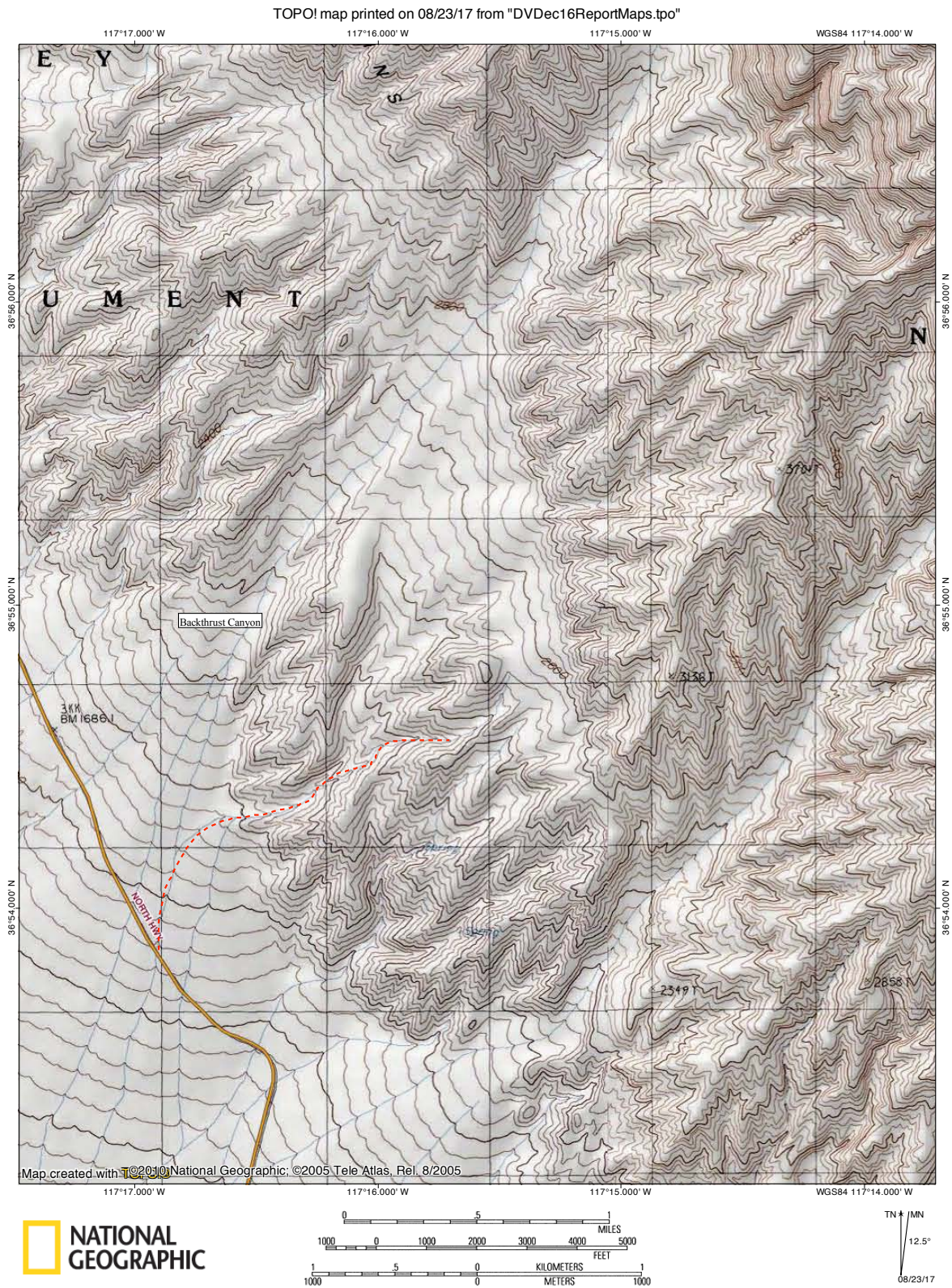


NARROW CANYON JUST SOUTH OF BACKTHRUST CANYON

Since we had found interesting narrows in side canyons of Moonlight Canyon, I thought there might be some interesting narrows near Backthrust Canyon, which is the major canyon just north of Moonlight Canyon. These narrows I spotted on Google Earth didn't turn out to be particularly interesting, but I'm writing about them anyway to document what is there.

TOPO map of this short canyon.



Google Earth map of this short canyon.



Looking up at the (very steep) canyons just north of Titanothera on our drive here.



Parking just south of the entrance to Backthrust (sometimes also called North Moonlight) Canyon. The wash we headed towards is just left of center in this photo.



Approaching the short canyon we were targeting for today's hike; the canyon curves around the small bump seen in the center of this photo, from the left side.



Up ahead we could see the beginning of the interesting section of canyon.



The canyon splits, with the left fork (barely visible in this photo) being mostly wide, interrupted only by a large dryfall. The right side, which is the one we were interested in exploring, also has a dryfall. Following the ridge between the two forks is a good workaround for the impasse.



Interesting formations on the canyon walls through here.



Looking over at the left fork of this canyon.



Some boulders must have fallen off the canyon wall in the distant past.



The right fork widens out briefly, before narrowing again further up in these foothills of the northern Grapevine Mountains.



Looking across at the impasse in the left fork.



It appears that one could bypass the impasse in the left fork without much difficulty, but the canyon appears to just be a wide wash before joining the main Backthrust Canyon wash.



Zooming in on a rock chute at the top of the dryfall.



Continuing up the right fork, we could see it starting to get narrow again.



We never really encountered any slot narrows, although there are a few narrow sections up ahead.



The canyon walls became taller and steeper.



Notice the dragon-like rock in the background, just right of center in this photo.



The "narrows" are choked with brush and weren't nearly as tall as I'd expected.



Panorama of a fork in the canyon.



This is the left fork, which almost certainly ends where seen in the photo.



The right fork continues on a little further.



This was the single narrowest section of the canyon, and essentially the only place where we didn't have to continually avoid bushes. I'm guessing there mustn't be much water coming down this canyon, as there was a lot of (dry) plants here, even in the narrower sections.



This dryfall is where we turned around. I was a bit nervous in this area, as there have been multiple reports of evidence of a mountain lion ranging between Red Wall and Moonlight Canyon.



Interesting shelf in the canyon wall here.



Looking back down and out a straighter section of canyon.



This is a very short side canyon, which immediately ended at a tall dryfall.



We decided to ascend the south side of the canyon to get a better look at the dragon-like rock formation we'd seen from below. This turned out to be a slippery and unstable route.



Panorama of the upper part of the narrows of this canyon.



Climbing a short ways higher, we could see that the canyon was going to be a wide wash. In this photo, you can see over the north ridge of this canyon to the Backthrust Canyon wash.



Looking across at many interesting canyons in the Cottonwood Mountains from the mouth of this canyon.



Panorama of the northern Cottonwood Mountains from here. There are many canyons in that area which I'd like to see someday. I'm not sure if most of the major canyons there have been documented, but I think many of them have been explored recently.



Looking down the valley towards Tucki Mountain from the road.



Two more views looking across at interesting canyons in the Cottonwood Mountains on the drive back.

