

A wide-angle photograph of the Grand Canyon at sunset. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The canyon walls are illuminated by the warm, golden light of the setting sun, creating a strong contrast with the deep shadows in the valleys. The text is overlaid on the upper half of the image.

Backpacking the Grand Canyon

Walking the Wild

June 24, 2020

Dick Lambe



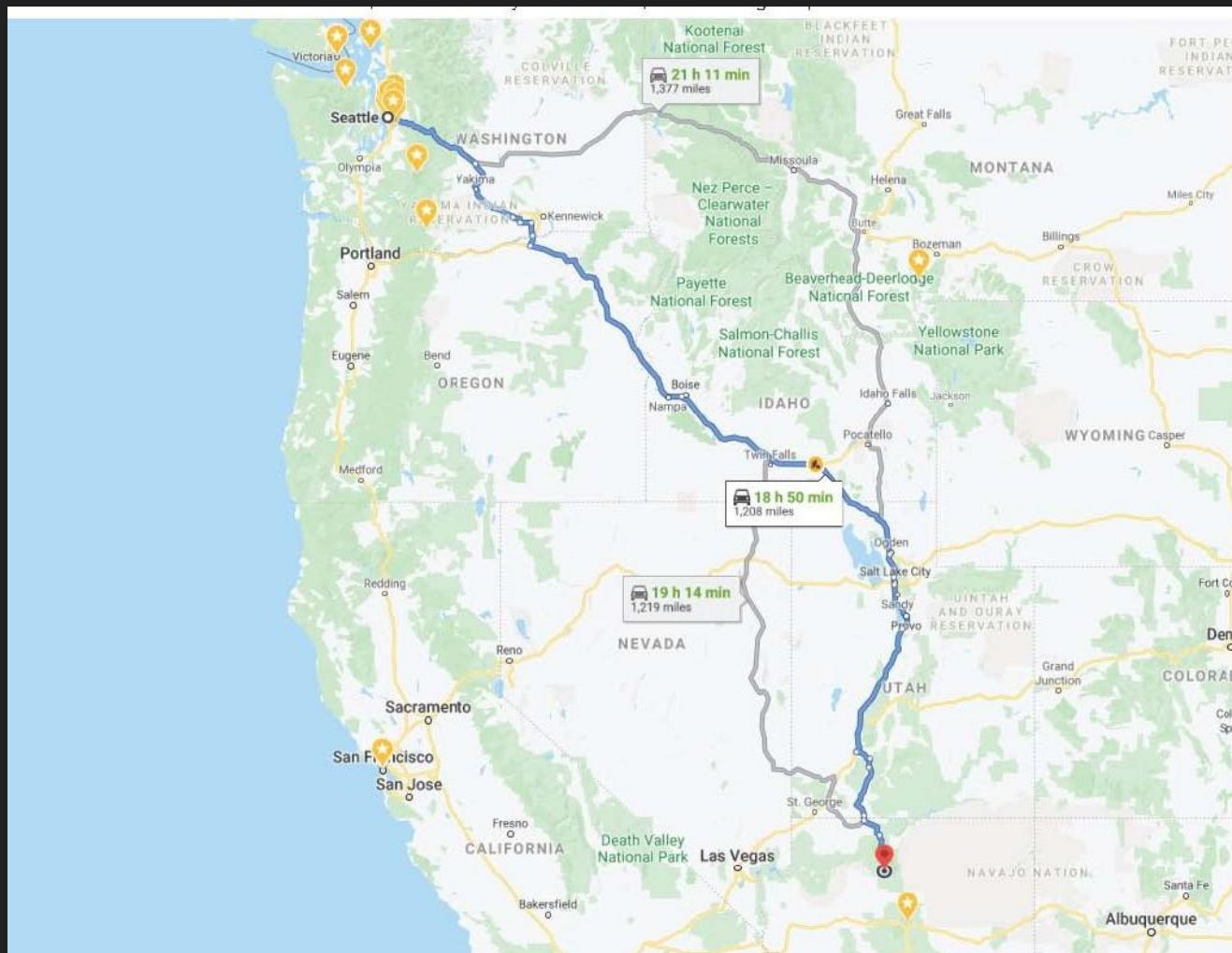








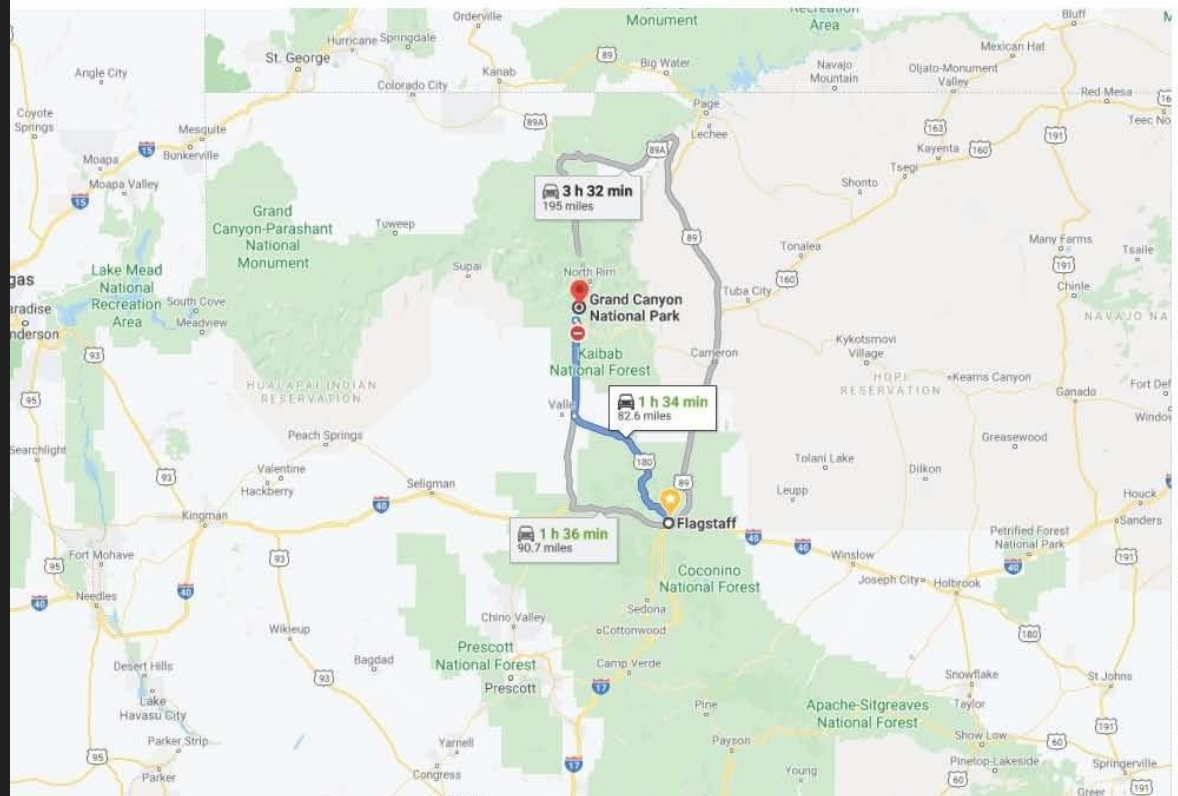


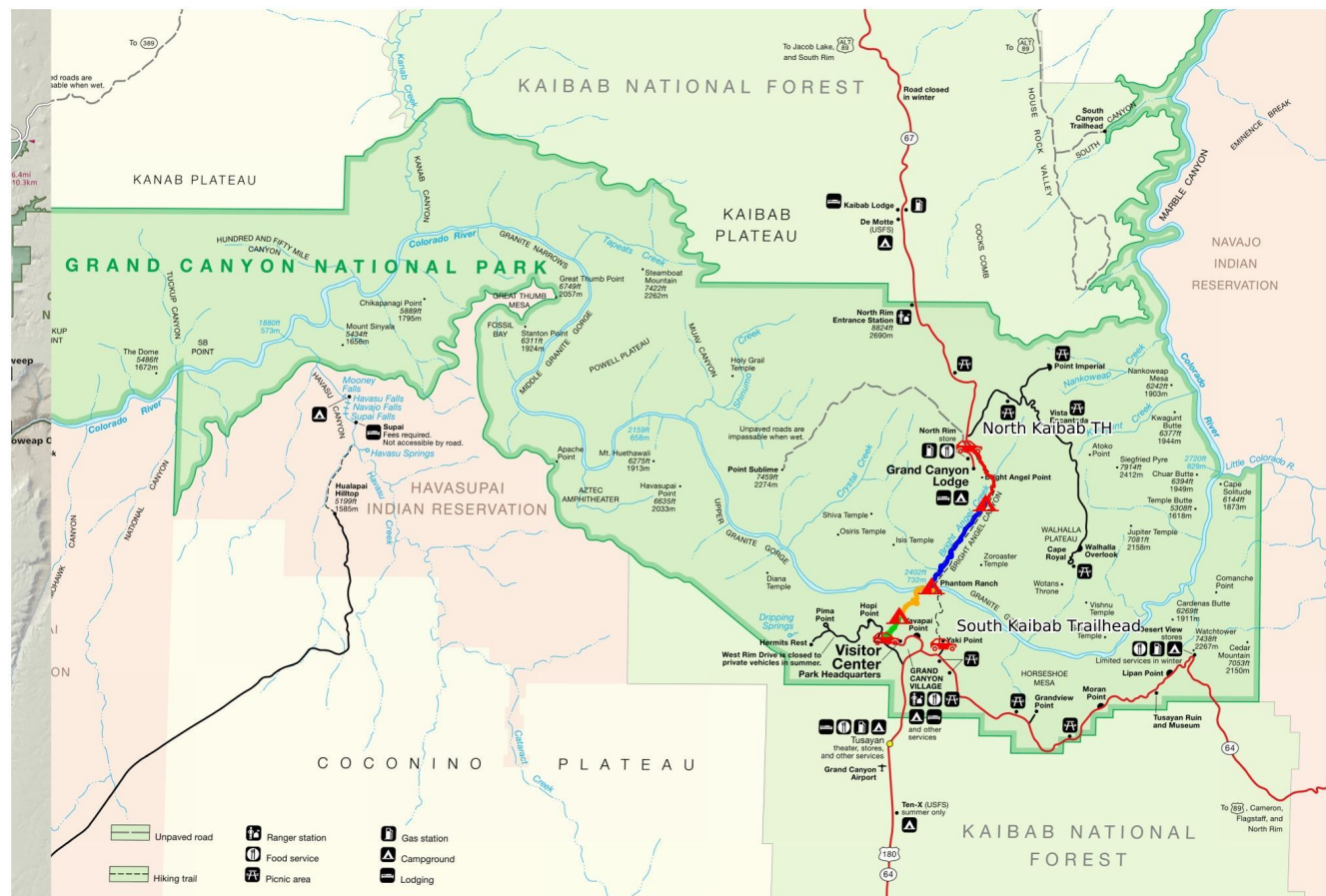


Flagstaff, AZ to Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona - Google Maps

