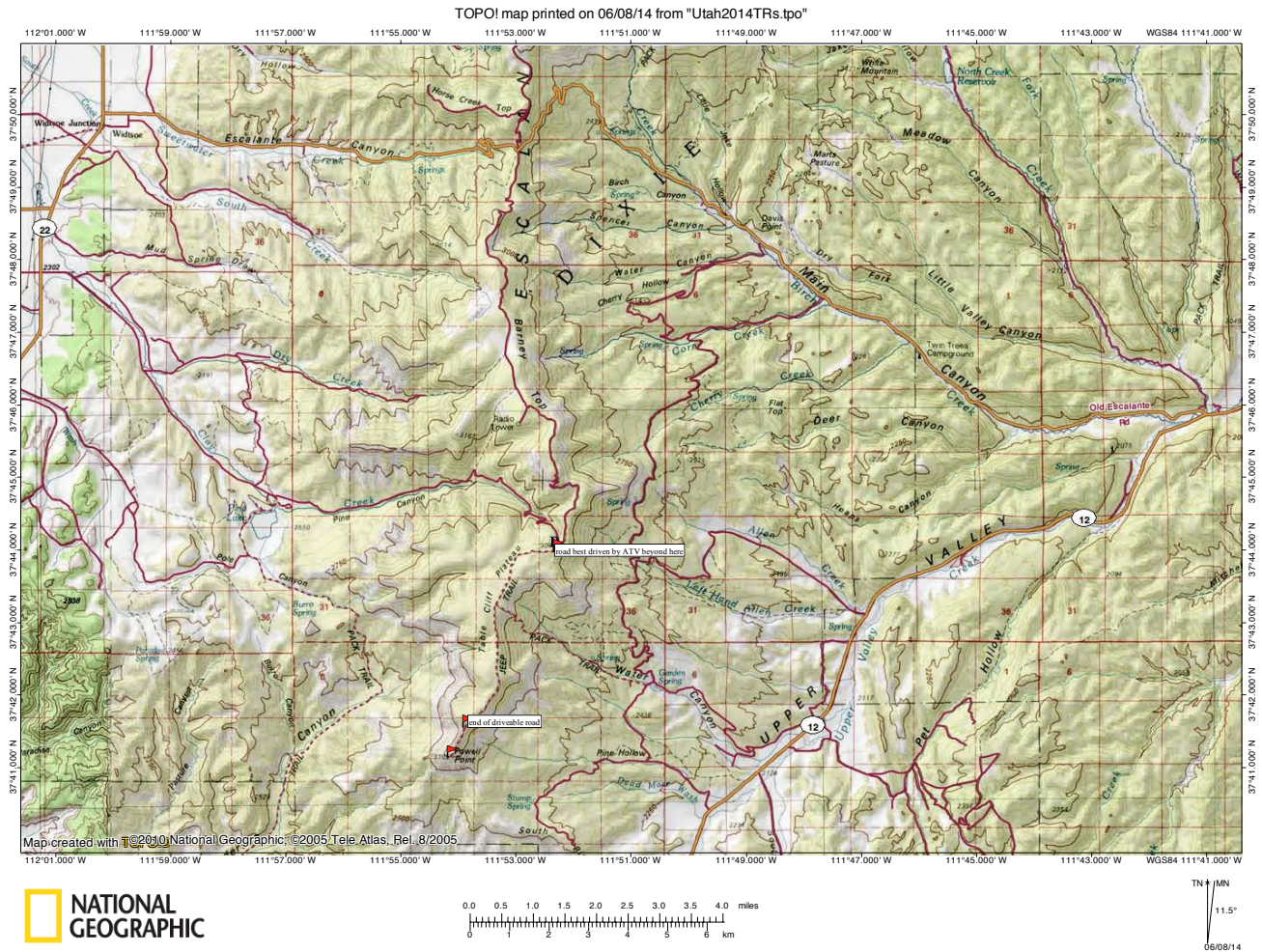


# ESCALANTE-WIDSTOE ROAD, POWELL POINT, AND PINE LAKE, GRAND STAIRCASE-ESCALANTE NATIONAL MONUMENT

The most reliably open route through Dixie National Forest to access Powell Point from Escalante is to follow the Main Canyon Road (FH17) from Escalante to Widstoe, then drive the Johns Valley Road to the Pine Lake Road turnoff (#132), and follow this road to where road #143 turns off on the right (after about 10.5 miles). Both the roads #143 and Barney Top (which connects the Main Canyon Road to the road from Pine Lake) are best driven in an ATV, as they are narrow and tilted. Hike road #143 for 3.5 miles to the Powell Point trailhead; Powell Point is 0.7 mile beyond that. I recommend obtaining the Forest Service Travel Map for Dixie National Forest Escalante Ranger District and the Forest Service's Powell Point trail brochure before doing this hike; as of the writing of this report (June 2014), both were obtainable by visiting the BLM website or by contacting the BLM office in Escalante.

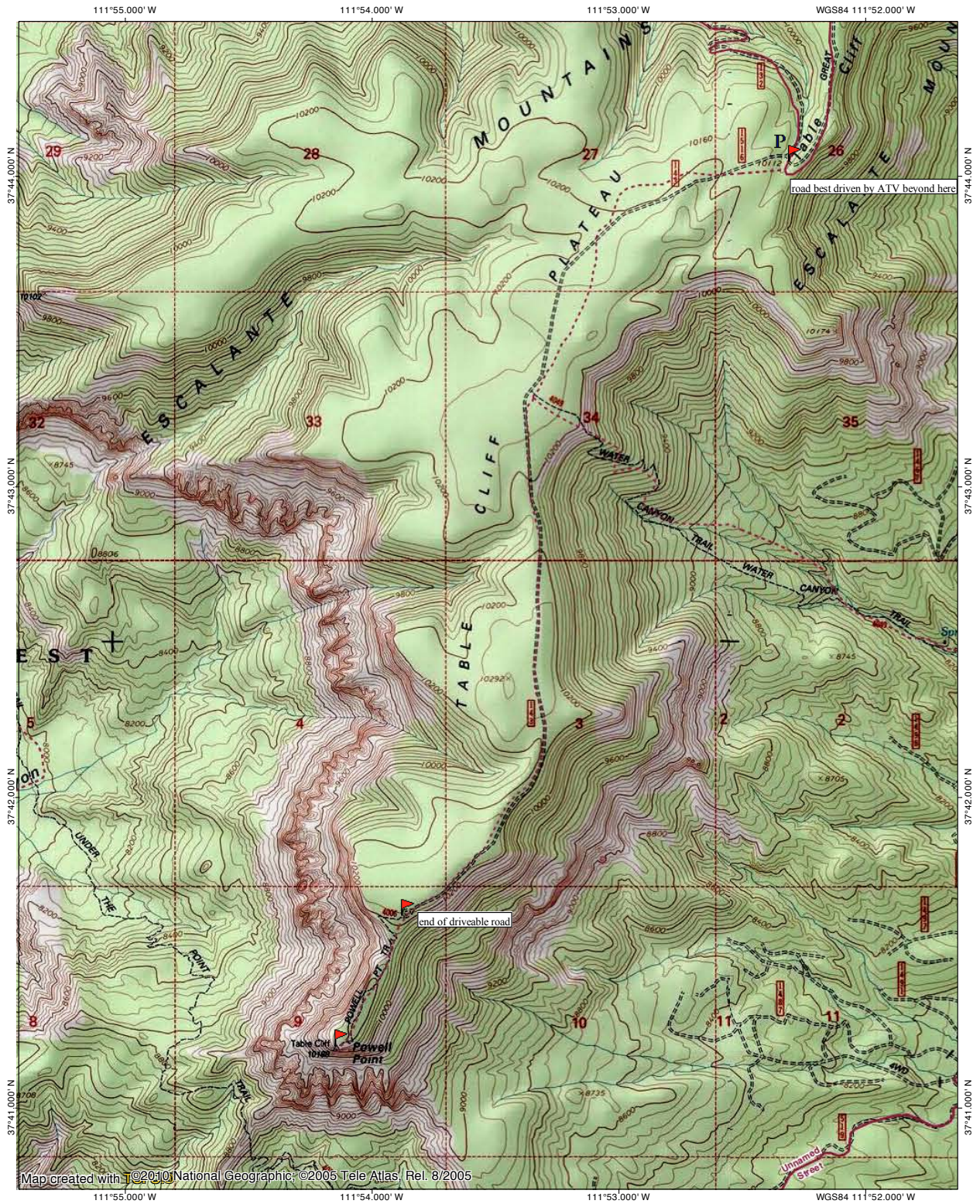
TOPO map of the drive to the Powell Point Trailhead from Escalante:



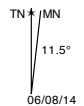
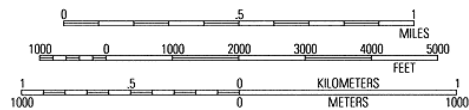


A more detailed TOPO map of the hike to Powell Point:

TOPO! map printed on 06/08/14 from "Utah2014TRs.tpo"



Map created with ©2010 National Geographic, ©2005 Tele Atlas, Rel. 8/2005





Looking back down the Main Canyon Road from just before where it reaches the ridge:



View over towards a meadow below Griffin Top:



Nice turnout for a view; note the hoodoos on the cliffs above the road:



Panorama from another view spot on the Main Canyon Road before it reaches the ridge:



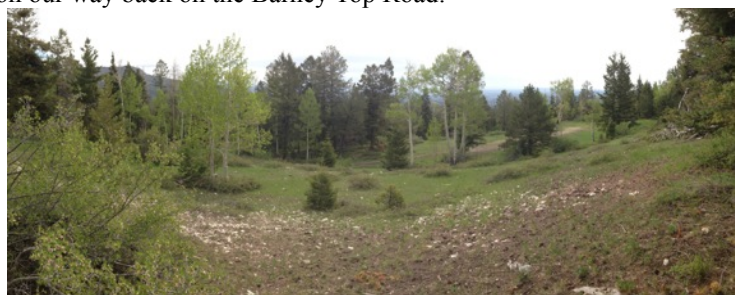
Once reaching the ridge, there are two roads branching off to the south and one to the north; of the two roads to the south, the left one, Barney Top, connects the Main Canyon Road to the road from Pine Lake. We decided to attempt to drive this; however, it proved to be too narrow and tilted with a number of washouts, so we determined that it would actually be faster to drive the longer way around than to take this road. The road was quite easily passable early on:



However, it soon got worse (this photo does not do justice to the difficulty of the road—it is not anywhere near as smooth and flat as it appears in the photograph):



A small meadow we stopped at on our way back on the Barney Top Road:



We decided to check out the Griffin Top Road for a short distance to see if we could get a good view, as we had been informed at the BLM office that there were good views from the ridge if one drove either direction from the junction with the Main Canyon Road where it reaches the ridge. This is the view looking east:





We drove a little bit further and were able to get a view looking west, also. Some tall mountains with snow can be seen far in the distance here:



Panorama from this viewpoint:



Looking down towards the Widstoe area:



Looking north along the ridge, with tall mountains seen off to the left:



From here, we drove to the parking area for Powell Point (or really, the parking area if you don't have a vehicle that can handle the 3.5 mile stretch of road between the Barney Top/Pine Lake Road Junction and the actual listed trailhead for Powell Point):



Two photos of the beginning of this road (it appears passable here by most vehicles, but take note that there were some quite deep water ponds in other locations, which I didn't get a photo of, that would also make driving difficult, in addition to large tree roots crossing the road):





The Water Canyon Trail, which is a little less than half-way to the Powell Point trailhead from where we parked:



After this point, the road became more passable as the terrain leveled out somewhat:



A view looking east from near where the trail to the point takes off from the "road":



Finally, we reach the actual Powell Point trailhead:



We are surprised to see this formation which looks very much like The Promontory (as seen from the Bristlecone Loop Trail) in Bryce National Park:



The trail to Powell Point gets steeper through here and the smaller amount of oxygen at our elevation of 10200 feet is more noticeable as we start to climb:



Looking towards the Bryce cliffs far in the distance from a view on the way to the point:





Another view towards the Bryce cliffs from a different view point, with Henderson Canyon in the foreground:



As we get further along the trail, we start to see the extent of mini-Bryce-like hoodoos along the cliffs:



Finally, we reach the point, and the view is much more spectacular than we had anticipated:





This is the informative sign at the point:



Another view looking down Henderson Canyon towards the Bryce Cliffs; there is a nice viewpoint to take photos from that is below the actual point and seems to have a more unobstructed view of the area:





A nice Bristlecone Pine with some hoodoos and Bryce-like cliffs in the background, as seen from this lower viewpoint:



An amazing panorama of the western part of the area seen from Powell Point:



Another view of the cliffs to the west of Powell Point:



Finally, as it was starting to get late, we headed back to the trailhead and back towards Escalante, stopping briefly at Pine Lake for a photo:

