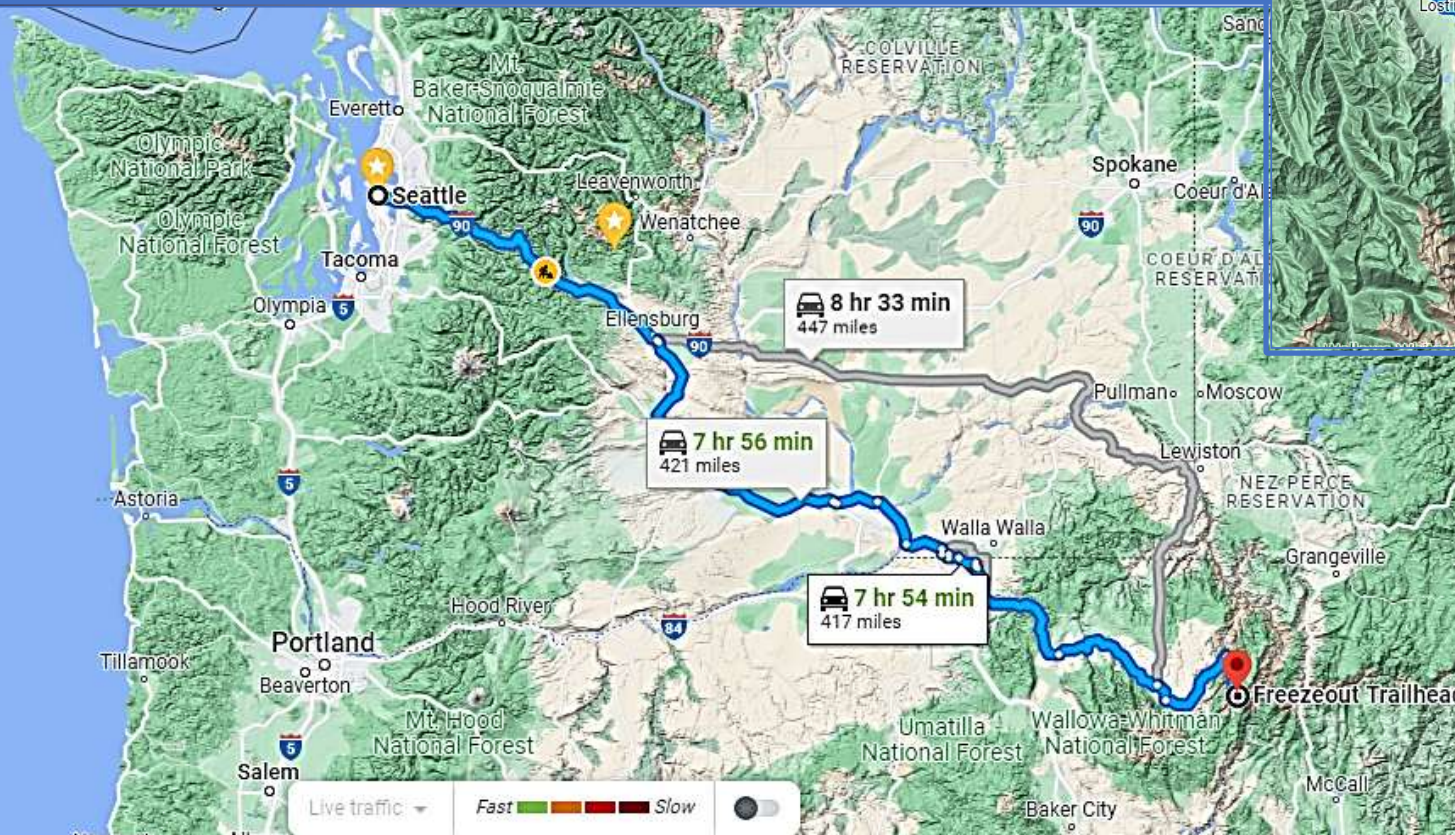
**\*\* An adventure planned and led by Rob Erickson\*\***

**Backpackers' Pajama Party – February 20, 2023, 7-8:30PM**





# Hell's Canyon Backpack – getting there

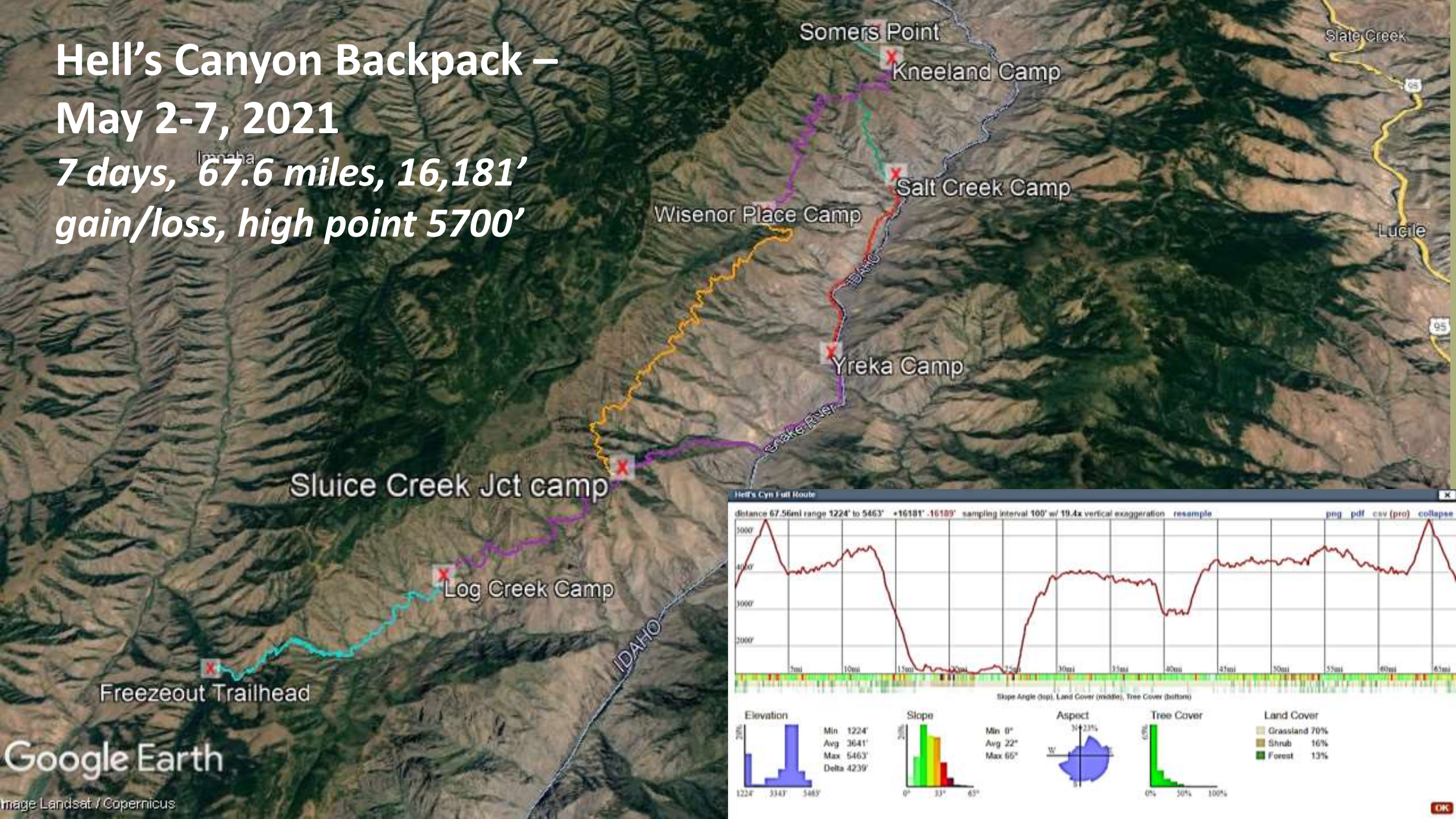




# Hell's Canyon Backpack –

May 2-7, 2021

7 days, 67.6 miles, 16,181' gain/loss, high point 5700'



Sluice Creek Jct camp

Log Creek Camp

Freezeout Trailhead

Wisenor Place Camp

Salt Creek Camp

Kneeland Camp

Somers Point

Slate Creek

Lucile

IDAHO



Google Earth

Image Landsat / Copernicus

ORC



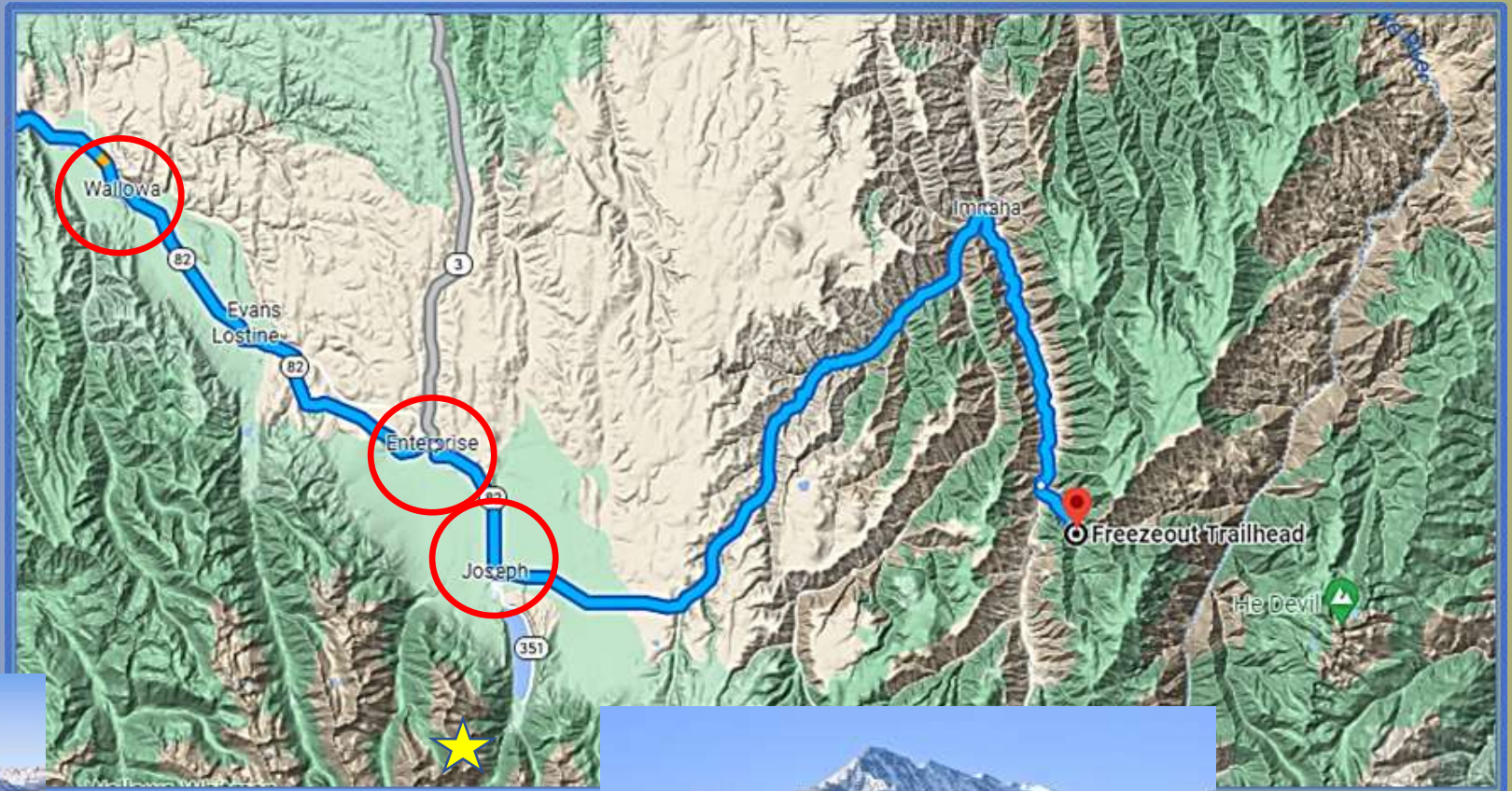
# Hell's Canyon High Trail – When to go?

	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
Mean Max. Temp	-	-	69°	82°	92°	94°	82°	-
Mean Min. Temp.	-	-	40°	51°	58°	56°	47°	-
Precipitation	-	-	1.42"	1.42"	1.03"	.82"	.77"	-

- Likely snow-free along the high trail by mid-late April in most years but may be blowdowns and winter trail damage. Some entry points like Hat Point may not be accessible yet.
- In early May it was quite warm by the river and the poison oak on the descent routes to the river was already shin-high, growing fast



# Gateway Towns



Eagle Cap  
Wilderness





Day 1 – Drive to Freezeout trailhead,  
hike to Log Creek Camp  
7.4 miles, 2543' gain, 2033' loss, high point 5462'







































