

Keet Seel Trip Report, May 16-18

Six SJBAS members met at Navaho National Monument for an overnight backpack to Keet Seel, one of the best preserved Ancestral Puebloan sites.



Trekkers learned that *Keet*

Seel is Navaho for “broken pottery.” The site, however, is ancestral home to the Hopi who call it *Kawestima*. And they will correct you if you use the popular name. *Kawestima* is the ancestral home to the Kookopwungwa (Fire or Burrowing Owl Clan), Tsivatowungwa (Big Horn Sheep Clan) and maybe the Iswungwa (Coyote Clan).

The eight-plus mile hike began with a steep descent of almost 1,000 feet to the canyon floor. We then followed a creek most of the rest of the way to Keet Seel—often hiking in the creek itself and spooking cattle and feral horses. This picture above right shows your trip leader being rescued from shin-deep quicksand, which was common throughout most of the eight-mile hike. Fortunately, tape worm season in the river, courtesy of the cattle, had not begun.



Once at the campground we dropped our packs and headed a half-mile further to Keet Seel. The 80-foot access ladder can be seen to the far left in the wide-angle picture of the village above.

Those making the journey were Lyle Hancock, Ruth Guarino, Lorie Hansen, Chris Anderson, and Lorraine and Hunter McCleary. Thanks to Chris and Lyle for the pictures.