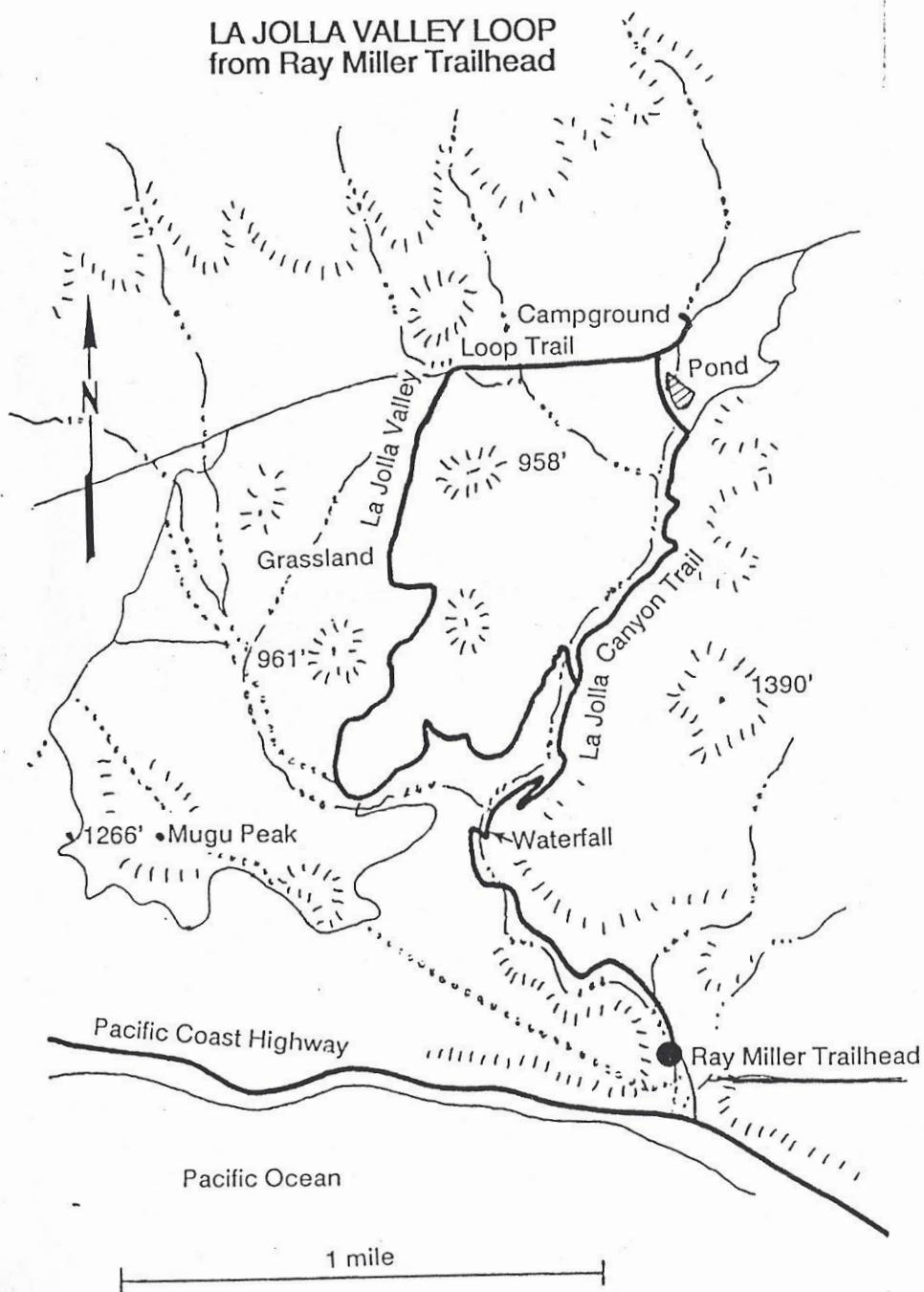


LA JOLLA VALLEY LOOP
from Ray Miller Trailhead



6 MAY 1998
GRANT E. TRETTEL

Hike #419

LA JOLLA VALLEY LOOP
from Ray Miller Trailhead

9:30 AM.

Maps:	Point Mugu, topo Point Mugu State Park
Distance:	6½ miles roundtrip
Elevation:	1000' gain and loss
Terrain:	Trail; some very steep, some level
Time:	3 hours
Trailhead:	Ray Miller Trailhead in La Jolla Canyon

Drive west on the Pacific Coast Highway, 22 miles from Malibu to the La Jolla Canyon parking lot. As you drive along, the lazy Pacific surf noses in on your left; and up ahead Mugu Peak is still shaking the morning mist from its crest. La Jolla Canyon is east of Mugu Peak.

Walk north from the parking lot at the Ray Miller Trailhead, going upstream on the La Jolla Canyon Trail. An old road, built in the '20s and used to haul rock for building the Pacific Coast Highway, goes about 3/4 mile into the canyon. We can see the quarry on the left as the trail starts up to the waterfall. Stop in the shade at the waterfall and notice the red roots of willow trees growing in the water. A rocky, steep, narrow segment of the trail lies ahead for a few hundred yards so we use an added amount of caution until the tread underfoot becomes wider. The waterfall is at an elevation of about 250'; the levelling off point after the two big switchbacks is at an elevation of 500' so we will have gained one quarter of the entire hike's elevation in just a few minutes.

At this temporary high point look at the sandstone along the trail — a layer of fossil shells is exposed. These shells were imbedded in sand when the land was ocean floor. Giant *Coreopsis* plants are in bloom during February through April. Come here then, if for no other reason. Continue along the trail for a few minutes and reach a side trail branching left. Take the left trail and it immediately drops down to the stream in the shade of oaks before