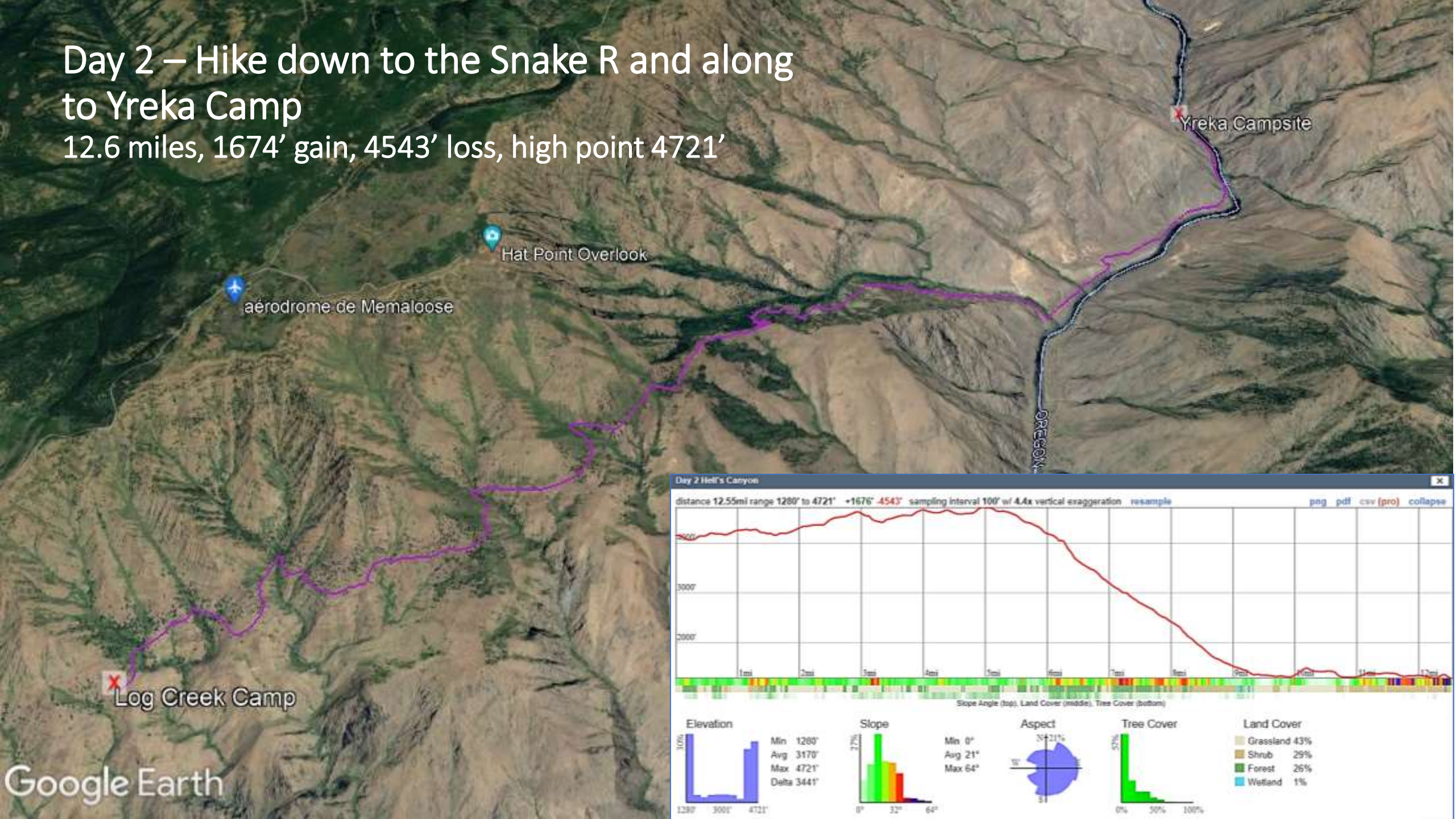






# Day 2 – Hike down to the Snake R and along to Yreka Camp

12.6 miles, 1674' gain, 4543' loss, high point 4721'



























