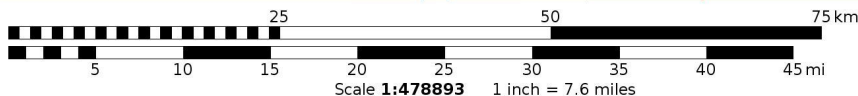
Flagstaff, AZ to Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona

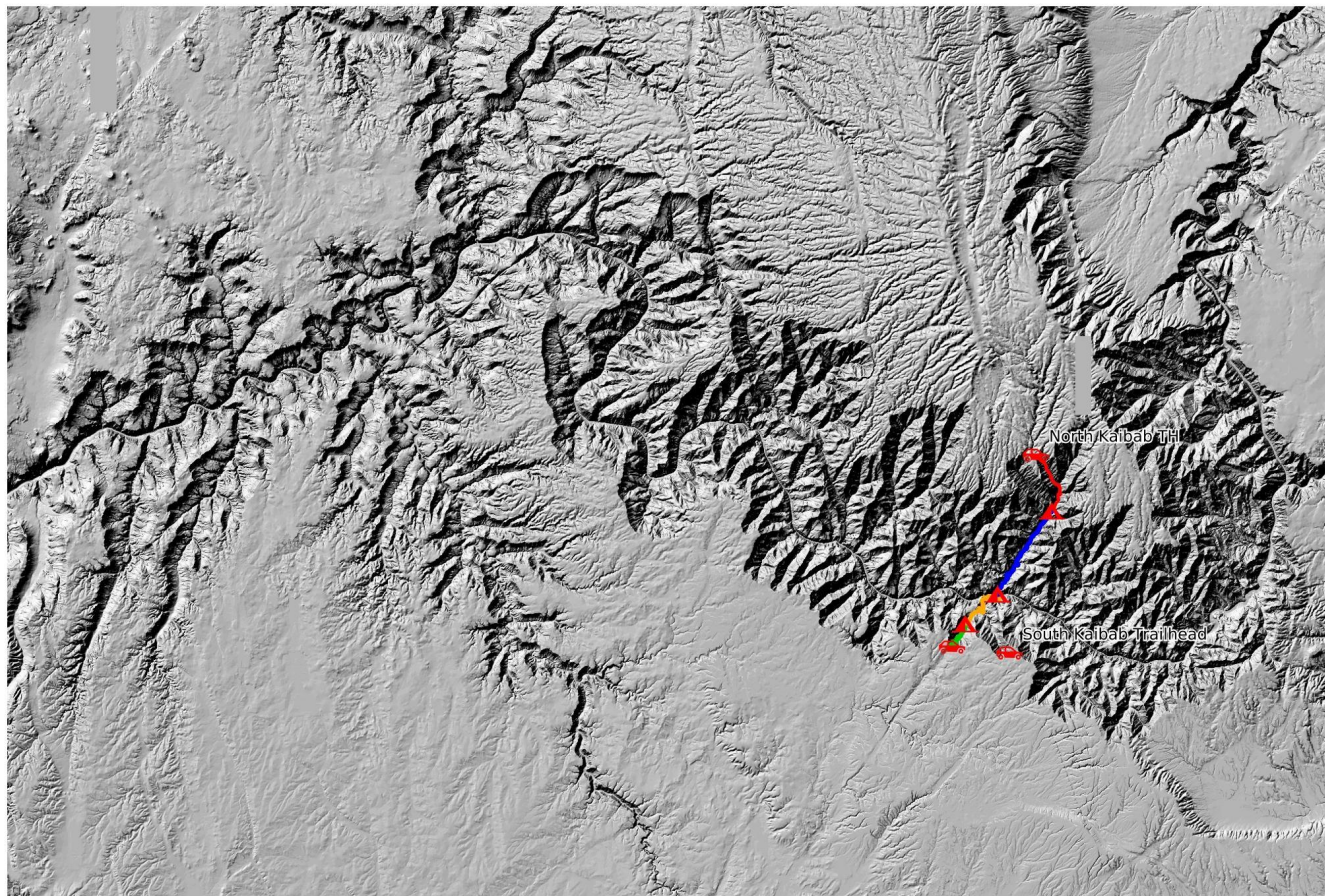
Drive 82.6 miles, 1 h 34 min





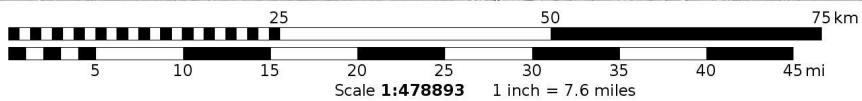
Mercator Projection
WGS84
USNG 12SUE-12SVF
CalTopo

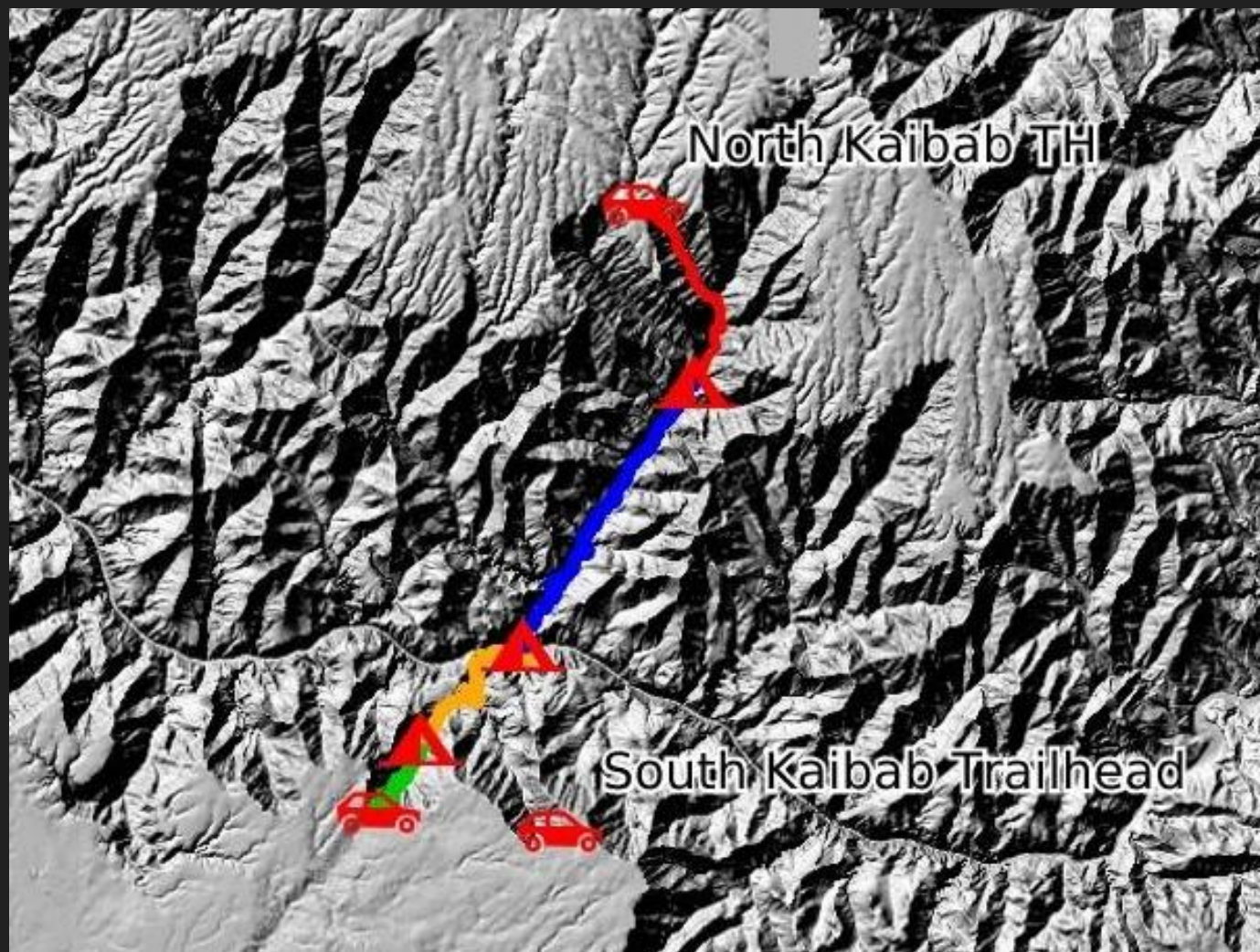




Mercator Projection
WGS84
USNG 12SUE-12SVF

CalTopo





Outline

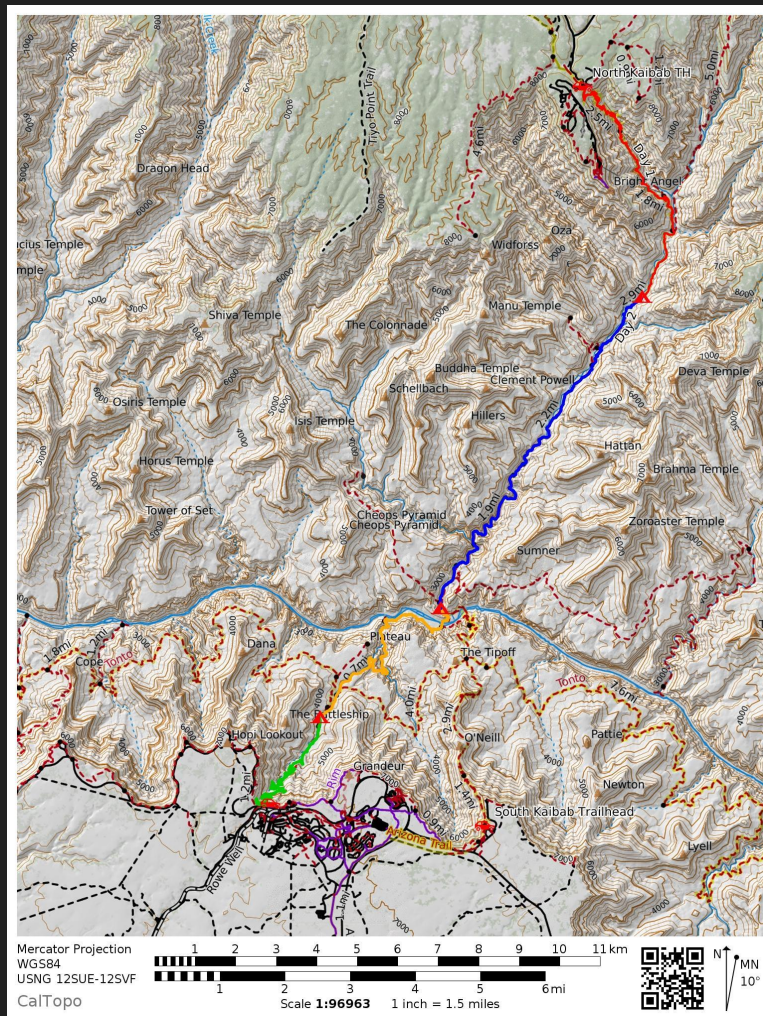
1. Rim to Rim trip October 2013
2. Focus on the area between South Rim and the River
 - a. Camps
 - b. Trail
 - c. Weather
 - d. Scenery
 - e. Based on 3 trips:
 - i. October 2003 - South Rim to River and back
 - ii. April 2010 - South Rim to River and back
 - iii. November 2011 - South Rim to River, including a section of the Tonto Trail (wind reroute)
 - f. Possible alternative Route - Tonto Trail to Granite Rapids

Break for questions

3. Scramble along the River, November 2012

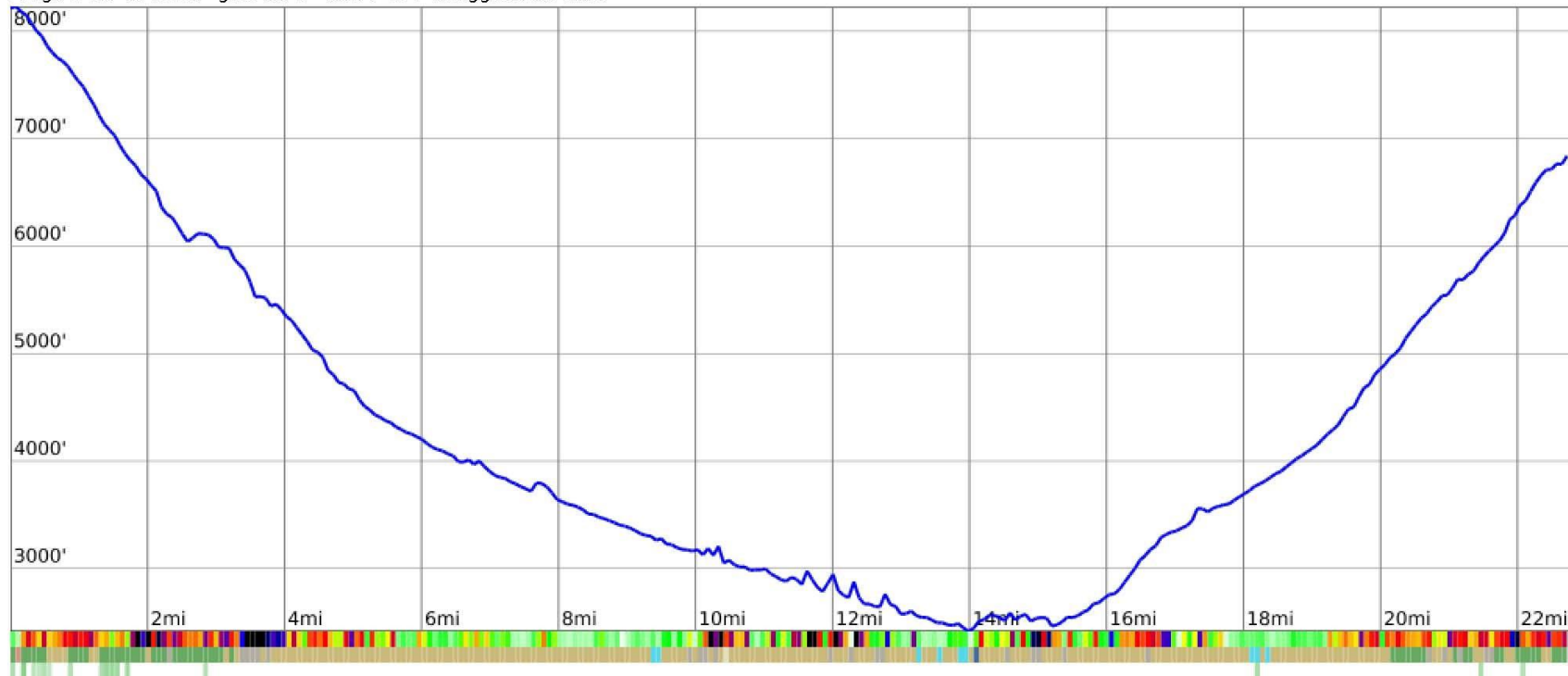
Break for questions

1. Rim to Rim, October 26-28, 2013



Rim to Rim full route

range 2415' to 8228' gain 5827' loss 7201' exaggeration 8.3x



Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

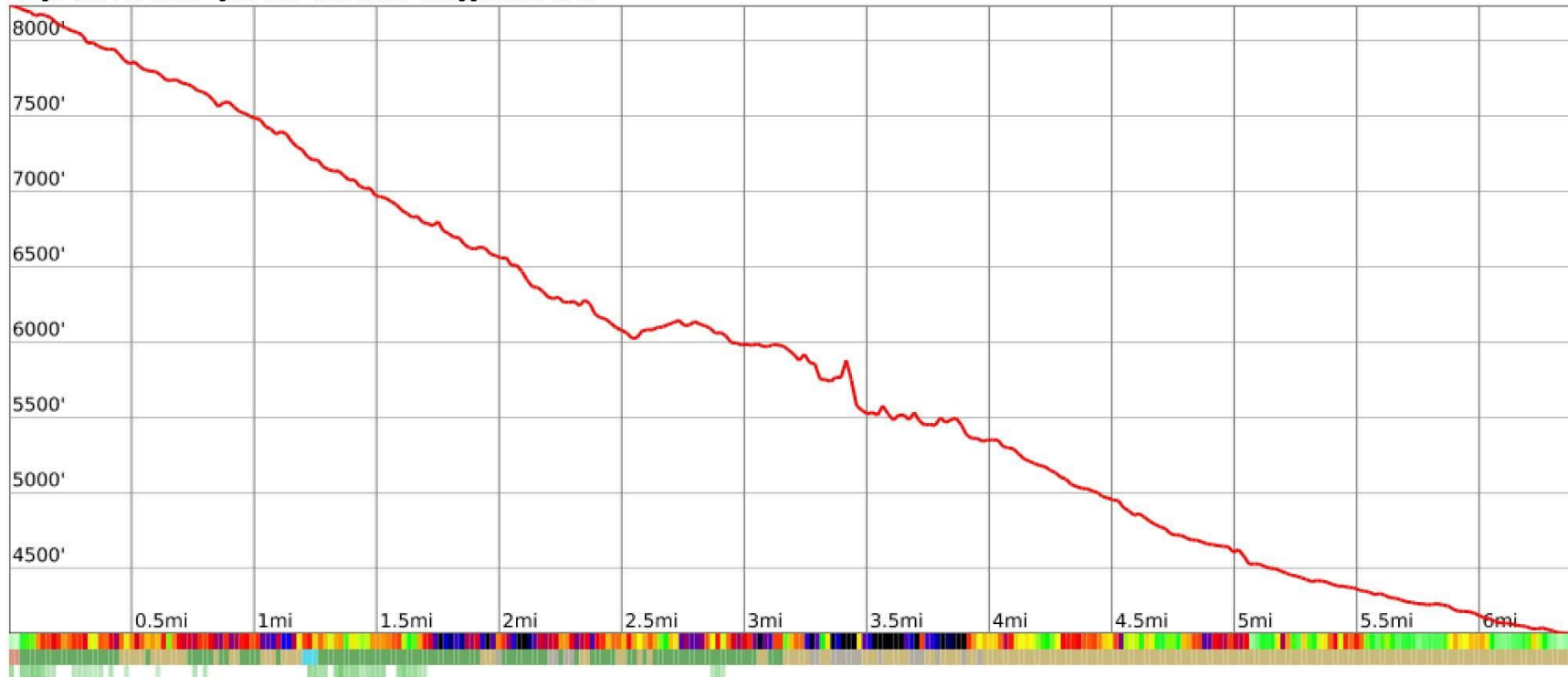
Day 1 - Shuttle to North Rim, hike North Rim to Cottonwood Camp



From North Rim to Cottonwood Camp

Day 1

range 4062' to 8235' gain 856' loss 5030' exaggeration 3.2x



Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

W = drinking water; TF = Toilet Facilities; EP = Emergency Phone; RS = Ranger Station

Distance Via:	Distance from Rim (mi/km)	Elevation (ft/m)	DW	TF	EP	RS	Other
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North Kaibab Trailhead to:		8241/2512					
Supai Tunnel	1.7/2.5	6800/2073	Y	Y			water available mid-May to mid-Oct only
Roaring Springs	4.7/7.3	5220/1591	Y	Y			20 minute detour off main trail; water available mid-May to mid-Oct only
Manzanita Rest Area	5.4/8.4	4600/1402	Y	Y	Y		
Cottonwood Campground	6.8/10.9	4080/1244	Y	Y	Y		water available mid-May to mid-Oct only; picnic tables, food storage cans, pack poles
Ribbon Falls	8.4/13.3	3720/1134					20 minute detour off main trail; waterfalls; day use only; stay on designated trails
Phantom Ranch	13.6/21.8	2546/776	Y	Y	Y		reservation required for food and lodging
Bright Angel Campground	14/22.5	2480/756	Y	Y	Y	Y	picnic tables, food storage cans, pack poles

National
Park
Service info
on North
Kaibab
Trail, North
Rim to the
River









Cottonwood Camp











Day 2 - Cottonwood Camp to Bright Angel Camp



Day 2 From Cottonwood Camp to Bright Angel Camp

range 2493' to 4055' gain 1043' loss 2602' exaggeration 9.8x



Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

















Bright Angel Camp



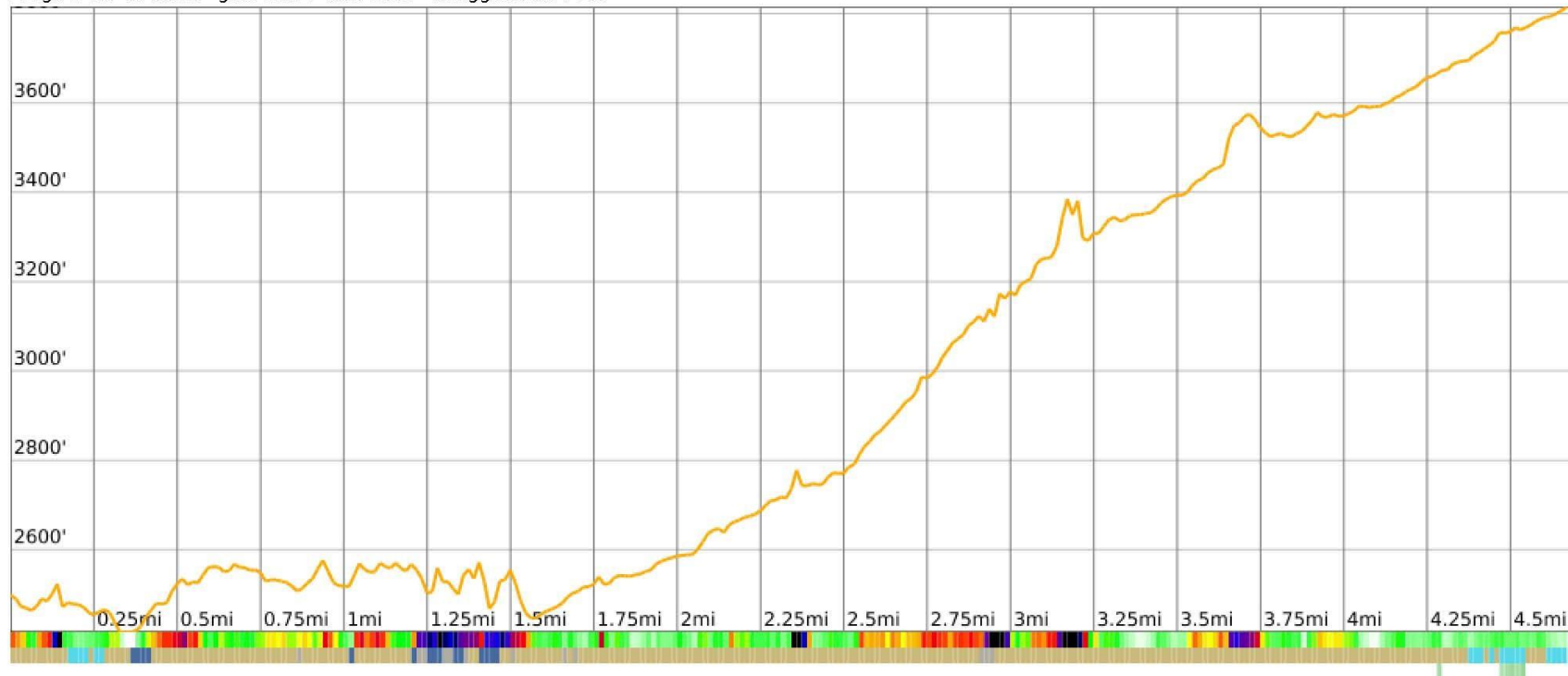
Day 3 - Bright Angel Camp to Indian Garden Camp



From Bright Angel Camp to Indian Garden Camp

Day 3

range 2415' to 3816' gain 2372' loss 1053' exaggeration 7.1x



Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

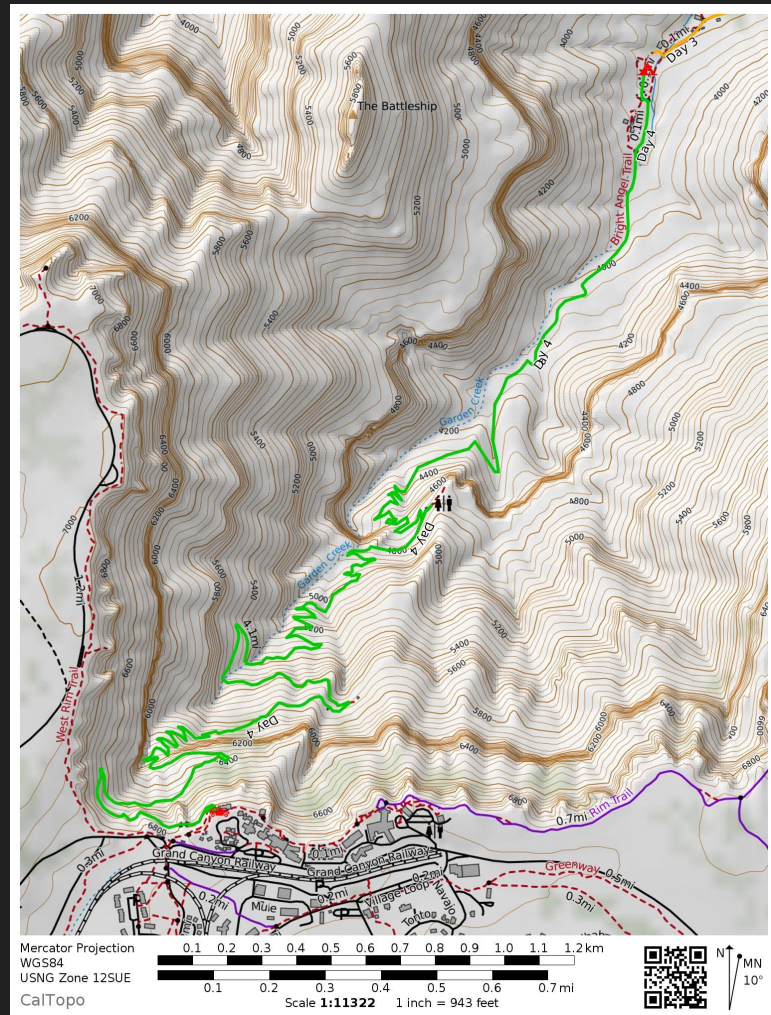






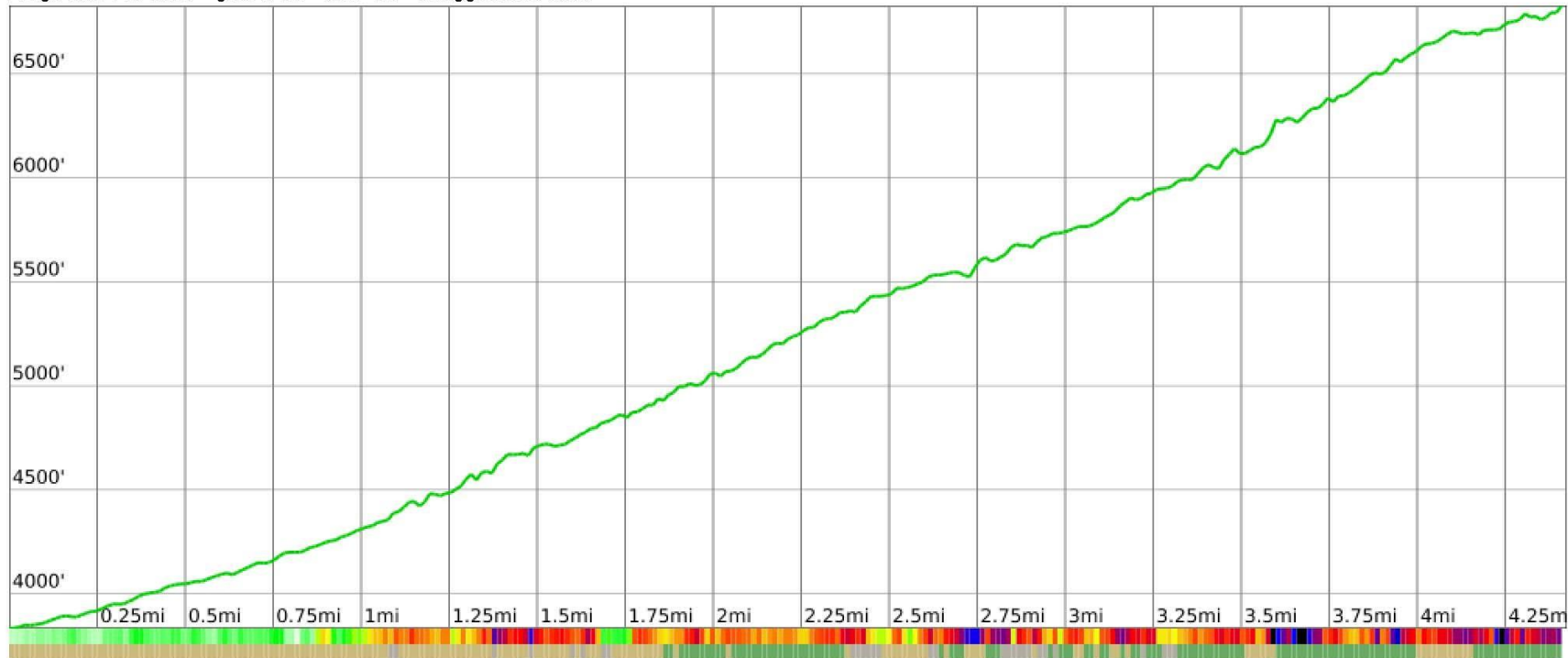


Day 4 - Indian Garden Camp to South Rim



Day 4 From Indian Garden Camp to South Rim

range 3832' to 6827' gain 3415' loss 417' exaggeration 3.1x

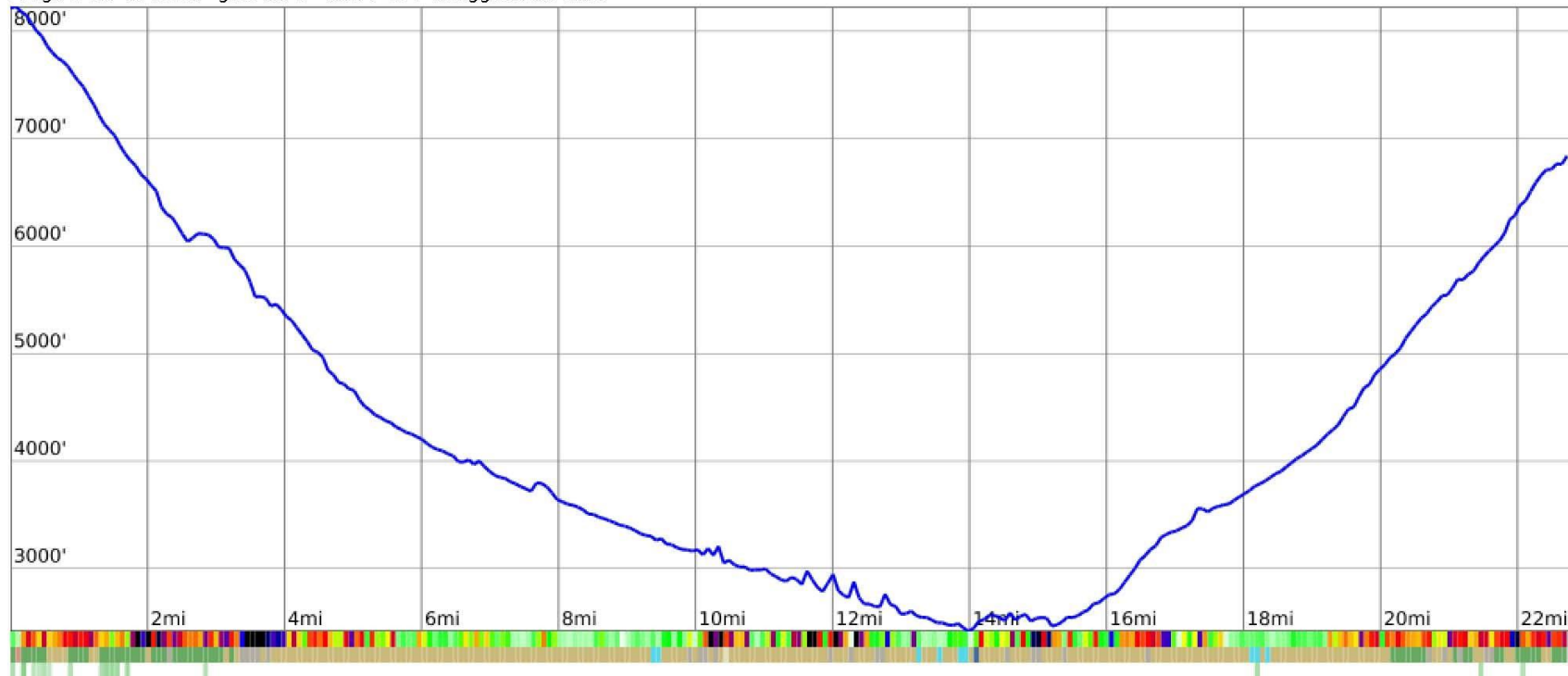


Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)



