

## **Pika-Fir Trail, July 6 and 7, 2003    2.5 miles 200 ft each way**

**This was, by design, a very casual trip. Roger was going to take his kids (Jessica, 6, and Peter, 4) backpacking for the first time. He had picked an especially easy hike for them, a trail into Pika and Fir Lakes. These small tarns (perhaps 5 acres each) are on the edge of the Mt. Jefferson Wilderness area. Fir Lake at trail's end was less than a mile from the trailhead. The road getting there was a bit rough. That presented no problem for Roger's 4X4 "rig," but would have been a challenge for my little Honda Civic "trail car." The Jefferson and Sisters area are loaded with small lakes, many of them isolated even from trails, offering intense experiences for the solitude seeking traveler.**



**Here's a shot of the kids at the start**





     This was the little transceiver I used for the trip. In a 2x5x7 inch box, the rig weighs just over 1 pound and produces an output of 1 watt. The antenna was an inverted V up about 25 feet and the battery was a 1.2 A-Hr sealed lead-acid type. I was again reminded of a lesson learned years ago: The "Deet" type mosquito repellent that is so effective at suppressing the action of the bugs also reacts strongly with paints and plastics. I had put the stuff on my hands and face, which were all that I had exposed for the hike. But the traditional yellow wood pencil immediately got sticky. I also found that a small plastic clipboard was altered by the Deet, as was the plastic part of an electronic keyer paddle. But the most dramatic effect was that on my ears. The foam pads on the headphones reacted to leave a stain. It all washed off after we returned home.

The ham activity was a lot of fun with some really interesting contacts. I worked KJ6CA, W6UMP, KD7JKA, WA7TQK, KB7SIK, and W6XF. Although I could hear him, we could not pull off a contact with a friend at home, Mark, KI7N. It's always reassuring when operating in the woods to again experience really quiet conditions.



     (Roger photo) Here's Grampa, Pete, and Jessica at breakfast. We had a good fire ring, but didn't use it. With the dry conditions, we elected to do all our cooking on a small stove.



**Our hike out was uneventful, although Peter got tired toward the end. But all in all, the kids did great. They are used to hiking in the woods near their house and this just added a bit of stuff in a pack. Next trip we will have to throw in a bit of elevation gain.**