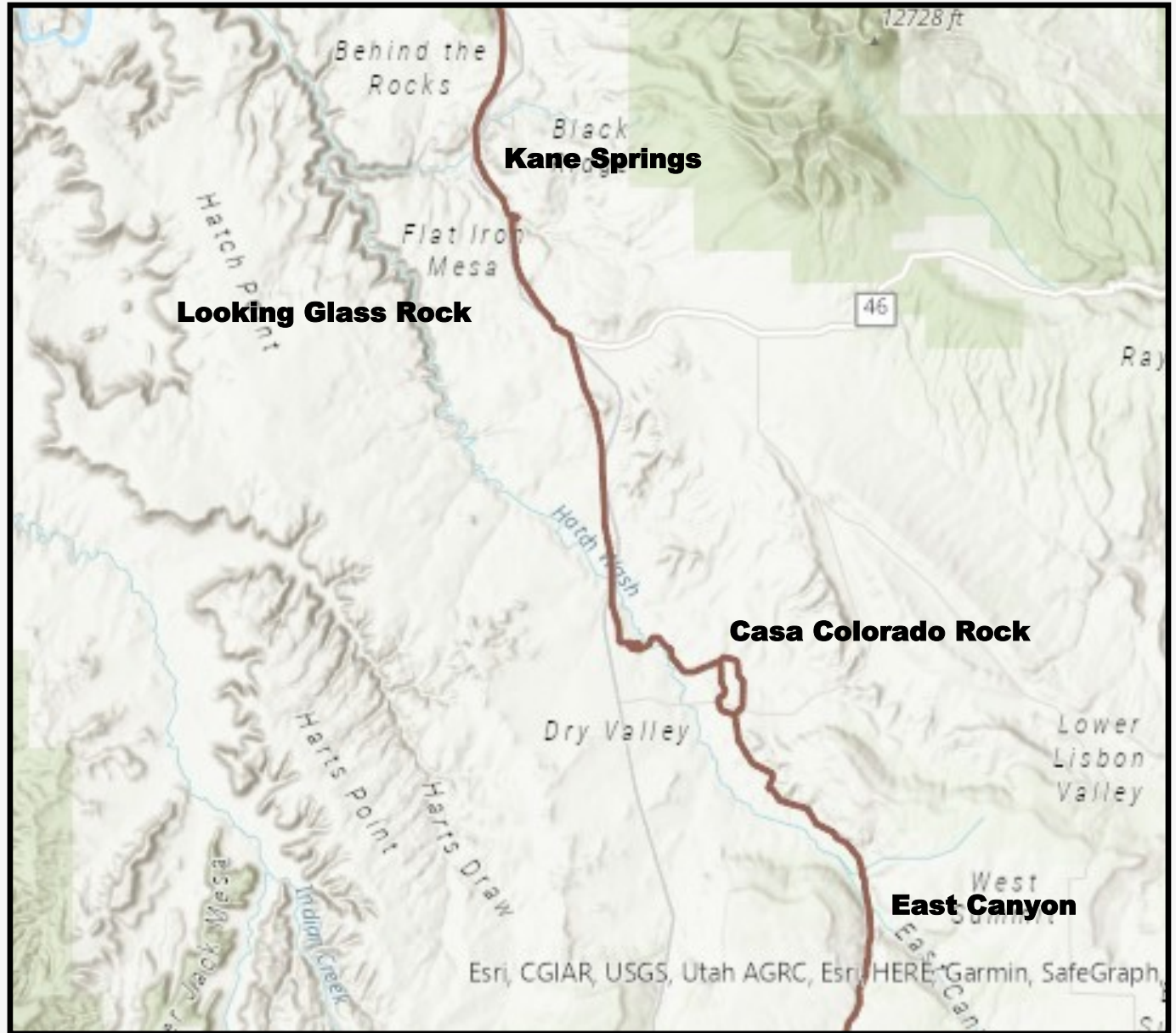


**MOAB MUSEUM**

# **OLD SPANISH NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL**

**The route thru San  
Juan County, Utah**



**1** Version 1

## **THE OLD SPANISH NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL**

**The route thru San Juan County, Utah**



**MOAB MUSEUM**

The Moab Museum — working with the National Park Service, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Canyon Country Chapter of the Backcountry Housemen, and the San Juan County Department of Economic Development — proposes a joint effort to physically mark the route of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail in San Juan County, Utah, the most scenic part of the trail in southeastern Utah.

This project focuses on the trail from the southern end of East Canyon Wash, near Monticello, north to Kane Springs, just south of Spanish Valley, a route length of approximately 31 miles, passing several major land forms such as Casa Colorado Rock, Looking Glass Rock, Wilson Arch, and Kane Springs. Always in the distance is the La Sal Mountains, guiding the mule caravans to the Colorado River crossing at Moab.

The maps and GPS coordinates noted on the following pages use information from the NPS ArcGIS Open Data Portal (<https://nps.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=24fc463363f54929833580280cc1a751>).

For the Moab Museum, this project enables us to interpret the history and significance of the Old Spanish Trail as a major historic artifact and event in San Juan County.

Initially, Dennis Brown, a Trustee of the Moab Museum, will coordinate our efforts developing this project.

Phone: 435-259-0537

Email: [dennis.dubuque@gmail.com](mailto:dennis.dubuque@gmail.com)

**Tasks to complete this project proposal are:**

- 1. Determine the people and groups needed to develop and complete this project,**
- 2. Survey the proposed route determining where and how to mark the trail,**
- 3. Determine if the proposed route crosses non-public land,**
- 4. Identify and evaluate any archeological sites the route crosses,**
- 5. Develop permanent signage for significant locations/events associated with the proposed route,**
- 6. Proposed appropriate criteria for traveling the proposed route such as horse pack trips, hiking, and guided group tours.**

## List of Route Sections



The following pages describe each section of the proposed route for the Old Spanish National Historic Trail in San Juan County, Utah. The maps and GPS information is from the NPS ArcGIS Open Data Portal.

- Page 4 East Canyon Wash
- Page 5 East Canyon Wash to White Rock
- Page 6 White Rock to Casa Colorado Rock
- Page 7 Casa Colorado to Steens Road
- Page 8 Steens Road to Joe Wilson Canyon
- Page 9 Joe Wilson Canyon to West Cayote Creek
- Page 10 West Cayote Creek to Mule Shoe Canyon
- Page 11 Mule Shoe Canyon to Kane Springs

Viewing these maps it appears that the route shown goes over elevation changes that are easily avoided. Only an on-site investigation will determine a practical route.

The active use of the trail for mule caravans was between 1829 and 1849. There is little information how visible the trail was on the ground. The caravans may have used the La Sal Mountains on other landmarks for guidance.

## East Canyon Wash

After descending a thousand feet from the Great Sage Plain of Eastern Utah to the southern end of East Canyon Wash.

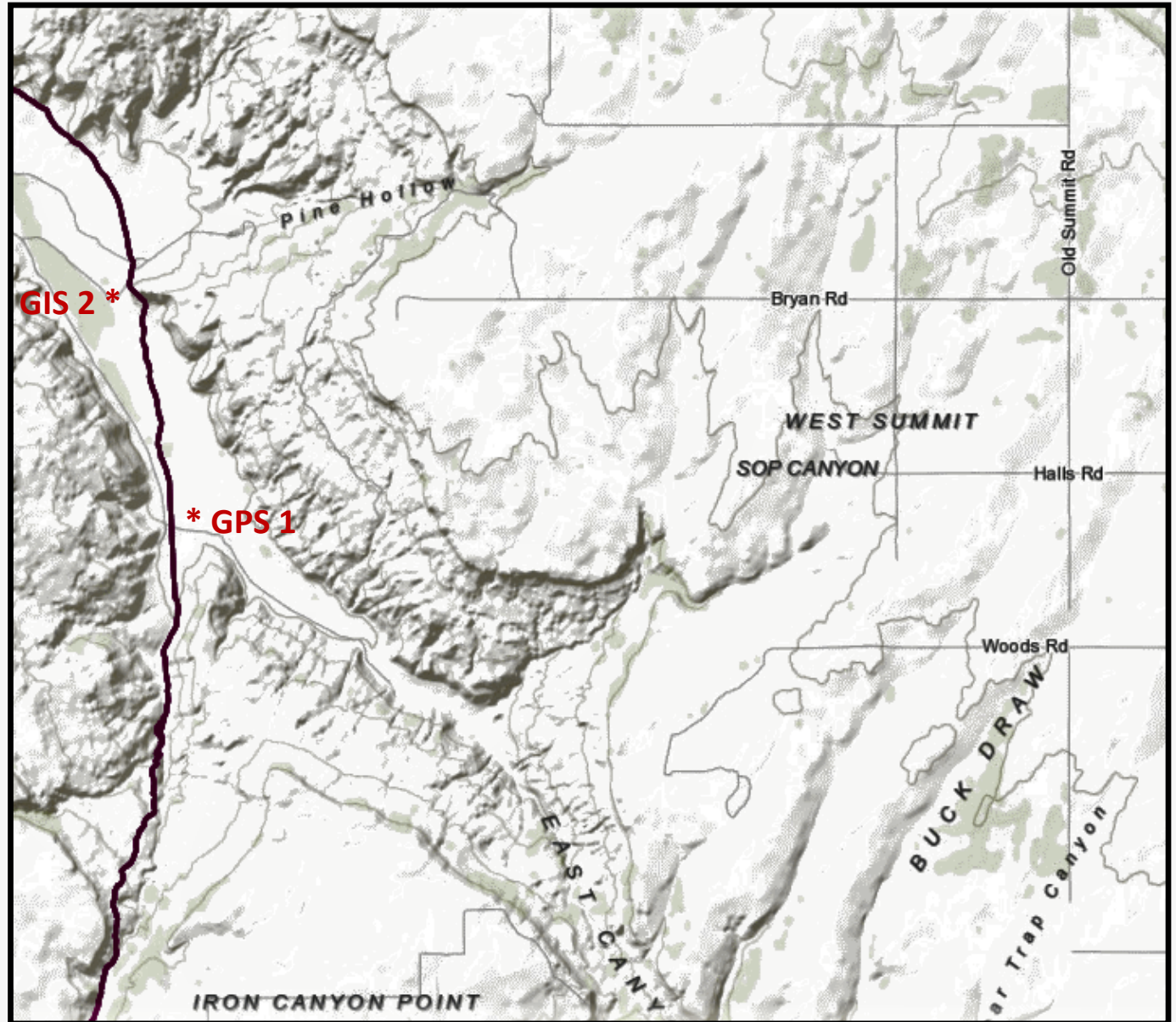
Starting here, the route continues north hugging the western edge of Deerneck Mesa to White Rock.



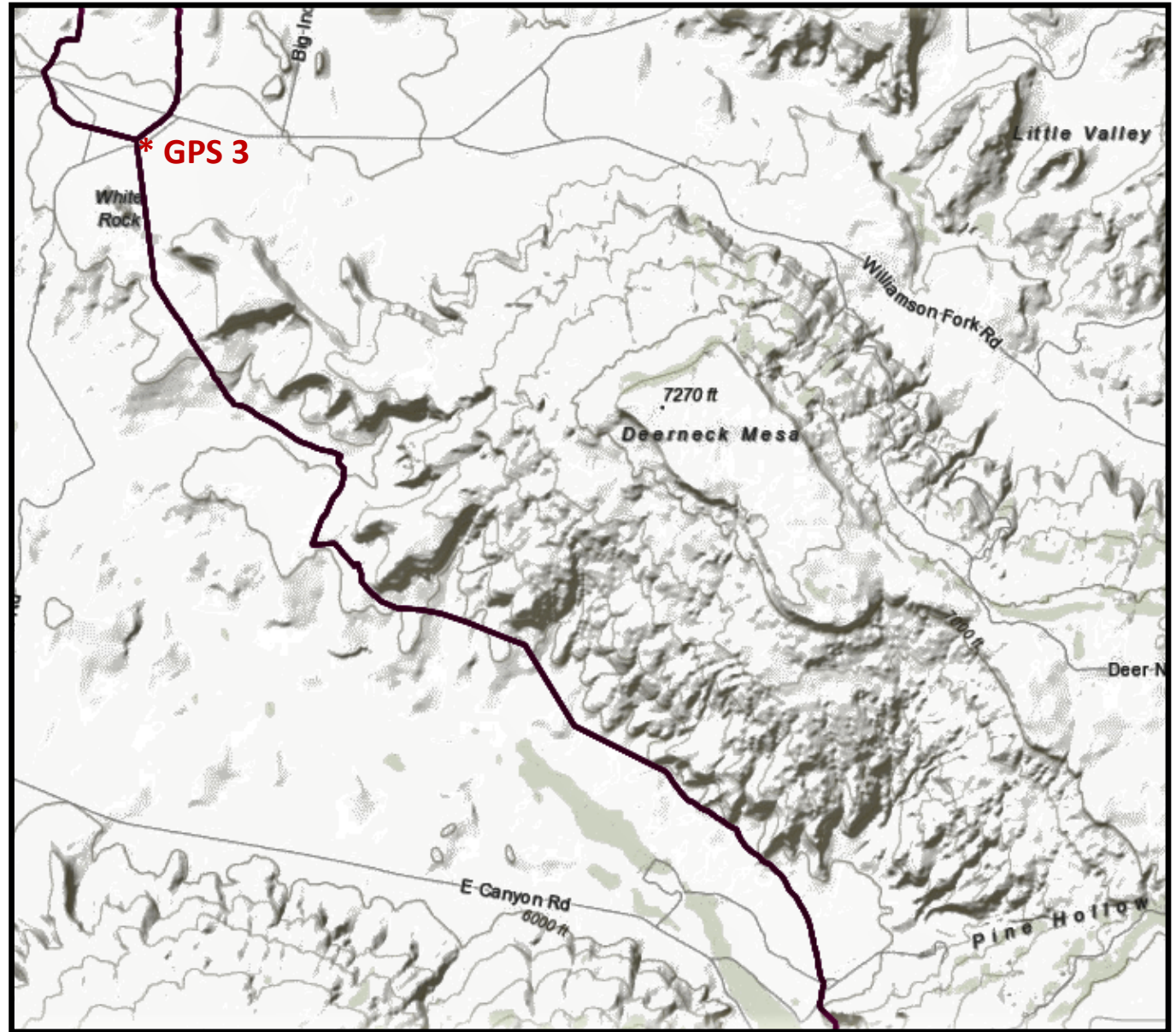
View across East Canyon Wash to the western edge of West Summit.

