

LOWER WHITE TOP MOUNTAIN ROAD AND LOST BURRO MINE AND SLOT

We had originally intended to drive most of White Top Mountain Road, but we had also looked at other options of areas to check out just in case we decided that the road was not in good enough shape for us to drive all the way. We stopped first at Teakettle Junction, then drove through Lost Burro Gap and started on the road to White Top. The road to Teakettle Junction was quite washboarded (April 2014), but not as severely as the road to Crankshaft Junction, which we had driven in January. Beyond Teakettle Junction, all the way through Lost Burro Gap and up the White Top road to where we stopped, the road was in excellent condition, quite smooth, except for one washed-out section on White Top which must be straddled by the vehicle. What stopped us on the White Top Road were some rock steps, which may have been created or have gotten worse in recent storms (described in more detail later in the report). Therefore, we decided to check out the Lost Burro Mine and Slot.

Six photos of Teakettle Junction and the teakettles; it appeared that most, if not all, of the teakettles had been placed there since March 2014 (in the past month or so!):



Panorama looking towards the Racetrack from Teakettle Junction:



Panorama towards Lost Burro Gap:



This is the first of three rock steps that we encountered in Rest Spring Gulch, all of which are located just before the road leaves the gulch (note that as we did not go beyond where the road leaves the gulch I cannot report on the conditions of the road beyond there). This step is easily passable, and many drivers would likely not even call it a step:



Two photos of the second step; we could have driven this one, but as the one beyond it was a bit worse we decided to stop here:



This step is larger than it appears and was more difficult than we wanted to attempt to drive:



Looking up the road from beyond the last step:



Panorama looking towards Lost Burro Peak on our way back down the White Top road, with the sierras barely visible in the distance:



An interesting-looking canyon in this area:



Another photo towards Lost Burro Peak and the sierras:



This is the washout in the road which must be straddled by the vehicle; getting a tire in the gully would be disastrous as it is deceptively deep:



There were some nice wildflowers along the road; the next nine photos show some of these flowers:





Panorama from where we stopped on this road to photograph wildflowers:



From here we headed to the Lost Burro Mine; there is one section of this road where the edge of the road along a ledge has been somewhat washed out, so a spotter is helpful to make sure the vehicle fits between the washout on one side and the cliff on the other. Also, just before the mine there were some large rocks that must have rolled into the road which needed to be moved off the road. The next four photos are of the mine area:



Looking inside the cabin and other building:



The mine, which we decided not to hike up to as it was windy and we figured a nearby peak would have a better view:



Looking down at the Lost Burro Mine area as we hiked up to a nearby peak:



Looking down Hidden Valley:



View over towards the Racetrack:



Panorama of the road to Lost Burro Mine:



Panorama looking down Hidden Valley:



From here we headed down to Lost Burro Gap to check out Lost Burro Slot; parking for this short hike:



Heading up the small canyon:



Looking back towards the road through Lost Burro Gap:



The next two photos show progress up this small canyon:



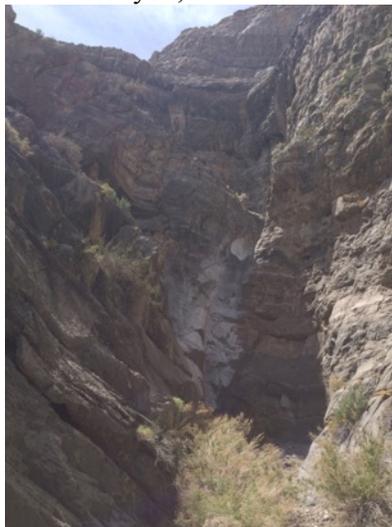
Nice arch in the canyon:



A 6-foot dryfall in the canyon:



Just beyond this is a more major impasse in the canyon, a 25-foot fall which must be bypassed:



The best bypass route is to ascend the rock shelf to the left just after climbing the 6-foot fall, then drop back into the canyon once at the ridge:



Looking back out towards the road from the ridge:



Looking into the canyon above the slot from here:



Nice wind caves in the hills across from the slot:



This slot is quite short, but it is nice:



There is another nice arch just up-canyon from the slot:



An impasse in the canyon around a corner after the arch; this is where we turned around in this short canyon:

