

Punta Gorda Light House

Punta Gorda Light House to Cooskie Creek

SCENARIO 1: You're past Mattole Beach and have just rounded the lighthouse. In about a 1/4 mile the beach will be blocked by a landslide. You must decide how to navigate this obstacle.

What is your next step?

- A.** Climb over rocks to reach the other side.
FEEDBACK: Incorrect - Try Again
While that might seem like a good idea, someone is guaranteed to get hurt. These rocks are unstable. It's easy to slip and fall or twist your ankle carrying a heavy backpack. You don't want to turn back before you even get started, so play it safe.
- B.** Look around and see if there's a spur trail you can follow.
Feedback: CORRECT
You should always take the safest route possible. Don't risk unnecessary injury.
- C.** Turn around and go home. If this is what the rest of the trail looks like, I can't hack it.
FEEDBACK: Incorrect - Try Again
If you're a true scout, you come prepared. Consider alternatives and work with the group.

SCENARIO 2: It's 9:13 AM and you've just passed the lighthouse. You must make it to Cooskie Creek before the tide sets in or else your going to lose 2-3 hours waiting for the water to recede. Now's a good time to check your tide tables. Remember you will need to refer to the time and depth of water to determine whether it's safe to continue.

Using your laminated tide table, what should be your next move?

- A.** Based on the information presented, head straight through to Cooskie Creek.
FEEDBACK: Incorrect - Try Again
If you're not 100% certain that you can cross safely, it's best to have a plan B. Have you thought that through? What's your Plan B?

- B.** Hold up at the light house until an hour after high tide.
FEEDBACK: Incorrect - Try Again
While this is safe, is it practical? Does it make sense to lose hiking time if you are to meet your next checkpoint?

- C.** Continue along trail but plan to hold up if the tide gets too high.
FEEDBACK: Correct
Continue to proceed but look for places to get up off the beach and wait out the tide if need be.

Cooskie Creek to Spanish Creek

SCENARIO 3: The next stretch runs about 5 miles. As you hike along the beach, you start to notice the cliffs on your left becoming lower and more accessible. You spy a spur trail that leads to the flats overhead.

Do you stay the course or follow the spur to the flats above?

- A.** Stay on the beach. It's open and you're no longer vulnerable to the tides.
FEEDBACK: Incorrect - Try Again
Think carefully... is this the most efficient way to travel to your next destination?
- B.** Stop and drop your packs. Send two scouts up the spur trail to investigate.
FEEDBACK: Correct
You're wise to send only a small number of scouts up the spur. This way if the trail ends up leading nowhere, the group hasn't lost much time or energy.
- C.** The group decides the spur looks promising and begins to hike the trail upward.
FEEDBACK: Incorrect - Try Again
The spur could lead to a dead end. If the entire group heads up to investigate, this could waste precious time and energy.



📍 Spanish Creek

Spanish Creek to Kinsey Creek

SCENARIO 4: Your next night stay will be at Big Flat, but before you arrive you'll need to cover 5-6 miles of very bare, flat terrain. As you leave Spanish Creek, it starts to downpour. Thunder can be heard in the distance. You're just about a mile down the road when you spy a line of green bushes and trees. While pondering your options, lightning strikes a couple of miles away.

Do you separate and stay put and or make for the trees and seek shelter?

- A.** Drop packs, move 20 feet apart, and get as low to the ground as possible. Stay in place for at least 20 minutes after the last lightning strike. By then you know it's safe to move about.

FEEDBACK: Incorrect - Try Again

While it's wise to stay put and scatter due to lightning, keep in mind that hypothermia could become an issue.

- B.** Drop packs, grab a tarp to cover yourself from the rain, move 20 feet apart and get as low to the ground as possible. Stay in place for at least 20 minutes after the last lightning strike. By then you know it's safe to move about.

FEEDBACK: Correct

Provided that the tarp does not have any metal grommets, this is your best option.

The tarp would help keep the possibility of hypothermia at bay.

- C.** Run for the green bushes and trees and seek shelter.

FEEDBACK: Incorrect - Try Again

While this may be your natural instinct, the chances of lightning striking a tree are much greater than where you are now. Though doable, if you leave this late in the day, you will face a time crunch with sunset and any possible nasty weather that may blow in.

Kinsey Creek to Big Flat

SCENARIO 5: You've been on the trail for a while now. It's time to think about where to camp for the night. When you hit the trail junction for Rattlesnake Ridge, turn right and head toward the ocean. As you draw near, you see campsites ahead. It's no longer raining but the wind has picked up and your GPS shows it's only going to get worse.

Where should you camp for the night?

- A.** When you reach Big Flat Creek, drop packs and spread out to search both sides of the creek in search of the most sheltered campsite.

FEEDBACK: Correct

If you enter the trees on the other side of the creek, you will find the Burrito Resort, a hidden campsite built by local surfers that includes a homemade windbreak, tree

swings, a tree slide, a raised firepit with stone benches, and a well-marked latrine.

- B. When you reach Big Flat Creek, you spy several well-established sites with walls and rock-lined pathways. Grab the first one you find and set up camp.

FEEDBACK: Incorrect - Try Again

When you come across what appear to be a comfortable spot for the night, you should venture a little further for an even better hidden gem.

