



## Utah: Day-Hiking Remote and Wild Canyons

Trip #2044

*October 23 to November 1, 2020*

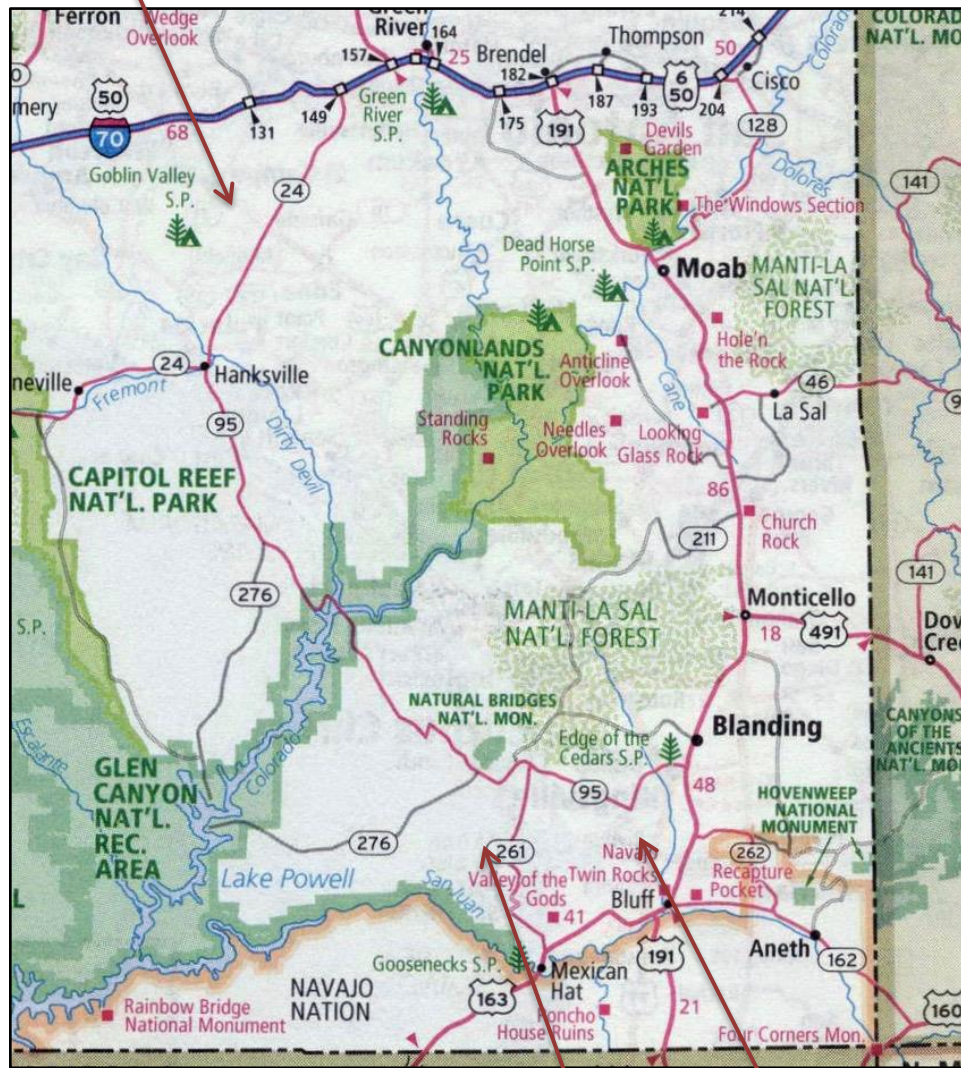


### *Introduction*

The less visited remote canyons in Southeast Utah contain rock art, Ancestral Puebloan ruins, and so much more. Come with us, to avoid the crowds at the “popular” National Parks as we explore this beautiful red rock country with its plethora of pictographs, slot canyons, hoodoos, bridges, and breathtaking scenery. We will visit Natural Bridges National Monument, Grand Gulch, Hovenweep, Comb Ridge and slot canyons. We will learn about the Ancestral Puebloans who occupied these lands for thousands of years. We will learn the history, archeology and geology of these special places. Join us on a journey to explore sacred places, and deepen our understanding of those who came before us.

Little Wildhorse

## Southeast Utah



Grand Gulch

Comb Ridge

### Trip Difficulty

This trip is rated #4/#5 (moderate to vigorous). AMC Trip Rating Chart: [Ratings](#)

We will hike for eight consecutive days, from two to eight hours per day. Every evening the leaders will describe the hike for the following day so participants can plan accordingly. The hikes will be 4–10 miles in length. All the hikes have less than 1500' of elevation change. However, the terrain will be rugged and steep in places, and requires agility. There may be short sections on narrow trails with exposure (steep drop-offs). We will hike at a modest pace, which will permit time for photos and rest breaks. Participants should be in excellent shape and be able to hike for most of the day.

### Climate and Elevation

High-desert temperatures are variable in October. Expect warm to hot days and cool evenings. Be prepared for a wide range of conditions. Rain gear and layered clothing is essential. We will hike at elevations between 5,000 and 6,000 feet.



## *Itinerary*

### **Day 1 – Fri. 10/23:**

Fly to Salt Lake City, where we will enjoy a welcome dinner at a local restaurant and spend the night at a motel.

### **Day 2 – Sat. 10/24:**

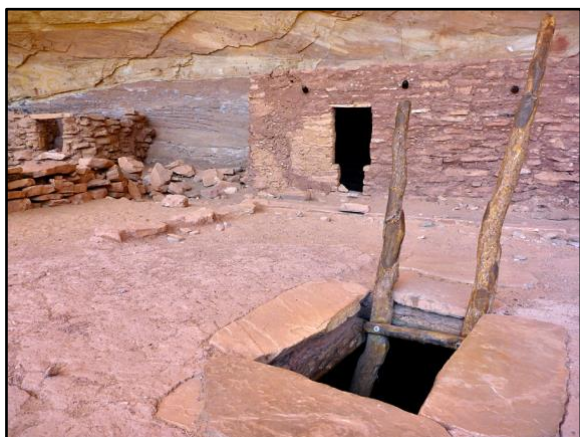
After breakfast at the motel, we will make our lunch and drive to Blanding. It is a 6-hour drive. We will stop en route for a short walk to stretch our legs. Night in Blanding motel.

### **Day 3 – Sun. 10/25:**

We will drive about one hour to Natural Bridges. Natural Bridges was declared a National Monument by President Teddy Roosevelt in 1908. This park contains three of the largest natural bridges in the world. We will hike down to one of the Bridges, and walk along the canyon bottom to another bridge before re-ascending. We will then walk across the flat mesa to return to our vehicles. 9 miles and 640' of elevation change. Night in Blanding.



*Sipapu Bridge at Natural Bridges National Monument*



*Perfect Kiva*

### **Day 4 – Mon. 10/26:**

Drive about one hour to Cedar Mesa. Hiking in Cedar Mesa/Grand Gulch gives us the opportunity to explore a remote and pristine canyon that sees few visitors. We will hike down Bullet Canyon and visit Perfect Kiva and Jailhouse Ruin. 10 miles and 770' of elevation change.



*Jailhouse Ruin*

**Day 5 – Tues. 10/27:**

Today we visit Hovenweep National Monument in southwest Colorado. 750 year-old large fortress-like towers are clustered along the rim of Little Ruin Canyon. These were once thriving communities. At the Visitors Center, we will learn about the lives of these Ancestral Puebloans. After we visit these structures, we will hike 4 miles to the Holly Group of structures. Total hike of 10 miles today.

*Hovenweep*



**Day 6 – Wed. 10/28:**

We return to Cedar Mesa. If we are able to get permits in advance, we will hike to the incredible Moon House Ruin. Moon House is a large, carefully protected ruin with a protective wall in front of the individual rooms. From a scientific perspective, Moon House is world renowned, unique to the region, and is a significant cultural treasure. It is a relatively short hike, but there are a few tricky sections with drop offs. Night in Blanding.

*Moonhouse Ruin*



**Day 7 – Thurs. 10/29**

Drive to Comb Ridge, another remote and rarely visited area. We will hike to Procession Panel to see this 20-foot long conga line of 179 figures. We will then continue to the top of Comb Ridge for incredible views. If time allows we may do another short hike in the area. Drive to Hanksville, where we will spend the night.

*Procession Panel*



**Day 8 – Fri. 10/30:**

Drive about 45 minutes to Little Wildhorse Canyon. We will hike up Little Wildhorse, and return via Bell Canyon. This is a fun and great introduction to slot canyons. We will be in the recently protected area called the San Rafael Swell. 8 miles and 710 feet of elevation change. Night in Hanksville.



**Day 9 – Sat. 10/31:**

On our drive back to Salt Lake City, we will stop for a short visit at Goblin Valley State Park. We will wander amongst the giant mushroom and alien shaped hoodoos and “goblins”. We’ll have our picnic lunch here before continuing our drive to Salt Lake City. We’ll enjoy a fine farewell dinner while we reminisce about our wonderful adventure and the new friends we have made. Night in Salt Lake City.

