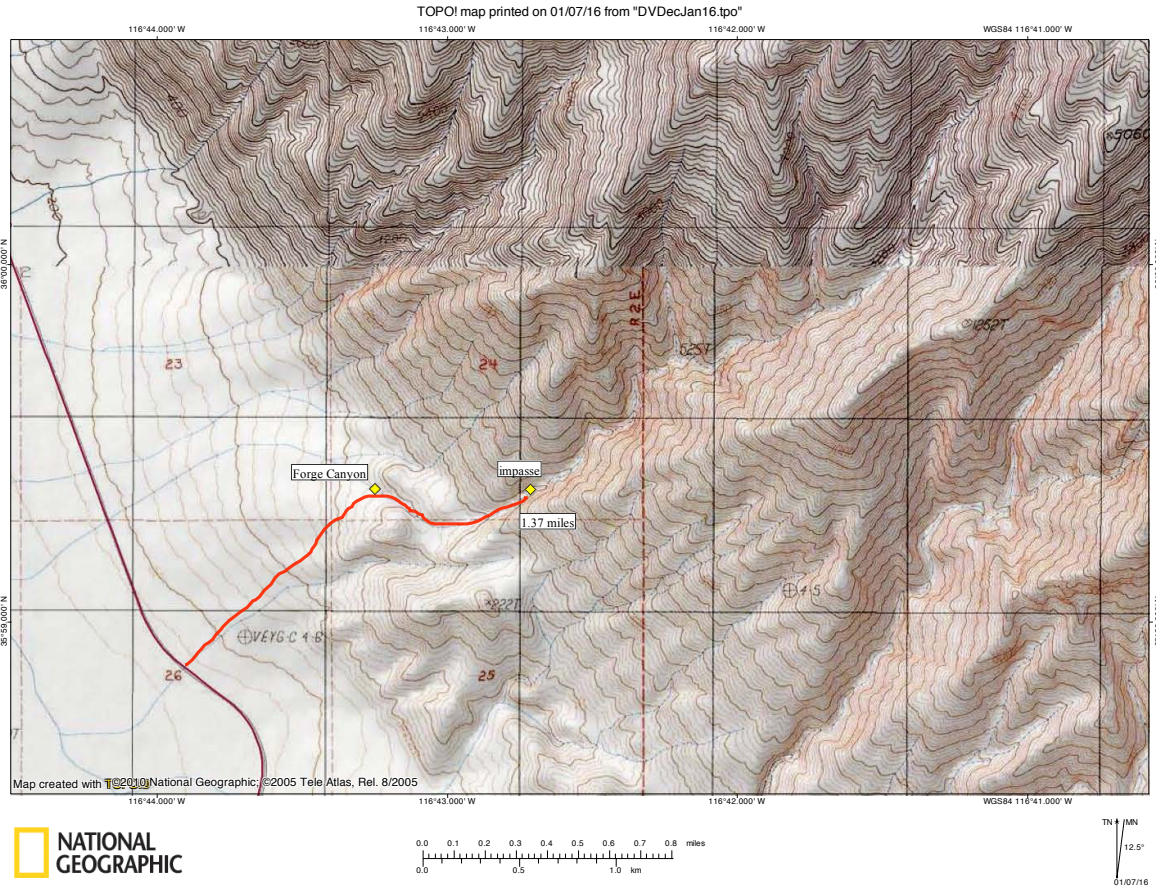


# LOWER FORGE CANYON, AND LOWER ARTIST'S PALETTE CANYON 1

TOPO map of Forge Canyon:



Google Earth map of Forge Canyon:





The previous day had been very rainy, and it was still quite cloudy, so we decided to check out lower Forge Canyon as a short hike. This photo is of clouds over Tucki Mountain in the morning:



The clouds and lighting were perfect just past Badwater for photography:



Looking up at Forge Canyon from where we parked:



The area below the major bend in the wash of Forge Canyon looks interesting to explore someday:



There were a few wildflowers blooming on the alluvial fan this January 2016:



Panorama from the top of the alluvial fan, just before the walls start to get steep:



Looking ahead towards where Forge Canyon comes out of the mountains:



The lighting was good for photographs on the hike out (on the way back, more clouds had formed so it was a bit darker, though more evenly lit):





The wash winds around a bit in this conglomerate rock formation:



It opens up in a big bend; the main wash continues to the left, but to the right is an "overflow" canyon, which we checked out briefly on the way back:



Up ahead we can see that the canyon gets steep quickly, and we are guaranteed to encounter an impasse soon:



Panorama looking down at the major bend in the wash of Forge Canyon:



Another panorama from further back; notice the spot just before the bend where there is a ledge that lighter rock has piled up on:



Luckily what looks like an impasse up ahead is actually the gateway to some nice (but short) narrows:



A workaround for an impasse here wouldn't be easy, as the canyon walls are getting really steep:



The canyon cuts through this gateway, and we see that we will get to walk through some nice narrows before being stopped:





The narrows here are a lot nicer than I'd expected to find:



The colorations in the rock through here were very interesting:



HDR photo looking out of the canyon mouth :



I was surprised at just how tall the canyon walls became so quickly:



Up ahead, at the end of this straight stretch of narrows, is the expected impasse:



It's too tall for us to safely climb, at about 30 feet:



Looking back down-canyon from here; this is certainly a very nice section of narrows, and, although we were disappointed it wasn't longer, it was certainly worth the hike:



Looking up the steep and tall canyon walls from here:



View back out of the canyon from the start of the straight stretch of narrows:



According to canyoneering reports, there is a workaround to this impasse that still requires a bit of climbing; I think this is it on the left side of this photo, but I could easily be incorrect:

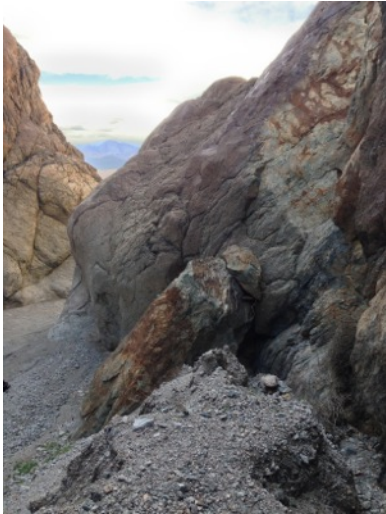




Given that there is a cairn on the middle ledge of this climb, I think it's likely this goes through; however, it looked too tall and crumbly for me to climb:



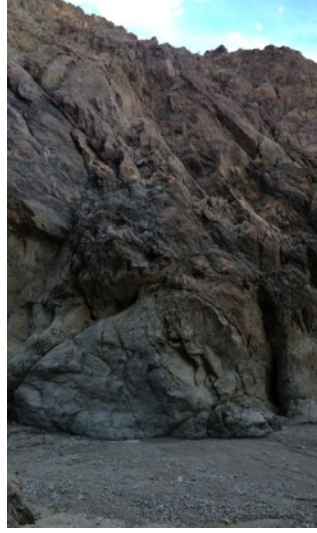
Looking back down-canyon from part-way up the potential workaround:



View up the steep canyon walls:



I tried taking some vertical panoramas in an attempt to give an idea of how tall the walls are in the narrows of Forge Canyon, but I didn't really succeed:



One last photo looking out of these impressive narrows:



From here, we headed back down and out of the canyon:





This doesn't look like it would work as a workaround, but one might at least get some good views up-canyon. Unfortunately, it was getting very windy at this point so we didn't want to climb up on a ridge where the wind would be worse:



We walked down to the flat area just before the major bend in the canyon; this is the view looking back up towards the canyon mouth, and a potential route up onto the ridge is to the left of this photo, out of sight (and up a bighorn trail):



Panorama looking out towards the valley from here; the wind was so strong at this location that I was having difficulty holding the camera stable for long enough to take a panorama:



We then headed to the "overflow" wash out of the canyon, at the major bend in the Forge Canyon wash; the main wash goes out to the right, while the "overflow" goes through the "slot" to the left:



Looking down this overflow channel:



We decided not to hike out this way, as it was getting very cold and windy now so we didn't want to get cliffed-out:



Panorama from the mouth of the Forge Canyon wash; notice how much cloudier it is here now than it was earlier in the day:



Zooming in on what I think is Galena Canyon (I haven't done much exploring yet in the southern Panamints):





This is where the "overflow" from Forge Canyon comes out:



There were a few of these Desert Gold flowers that we walked by on the way back:



Looking over at the interesting short canyons near Forge Canyon:



Another Desert Gold flower (the picture didn't turn out as well as I'd hoped since it still was very windy here):



One last panorama looking back up at the Forge Canyon area:



On the drive to Artist's Palette, I was able to get some photos of some of the named canyons we drove by; this is Shoestring Canyon, which we checked out a few years ago:



There was a lot of greenery in the Sheep Canyon/Willow Creek area, so it'll probably be a great wildflower year in this area:



These are the Twin Canyons:





This is Styx, or Wineglass, Canyon:



This is Dante's Canyon:



This is Hades Canyon:



Our next stop was the Artist's Palette, which we'd hoped would have great colors after the recent rains, and in this dimmer lighting due to the clouds:



We decided to walk up to the 1st Artist's Palette Canyon, which we hadn't hiked since we'd first hiked into the Borax Benchmark area, above Artist's Palette:



The last time we'd been here this was a gravel wash—so I think the mud flow is relatively new:



The mud formation through here reminds me of geothermal formations in Yellowstone:



Upon entering this canyon, it also looked different than I'd remembered from our previous trip:





The narrows were nicer than I'd remembered:



This dryfall had stopped us last time, and it stopped us again today, because the rock is so crumbly:



Looking up-canyon from just below the dryfall. We'd been in the far upper reaches of this canyon earlier in the trip, in our "Beyond Borax Benchmark" hike:



HDR photo of the valley from near the entrance to this canyon; the weather was starting to clear in this part of the valley:



Looking back at the entrance to this canyon, and at a potential workaround of the impasse (or at least a route onto the ridge) from here:



One last panorama of the Artist's Palette, with the clearer skies:



On our drive back, we stopped to get a panorama of the northern Funeral Mountains:

