

Mud Springs Canal Preliminary Field Notes

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The Mud Springs **Prehistoric Hanging Bajada Canal** is one of the longer and more interesting and includes several unique features. **It is one of the very few that can be viewed nearly in entirety from several locations.** Which suggests its easier development might have formed an earlier prototype. Other points of interest include a significant watershed crossing and a "pithouse-like" or "swimming pool-like" adjacent costructure.

The known portions of the canal include a **Mud Springs** eastern branch of ten kilometers length and a **Jernigan Canal** western branch of two kilometers. The Jernigan portion will be covered in a separate field note. Both canals are sourced from a taken at or near the Coronado National Forest **CNF** boundary at **32.78729 -109.85475** at an elevation of 3760 feet.



This canal is primarily on **AZ State Lands**, with a small portion on **BLM**. Access varies from Layton Road, Ash Creek Road, and various 4WD tracks to portions that still remain unvisited. The average slope appears to be approximately 2.3 percent.

There are presently five largely unexplored gaps in the Mud Springs study area. While the Ash Creek taken is almost certainly near the **CNF** boundary at **32.78743 -109.85516**, its actual location remains unknown. The 1983 tropical storm **Octave** may have obliterated any evidence. Vertical conglomerate cliffs in the area do suggest extreme flooding.

A highly significant feature of the Mud Springs canal is its **watershed** crossing through a narrow saddle between Ash Creek and Mud Springs canyon found at **32.79160 -109.85383**. Another candidate regional watershed crossing remains unverified at **32.74507 -109.83900**, while a third watershed crossing would seem possible at **32.77834 -109.95671**, but appears to have remained unexploited.

The route to Mud Springs starts off fairly obvious, but has not yet been explored. It becomes indistinct near **32.80356 -109.83933** but once again becomes obvious downstream. A 4WD road crossing is easily findable at **32.80356 -109.83933**. The route can be traced fairly well, but remains unverified near **32.81419 -109.83128**. There are numerous **CCC** projects in this area. These are often distinctly different than the prehistoric constructs being cross wash intended for water spreading.

A rather remote and largely "hidden" fairly significant hanging portion begins a "climb" southward out of a wash at **32.81673 -109.82927**. The route is somewhat traceable past a mid channel Mesquite tree at **32.81757 -109.83013** to a dual track that apparently corrected excessive erosion at **32.82219 -109.82530**.

Extensive modern canal work dominates behind a **SCS** dam found at **32.82297 -109.82496**. This dam fully covers and dominates the Mud Springs trace without any accomodation to either source or sink canal water. Giving strong credence to Mud Springs Canal prehistoric origins. A blowout in the dam would appear to presently be extremely unsafe.

Below the dam, there is a medium sized hanging "climb" out of the wash, that terminates adjacent to a highly usual "pithouse like" structure found at **32.82692 -109.82115**. This structure is at grade with the canal and only one meter away. There is no obvious charcoal evidence. It is presently titled the "**Troll House**" or the "**Adena Embassy**", with more credible explanations being sought. Use as a wading pool has not yet been ruled out.

While fairly distinct in hindsight, the canal route near **2744 -109.82008** was first discovered by extensive dead plant material following a major wildflower bloom. This is followed slightly to the east at **32.82761 -109.81942** by the northward split forming the **Jernigan Canal**. The latter is a subject of a separate field note and is in the directory as **#46 JEC1**. Apparently placed rocks atypical of the sandy terrain suggest a headgate type of diversionary structure.

A historic tank can be found at **32.82768 -109.81892** that does seem possibly suggestive of later canal use. The Mud Springs canal itself swings north here and can be easily followed as far as **32.83074 -109.81551** where it becomes indistinct and presently unresolved. Segments are findable north to **32.84262 -109.81051** . Portions here seem to have suffered extreme ATV damage.

At that point, the canal becomes exceptionally easy to visit just east of the West Layton Road. A modestly hanging and highly photogenic portion can be viewed here that is considerably wider than usual. The canal seems to have a caliche like fill atypical except for a similar portion of the **Allen Canal** .

After a road crossing at **32.84355 -109.81141**, the canal becomes quite wide and flat and continues to be easily tracable. It is easily hikeable off several 4WD tracks.

Despite numerous attempts to date, the field destination(s) of the Mud Springs Canal remain unknown. Candidate possibilities include the Central Dump at **32.85628 -109.81539** and the Central Cemetary at **32.85733 -109.80105**. In contrast, the **Jernigan** branch has unusually well defined destinations.

Here are some noteworthy Mud Springs Canal features and locations...