*Goblin Valley State Park*



**Day 10 – Sun. 11/1:**

End of trip and flights home.

### *Possible Itinerary Changes*

Weather conditions, delayed flights, automotive breakdowns, or road conditions can change our daily plans. Everyone is expected to “roll with the punches”, be cooperative, abide by leaders’ decisions, assist leaders as requested and add to the group experience, while enjoying themselves. Foremost, while leaders will try to offer options and solicit participant preferences, the decision of the leaders will always be final as they are ultimately responsible for the safety of the group.

### *Experience and Risks*

People wishing to participate on this trip must have previous hiking experience at the intermediate level or higher. Although the hiking will be over moderately strenuous terrain at a moderate pace, this is not a trip for beginners or people who do not hike on a regular basis. You should already be in good physical condition by the time you arrive. When you participate in this activity you should be both physically and mentally prepared and equipped with the appropriate gear. You should always be aware of the risks involved and conduct yourself accordingly. We are not responsible for your safety – you are. Prior to being accepted for this trip, you may be asked to discuss your capabilities with the leader. Please do not be offended by any questions. This area is known for its rugged, unforgiving and dangerous landscape. Some dangers that are relevant to southwest hiking include flash floods, exposure on high-desert trails, thunderstorms, heat and lack of water on desert routes.



*Little Wildhorse Canyon*

It may happen on any trip that a trip member is or becomes unable to participate in one or more of the planned activities. Leaders in their sole judgment have the right and obligation to refuse participation in any activity to any group member for reasons of safety, whether it be of the group or of the individual. Illness, injury or lack of proper gear or fitness for a particular activity are examples of some conditions that might result in a participant being unable to perform one or more activity. Leaders may try to find a substitute activity for the trip member, but this may not always be possible.

## *Being a Team Player*

We will be more than just a group; we are a team! If you enjoy being part of a group in a spectacular environment, then this trip may be just right for you. We will visit and hike in beautiful areas, proceeding at a moderate pace. We expect that everyone will stay together. If you like to “do your own thing”, to hike by yourself at your own pace, be it fast or slow, you will not enjoy this trip. If you are not willing to be part of the group activities, or help your fellow hiker when needed, then please do not register for this excursion. AMC travelers are known for their cooperative efforts, and we expect that all participants will be considerate of others that share this AMC trip experience.

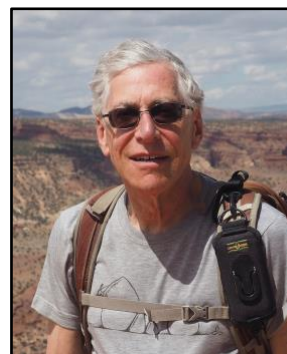
As participant safety is a high priority for all AMC-sponsored events, procedures and policies have been developed to attempt to limit participant risk. Participants are expected to work with volunteer leaders to reduce risks and make the experience successful for all. Participants should be aware that there are risks associated with outdoor adventure activities, including but not limited to adverse weather and environmental conditions, remote locations of our trips and camps, and transportation in vehicles, on foot, by boat, or on a bike. When you apply for acceptance onto a trip, please carefully read and sign the Adventure Travel Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks and Release and Indemnity Agreement and call if you have any questions.

## *Expectations*

The southwest is a remote area compared to where most of us live. On some days we will be driving long distances. There are limited choices of motels and restaurants in most of the places we will visit. We know that if you incorporate these expectations, you will fully enjoy this trip.

## *Trip Leadership*

**Ron Janowitz, Leader:** Ron lives in New Hampshire and regularly hikes in the White Mountains. He has been leading AMC Adventure Travel trips for ten years. He has led multiple AMC trips to southern Utah, and trips to Olympic National Park, Sedona, the Cascade Mountains, Death Valley, Idaho, Slovakia, Patagonia, Peru, Scotland, India, Switzerland, Ireland, Italy, and Albania. He volunteered for the Park Service for three months at Natural Bridges National Monument in Utah. He looks forward to sharing his enthusiasm for southeast Utah with the participants on this trip.



**Samir Patel, Co-Leader:** Samir first became a member of AMC in 1992. He leads for the Boston Chapter's hiking/backpacking committee and the Adventure Travel program. Prior to becoming a leader for the Adventure Travel program, he participated in trips around the world including New Zealand, the Dolomites in Italy, Patagonia, Japan, Mexico, Alaska, Canadian Rockies, and many national parks in the U.S. and abroad. He has co-led trips to New Zealand, the Canadian Rockies, Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks, and Alaska. He is scheduled to lead trips to Ireland, Nepal, and Hawaii in 2019 and 2020. Southern Utah and Red Rock Country, where he has visited numerous times, are some of his favorite places to hike and share with a group. He is certified for Wilderness First Aid via NOLS, and CPR via American Red Cross.

## *Trip Price*

The land price of this trip is \$2125, which includes all lodging, all meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 10, ground transportation, tours and park entrance fees. The price does not include airfare, estimated to be \$700. Not included is alcohol, items of a personal nature, and fees for any optional activities. Any unspent funds will be refunded to participants. In the unlikely event the actual costs exceed the advertised price, participants may have to contribute an additional amount. AMC Adventure Travel trips are run on a non-profit basis.

## *Accommodations/Meals/Transportation*

We will be staying in modest, comfortable motels – double occupancy, or comfortable cabins. We will have breakfast at the motels or at the cabin and make lunches to take with us on our hikes. We will have dinner at local restaurants every evening. We will rent SUVs and drive to the various locations. The leaders will drive, as well as some participants. DMV checks will be made for all drivers.

## *Application Process*

If you decide that you would like to sign up for this trip, let us know by email or give us a call. We will email you an Application, a Confidential Health Questionnaire, and a Liability Waiver. A reservation deposit of \$1000 per person is due with your application. Please make your check payable to the Appalachian Mountain Club and mail it with the completed forms to Ron at the address shown on the application. After we receive your application, we may talk to you about your hiking experience to ascertain your ability to participate successfully in this trip. Providing information to us about a medical issue or injury will not necessarily disqualify you from participation, but we may need to ask you some follow-up questions. We want to be sure that we can adequately provide for your needs in our backcountry locations.



## *Deposit and Payment*

Upon acceptance on the trip, we will notify you by email. At that point we will deposit your check into the trip account and use the money to cover trip expenses incurred on your behalf. The balance of \$1125 per person is due on April 1, 2020.

*Pottery sherds*

## *Cancellations*

Cancellations before April 1, 2020 will receive a full refund. Cancellations on or after April 1, 2020 will lose a minimum of \$200 of their deposit. Any additional refunds will only be made if it does not raise the cost of the trip to the other participants or leaders. There is a possibility that participants will not receive any refund. Participants are encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance. If the trip is cancelled by AMC, participants receive a full refund for any deposits and payments.

## *Insurance*

The basic policy that is included with your trip fee is through TripMate™ and includes \$200,000 for emergency medical evacuation. It also includes \$5,000 for medical accident expenses. Participants

should have their own medical insurance. If you are accepted on this trip, we will provide information about purchasing optional travel insurance that could cover cancellation, lost baggage, etc.

### ***AMC Mission***

AMC Adventure Travel trips are run in a manner supportive of and consistent with the conservation, recreational and educational principles and mission of the Club. Trip leaders encourage participant conduct consistent with Leave No Trace environmental and conservation principles and local regulations.

### ***Airlines and Travel***

The leaders can assist you in making airline reservations. Please arrive in Salt Lake City by 3 PM on Friday, October 23, 2020. The trip ends, and you may depart from Salt Lake City on Sunday, November 1. Of course, you may arrive earlier and depart later if you want to extend your trip.

### ***Questions***

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact one of the leaders to discuss.

Ron Janowitz: [ron@ronjanowitz.com](mailto:ron@ronjanowitz.com) or 603-625-9848

Samir Patel: [samir5670@yahoo.com](mailto:samir5670@yahoo.com) or 978-270-0714

### ***Required Gear***

Here is a list of what to bring on the trip. Most of the items are things you would bring for a day hike in the mountains.

- Day pack
- Personal first aid
- Rain gear (both jacket and pants)
- 2 one liter water bottles and/or hydration bladder
- Light gloves
- Warm hat (for chilly mornings)
- Light or midweight fleece jacket
- Comfortable hiking boots and socks
- Sandals or sneakers
- Long pants - synthetic
- Hiking shorts (zip off pants recommended)
- Synthetic T-shirts
- Long sleeve synthetic shirt
- Sunglasses
- Sun hat with wide brim
- Sun protection lotion
- Lip protection balm
- Leisure clothes for travel and restaurants (moderate amount)
- Personal toiletries including hand sanitizer
- Trowel, toilet paper and plastic bags for carrying out the used paper
- Head lamp with extra batteries

### ***Optional recommendations:***

- Bathing Suit
- Camera
- Ear plugs
- Extra prescription glasses, if worn



Short gaiters to keep rocks/dust out of boots  
Small knife (be sure to pack in check-in luggage, not carry on)  
Compass  
Extra shoelaces  
Zip lock bags  
Reading material for breaks in the action  
Hiking poles (be sure to pack in check-in luggage, not carry on)