

Some Freeman Canal Preliminary Field Notes

Don Lancaster and **Dr. James Neely**

Synergetics, Box 809, Thatcher, AZ 85552
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<http://www.tinaja.com>

don@tinaja.com and neelyja@utexas.edu

(928) 428-4073 and (575) 686-0098

Preliminary discovery reveals the Freeman Canal and its apparently quite small nursery destination to presently range from **N 32.80004 W 109.75027** east to **N 32.80000 W 109.74991**, a distance of a mere 60 meters at elevations which approximate 3040 feet...



The canal is quite easy to visit, both on foot and with 4WD access west of the Porter Springs Road. It appears fragmented and disjointed with many significant portions still unresolved. The destination seems to be a small nursery located in a conspicuously rocky area in otherwise flat sandy desert. This would appear to be one of the very few canals in the bajada system that presently has an apparently known and well defined destination. Any such appearance is conspicuously absent in **Acme Mapper**.

To date, the apparent nursery area seems to consist of a 100 meter square of rearranged lithics. Features include a pair of check dams, a twenty meter square

of flat and rock free aeolian fill, and various rock realignments that imply agricultural use. Such check dams are also quite common much further south.

The nursery appears serviced by a fragmented and disjointed canal from the west. To date, this canal has only been traced some 60 meters.

This site is quite a distance from credible water sources. One source presently believed unlikely is an artesian spring at **N 32.79342 W 109.76596**. Somewhat more credible would be one of several possible destinations for the HS Canal at **N 32.79342 W 109.76596**. Possibly aided by storage in the Blue Ponds area at **N 32.78307 W 109.77364**. But this would suggest a rather spectacular total canal length of over six kilometers. And that would be **beyond** the HS canal terminus.

The intermediate area has been rather extensively visited with few positive results to date. There are hints of a concrete pipe fragment at **N 32.79149 W 109.76063** that suggests a possible underlying prehistoric origin. This area has not yet been adequately studied.

The small nursery site appears inconsistent with the total distance and all the construction effort required for the Freeman canal. Perhaps it was only partially developed from a larger area plan. The lack of strong intermediate route evidence remains highly enigmatic.

Some observed features of the Freeman Canal destination include...

- N 32.80000 W 109.74991** Very rocky area in otherwise sandy flat desert.
- N 32.83097 W 109.92608** Western canal end of preliminary study area.
- N 32.80005 W 109.75019** Traceable but erratic and variable canal route.
- N 32.80004 W 109.75012** Wider and more uniform canal reach.
- N 32.80002 W 109.74993** Rock structural alignments of apparent ag intent.
- N 32.80003 W 109.74993** A pair of checkdams or gridded field boundaries.
- N 32.80003 W 109.74994** Flat and rock free fine soil apparent field area.

Further Freeman Canal work might include...

- 1** — Continuing a westerly trace of the Freeman Canal route.
- 2** — Establishing a water source.
- 3** — Resolving any historic pipeline relationship.
- 4** — Droning, videotaping, and more photos of the known explored portion.
- 5** — Justifying the small nursery with the major canal construction effort.
- 6** — Seeking out any further eastern downstream routing.
- 7** — Relating checkdams to those further south.
- 8** — Getting cultural interpretation from other archaeologists.



FREEMAN1 – Rock checkdams or nursery field boundaries. These are also quite common further south, but without a canal feeder and with aprons. Purposeful rock alignments can also be seen, presumably with intended ag purposes. View is to the west near **N 32.80001 W 109.74994**.



FREEMAN2 – Canal spoil pile boundary edges are somewhat erratic and rather jumbled in places, but there is reasonable evidence that they are in fact traceable canals. The view is to the east near **N 32.80002 W 109.74999**.



FREEMAN3 – Canal spoil banks remain erratic but are somewhat better defined in this image. Canal is 800 cm wide. View is east near **N 32.80003 W 109.75001**.



FREEMAN4 – The canal widens somewhat at this point and the required constant slope becomes much more apparent. View is west near **N 32.80002 W 109.75011**.



FREEMAN6 – Yet another view of non-uniform and erratic spoil banks. The view is to the east at **N 32.83154 W 109.92477**



FREEMAN7 – The need for extreme energy efficiency on construction will overwhelmingly dominate on level terrain. Hanging portions are only used when slope must be made independent of terrain. The view is to the east near **N 32.80005 W 109.75013**.



FREEMAN8 – A reverse view of **FREEMAN4**. Canal is broader and shallower in this reach and appears to have an aeolian fill. View is **N 32.80002 W 109.75011**.



FREEMAN9 – Sally is a medium sized Australian Shepard who can add scale to the canal sizing. The view is east near **N 32.80004 W 109.75017**.