- 32.78743 -109.85516** Presumed Ash Creek takein point that is not yet field verified.
- 32.78881 -109.85443** Presumed significant hanging portion Not yet field verified. May have seen significant damage from the 1983 tropical storm Octave. Conglomerate sheer cliffs do not bode well.
- 32.79160 -109.85383** **Brilliantly engineered watershed crossing.**
- 32.79160 -109.85383** Well preserved downslope area a seems a good candidate for drone development.
- 32.80128 -109.84127** Ill defined area likely caused by historic development or rework.
- 32.80128 -109.84127** Canal resumes obvious well preserved route. CCC structures in area.
- 32.80693 -109.83793** Canal crosses 4WD track. Unexplained mystery construct immediately west.
- 32.80999 -109.83566** Fairly well defined segment 1 meter wide by 60 cm deep. Portions remain unexplored.
- 32.78709 -109.85645** Hidden and quite impressive "secret" hanging portion that is quite distinct but hard to reach.
- 32.81757 -109.83013** Large Mesquite tree in center of channel.
- 32.82206 -109.82601** Route temporarily splits for a short distance, possibly because of a washout realignment.
- 32.82297 -109.82496** Total **SCS** heavy dam construction rework. A second original path may be present. There are safety issues in and around a blowout region.
- 32.82597 -109.82161** Canal resumes a hanging portion as it "climbs" its way out of the wash.
- 2.82692 -109.82115** **Enigmatic unique "pithouse-like" or "swimming-pool-like" structure** immediately and intimately intimately associated with the canal. To date, there is no observed charcoal in this "troll house".
- 32.82744 -109.82008** During a recent bloom, "dead flowers" clearly marked the canal routings in this area.

- 32.82761 -109.81942** Start of north trending **Jernigan Canal** branch. Small rocks suggest a headgate system.
- 32.82768 -109.81892** Apparently historic anglo tank seems somehow associated with the canal structures.
- 32.83074 -109.81551** Short segment remains undiscovered.
- 32.83885 -109.81107** Short segment includes extensive ATV damage.
- 32.84262 -109.81051** Modest hanging portion is significantly wider and includes caliche like white fill.
- 32.84356 -109.81141** Layton Road crossing.
- 32.84792 -109.81102** Canal vanishes without an apparent trace. Destinations remain unknown despite many attempts at resolution.
- 32.85608 -109.81527** Central Dump candidate destination.
- 32.85772 -109.80029** Central Cemetary candidate destination.
- 32.86610 -109.80138** Riverine candidate destination.

Further Mud Springs Canal work might include...

- 1** — Finding any remains of the Ash Creek takin and hanging portion.
- 2** — Seeking other watershed crossings, especially upper Frye Creek.
- 3** — Developing drone potential northeast of the watershed crossing.
- 4** — Verifying Mud Springs and south-of-secret hanging portions.
- 5** — Improving understanding of SCS dam initial canal routings.
- 6** — Explaining the troll house.
- 7** — Understanding the anglo tank.
- 8** — Filling in minor missing portions.
- 9** — Resolving the canal destinations.
- 10** — Videotaping and droning entire route.
- 11** — Continuing Mud Springs tours and lectures to raise awareness.



TROLL1 – Enigmatic "troll house" like structure is unique to the area and is closely associated with the Mud Springs canal. While a pithouse appearing, no charcoal remains have been noted to date. The view is to the northwest at **32.82717 -109.81995**



MUD1 – Midway along the Mud Canal, just below the SCS dam that overran it without accomodation. The view is to the southwest at **32.82696 -109.82111**.

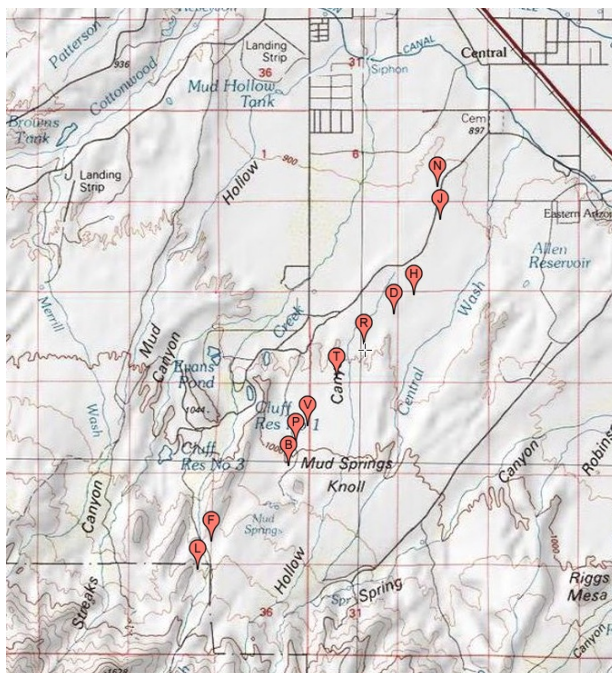


MUD4 – A modest hanging portion of the Mud Springs Canal seems to include a fairly rare caliche-like fill. This portion seems shallower and wider than typical. The view is to the northwest at [32.84295 -109.81075](#)



MUD2 – The Mud Springs Canal vanishes without a trace just north of this view. Destinations remain unknown, despite numerous visits. In this view, the canal originates "halfway up" the middle of the mountain. View is to the South at [32.84792 -109.81102](#).

Here is a topographic map of the Mud Springs Canal...



You can click through on the above images to directly reach [Acme Mapper](#) at a higher resolution.

A hanging canal directory can be found [here](#) and its sourcecode [here](#).

This field note is associated with directory **#42 ALC1 Mud Springs Canal**. Also related are **#45 MST1 Mud Springs Tank** and **#44 MJB1 Mud Jernigan Branching Pointt** and **#43 THP1 Troll House Strange Structure** and **#47 LMT Lower Mud Trace** and **#41 Ash Creek Feeder to Mud Springs** and **#46 JECT1 Jernigan Canal**.

This document can be found [here](#) and its sourcecode [here](#).

More Hanging Canal Resources: <http://www.tinaja.com/tinsamp1.shtml>

New Hanging Canal Developments: <http://www.tinaja.com/whtnu17.shtml>

