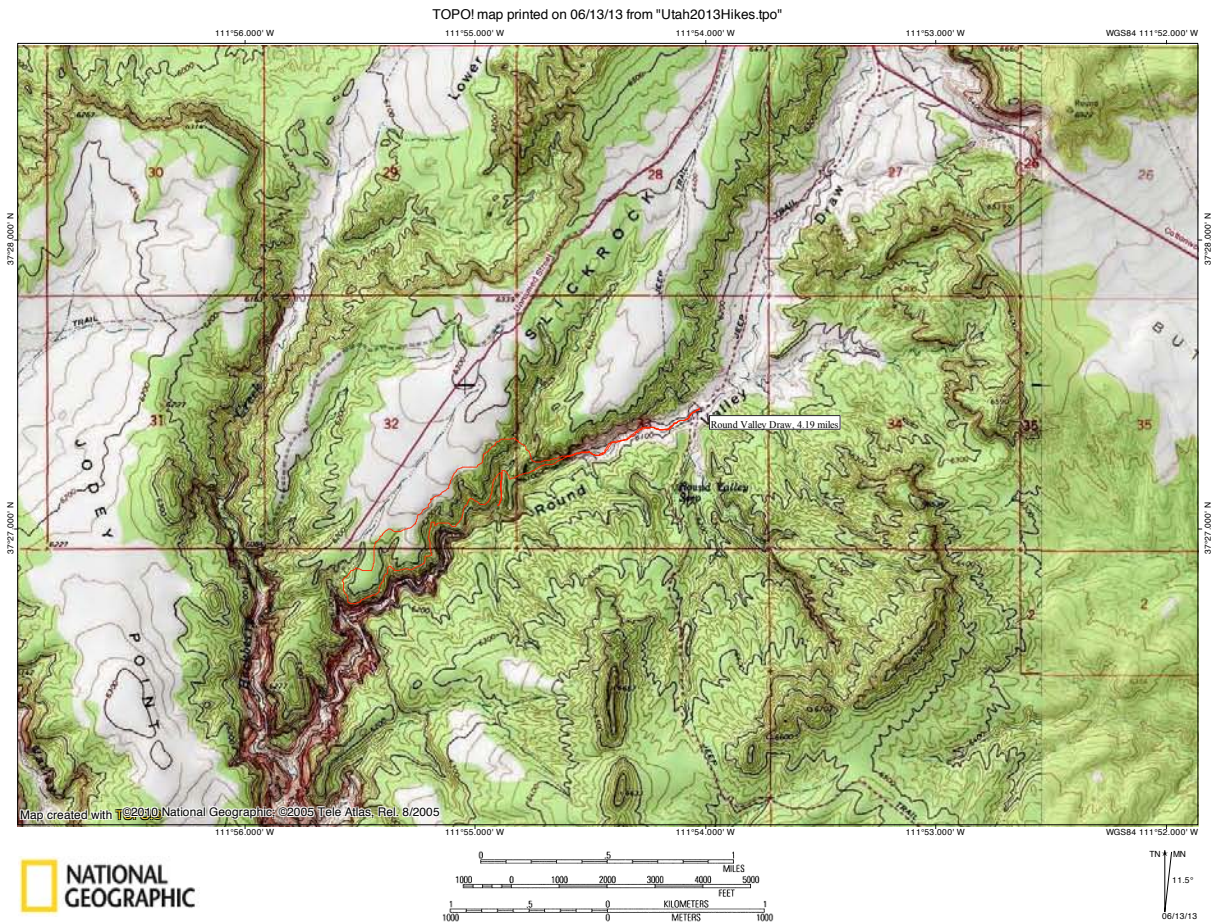


ROUND VALLEY DRAW, GROSVENOR ARCH, AND ROCK SPRINGS BENCH ROAD IN GRAND STAIRCASE-ESCALANTE NATIONAL MONUMENT

Round Valley Draw is accessed from the upper Cottonwood Road; it is approximately 7 miles down this road from Kodachrome Basin to the Rush Bed Road, then not quite 2 miles more to the parking area for Round Valley Draw. After the parking area, this road appears to get rougher. Also, some maps mention a 4WD/High Clearance road that goes down Round Valley Draw just under a mile to the start of the slot; we saw traces of this road, but it currently does not appear to be drivable.

TOPO map of Round Valley Draw:



Hiking down the wash:



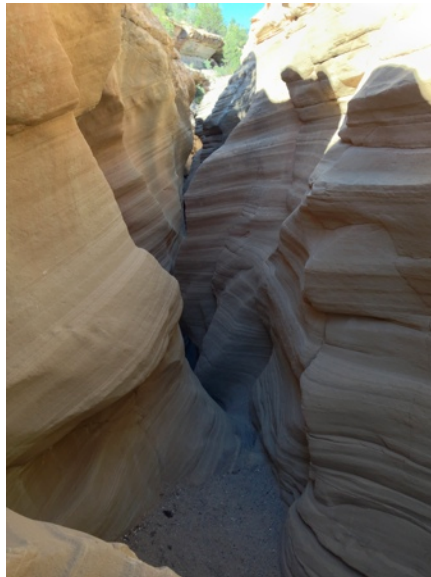
The slot drops suddenly into the rock:



Looking down from just to the left of the start of the slot:



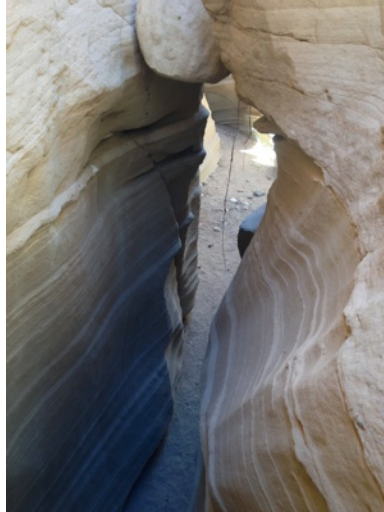
We dropped into the start of the amazing narrows of Round Valley Draw:



In my research of this slot, I had read that there is a 15-foot impasse near the beginning of the slot; I had hoped that we would be able to downclimb it, but it was just barely above our skill level, so we opted to instead look for one of the bypasses we had also read about. looking down the impasse:



Looking down the slot from above the impasse:



We first looked on the left side of the slot for a bypass trail, but we saw that the route on the right side of the slot looked better. Looking down into the slot from the left-side trail:



The next 4 photos show some views looking into Round Valley Draw from the part of the bypass trail before the North Fork drops into the canyon:



Looking into where the North Fork joins the main canyon from the rim trail:



The rim trail which we followed dropped into the North Fork, so we followed this slot down as far as we could. It definitely has some nice narrows, which are shown in the next 4 photos:



All too soon, however, we reach an impasse—a drop probably of close to 40 feet, though due to the convoluted nature of the slot we cannot tell for sure. There is a chain attached to the canyon wall, likely used to rappel into the canyon:



Attempting to look down the impasse:



Continuing on past the north fork, we get views into Round Valley Draw from the rim trail, which is getting less and less worn-in:



The canyon is starting to get wider, so we are hopeful that we will be able to find a place to drop into the slot, but the walls are staying sheer and impassible for us:



To the lower right in this photo is a route which some hikers might take to get into the canyon, but to me it looks worse than the original impasse:



From here, the trail gets much less worn, but we continue on in hopes of finding a better route into Round Valley Draw. This panorama looking back at where we have come from shows the possible entry route in the lower left:



More photos as we continue along the rim trail:



At this point, it was getting too hot to continue for much longer, and the trail we were following was quickly disappearing, so we know we would likely need to turn back soon. Panorama showing some nice reddish colors on the canyon wall as we approach the junction with Hackberry Canyon:



We ended up heading back without getting into the slot, but we looked for a quicker route back. Photo looking northwest across the Slickrock Bench:



There was somewhat of a trail on the way back; it looked like a cattle trail which had been used by hikers:



Some interesting cliffs to the west:



Looking down at some hoodoos near where the slot starts from just above the North Fork:



Blooming cactus:



Looking down at the trail going by the hoodoos (to the left) and where the North Fork joins the main slot (to the right):



Next, we continued down the Cottonwood Road to the junction with the Four Mile Bench road, which we drove up a little ways to Grosvenor Arch. Panorama looking towards the arch from the parking lot:



Photo of the arch from closer up:



We then decided to check out the Rock Springs Bench Road, which we had seen on the Grand Staircase-Escalante map. This road is easily passable until you reach a barbed-wire-and-sticks gate; beyond this, the road gets increasingly worse. We did not see any tire tracks on this road past the gate, so the area is likely not highly visited. Panorama from where we stopped:



Finally, we headed back towards Kodachrome Basin. Panorama looking north of clouds over some mountains near the basin:

