



Steve Hobson in White Squirrel Cave. 9-4-18.

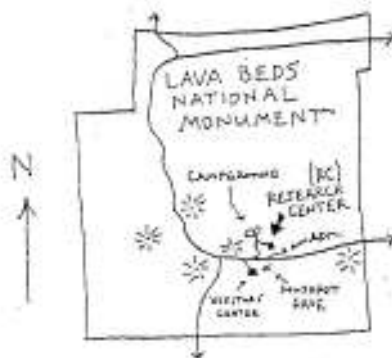
Inside: Marbles Report and Despain's R5 Update

The SAG RAG is published by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Grotto meetings are held at different locations on the fourth Friday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Meeting locations are announced in the SAG RAG. Membership dues are \$5 dollars per year and include newsletter subscription. Original material not otherwise noted is copyright to the SAG RAG. Such material may be copied with credit given to the author and the SAG RAG. For use outside of the caving community, please seek the permission of the author or editor first. Send material for publication any time to Bighorn Broeckel, 2916 Deer Meadows Road, Yreka, CA 96097 or <caverbill@live.com>. For more on SAG, check the web site at <<http://www.caves.org/grotto/sag>>.

CAVER CALENDAR 2019

May 25 SAG meeting Saturday night 7:30 pm Lava Beds Research Center.

Map to May Meeting



SAG RAG SUMMARY

By Bighorn Broeckel

With high elevation caving season rapidly approaching, here are some results from last year's efforts coming out barely in time. Mark Fritze gives us a fine summary of KMCTF Speleocamp 2018, and Joel Despain updates more good survey and discovery projects in progress around about Northern California. Go Grotto. Meanwhile, we hope to see some folks at Lava Beds this weekend. Cave safe. Cave soft. Cave soon. **BB**

Shasta Area Grotto Meeting – January 18, 2019

Unofficial notes from B. Broeckel

The meeting was called to order at Melanie Jackson's place in Yreka at 1945. Present were Dave Smith, Jim & Liz Wolff, Steve Hobson, Tabitha Viner, Melanie Jackson, and Bill Broeckel. Treasury: \$1,125. Web site: OK. SAG RAG: Hobson and Bobrows switch to e-rag. Correspondence: LaForge regarding Spring plans, England/Wales invitation, Katrina has Master's Thesis on line, and Ed Bobrow's vision problems. Calendar changes with regards to government shut-down. Old Business: 14 ballots returned. Officers announced. Constitutional matters: grotto property (none), NSS membership requirements, and Roberts Rules of Order. SAG RAG bill submitted. New Business: mules to the Marbles this year, Western Regional at Redmond OR, Aug 30 to Sep 2. Trip Reports: not too much. **BB**

MARBLES TRIP REPORT SEPTEMBER 2018

By Mark Fritzke

Steve Hobson of Shasta Area Grotto (SAG) contracted mules for Friday August 31, so I met them and reduced my load. Perry Smith, Dylan and Treon arrived on Thursday, but the rest of the crew hiked in Friday. I picked up a hoe (left at Sisyphus) and arrived at Marble Valley just after the mules. Rob Lewis and I went back to Silver Snag to work on a dig, while the rest of SAG prepared for Saturday's trip to Apogee to place a plaque in memory of stalwart cave digger Claude Smith. Claude succeeded at a multi-year dig at the back of Apogee, but it ended at a 3-inch wide crack taking whistling air and pebbles rattling down "forever". I urged him to check out a dig started by me and Dave Walker in 1984. Two hours of digging gained him access to a pit and the rest of the cave for a total of nearly 7,000 feet of survey.

Steve Hobson camped on the mountain with the ropes/gear and the rest of the SAG group joined him on Saturday. Jim Wolff had been to Apogee back in the 1980's but none of the others had, so they spent most of the day Saturday staging gear and searching for the cave. When they finally found it there was no time for a full cave trip, but the plaque was hung in the upper cave and Claude will forever be acknowledged as a great caver and digger.