- C. When hit the ocean, set up camp at the first campsite you see. You're exhausted and just want to get settled and get warm.

FEEDBACK: Incorrect - Try Again

While you may be tired, there is little protection from the wind and rain, so you're not likely to get warm or get much rest. This is a recipe for a miserable night.

Big Flat

Big Flat to Buck Creek

SCENARIO 6: The next leg you will travel is perhaps the most treacherous. The distance is short - about 3 miles - but consists of a very rocky and narrow shoreline. When combined with the tide, it can be outright deadly.

Your tide table for the day shows the following cycle:

Low tide is -0.6 feet at 6:30 AM
High tide is 3.8 feet at 12:34 PM
Low tide is 1.2 feet at 6:34 PM

In this section of the trail, a tide over 3 feet is impassable and there is no safety zone. The average time it takes to cover this distance is 2 hours.

Given this information, how should you plan to cover this next section of trail?

- A. Prepare to leave camp between 5:30 - 6:00 AM and hike straight through to Buck Creek.
FEEDBACK: Incorrect - Try Again
Though doable, it's puts a great strain on your

body because of the bad weather the day before. Your body needs time to recuperate.

- B. Wait until the next low tide at 6:34 PM and hike straight through to Buck Creek.

FEEDBACK: Incorrect - Try Again

Though doable, if you leave this late in the day, you will face a time crunch with sunset and any possible nasty weather that may blow in.

- C. Start roughly an hour after high tide and hike straight through to Buck Creek.

FEEDBACK: Correct

If you leave between 1:30-2:00 PM, the tide will be going out (getting lower) the further you go. You will also have time to relax, be well-fed, well-hydrated, and well-rested for the next leg.

SCENARIO 7: After carefully navigating the rocky shoreline and many blind corners, it's a guarantee you'll be wet and tired. It's late afternoon now and time to look for a place to spend the night. As you head up to Buck Creek, there is a campsite on the right-hand side but it's exposed and rather small. Off to the left, you spy a trail that goes up into the trees. Seeking shelter from the storm you see brewing on the horizon, you decide to venture on in search of a better site. The path is overgrown with all kinds of plant life. Close to the creek, you also notice a pair of bear tracks in the sand - one large and one small.

Using what you know so far, what are the dangers of staying in this particular location?

- A. An impending rainstorm and warning of fresh bear tracks.

FEEDBACK: Incorrect - Try Again

Setting yourself up for a visit from a mama bear and her cub combined with foul weather is not ideal. Extra precautions would need to be taken to ensure your safety - namely the storage of food and smellables. Plus, you overlooked the danger of trekking through poison oak.

- B. An impending rainstorm, warning of fresh bear tracks, and the abundance of poison oak.

FEEDBACK: Correct

Setting yourself up for a visit from a mama bear and her cub combined with foul weather is not ideal. Extra precautions would need to be taken to ensure your safety – namely the storage of food and smellables. Make sure everyone is aware of the presence of poison oak and how to identify it.

- C. Fresh bear tracks.

FEEDBACK: Incorrect – Try Again

While setting yourself up for a visit from a mama bear and her cub is certainly not ideal, there are other dangers to consider – namely foul weather and the presence of poison oak.

Buck Creek

Buck Creek to Horse Mountain Creek

SCENARIO 8: Sitting around the campfire at Buck Creek, the group begins to discuss the next day's travel. Here's what you need to consider.

Your tide table for the day shows the following cycle:

Low tide is 1.1 feet at 6:47 AM
High tide is 4.6 feet at 12:52 PM
Low tide is 1.0 feet at 6:50 PM

There is 1 mile of an impassable zone at high tide. You cannot travel at high tide over 3 feet for fear of being caught in the surf. It is roughly 2.5 miles to reach Horse Mountain Creek.

Based on this information, what is the best time to depart to reach your next destination safely?

- A. The best time to leave is bright and early at 5:30 AM.

FEEDBACK: Incorrect – Try Again

The early bird usually gets the worm, but in this case, it would be a chilly fog. You're only travelling about 2 miles, so why not wait and enjoy your time there a little longer? Plus, there will always be one scout who doesn't want to leave a warm sleeping bag.

- B. The best time to leave is 6:30 PM, right before low tide sets in.

FEEDBACK: Incorrect – Try Again

While it's safe to leave now in terms of the tide level, you'll be chasing the sun setting. On the Lost Coast, nighttime can either be extremely bright because of the moonlight or so dark that you can't see your hand in front of your face. Don't risk finding out which when you're mid-hike.

- C. The best time to leave is roughly one hour after high tide (1:30 – 2:00 PM).

FEEDBACK: Correct

This the idea time to head out. Not only can you enjoy a leisurely morning at Buck Creek, but you will have plenty of time to travel without high tide interfering. And you can take your time setting up camp before sun down.

Horse Mountain Creek

Horse Mountain Creek to Black Sands Beach

SCENARIO 9:

Scenario here.

Question?

- A. Answer

FEEDBACK: Correct

- B. Answer

FEEDBACK: Incorrect – Try Again

- C. Answer

FEEDBACK: Incorrect – Try Again