

Overview Narrative: CDT LASH 2021

Total Trail Miles: 450

Total Days: 30

Origin / Terminus: South Pass City (Hwy 28), WY – I-15 Underpass (Lima), MT

Books Read: 5; Rule of St. Benedict, Thoughts in Solitude, Way of Humility, Abolition of Man, Very Short Introduction to Human Evolution

Summary Statement: “The Hardest Thing I’ve Ever Done.”

Three words to describe the CDT: Rugged, Remote, Extreme

Words that impacted me: mercy, gratitude, vocation, wilderness, solitude

Reflection

Formally known as a LASH (long-ass section hike), I have always thought of long-distance (> 100 mi) backpacking as a means of contemplative walking. Having finished the AT in 2016, and not really wanting to hike the same thing again, I looked at the other (more western) national scenic trails as ideal venues for exploring in the vein of contemplative walking. Moreover, walking through the states on the AT really gave me a sense of “knowing” the state and its people much more than driving and visiting. As an example, I never knew the state of New Jersey was so beautiful and its residents so hospitable until I walked through the state on the AT. Therefore, the opportunity to experience the West (in this case, WY, ID, and MT) while walking in a similar way was highly attractive.

However, the CDT would have none of mere contemplative walking, as I did on the Appalachian Trail. The CDT is more rugged, more remote, and more extreme than the AT, as I will continue to detail. The CDT is not well-marked, and its landscape is unforgiving. As I’ve said to many of you, this was the most difficult thing I’ve ever done. Not just the climbing and the altitude, but also the disconnection and lack of connectivity, as well as the mental energy required to find the trail on an hourly basis and rationing water and food.

FB Post: Some of you know that I’ve recently returned from my remote, rugged, and extreme wilderness walk of solitude on the Continental Divide Trail (CDT) in WY, ID, and MT. Due to the lack of connectivity and some questions about my adventure, I will update daily here (beginning tomorrow) w pictures and some highlights. First, an overview:

30 total days of hiking, 450 trail miles, beginning at South Pass City (WY) and ending at Lima (MT).

My ambassador of Wilderness Solitude, Marianne McCay Fleenor, is a constant source of support and encouragement. So Thankful for your presence in my life!

I’m grateful for the texts and inquiries from many of you, and I look forward to sharing with you my “good and terrible” adventure.

Other Shots out to those who provided on-trail support: Big Sandy Lodge, Brooks Lake Lodge, Old Faithful Village, Jared’s Wild Rose Resort, and Mountain View Motel and RV Park. Thank You!