

## Baja Voyage Day 1, 2, & 3

*This trip involved more than 2200 miles of driving and 600 nm of sailing. For technical details and information, lists, etc. see "Baja Odyssey & Lists" posted previously in multiple postings due to the size of the files. You may find these useful if you are planning a long voyage.*



**Enosis heading South past Mt. Shasta**

The trip began when my friends Mike, Jonathan and I left from Medford, a small town in southwestern Oregon on Sunday, Father's Day in the afternoon. They were towing their 23' Ranger and I, my Rhodes 22. We drove for 5 hours stopping at my brother's house in Sacramento for the night, and to pick him up for the adventure. Early the next morning we headed south. The end of the

day found us in Newport Beach south of L.A. looking for someplace to park the boat overnight. We had no luck until we wandered onto a narrow one-way road with a barrier gate that someone forgot to lock. We spent the night on the side of the road in the middle of a wildlife sanctuary. It reminded me of the upper Eastern shore of Maryland with herons, pelicans and spartina grass all surrounded by high sand cliffs and only few houses visible. It was great!

We got up early the next morning and headed south. We had all the necessary paperwork prepaid through an organization called Vagabundos del Mar that specializes in helping people discover Baja. The trip through Mexican customs went without a hitch and we got back on our way in no time. The road south to Ensenada was mostly a toll road



**My trusty F150 and its elegant burden**

comparable to those in the U.S. As we went through Ensenada, we stopped for fish tacos and headed out southbound on Rt. 1A. It is a 2-lane paved highway that carries all the traffic for the entire peninsula of Baja. The pavement was in good shape, but the grades were steeper than those in the States. The width of the road was much narrower. Therefore, the boat trailer had only 6 inches of clearance to the yellow line and 6 inches to the right edge of the pavement. The most unnerving part was there was no shoulder. The pavement stopped and

there was a drop of anywhere from a few inches (not very common) to several feet (more common). It was a real heart-stopper to meet a fully loaded tandem truck on a curve, which they loved to cut. I'm glad I didn't polish the boat and add that extra layer of wax, or we would have touched. A big crash of a dump truck vs. horse trailer (the horse was killed instantly), held us up for a couple of hours. It wasn't until a farm tractor and many people rolled the truck off the road and then dragged the horse off to the other side, that we could continue.

I must say something about "Topos". These are speed bumps that appear in this road with very little warning and when Mike would hit one, I could see 4 inches of air between his hull and the bunks. Ouch! As a result of the vibrations and topos there were a few things that came loose or fell off the boat. For example, I lost my solar panel brace, turnbuckle and masthead fitting.



The landscape once we turned off of 1A and drove east across the peninsula for 100 miles was surreal with strange boojum trees, saguaro cactus and massive boulders all lit by the full moon. We did not see another car or town on this well maintained but, un-traveled road. We arrived at the Bay of Angeles (Bahia de Los Angeles) at 1:30 in the morning and promptly went to sleep parked on the beach.

### **Bahia de Los Angeles looking East**

The town of Bahia de Los Angeles (BLA) has perhaps 500 or so people, 1 gas station and several small food stores. It is just a big fishing village with sport fishing and eco-tourism. There are a couple of launching ramps, several hotels and restaurants, which are pretty rustic. The larger of the food stores could have supplied us with much of what we needed at a reasonable price.



### **Looking West to the town of BLA**

Next time, I will leave earlier in the morning from San Diego and arrive at a more reasonable time. Though scary, it certainly is within the skill of most drivers to take their boat down to BLA. In fact, I left the boat there at the end of this trip and my 22 year-old son drove the truck and boat back a week later. We launched the boats the following afternoon after getting ice and a nice snack at a local restaurant.

To Be Continued.....