Rim to Rim full route

range 2415' to 8228' gain 5827' loss 7201' exaggeration 8.3x



Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

2. Focus on the area between South Rim and the River

- a. Camps
- b. Trails
- c. Weather
- d. Scenery
- e. Based on 3 trips:
 - i. October 2003 - South Rim to River and back
 - ii. April 2010 - South Rim to River and back
 - iii. November 2011 - South Rim to River, including a section of the Tonto Trail (wind reroute)
- f. Possible alternative route - Bright Angel, Tonto Trail to Granite Rapids, Hermit Trail to Rim

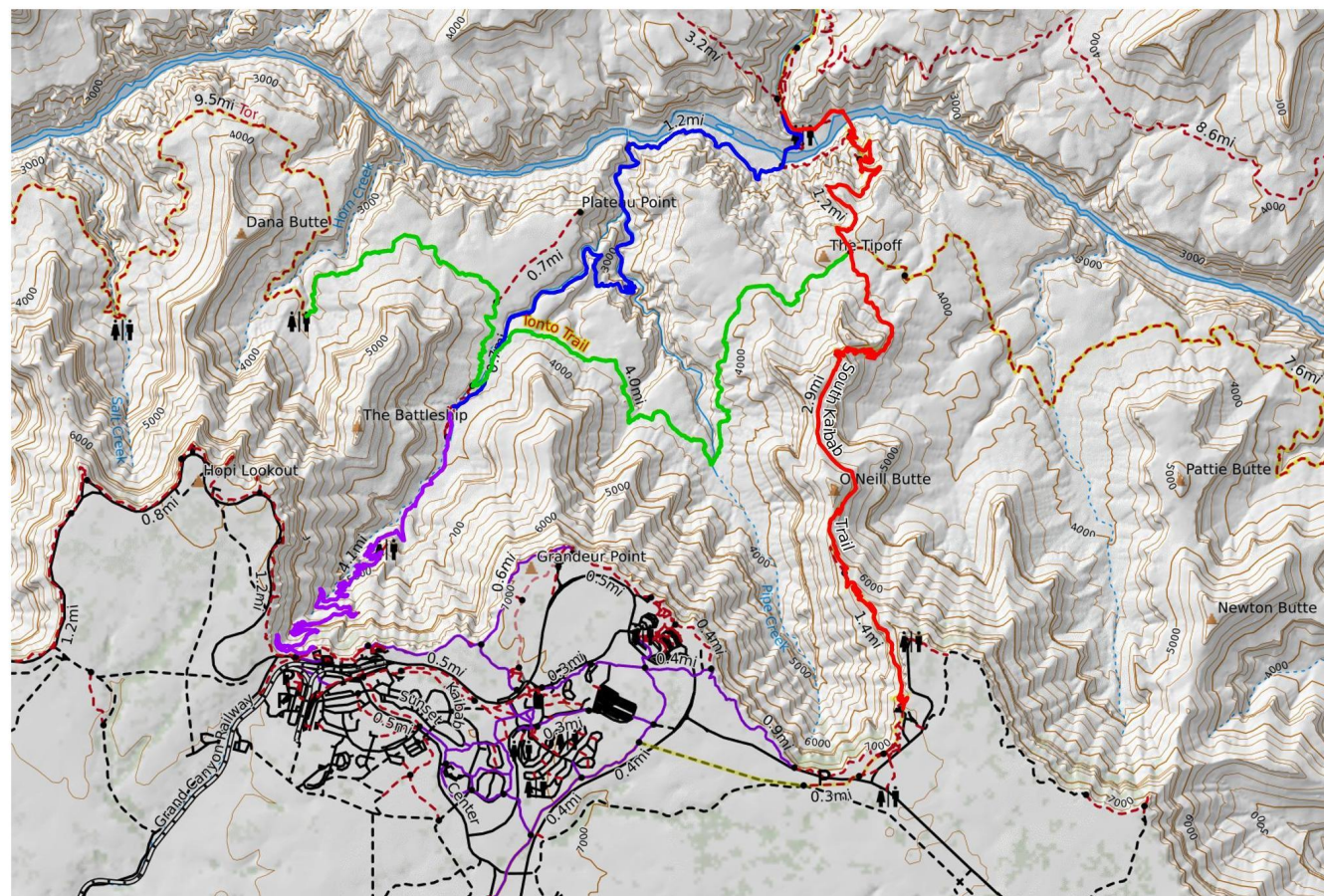
Key:

Green: Tonto Trail

Red: South Kaibab Trail

Purple: Bright Angel Trail (upper section)

Blue: Bright Angel Trail (lower section)



Mercator Projection
WGS84
USNG 12SUE-12SVE
CalTopo

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 km
1 2 3 4 mi
Scale 1:46885 1 inch = 3907 feet



Indian Gardens campground





Bright Angel campground





Trails

1. Vertical:
 - a. Bright Angel
 - b. South Kaibab
2. Horizontal:
 - a. Tonto
3. Many other trails

Bright Angel Trail



National
Park
Service
information
on Bright
Angel Trail,
South Rim
to the River

DW = drinking water; TF = Toilet Facilities; EP = Emergency Phone; RS = Ranger Station

Distance Via:	Distance from Rim (mi/km)	Elevation (ft/m)	DW	TF	EP	RS	Other
Bright Angel Trailhead to:		6860/2093					
Mile-and-a-Half Resthouse	1.6/2.6	5729/1748	Y	Y	Y		water available mid-May to mid-Oct only
Three-Mile Resthouse	3.1/5	4748/1449	Y	Y	Y		water available mid-May to mid-Oct only
Indian Garden Campground	4.8/7.7	3800/1160	Y	Y	Y	Y	picnic tables, food storage cans, pack poles
River Resthouse	8/12.9	2480/756		Y	Y		
Bright Angel Campground	9.5/15.3	2480/756	Y	Y	Y		picnic tables, food storage cans, pack poles
Phantom Ranch	9.9/15.9	2546/776	Y	Y	Y	Y	reservation required for food and lodging











South Kaibab Trail



National Park Service info on South Kaibab Trail, South Rim to the River

DW = drinking water; TF = Toilet Facilities; EP = Emergency Phone; RS = Ranger Station

Distance Via:	Distance from Rim (mi/km)	Elevation (ft/m)	DW	TF	EP	RS	Other
South Kaibab Trailhead to:		7260/2213					
Cedar Ridge	1.5/2.4	6120/1865		Y			
Skeleton Point	3/4.8	5220/1591					
Tip Off	4.4/7.1	4000/1219		Y	Y		junction with Tonto Trail (distance to Indian Garden via Tonto Trail - 4.6 mi/6.6 km)
Bright Angel Campground	7/11.3	2480/756	Y	Y	Y		picnic tables, food storage cans, pack poles
Phantom Ranch	7.4/11.9	2546/776	Y	Y	Y	Y	reservation required for food and lodging

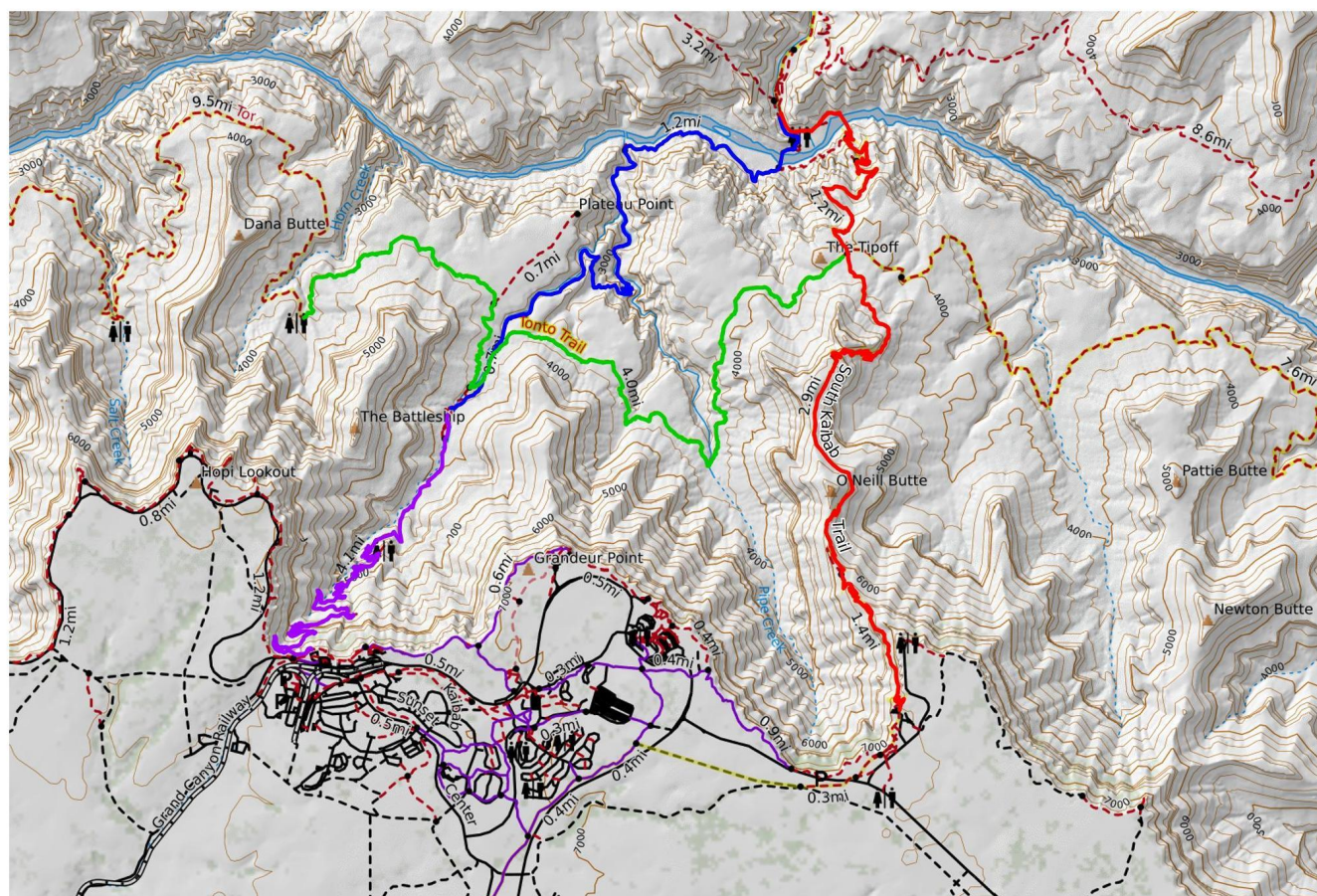
Key:

Green: Tonto Trail

Red: South Kaibab Trail

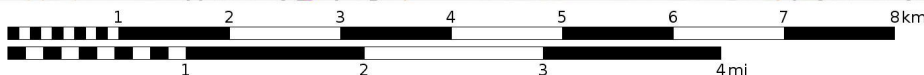
Purple: Bright Angel Trail (upper section)

Blue: Bright Angel Trail (lower section)



Mercator Projection
WGS84
USNG 12SUE-12SVE

CalTopo



Scale 1:46885 1 inch = 3907 feet









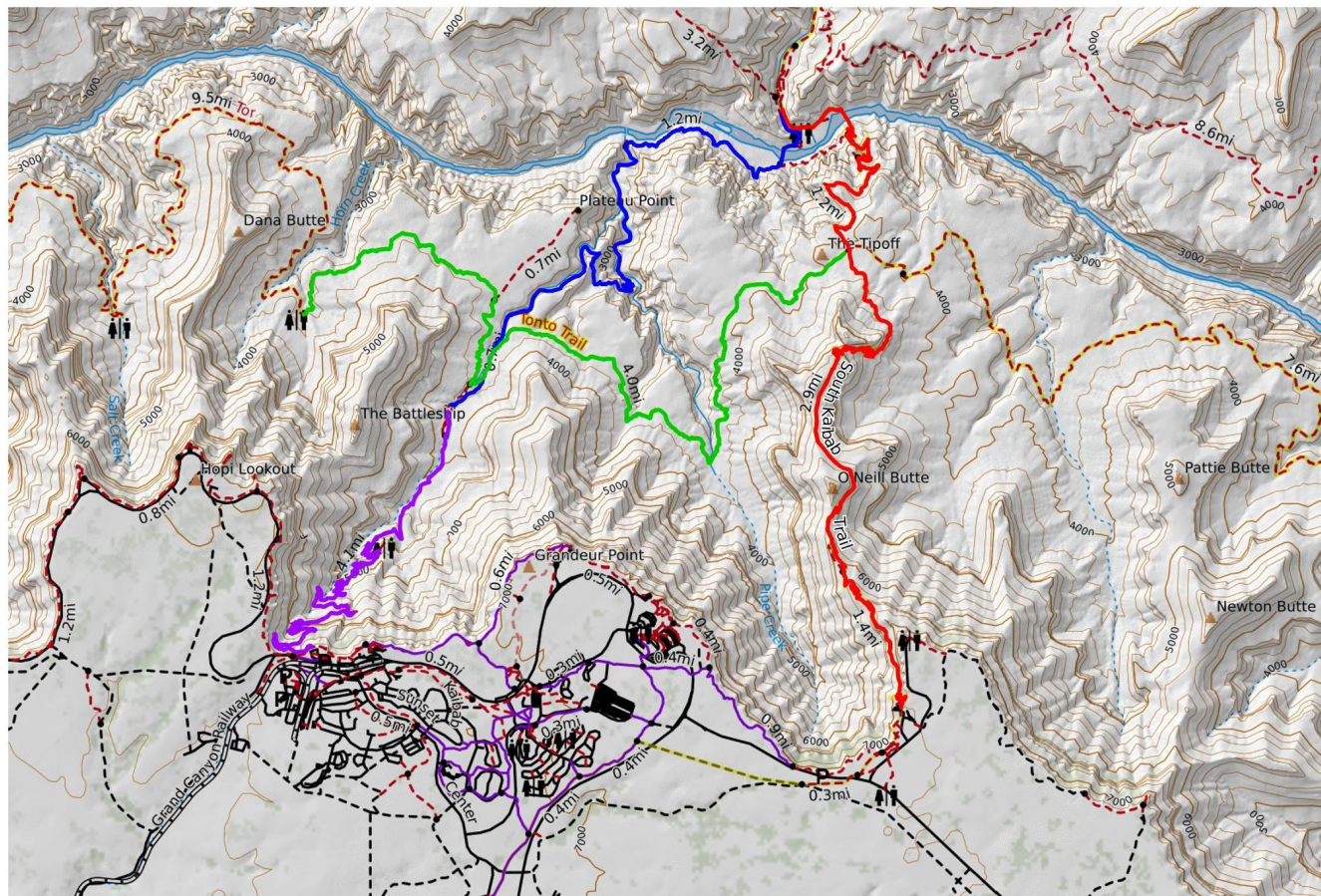




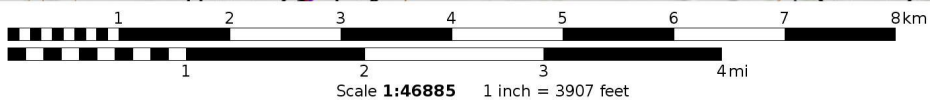


Tonto Trail





Mercator Projection
WGS84
USNG 12SUE-12SVE
CalTopo











Trail conditions





3. Weather









South Kaibab Trail

Kaibab section east
Südlicher Kaibab Pfad

南カイバブ(インディアン)
の道(北西側)

Warning
Never try to hike from the rim to the river and back in just one day. Most who tried suffered serious illness or death.

German

Entfernen Sie sich niemals von der Klippe zum Fluss und zurück in nur einem Tag. Die meisten, die es versuchten, erkrankten schwer oder starben.

French

N'essayez jamais d'aller du bord du canyon au fleuve et de revenir en un seul jour. La plupart de ceux qui l'ont fait ont souffert de graves maladies ou sont morts.

Japanese

一日でカニオンから川まで行き、戻るのは絶対にしないでください。ほとんどの人が重病を患ったか、死にました。

Trail Log

Trail Length: 16.1 miles (25.9 km)
Elevation Gain: 5,500 feet (1,676 m)
Round Trip: 32.2 miles (51.8 km)
South Kaibab Trailhead to 10.0 miles (16.1 km)

Trailhead: 10.0 miles (16.1 km)
Kaibab: 10.0 miles (16.1 km)
Phantom Ranch: 10.0 miles (16.1 km)

Trailhead: 10.0 miles (16.1 km)
Kaibab: 10.0 miles (16.1 km)
Phantom Ranch: 10.0 miles (16.1 km)

Trailhead: 10.0 miles (16.1 km)
Kaibab: 10.0 miles (16.1 km)
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Kaibab: 10.0 miles (16.1 km)
Phantom Ranch: 10.0 miles (16.1 km)

Grand Canyon National Park

Information



DO NOT ATTEMPT
to hike to the
river and back
in one day!



YOU CAN
HALLS









4. Scenery

























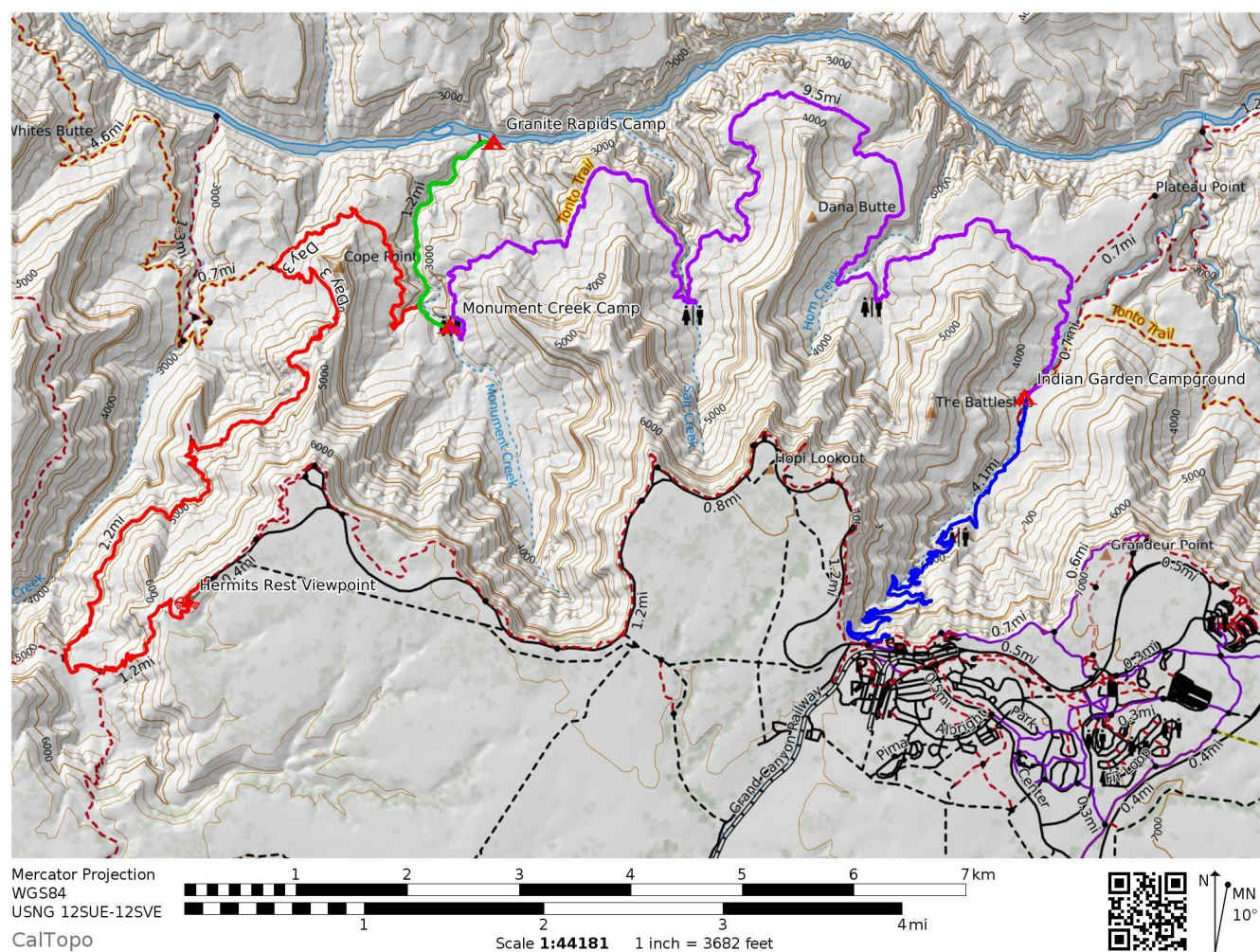






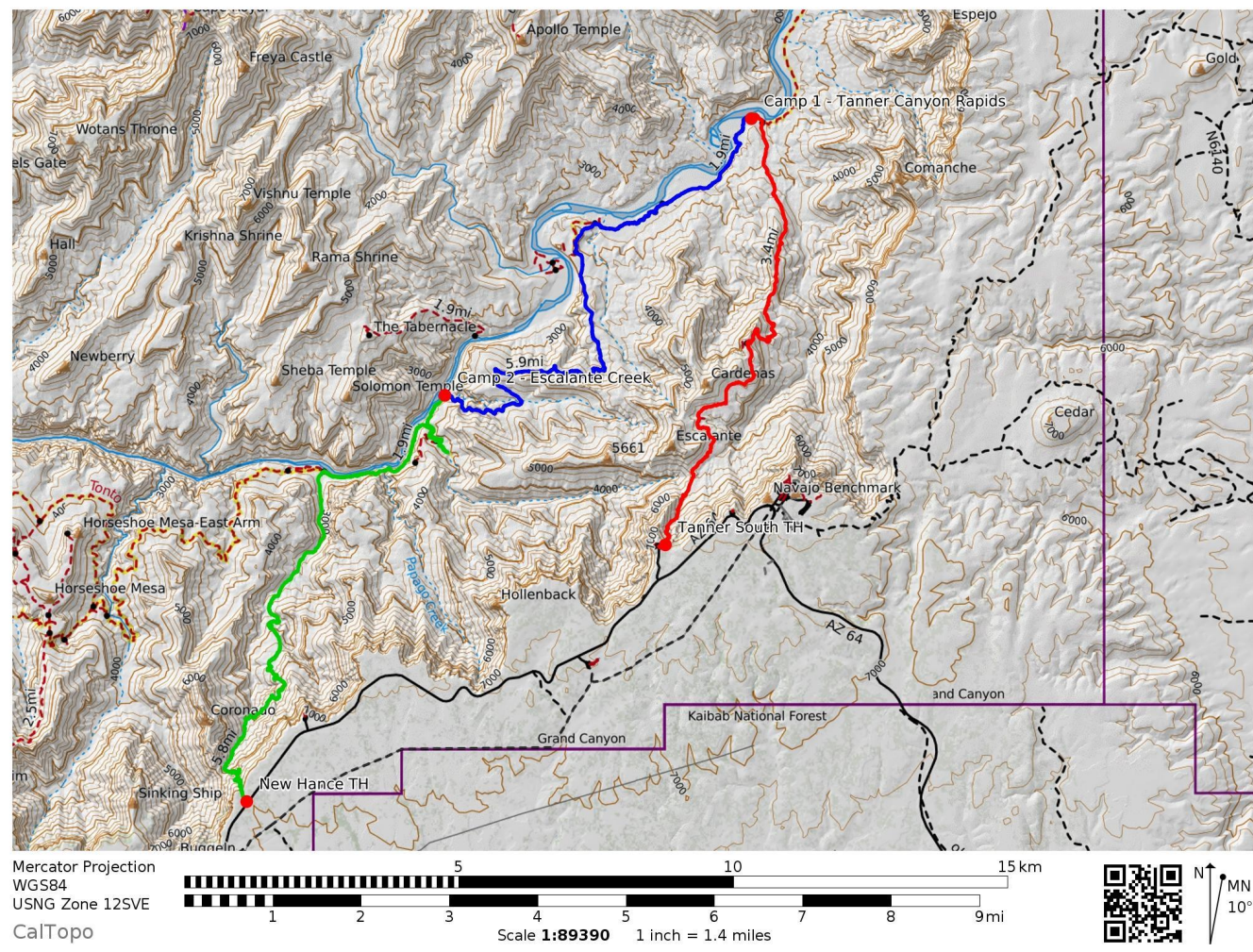
Possible alternative
route:

Bright Angel Trail to
Tonto Trail to
Granite Rapids,
Hermit Trail to Rim



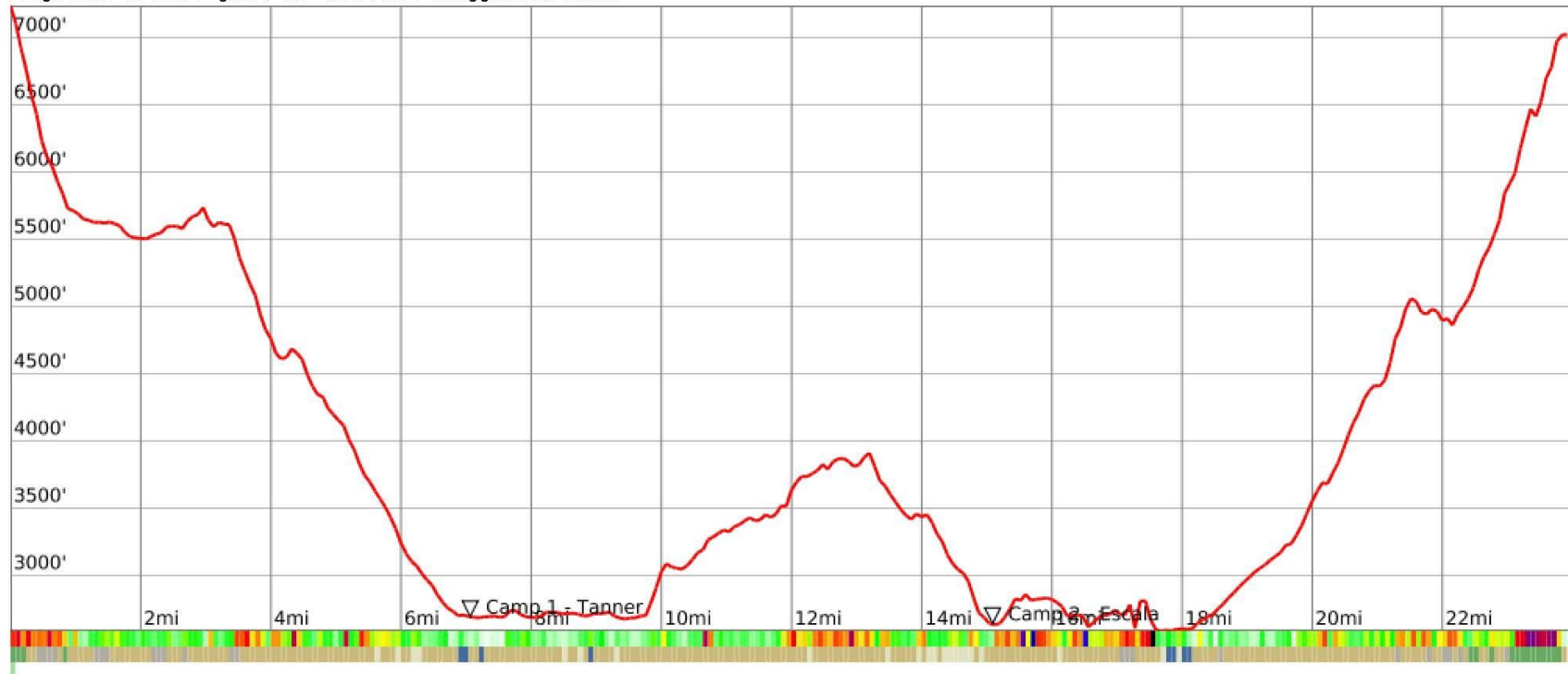
Questions?