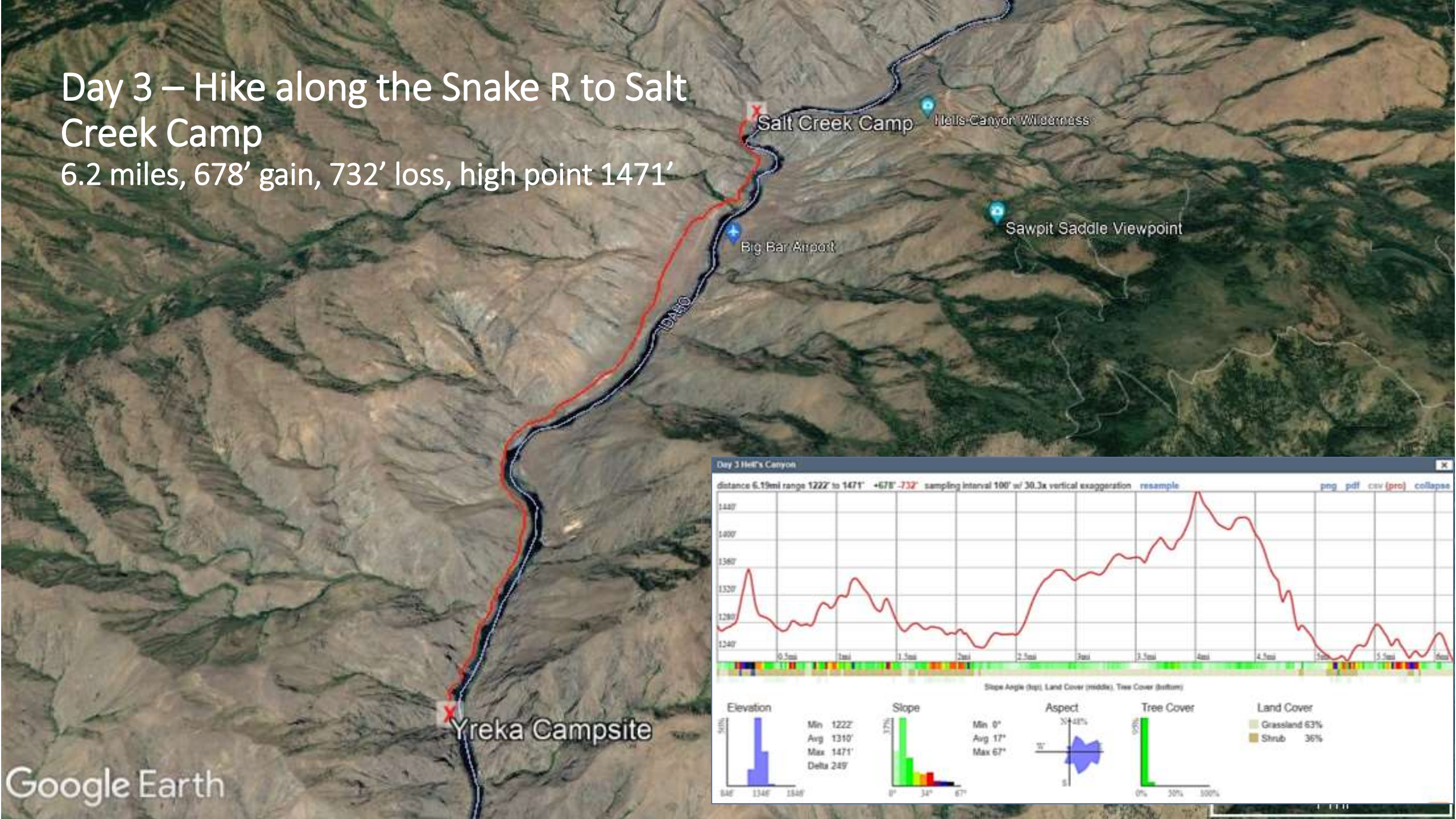






# Day 3 – Hike along the Snake R to Salt Creek Camp

6.2 miles, 678' gain, 732' loss, high point 1471'









































**Temperence Creek Ranch**  
Lease Under  
Special Use Permit:

OMB NO. 0596-0082

**No Trespassing!**

Access  
By Permission Only!



Use Code 222  
Submission ID: JKN0111















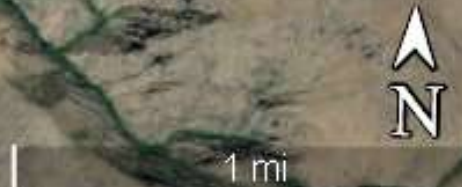
Day 4 – Climb from the river to Kneeland Camp  
6 miles, 3248' gain, 458' loss, high point 4046'

X Kneeland Camp

X Salt Creek Camp

Hells Canyon Wilderness

Google Earth



















































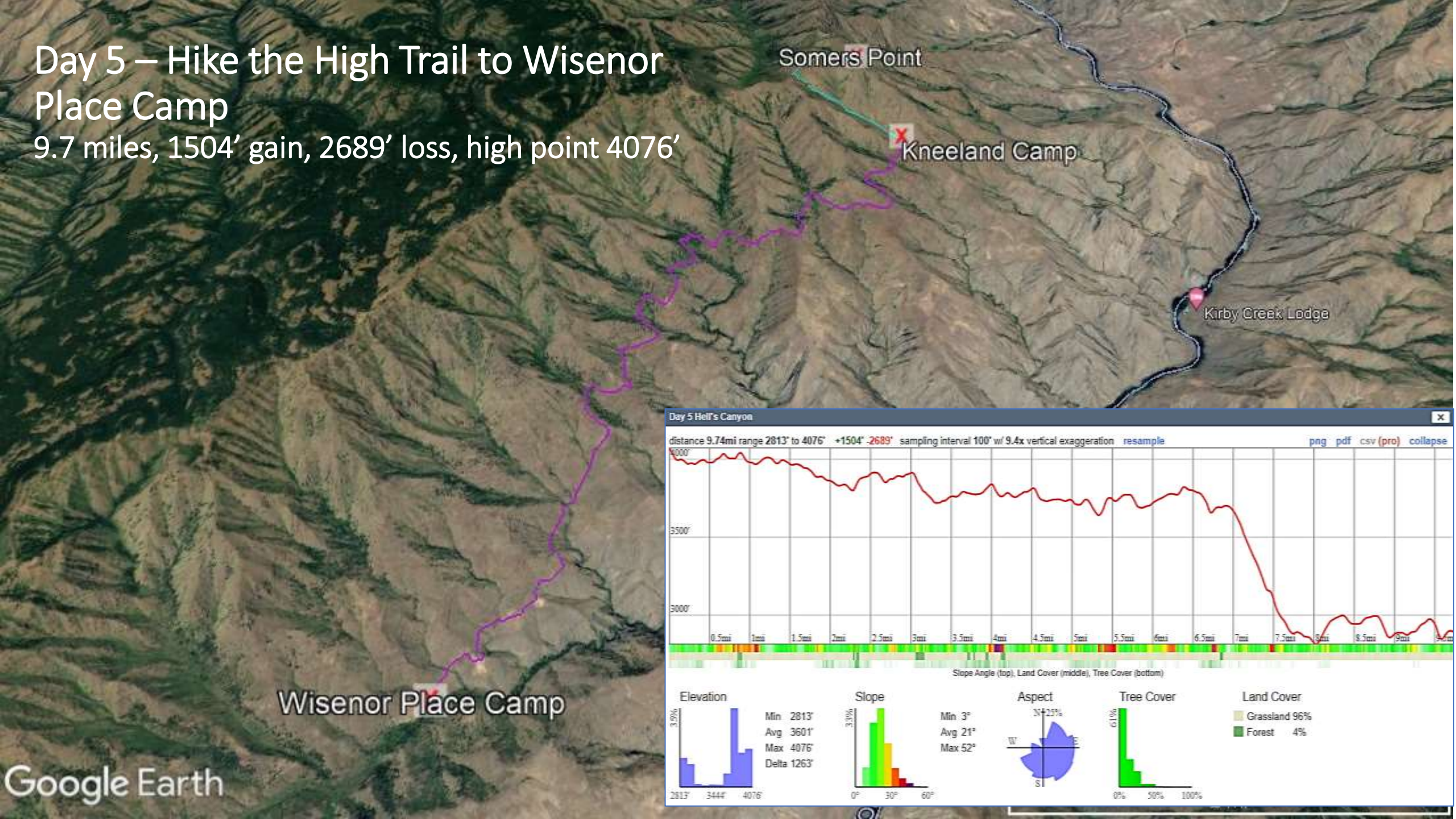






# Day 5 – Hike the High Trail to Wisenor Place Camp

9.7 miles, 1504' gain, 2689' loss, high point 4076'



























