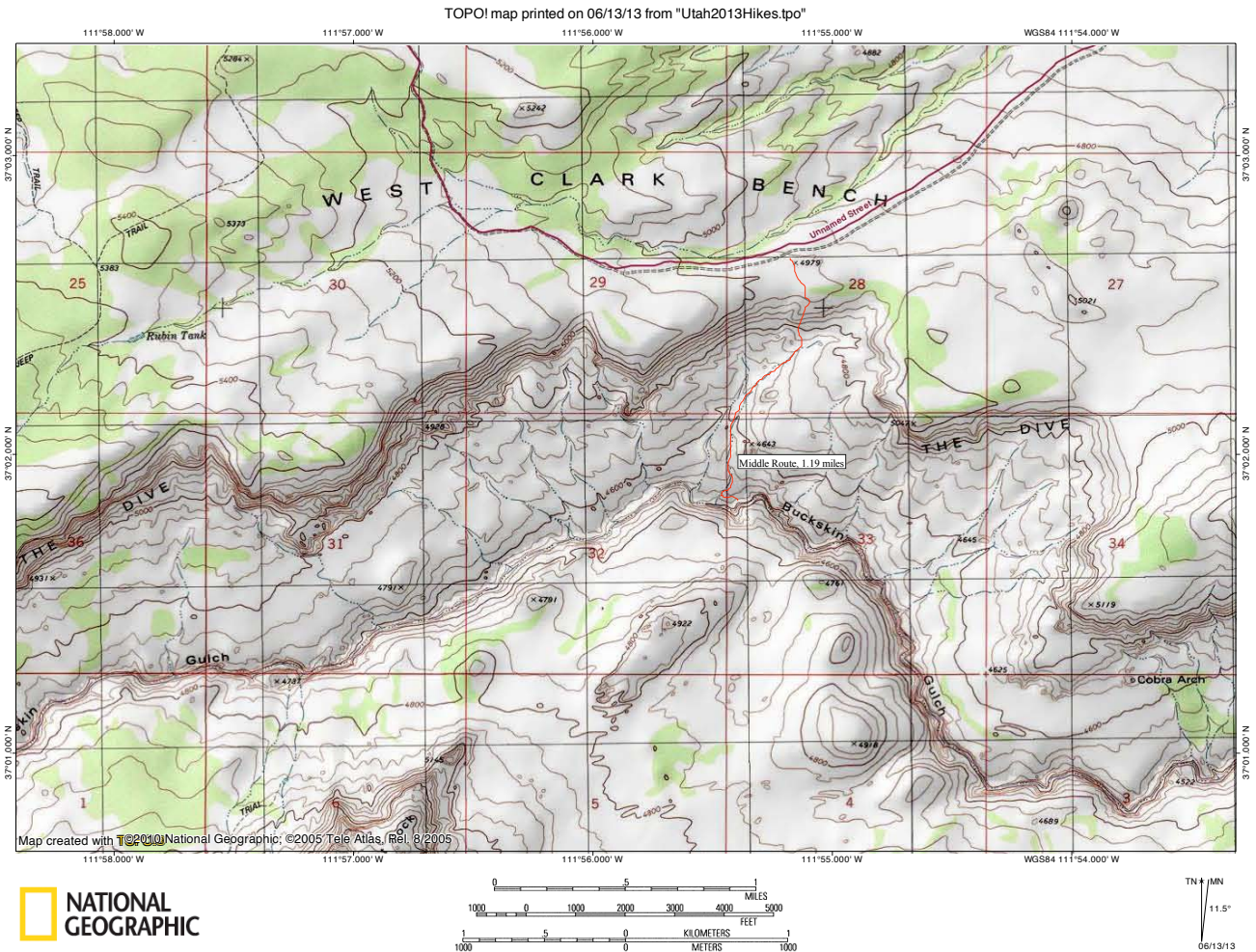


MIDDLE ROUTE TO BUCKSKIN GULCH AND LONG CANYON IN VERMILION CLIFFS NATIONAL MONUMENT

Middle Route is the entry into Buckskin Gulch that is located approximately halfway between the start of gulch's slot and its confluence with the Paria River. The trailhead can be accessed via the Long Canyon Road; as there are many other dirt roads branching off Long Canyon Road, a clear road map is necessary, as is a 4WD vehicle since there is often deep sand in the road near the parking area. After hiking to the rim of Buckskin Gulch, we decided not to descend the steep slickrock into the gulch due to the quantity of sand on the rock, which made it very slippery.

TOPO map of Middle Route. Note that it is best to follow the eastern of the two washes that descend from The Dive into Buckskin Gulch, and that it is necessary to head east until just before Buckskin narrows down again and turns northeast:



Looking south from near the parking area for Middle Route:



Looking down towards Buckskin Gulch from The Dive:



There is a trail down from the top of The Dive onto the slickrock below, making the descent quite straightforward:



Nice, wave-like rocks in the wash we followed on the way down to Middle Route:



Looking into Buckskin Gulch from above; Middle Route is to the left in this picture, just as the gulch starts bending away:



Looking down into Buckskin from Middle Route; as you can see, the slickrock is quite steep:



Looking up-Buckskin from here:



This photo shows the view down Long Canyon from the upper end:



Looking down from the top of the first impasse; the road can barely be seen on the rim in the other side of the canyon:



Looking into the canyon from the second place we tried to access the slot:



View heading up-canyon from the second place we dropped into the canyon:



Ahead is the impasse that stopped us from above:



We turned around and headed down-canyon; shortly after passing the place where we had dropped into the canyon, we encountered an impasse. Panorama from above the impasse that stopped our further progress down-canyon; note the interesting red mud-drippings on the wall:

