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9-10-83

Dear Jim and Holly,

There have been many times over the past several weeks when I've thought of you two and your little paradise there at Taylor Ranch. First of all I'd like to thank you for your kindness (that dinner still hits the spot) and your friendship, the conversation was even more precious!

My Walk is over for this year. I finished on the 4th at the Canadian border. My wife, Elaine, hiked the last 3 of the 1011 miles I hiked this summer. It was a pretty special moment to get to the Border after 3 years of hiking toward it.

I'm really enthused and optimistic about the future of the trail. And I'd really like to include that beautiful stretch (but terribly lousy trail) I came thru before I got to Taylor Ranch. I haven't started my correspondence with the Forest Service, but if they have no interest in going over that trail I may try maintaining it, or doing a work trip myself.

That Cliff Creek ridge trail was pretty good, I had one part where I think it could be better marked. From there, north to the Salmon River I found exceptional. That trail system seems well maintained. I got down to the Salmon and found that the pack bridge shown on all the maps was long gone. I got a ride across with a raft party. They told me that the bridge had been out for 15 years! Nothing like accurate maps!

Some of the best hiking I had was in the Cabinet Mountain Wilderness just recently. I just loved it. Lots of sharp peaks and rocky ridges. Great goat country.

Now its back to singing. Got off the trail Sunday and was singing in a crowded bar on Wednesday. Talk about culture shock! I miss the life of the trail, I always do, but it is good to be home. (Home. I should always capitalize that.)

Well, I imagine its probably very peaceful there. Hope it always is for you folks.

Happy Trails,
Walkin' Jim

P.S. I'm trying to come up with a better name for the trail. Any suggestions would be most appreciated. How does The Grand West Trail strike you?