

LOWER "MORE SLOTS" CANYON, AND THE SMALL DRAINAGE JUST SOUTH OF FUNERAL SLOT CANYON

In January of 2012, we visited this canyon in hopes of finding more slot-narrows like those in Funeral Slot Canyon. (Since then, I've heard that many other hikers have visited the lower part of this canyon with the same idea, both before and after we had hiked to this area.) I have unofficially been referring to this canyon as "More Slots" Canyon since then, simply because (from Google Earth) it appears to be the obvious next canyon to check out after seeing Funeral Slot Canyon. It is one of two relatively major canyons between Funeral Slot Canyon and Echo Canyon, so I have also referred to this canyon as the canyon just south of Funeral Slot Canyon (the canyon just north of Echo Canyon has some very nice narrows, which aren't as narrow but are much longer than in this canyon; see my reports from January 2016 and December 2016 on the canyon just north of Echo Canyon). With the recently updated Google Earth imagery, I decided to return to this area in hopes of completing our exploration of these slot narrows, and in particular to see the part of the first northern side slot which is inaccessible from below due to a tall and crumbly dryfall. On this hike, since we were not able to take the bypass that I had originally planned, we also briefly checked out a small drainage just south of Funeral Slot Canyon. A report on the continuation of this hike on a later day during this trip (December 2016) can be found under the title "Middle More Slots Canyon Area."

The purple line on this Google Earth Map is the route we took for this hike. (The green line is the hike we did later in the trip, to see the upper part of the best slot, and the orange line on the far right of the image is the hike we did to the upper part of this canyon in January 2016.) The best place to park for this hike seems to be same place as for Funeral Slot Canyon. (Crossing over from Echo Canyon is not a good idea!)



Looking across at one of the many canyons on the eastern side of Tucki Mountain, from where we parked for this hike.



A nice arch we spotted high up on a hillside to the south after passing where one would turn off for Funeral Slot Canyon.



Panorama from near here, looking up the wash we would be following.



We spotted numerous tunnel-like formations which we had missed seeing on our previous trip to this area.



This "hole in the rock" appears to be where water has drained down from the hillside further up. Unfortunately, it quickly became too small to crawl through.



It appears that water enters this natural tunnel behind the small ridge seen in this photo (note the exit hole of the "tunnel" is in the lower right corner of this photo).



This is another interesting natural formation.



This formation wasn't as large as it appeared from a distance.



This is a small side-wash which heads off to the south of the main wash we were following. Unfortunately, the morning sun angle caused the light pink color of the hills in this area to not show up well in the photograph. It looked to be worth exploring further in the future.



The wash we were following widens and joins with some minor drainages coming from small canyons between the "More Slots" Canyon we were heading to and Funeral Slot Canyon. Note that these short drainages end in the middle row of hills, visible between the white mounds and the jagged peaks in the background.



Panorama of the view looking towards all these small canyons. On Google Earth, it appears that most of these small canyons are relatively wide valleys, but some of them have very short narrow sections. We checked out one of these small canyons on this hike, and another one later in the trip, when we visited the middle section of "More Slots" Canyon.



Here is where one of the many horse trails in this area drops into the canyon wash. When we had previously visited the lower part of this canyon in January of 2012, this trail looked more heavily used than it now appeared.



Up ahead we see the wash starting to narrow as it goes around a bend.



As with many canyons in this area, the wash was quite wide and open before narrowing abruptly.



We spotted another arch high up on the hillside near here.



The canyon walls began to get taller and more impressive.



I recall when we first hiked to this canyon noticing that it had the potential to have some nice narrows, but because of the major dryfalls in each of the forks, the canyon never really got very deep or narrow.



Here is a side-slot on the south side which we didn't notice on our previous trip to this canyon.



The water actually drains from this side slot between two mud-boulders which have rolled together.



Just around a corner is this major dryfall. We were able to get a view into the part of this side-slot above this impasse from the ridge to the east of the canyon (photos later in this report).



Continuing up-canyon, we rounded a corner and saw the major fork in the canyon.



To the left is the main side-slot of this canyon, which is easy to miss when hiking up-canyon as it is around a sharp bend.



This side-slot has some very tight narrows, although they are not nearly as deep as the narrows in nearby Funeral Slot Canyon.



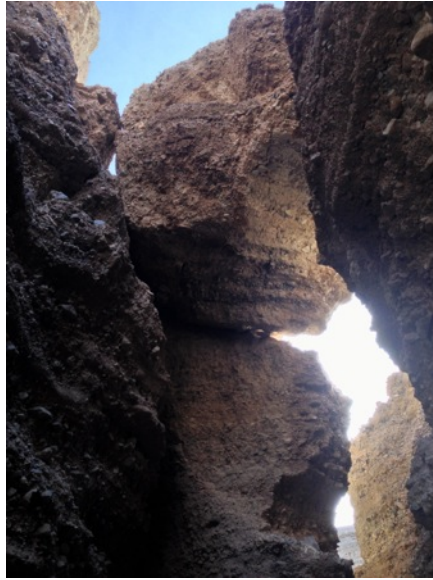
Notice how the walls nearly touch in the tightest part of this slot, seen to the left in this photo. To the right, observe how a large chunk of the wall seems to have broken off.



The next two photos show progress through the narrowest part of this slot.



A huge conglomerate boulder has gotten wedged between the walls here.



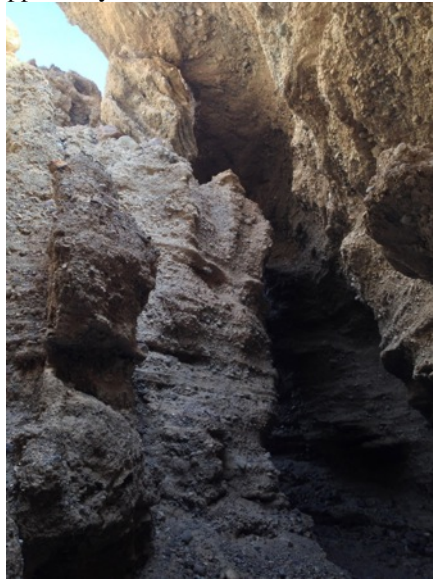
Vertical panorama looking back out of the slot and up at this boulder.



Up ahead, the canyon goes around a tight bend.



There is another boulder wedged between the upper canyon walls here.



Three more photos of our progress up-canyon through these nice narrows. In the middle photo, there is a short dryfall which must be climbed before progressing.



This dryfall prevents further progress up the side-slot. For photos of the canyon above this dryfall, see my report from later in the trip on Middle "More Slots" Canyon.



Two more photos of these nice narrows as we head back to the main canyon.



Looking up at the canyon fork from here. There were the dried remains of many flowers in the canyon wash here, probably from the previous year's big wildflower bloom. I would guess that in Spring 2016 this canyon floor would have been covered in Desert Gold, along with Gravel Ghost, Phacelia, and Desert Five-Spot.



This is a side-slot a short distance up-canyon, on the north side and before the fork, which I thought (from looking at Google Earth) might lead to the ridge.



However, it soon became very steep, with many small dryfalls.



Therefore, we headed back down-canyon from here to gain the ridge.

