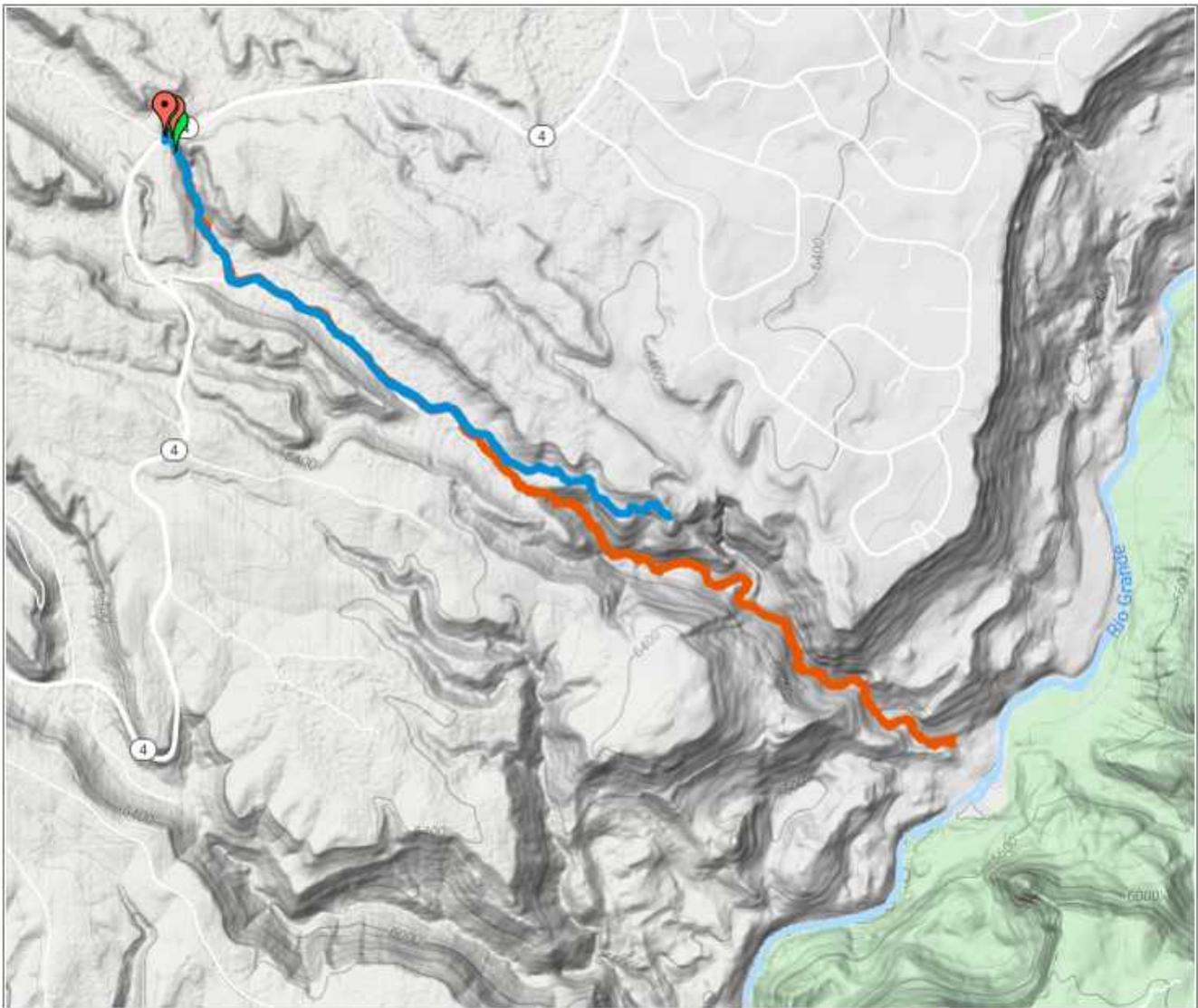


## 20 May 2020 – Lower Water Canyon - Evan Rose

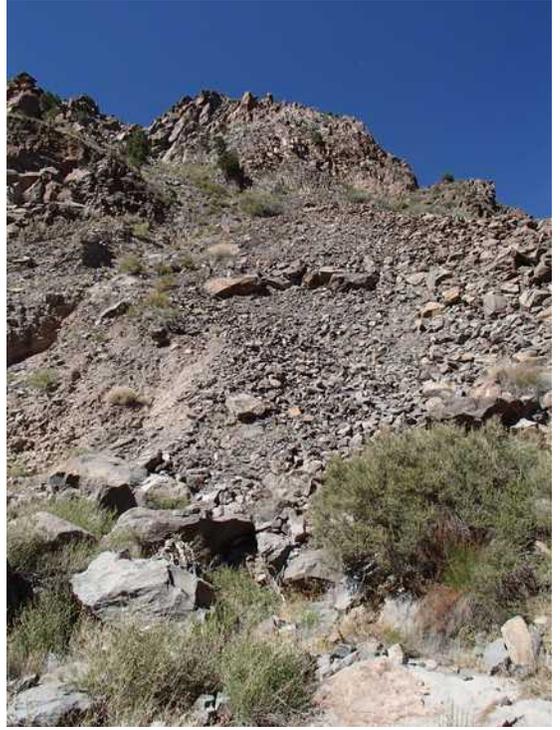
To access the trailhead, drive south and west from White Rock on NM 4 for about two miles. I accessed the canyon from Gate #7, which is below road grade and not visible from the road. Park on the south side of the road across from a gate to LANL property to avoid hassles from laboratory security. Proceed through the gate and walk southeast on the well-marked trail.

The blue path shows the standard route along the north rim of Water Canyon. Good views across the Rio Grande are available at the end of this route. To access the floor of Water Canyon, follow the drainage where the trail crosses Broken Mesa Trail. Proceed down the drainage along the orange path, which involves some easy walking, modest rock hopping and downclimbs, and bushwhacking through some trees and brush. The variety makes for an interesting hike. I stopped at the pour off a couple hundred yards short of the Rio Grande where there are good views of the river.



A quick photo tour of the canyon:





Exploring where Lower Water Canyon meets the Rio Grande River:



View looking upstream, while standing at the pour off.



Photo of the smooth gray rocks at the edge of the pour off. The cliff is to the left. The cleft in the cliff for the watercourse does not appear to offer a downclimb. I think it would yield to a partner with a rope.



Looking downstream. I estimate the cliff at 30 feet.



Looking upstream. The cliff appears to break down in this direction, although I did not explore this area further.

On my return, as I was crossing the drainage and after emerging from a willow grove, I heard loud and insistent rattling. My legs backed me away, automatically. I returned to obtain a photo, before proceeding up a rockfall on my side of the drainage.



Rattlesnake near the willow grove. View blocked by alfalfa.



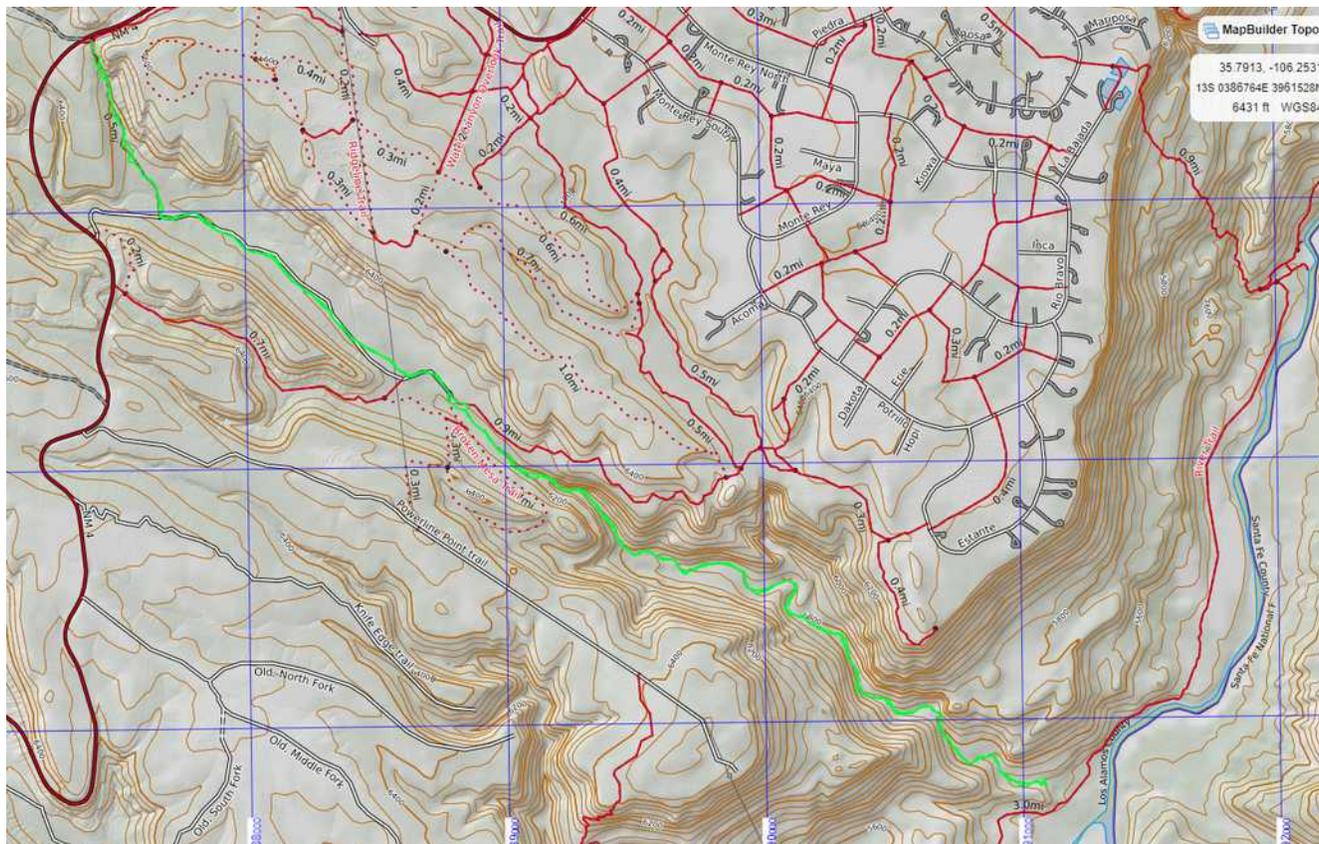
Enlargement of the business end of my rattlesnake.



Interesting monolith by the main footpath. Could it be a human-shaped stone?

This is an enjoyable hike. I started at 2 PM and finished at 7 PM.

Route Map, showing White Rock and other local trails.



Trail Terminus, detail at the pour off, just short of the River Trail and the Rio Grande.

