



## SOME BAJADA CANAL FIELD NOTES

Allen Canal	Bear Springs	Cluffnw Canal
Deadman Canal	Freeman Canal	Frye Complex
Golf Canal	Henry's Canal	Jernigan Canal
Lefthand Canal	Longview Area	Lower Frye
Minor Webster	Mud Springs	Reay Canal
Riggs Mesa	Robinson Canal	Sand Canal
Smith Canal	Smith Exten	TB Ponding
Tranquility	Tripp Canal	Tugood Canal
Veech Canal		

## OTHER BAJADA HANGING CANAL PAPERS

JFA publication.	Author's JFA Preprint
Canal Menu Directory	Hanging Canal Images
Prehistoric Bajada Canals	USA Today Story
Lafayette College Story	Wikipedia Story
Grant County Paper	Glyphs Canal Paper
Third Party Papers	ARA Web Video
ARA .3GP Video	Downloadable Video
Latest & Older Updates	-----

# Smith Extension Bajada Canal Preliminary Field Notes

**Don Lancaster**  
[don@tinaja.com](mailto:don@tinaja.com)  
 (928) 428-4073

**Jim Neely**  
[neely@utexas.edu](mailto:neely@utexas.edu)  
 (575) 686-0098

The Smith Canal is a credible but woefully unproven potential prehistoric bajada hanging canal. It is presently presumed to range from an Ash Creek Cluff Ponds origin at [N 32.81485 W 109.84926](#) and possibly ending up near the Central Dump Pond at [N 32.85569 W 109.81544](#). A distance of four miles and a 152 foot elevation change. Ownership is largely [AGF](#) and [Az State Lands](#).

Its start is believed to underlie and once have sourced the historic Smith Canal rework from [N 32.81485 W 109.84926](#) to [N 32.82010 W 109.84085](#). Strong evidence for this sourcing is based on its clearly prehistoric and a very well defined northern extension beyond [N 32.82010 W 109.84085](#).



The more credible evidence for the Smith Extension Canal can be reached via 4WD north trending tracks off Grandma road. Accessed off West Layton road out of Central. Portions of the potential canal route still remain undiscovered, questionable, or of marginal quality. [Acme Mapper](#) gives us a useful but limited resolution tool for exploring locations and this topo map image...



The portion from its Ash Creek taken in at B to its start of the overlain Smith Canal at A has been reworked by modern Cluff Ponds redevelopment and is rather hard to trace. The more viewable and oversize Smith Canal portions run from A to C and terminate in a pair of Smith Ponds. This is covered in the separate Smith Canal notes.

As with the Smith extension, a number of historic canals appear in fact to be "steal the plans" reworks of prehistoric originals. Based on it being a lot easier to "dig out an old ditch" than to engineer a new canal from scratch. Reworks are usually partial and often end at a cattle tank. Or, in the Smith case, servicing a pair of ponds.

The original continuance north beyond the Smith Ponds starts at "C". It is in heavy brush with a well defined and fairly deep channel clearly built to prehistoric standards and seemingly lacking any historic rework...



Here is what the well defined canal looks like at "D"...



The reach of the canal between "D" and "E" when crossing West Layton road is not very convincingly defined, despite some modest hints and several study trips. But it does have a uniquely reasonable slope and location.

The situation at "E" is rather complex in that it consists of three **parallel** tracks. These are a few feet away from each other and any one of which might conceivably have once been a prehistoric canal. Per this rather large current example...



The "main" portion of the Smith Extension canal appears to be a pair of parallel canals. The larger and eastern one ranges from "F" to "G". With this "F" southern example...



Habitation sites and limited paint ware are in association with both routes. Here is the northern "G" image...





A second and parallel Smith Extension canal reach lies a few hundred feet to the west at "H" and "I". It is quite small and of limited depth, but clearly shows up on [Acme Mapper](#). It is also remarkably straight and has several tradeware potsherds in association. The role and purpose of this canal remains unknown with only the barest hints of a more southern sourcing...



At present, the canal destination remains unknown, but the Central Dump lake would appear to be of a reasonably credible location and elevation.

Curiously, there are a few distinct but short "almost" canals in the area of undetermined purpose and age. Their relationships with the Smith Extension canal and the Jernigan canal remain unexplained...

- N 32.83534 W 109.82112 - Short segment above Layton Road area.
- N 32.84207 W 109.82107 - Possible but weak Western branch Feeder.
- N 32.83911 W 109.81534 - Evidence of a short second aqueduct?
- N 32.84240 W 109.81390 - Mystery northern Jernigan canal branch.

Here are some current interest points of the [Smith Extension Canal](#)

- N 32.81485 W 109.84926 - "A" Ash Creek Cluff Ponds taken point.
- N 32.82047 W 109.84383 - "B" Start of historic Smith Canal.
- N 32.82010 W 109.84085 - "C" Start of a well defined canal portion.
- N 32.82420 W 109.83840 - "D" Ending of well defined canal portion.
- N 32.83313 W 109.82565 - "E" Location of very dim mid canal hint.
- N 32.83951 W 109.81874 - "F" Start of main western parallel branch.
- N 32.84360 W 109.81770 - "G" Continuance of main western branch.
- N 32.84366 W 109.81942 - "H" Start of western parallel branch.
- N 32.84644 W 109.81882 - "I" Continuance of western parallel branch.
- N 32.85569 W 109.81544 - "J" Possible Central Dump pond destination.

Some suggested future Smith Extension Canal work includes...

- Resolve big gaps in the canal route.
- Improve marginal discoveries.
- Determine probable destination.
- Explain parallel path issues.
- Review decorative potsherds.
- Create a flyable drone Lidar KML product.
- Study short unconnected area segments.
- Publish professionally.
- Update and improve the other field notes.