

The No-Trail Way

I stood high on the mountainside looking down on a well-worn animal trail below. Doing so brought forth a flood of thoughts. How many times have I hiked a mountain trail? How many times had I been resistant to hiking on an established trail? How many times had I invariably drifted onto a much-preferred animal trail? How many times had I left the animal trail to wander (wonder) through the mountains on no trail whatsoever? Many!!!

“Why?” Spirit commanded. The answers were pressing. Using a “regular” trail is to see what everyone else sees. Seeing what everyone else sees has never been satisfying. In fact, boring! I have always wanted to see what’s beyond mere observation. Taking an animal trail frees me to imagine that I could see what the animals who take the trail see—much more to see from animal eyes than human eyes. Ok, no trail? I merge with the question. No trail is akin to traveling in uncharted territory, to generate my own discoveries freely and first-hand. Yes, to travel where no one else has ever gone has always been a nagging yearning.

I thought way back to my college years, laboring over a graduate paper for an Appalachian field study class. Daniel Boone! It was he who had forged a trail through unknown territory, creating a new community in the wilderness. It had been a dangerous journey, and costly; as I remember he had lost much along the way, including two sons to Indian attacks. But...he had stepped into a new world.

I laughed as the review was ending. What did Spirit want me to “see”? Ok, so here I am traveling into unknown territory. No, not a national forest! Much further than that! Way out beyond the beyond. The unseen world, where Spirit dwells.