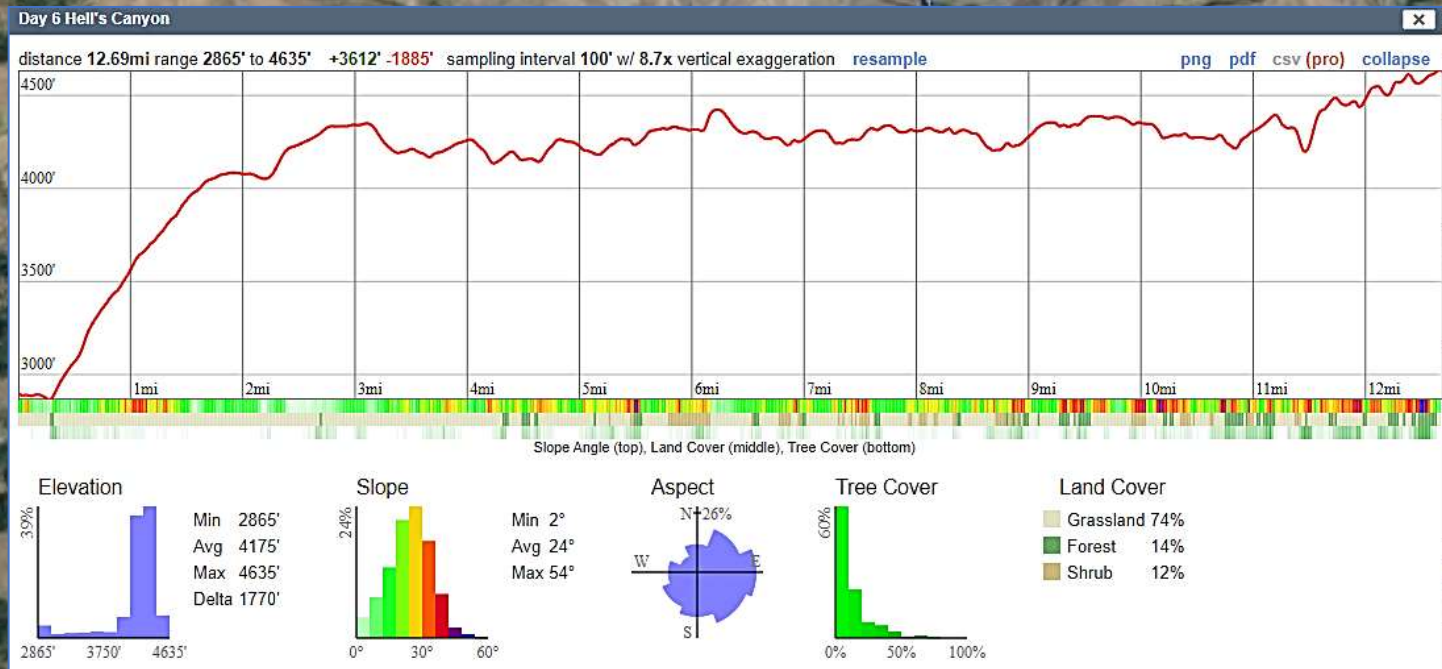
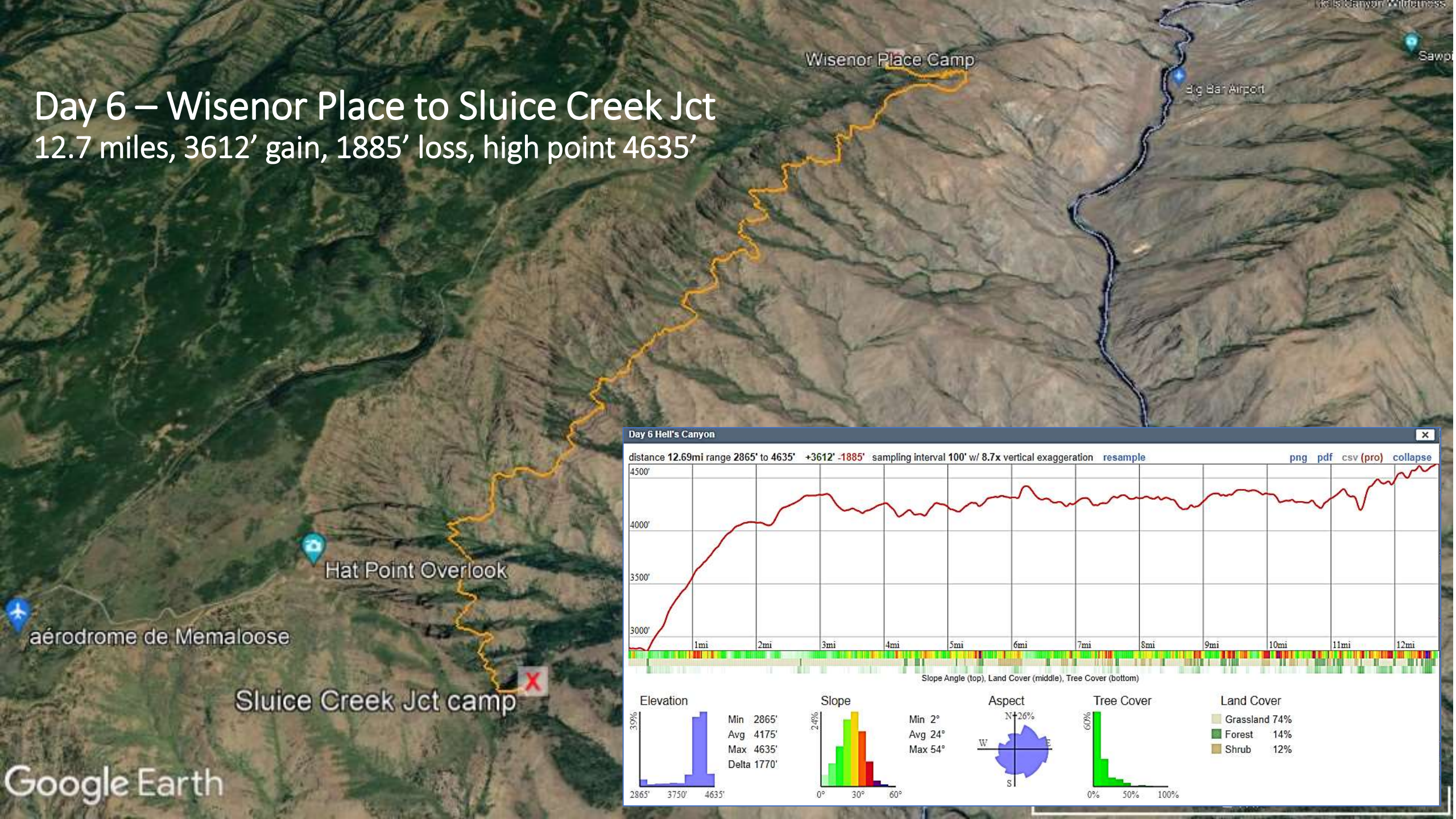






# Day 6 – Wisenor Place to Sluice Creek Jct

12.7 miles, 3612' gain, 1885' loss, high point 4635'



























**Photo by Donna Hahn**





Photo by Donna Hahn













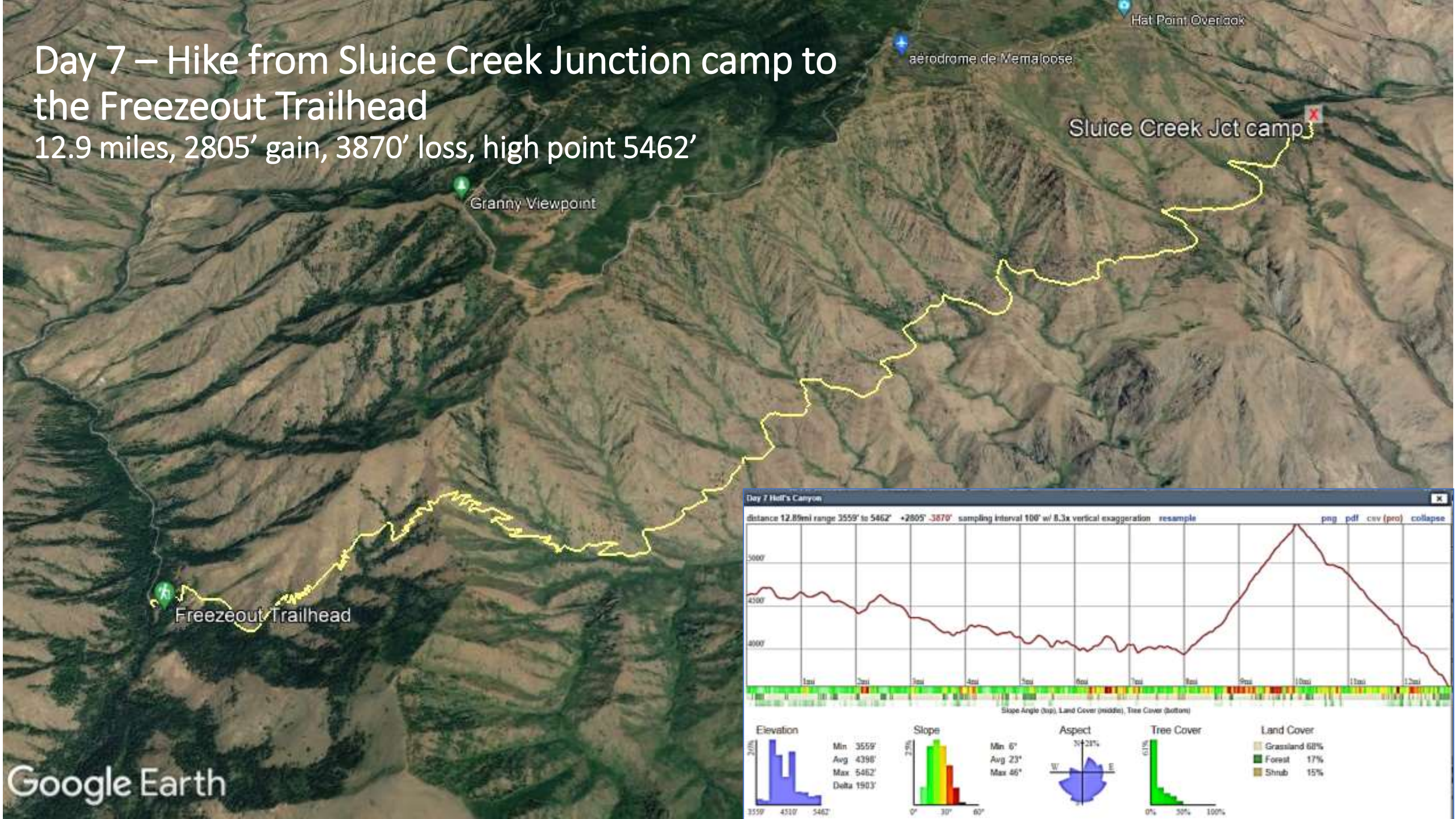






# Day 7 – Hike from Sluice Creek Junction camp to the Freezeout Trailhead

12.9 miles, 2805' gain, 3870' loss, high point 5462'

























Our post-trip feast was “in-tents” at Terminal Gravity Brewpub in Joseph!





# Wildlife and Bird life Photos by Donna Hahn





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Orchid Photo by Donna  
Hahn





# Maps and Guides

- Maps: USFS Hells Canyon National Recreation Area & Wilderness Map. <https://www.discovernw.org/hells-canyon-national-recreation-area-wilderness-map.html>
- Guidebook: **Backpacking Oregon: From River Valleys to Mountain Meadows** by Douglas Lorain, 2018



# Logistics Considerations

- **Snowmelt timing in the early spring**
- **Poison oak explosion soon after snowmelt**
- **Heat by mid spring**
- **Ticks**
- **Bear cubs**
- **Need a tent that can withstand occasional high winds**
- **Road access to Freezeout Trailhead is well maintained**
- **A Northwest Forest Pass or Interagency Pass is required**



# This trail is for you if:

- You're not highly reactive to poison oak
- You love high panoramas and shoreline views (and a cool river dip!)
- You don't mind a few precipitous traverses
- You're looking for a great snow-free backpack before the high Cascades melt out



A wide-angle landscape photograph of a mountain range. The foreground is dominated by dark green evergreen trees on the left and right. The middle ground shows rolling green hills and valleys, with some areas appearing to be covered in grass or low vegetation. In the background, a range of mountains stretches across the horizon, with the highest peaks covered in snow. The sky is filled with large, grey, dramatic clouds, suggesting an overcast or stormy day. The overall mood is serene and majestic.

Questions?