

Halfmile's PCT Hiker Schedules

These schedules are created by analyzing the trail journals of 17 successful 2009 and 2010 northbound PCT thru-hikers and projecting schedules based on different starting dates. The actual average starting date of the 17 hikers was April 27th (April 24 for the 9 2010 hikers, April 30 for the 8 2009 hikers). Of the 17 hikers, 3 are in the Fastest Hikers category, 3 in the Next Fastest hikers category, 6 in the Most Hikers category, and 5 in the Slower Hikers category. The average hiking time for all hikers was 150 days (149.3 days for the 2010 hikers, 150.5 days for the 2009 hikers). None of the hikers flip-flopped or skipped sections of the trail. The PCT Kickoff began one day earlier in 2010 than 2009.

Segment Days are the number of days to hike from the prior location. Mile per day average is for each trail segment.

2012 Update -- 2011 was an extremely high snow year which slowed hikers and ended many hikes early. 2011 hikers had a lower completion rate than most years. For this reason I have decided not to include 2011 journal data in my overall averages. Surprisingly, three very fast 2011 hikers did keep journals. I have averaged these three very fast 2011 hikers with the three fastest hikers from 2009 & 2010 to create the 4 month [122 day] schedule.

Fastest Hikers - 4 month hike duration [122 days]					Projected Schedules				
	PCT Mile	Segment Days	Total Days	MPD Avg	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
Campo	0				4/22	4/30	5/7	5/15	5/22
Agua Dulce	454	22	22	20.6	5/13	5/21	5/28	6/5	6/12
Kennedy Meadows	703	13	35	19.2	5/26	6/3	6/10	6/18	6/25
Sonora Pass	1018	22	57	14.3	6/17	6/25	7/2	7/10	7/17
Ashland	1720	29	86	24.2	7/16	7/24	7/31	8/8	8/15
Cascade Locks	2155	16	102	27.2	8/1	8/9	8/16	8/24	8/31
Manning Park	2664	20	122	25.5	8/21	8/29	9/5	9/13	9/20

Few hikers will hike this 4 month pace. Most will be young, fit, carrying well under a 10 pounds base weight, and have previously hiked a long trail. The record for fastest PCT thru-hike is an amazing 64 days 11 hours and 19 minutes.

Next Fastest Hikers - 4.5 month hike duration [136 days]									
	PCT Mile	Segment Days	Total Days	MPD Avg	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
Campo	0				4/15	4/22	4/30	5/7	5/15
Agua Dulce	454	27	27	16.8	5/11	5/18	5/26	6/2	6/10
Kennedy Meadows	703	14	41	17.8	5/25	6/1	6/9	6/16	6/24
Sonora Pass	1018	24	65	13.1	6/18	6/25	7/3	7/10	7/18
Ashland	1720	29	94	24.2	7/17	7/24	8/1	8/8	8/16
Cascade Locks	2155	19	113	22.9	8/5	8/12	8/20	8/27	9/4
Manning Park	2664	23	136	22.1	8/28	9/4	9/12	9/19	9/27

Most Hikers - 5 month hike duration [151 days]									
	PCT Mile	Segment Days	Total Days	MPD Avg	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
Campo	0				4/15	4/22	4/30	5/7	5/15
Agua Dulce	454	33	33	13.8	5/17	5/24	6/1	6/8	6/16
Kennedy Meadows	703	16	49	15.6	6/2	6/9	6/17	6/24	7/2
Sonora Pass	1018	25	74	12.6	6/27	7/4	7/12	7/19	7/27
Ashland	1720	33	107	21.3	7/30	8/6	8/14	8/21	8/29
Cascade Locks	2155	19	126	22.9	8/18	8/25	9/2	9/9	9/17
Manning Park	2664	25	151	20.4	9/12	9/19	9/27	10/4	10/12

A 5 month hike starting between 4/22 and 4/30 is the schedule of the largest number of hikers, AKA the herd.

Slower Hikers - 5.5 month hike duration [168 days]									
	PCT Mile	Segment Days	Total Days	MPD Avg	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
Campo	0				4/8	4/15	4/22	4/30	5/7
Agua Dulce	454	34	34	13.4	5/11	5/18	5/25	6/2	6/9
Kennedy Meadows	703	17	51	14.6	5/28	6/4	6/11	6/19	6/26
Sonora Pass	1018	31	82	10.2	6/28	7/5	7/12	7/20	7/27
Ashland	1720	38	120	18.5	8/5	8/12	8/19	8/27	9/3
Cascade Locks	2155	21	141	20.7	8/26	9/2	9/9	9/17	9/24
Manning Park	2664	27	168	18.9	9/22	9/29	10/6	10/14	10/21

Schedules with strikethrough dates are not recommended because of the late finish.

The 9 hikers in 2010 faced above average Sierra snow. These 2010 hikers arrived early at Kennedy Meadows, June 7th average, 9 days earlier than the 2009 hikers. The 2010 hikers spent an average of 4 more days in the Kennedy Meadows to Sonora Pass segment than did the 2009 hikers. This seems to suggest that being prepared for snow, and taking extra time in the Sierra is a successful approach to a high snow year.

May 27 was the latest start date of any of the successful thru-hikers who kept journals in 2009, 2010 or 2011 [he finished Oct 10th]. Hikers should attempt to finish their hike well before October 1st to avoid bad weather in Washington. On September 29th 2007 a heavy snowstorm in the Northern Cascades effectively shut down the PCT ending many hikers plans. Some years the heavy snow arrives later, but usually the later you hike the worse the rain, fog, and snow will be in Washington. Of the 17 successful thru-hikers only 3 finished after October 1st. The latest finish was October 10th.