Rob and I were partly successful with the hoe, opening up the floor of a thin slot to a parallel and deeper pit. We worked on this slot for 3 days, finally enlarging it enough on Tuesday for both of us to get through. Meanwhile, we also dug open more new leads on the surface and explored Arch Pit, which has five closely spaced entrances joined by arches. We surveyed Silver Snag on Wednesday. The parallel pit pinched into a slot but pebbles drop into a small chamber with mild airflow. Rob climbed across the second pit to a window into a third pit we called White Pit, with clean, water-washed walls of white marble. I rappelled to the bottom where a pocket pinches into a crack smaller than my foot; the end!

Finally, we dug open Wasp Pit on Tuesday eve and returned Wednesday to explore/survey. I climbed down a narrow entrance crack for 40-feet to an apparent dead-end, but a window on the wall lead to a parallel 60-foot deep pit. After feeding through rope and pack, I did a handstand to get my feet through the tiny window and squeezed over the septum into the shaft. A huge flake was barely pinched between the walls at my feet; as I kicked several pieces fell off but the rest was articulated like a Chinese jigsaw puzzle and would not fall! Rob and I were both tired, so we left it until next time.

Perry Smith's group made a crossover trip in Bigfoot, dropping down the discovery entrance and emerging from the Upper Monkey River Entrance. Bighorn Broeckel surveyed a small cave near Skunk Hollow, and everybody had a great time, with mostly non-smoky weather as we watched the new Delta Fire create giant thunderheads as it closed down Interstate 5. **MF**

"The secret of survival is to be able to judge precisely what one's limits are, and to have the determination and discipline to push oneself that far and no further. The temptation to reach just a little beyond one's ability is great, but the penalty is final." Lincoln Hall in "White Limbo".

WHITE SQUIRREL CAVE

By Bighorn Broeckel

This marble solution cave in Siskiyou County was named and developed by Roger Jones and friends prior to 7-3-09. I don't know the significance of the name, we will have to ask around. Rich Sundquist got wind of it, checked it, and said it "didn't go". However, there is some cave there, just not very much. In fact, it does quite well as a mini cave and includes many of the features typical of other bigger caves in the area. This includes the single small entrance difficult to find and enter, an immediate vertical component or entrance pit to reach a base level, walking passage in a crevice leading to a crawlway, and just a few sparse decorations scattered about. Pretty good for all that, within a cave length of only 68 feet. The cave is 28 feet deep, and most of the drop is in the small caliber entrance pit, small enough to allow holds, chimneys, and brace points sufficient to make free-climbing a reasonable option.

I personally checked the cave on 7-3-09 and described it as follows: "There is a slab crevice right next to the entrance. Right away there is cold air. A drop goes awkwardly around an elongated and unfortunately positioned rock. A view through a narrow crack gives an encouraging peek into the deeper part of the cave. After getting around that rock, the route continues steeply down a dirt slope with minimal ceiling clearance. Some of it is loose. Down further it opens up a little, and solidifies into a bit of more normal marble climb-down. The strictly vertical part is maybe 14 feet down. The landing area is very nice and friendly, with a flat, gravelly floor and a three foot wide walking passage taking off. This doesn't last for long, and we are down on hands and knees. Ahead awaits a low crawl with an outflow of cold air."

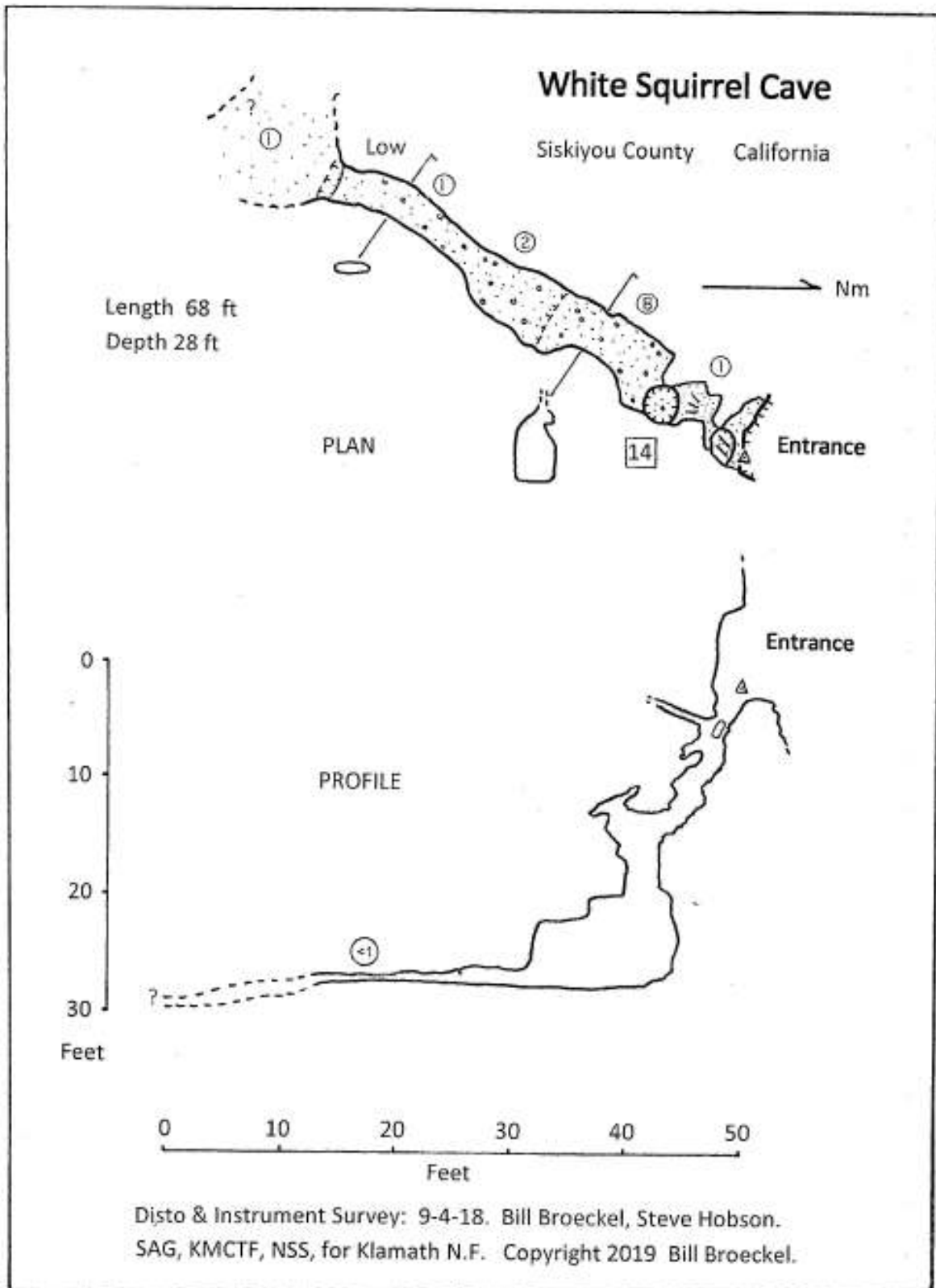
Nine years later we came back on survey. I was able to sandbag Grotto Chairman candidate Steve Hobson into helping map this "short, easy, horizontal cave that would take like an hour or so". After nine years, I had forgotten some of the details. We found the cave much as the description given above, which at the time was buried deep in my field notes back home. We managed to survey the 68 feet. The crawlway remains as a going lead at the end of the cave survey.

The nature of these Marble caves is such that it is often difficult to say that any given cave is actually "done". White Squirrel is a good example. Thus I left the end of the cave rather vague. It just depends on how far you want to cram yourself back in there. Like many of my Marbles maps, think of it as a work in progress, or a preliminary, and not the final word. I can easily imagine a motivated person squirreling further into this cave. Think of me as overly cautious. Think of my maps as leads.

Also, there are some more Roger Jones caves in the Marbles waiting to be surveyed. **BB**

"While we don't want to be sending any novice down the Bigfoot Caves where they'll be lost, and the dump bears are no longer posing for photos like they used to, I'm sure you can recommend places you like to take visitors when they visit you. Happy Camp has so much to offer, being situated in such a beautiful place."

Judy Bushy, Siskiyou Daily News (2-6-18)



Map: White Squirrel Cave



White Squirrel Cave entrance. 9-4-18.



White Squirrel Cave passage. 9-4-18.

Quick Update on R5 Cave Mapping Activities on the Shasta-Trinity and Klamath NFs

Joel Despain 2-19-19

Hi All: Below is a report I did for the Forest Service on the cave mapping projects. In keeping with local tradition, the names have been abbreviated to protect the innocent, being the caves. Some of the draft maps have already been in the Rag, but here are a couple of new ones. SC Shasta-Trinity is a new project and so not much to draft up yet. If anyone wants to come on trips, let me know.

Klamath

SC: We finally got out to SC before winter became too harsh in mid-November on a three-day backpacking visit. Geocorp intern Anna Chinchilli and I were joined by caver-volunteer, Mark Fritzke, from Bayside, CA. A small, single entrance leads into a cave that is immediately three-dimensionally complex. Previous maps ignored this complexity. On two trips into the cave 471 feet were mapped with a depth of 60 feet. The survey reached the Cathedral Room. Many of the passage continuations are now vertical drops requiring rope work. More work is planned for 2019. Please see the attached draft map.

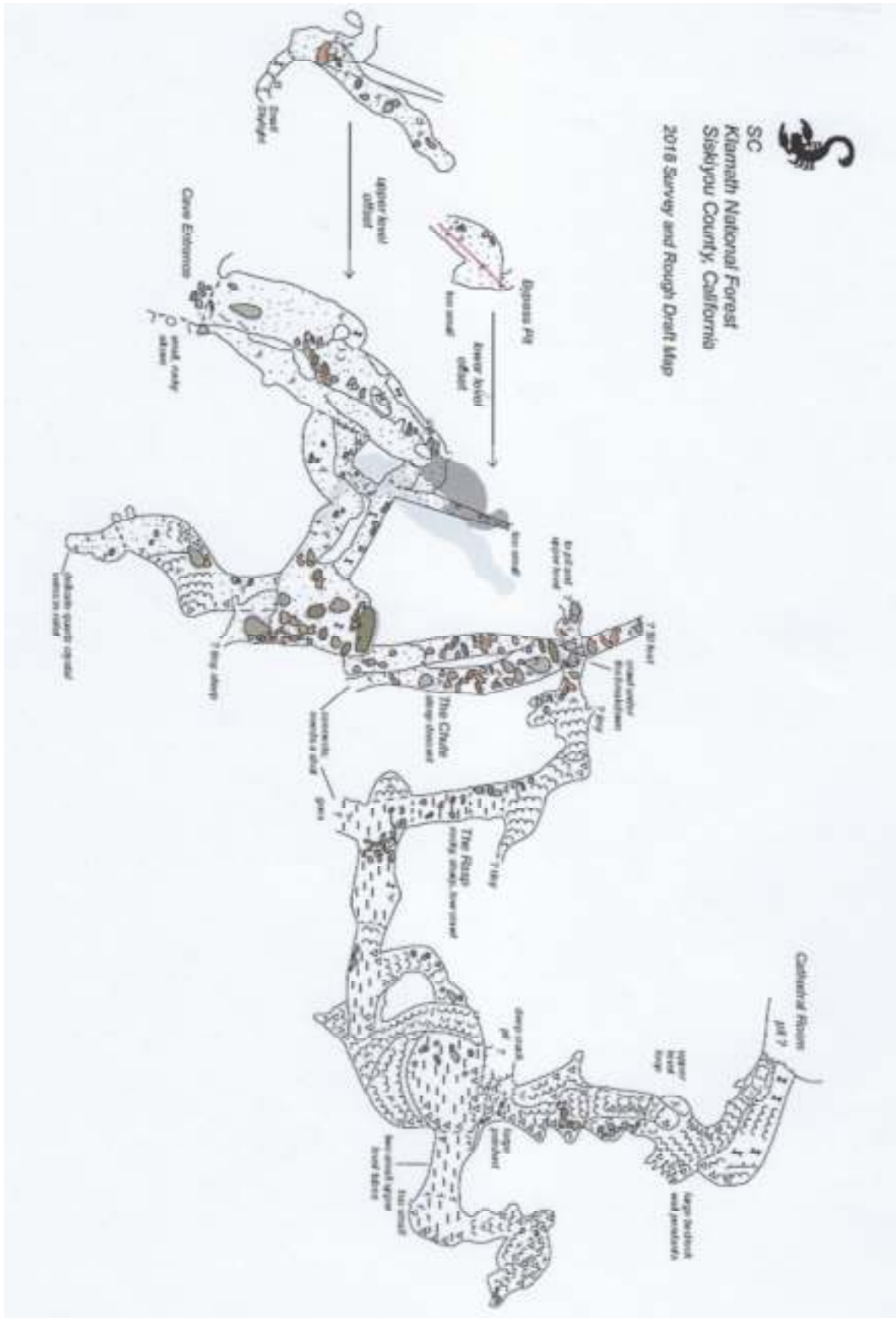
Shasta-Trinity

MRC: This survey was started in 2017 and continued in 2018. Several day trips were made to the cave with volunteers and our Geocorp interns. The carefully hidden and delicate back of the cave was finally relocated in 2018. In total 1652 feet have now been mapped with a cave depth of 84 feet. Please see the attached draft map.

APC: Survey trips have continued in this cave this winter now that the fire closure has long been lifted. The length of the survey is 2653 feet but this includes survey shots that do not contribute to the length of the cave that were created to accurately locate cave features. The depth is 259 feet, which should be the correct total depth of the cave. The draft map is in Issue 37(2), p. 9, but does not include all of the survey completed to date.

Lake Shasta Caverns: Survey trips have continued in this cave this winter. Total mapped length is 1526 feet with a depth of 101 feet. This includes artificial tunnels that allow tours to access the cave passages. Please see the attached draft map.

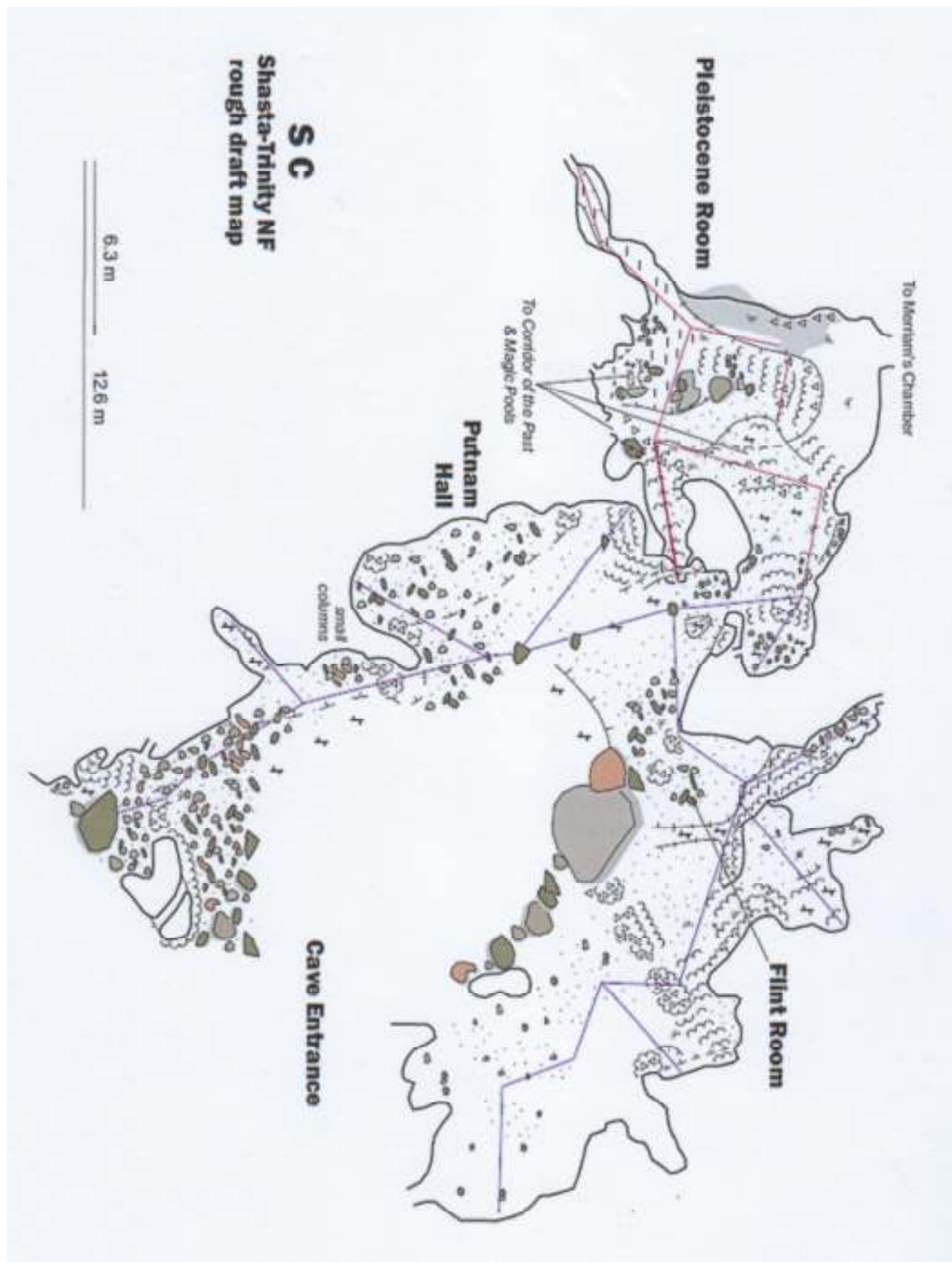
continued



Map: SC, Klamath National Forest



Map: MRC, Shasta-Trinity



Map: SC Shasta-Trinity

SC: This project has just gotten started with two trips in 2018. So far 440 feet have been mapped with a depth of 31 feet. Please see the attached draft map.

PGC: This project was started in 2015. No trips were made in 2018. In 2019 we hope to complete the map of this cave and expect it will exceed a mile in length. This cave is a six mile hike-in with a rough off-trail last mile and a half. PG is an active stream cave with large rooms, lakes and many speleothems. The current mapped length of the cave is 4714 feet with a depth of 142 feet. Draft maps are in Issue 36(6), pp. 3, 7, and 12.

Natural Bridge or Kok-Chee-Shuhp-Chee: The map was completed in 2018 with the field work completed in 2017 with Geocorp Intern Jake Tholen. It is printed in Issue 37(1), p. 7.

Possible 2019 Plans: We will continue to access the low elevation caves for occasional survey trips over the next couple of months. Come summer, we will be laying plans for trips to S and PG in the high country. Much of the work will take place on weekends when volunteer cavers are available. **JD**

Shasta Area Grotto is an Internal Organization of the National Speleological Society.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TO:

Page 1	Steve Hobson in White Squirrel Cave
Page 2	Calendar, Summary, Jan 2019 Meeting
Page 3	Marbles Report – Mark Fritzke
Page 4	White Squirrel Cave – Bighorn Broeckel
Page 7	R5 Update – Joel Despain