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Lost in a forest.

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Summary: Fifty years ago, Richard Bellman posed an interesting search problem that can be phrased as follows: A hiker is lost in a forest whose shape and dimensions (but not its orientation) are precisely known to him. What is the best path for him to follow to escape from the forest? Construing “best” as meaning “shortest,” we survey what is known for regions of various shapes, we clarify the relationship with Leo Moser’s well-known “worm” problem, and we consider some related questions.

Classification: G90

Keywords: Bellman’s hiker; worm problem; extremal problems

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