GPS1 -109.23134 38.04983

GPS 2 -109.23417 38.06855



**East Canyon Wash to White  
Rock: 10 miles**



GPS 3 -109.30738 38.14163

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## White Rock to Casa Colorado Rock: 2.2 miles

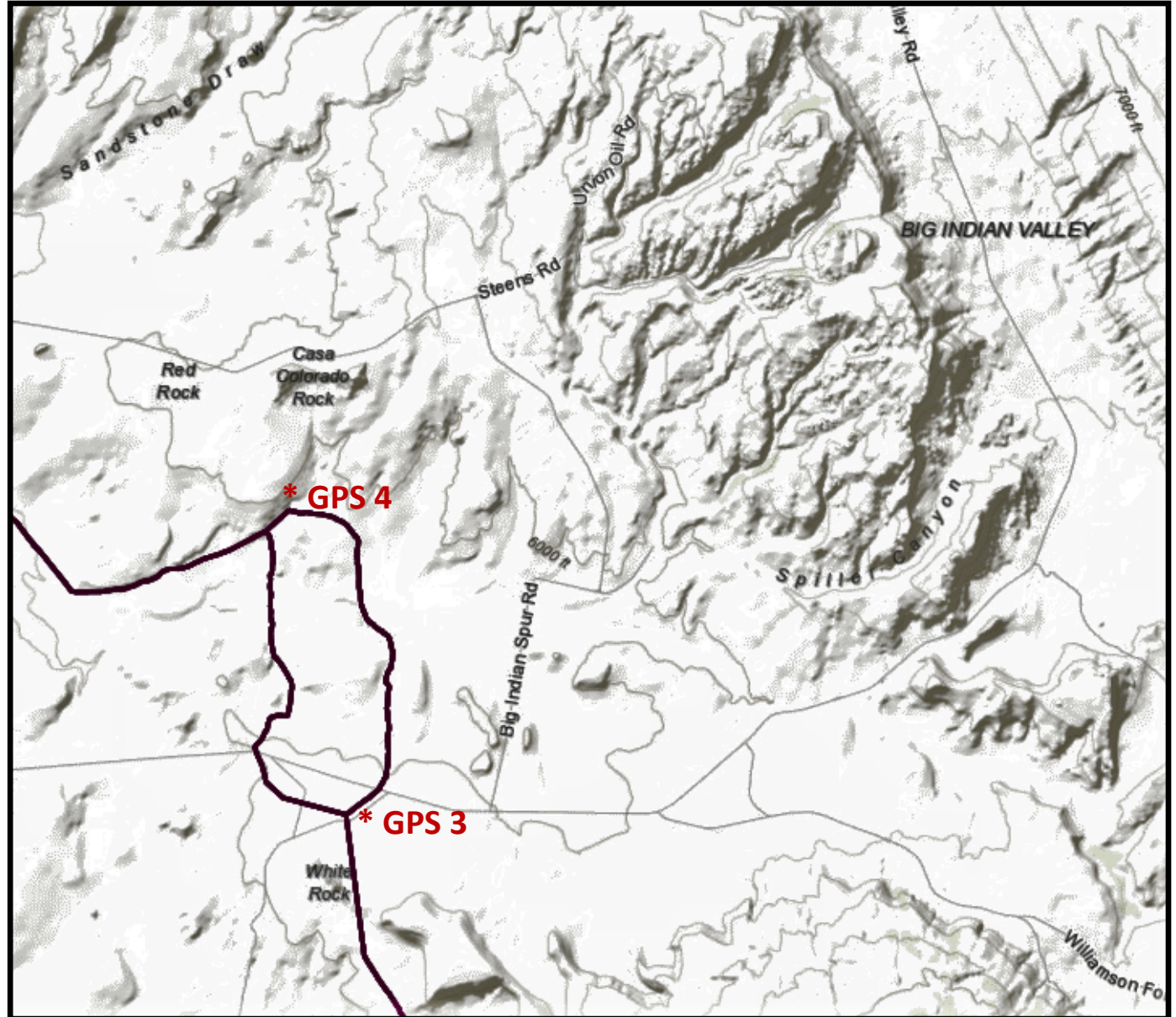
In the wash from the base of Casa Colorado Rock there is a large natural water cistern called La Tinaja where the mule caravans replenished their water supplies.



Casa Colorado Rock, viewed from the south. With LaSal Mountains beyond

GPS 3 -109.31348 38.16687

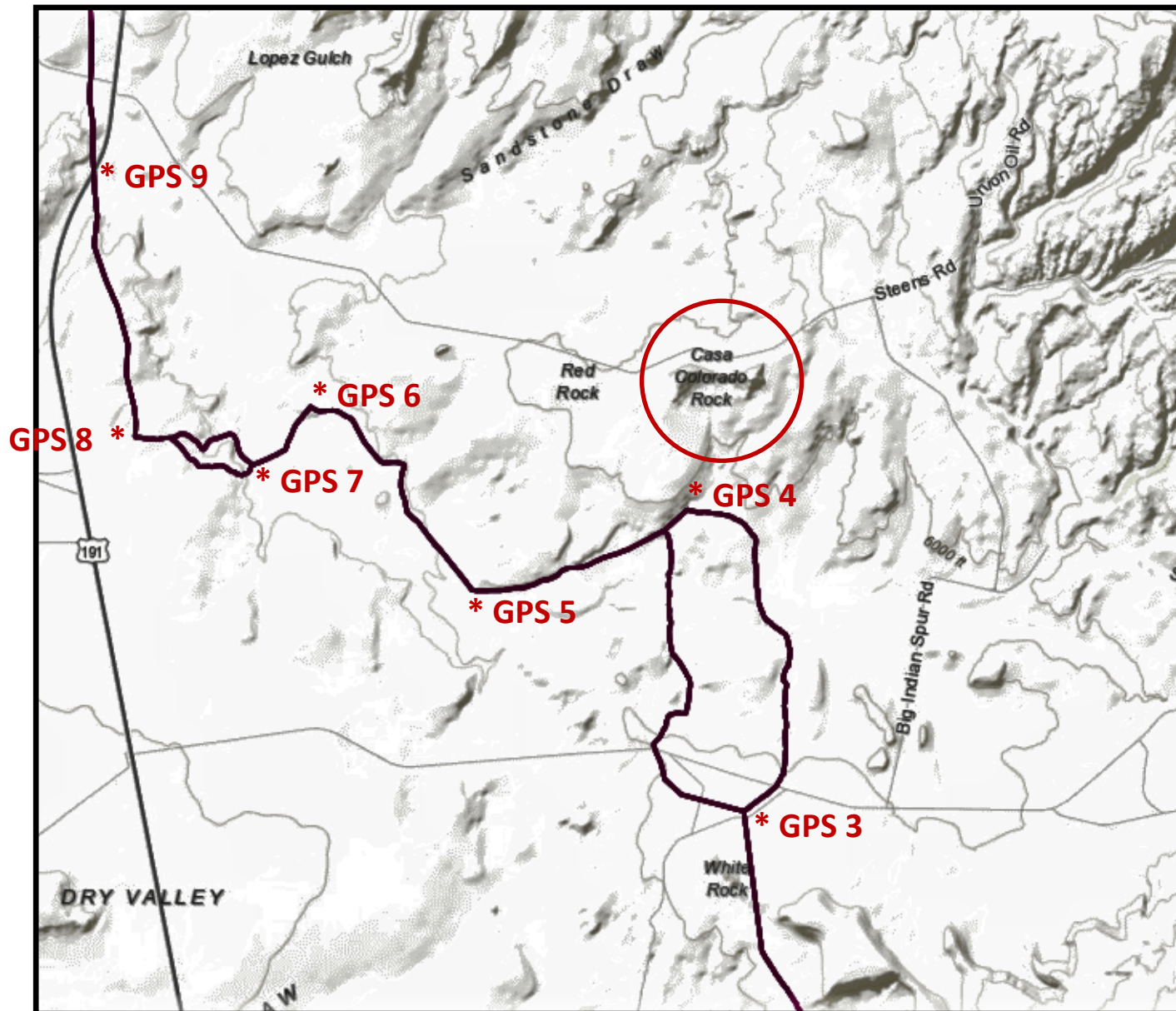
GPS 4 -109.23417 38.06855



## Casa Colorado Rock to Steens Road: 5.7 miles

Shown are 2 routes getting to Casa Colorado Rock, probably want to choose one.

From Casa Colorado Rock the trail shifts about to get around the washes.



GPS 3 -109.31348 38.16687

GPS 4 -109.23417 38.06855

GPS 5 -109.33656 38.16026

GPS 6 -109.35382 38.17578

GPS 7 -109.36008 38.17072

GPS 8 -109.37257 38.17314

GPS 9 -109.37708 38.19548

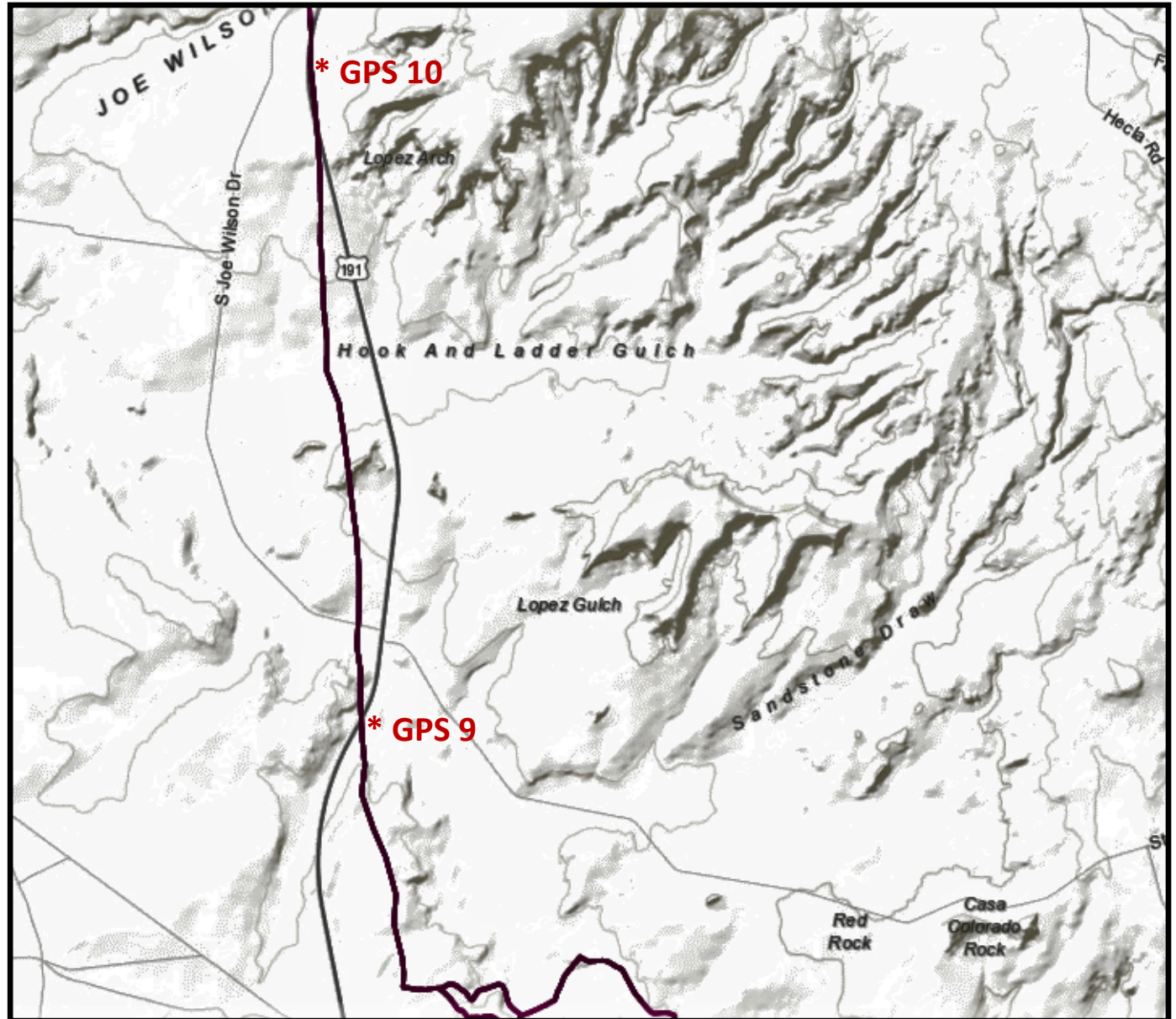
**Steens Road to Joe Wilson Canyon: 2.2 miles**



Joe Wilson Canyon, a popular hiking and horse riding area.

GPS 9 -109.37708 38.19548

GPS 10 -109.38553 38.25212





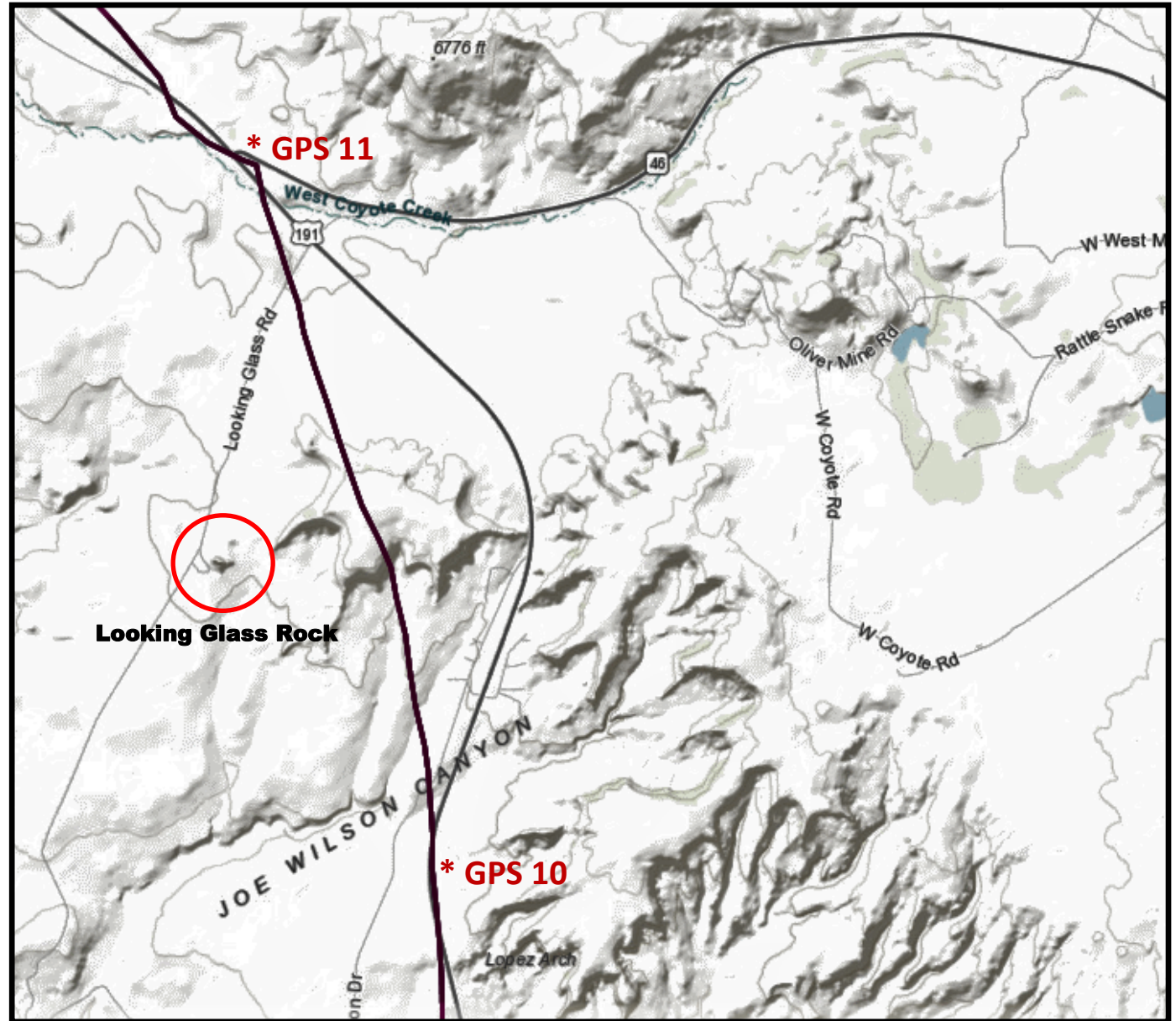
**Joe Wilson Canyon to West Coyote Creek: 8 miles**



Looking Glass Rock, the arch is not visible from US Hwy 191.

GPS 10 -109.38553 38.25212

GPS 11 -109.40107 38.30834



**West Coyote Creek to Mule Shoe Canyon: 4.75 miles**

**Loop around Mule Shoe Canyon: 4 miles**



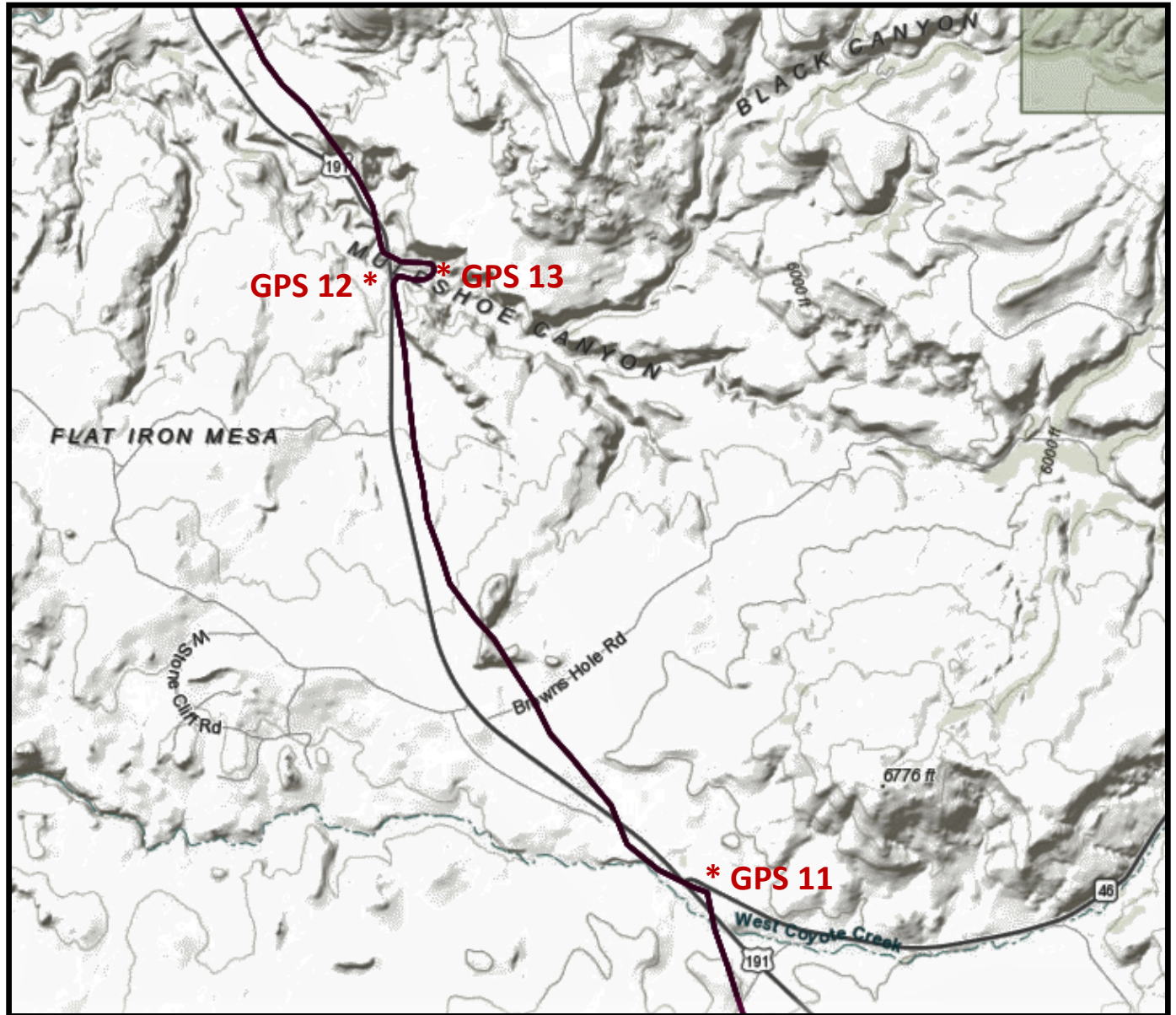
Mule Shoe Canyon, a popular hiking and climbing area.

