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 entirity from several locations. Which suggests its easier development might have 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 takein 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 takein is almost certainly near the **CNF** boundary at 32.7843 -109.8516, 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 accommodation 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 Cemetery 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.

32.80709 -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.
Start of north trending Jernigan Canal branch. Small rocks suggest a headgate system.

Apparantly historic anglo tank seems somehow associated with the canal structures.

Short segment remains undiscovered.

Short segment includes extensive ATV damage.

Modest hanging portion is significantly wider and includes caliche like white fill.

Layton Road crossing.

Canal vanishes without an apparent trace. Destinations remain unknown despite many attempts at resolution.

Central Dump candidate destination.

Central Cemetery candidate destination.

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.
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 accommodation. 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.
