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Subject: Postcard

We started at the Lumpy Ridge trailhead this morning to hike to MacGregor Falls. A lot of the hike is on the Black Canyon Trail, between the ridge and the MacGregor Ranch. It connects later to a MacGregor Ranch road and finally to the MacGregor Falls Trail. (All those MacGregors make me feel like James Doohan. No, I won't beam you up).



Lumpy Ridge is actually lumpy. Some of the lumps are so big they are popular technical climbs. Well, at least they used to be. Now they are posted off limits for reasons of raptor preservation. We hope they're not talking formaldehyde.

The sun fought a successful battle with the several clouds that sat on the ridge and on the floor of the ranch. But it took a while.





The trail was divided between forest and meadow. An elk crashed through the brush. Broad-tailed Hummingbirds thrummed past. Little mammals posed for pictures. Tree swallows ate mosquitoes. Dewey flowers lined our path.







Sheila was taking most of the pictures. I was looking for a moose. I have never found a moose. And Sheila has become skilled at taking photos of flowers, insects, small animals and strange yucky things. There's more to it than flipping the camera to macro – she has a good eye and she works out daily.



As Sheila chronicled our trek, and as I sought the elusive moose, a hiking couple blew past us. And they were really old. Yes, we are old so I mean they were *really* old. Thin as rails, hard as nails. Ropey muscles and leathery wrinkles. And probably knew every trail in the park. We flagged them down.

The hike to MacGregor Falls is not well documented. It's more like alluded to. We knew we had to do a connector trail and a ranch road but it wasn't on our map. We had a vague description from a ranger in a Visitor Center who thought maybe we should do a 14'er. So here came some likely candidates for advice. Yes, they knew the route. Yes it's easy. They said turn around and look behind you because there is the connector trail. No sign of course, but there it was. And off they breezed. We turned around and off we walked.



We kept passing little falls, or maybe they were big rapids, asking each other "is this MacGregor Falls?" Neither one of us knew but still we asked. So we hiked until the trail was impassable and declared the most recent little falls to be MacGregor.



The perfect finish to our morning would be a serene picnic lunch at Hidden Valley.



It wasn't very well hidden. We found it. It is now the staging area for park road construction. Unfortunately there were picnic tables available and we were hungry. We ate at warp speed.

D&S

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