

April 23, 1976

Dear Ed:

Looking over my maps of the Grand Canyon I recall so many interesting trips that it is difficult to know which would suit you best. I find that I have an extra copy of the map of the eastern section and also of the western section. These maps were prepared quite a few years ago and newer ones might be more accurate at some points. I understand that Bradford Washburn (an official of a Boston museum) has been working with helicopter and other equipment to make a very fine detailed map of all parts of the Canyon, but do not suppose that his results are yet available.

Since I recall once seeing an older map that showed some trails that are missing on mine I think it extremely likely that many of the trails on my map are not shown on more recent ones.

There are only three maintained trails in the Canyon. These are kept almost like sidewalks and are traversed by hundreds of people every year. The many remaining trails, which were followed by prospectors and explorers early in the century, have been allowed largely to disappear, and only sections of them remain visible. Yet if one wishes to get off the beaten path it is very helpful to know about them, since they give an idea of areas where it is possible to find one's way even if the trail should largely have disappeared, for without this knowledge one may sometimes find it necessary to retrace his steps for many miles. It is hard to know which of the many possible trips would suit you best. Some are more or less level, while others have many ups and downs. Some have particularly striking views at certain points; the views of others may be less striking but perhaps more continuous. Some entail scrambling through interesting but rather difficult terrain. Some have occasional long stretches without water, while in others these stretches are less frequent. To pick out a week's trip that would include all of the most interesting parts of the Canyon would require helicopter travel to skip over the less interesting areas. Some of the very best trips are down from the North Rim but there are some very good ones from the South Rim.

It is particularly important to have good head protection and shoes that will not cause blisters, especially since the first part of any trip will involve descending over a considerable amount of steep terrain.

With the maps before us I can lay out for you the advantages and disadvantages of various possible trips and you can select one that will best meet your particular interest.

Water conditions may change somewhat over the years, but I believe that my knowledge of places where it is available will be of great help in connection with any particular trip you may select.