Image by Paul Bucher

GPS 11 -109.40107 38.30834

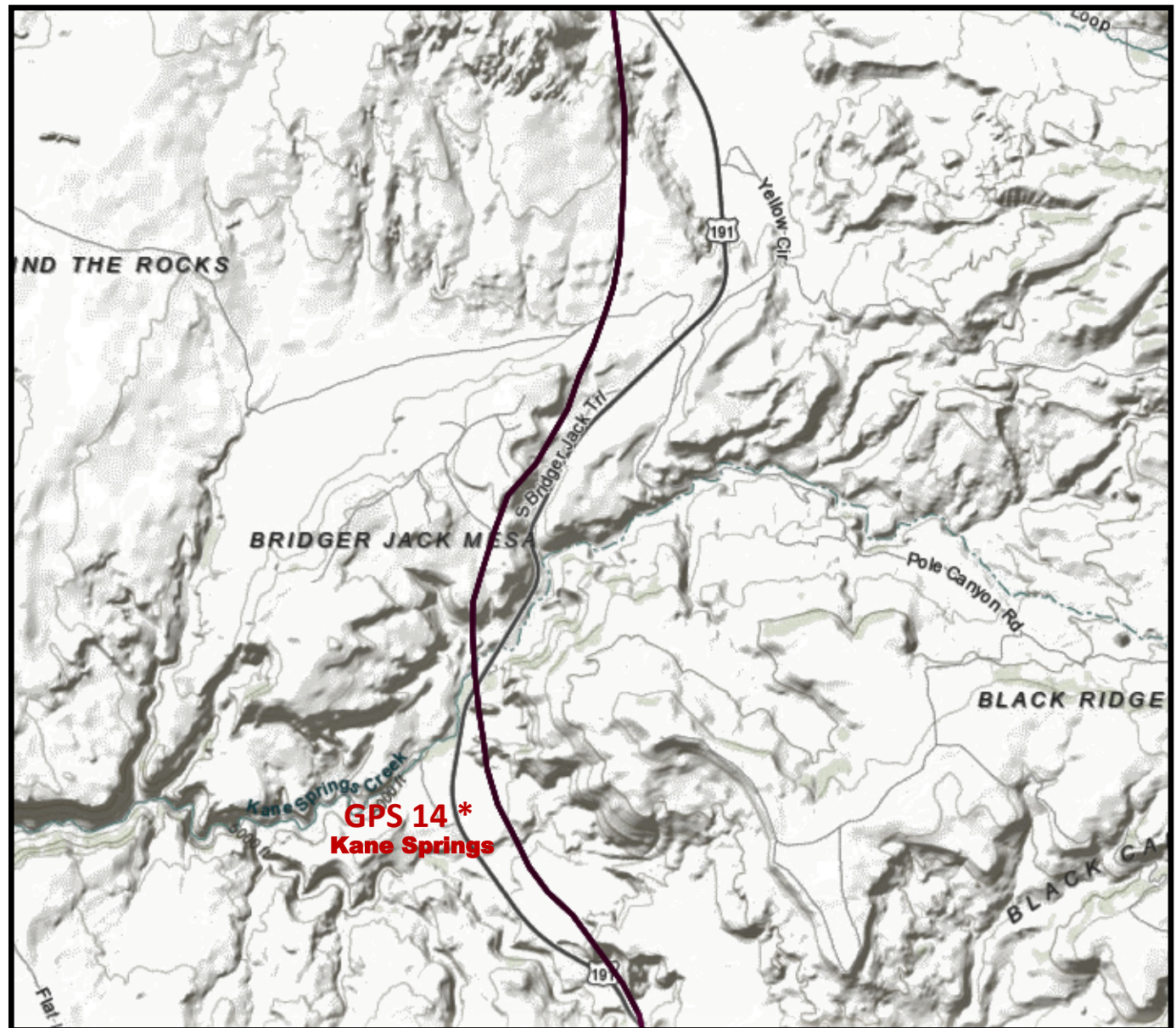
GPS 12 -109.43340 38.35879

GPS 13 -109.43010 38.36028



## Mule Shoe Canyon to Kane Springs: 3 miles

Because of the surrounding mesas and canyons, the route follows US Hwy 191, so is probably not a pleasant travel experience.



GPS 14 -109.45368 38.39216

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