Escalante Route, November 2-4, 2012



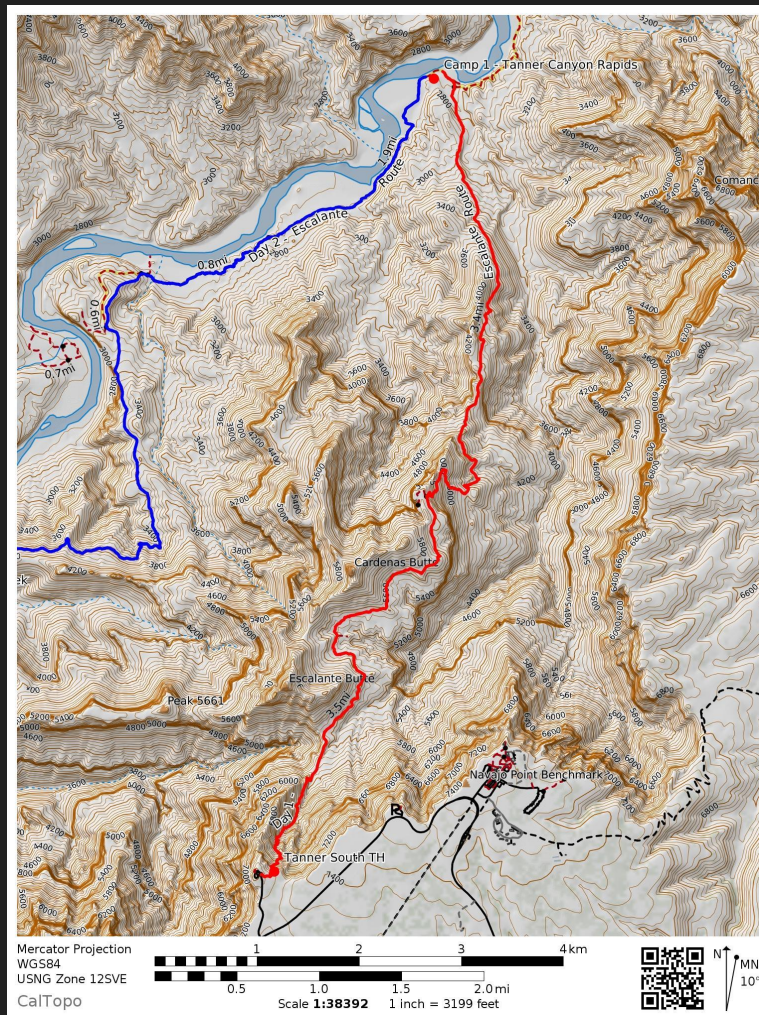
Escalante Route - full route

range 2585' to 7234' gain 7434' loss 7651' exaggeration 10.9x



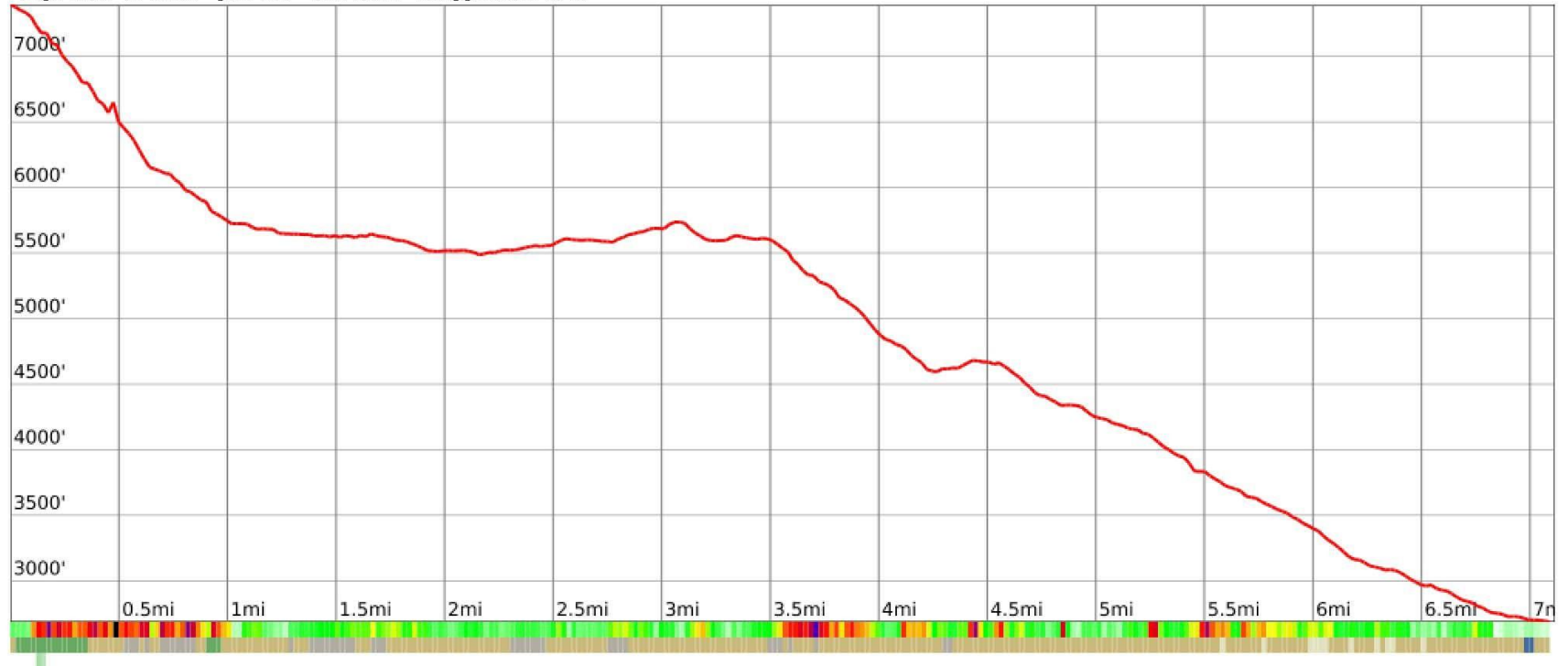
Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

Day 1 - Tanner Trail to River



Day 1 - Escalante Route Tanner Trail to River

range 2684' to 7395' gain 627' loss 5338' exaggeration 3.2x



Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)









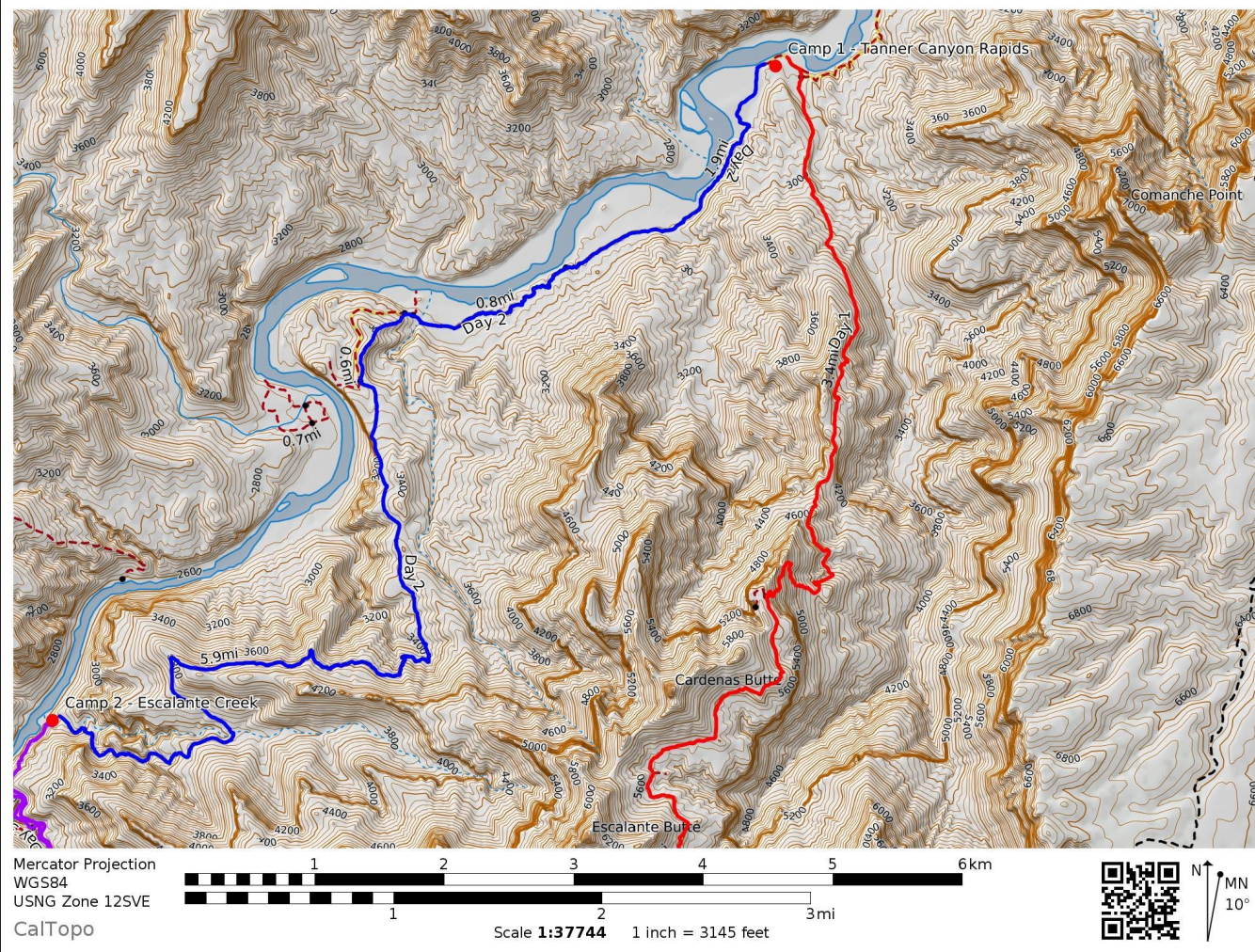






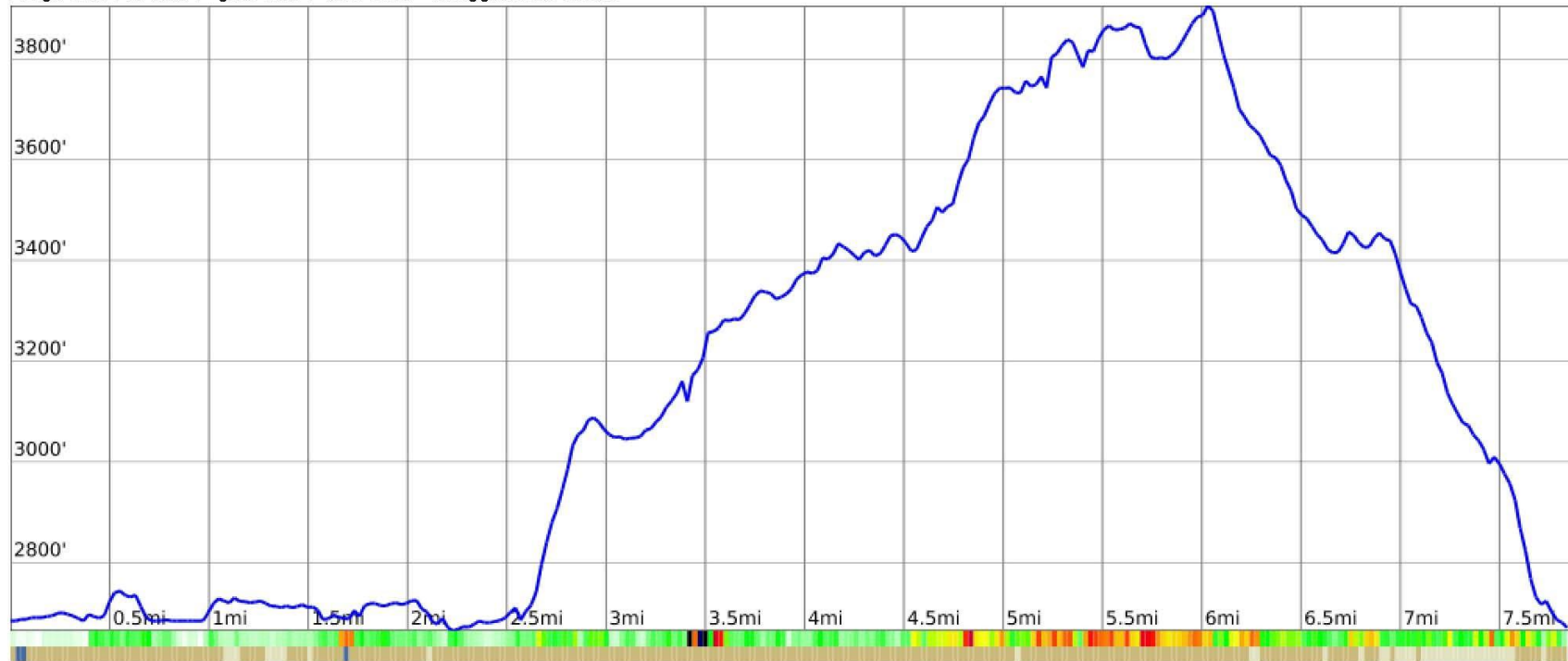


Day 2 - Along the River to Escalante Creek



Day 2 Along the River to Escalante Creek

range 2661' to 3904' gain 1972' loss 1985' exaggeration 13.4x



Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)





















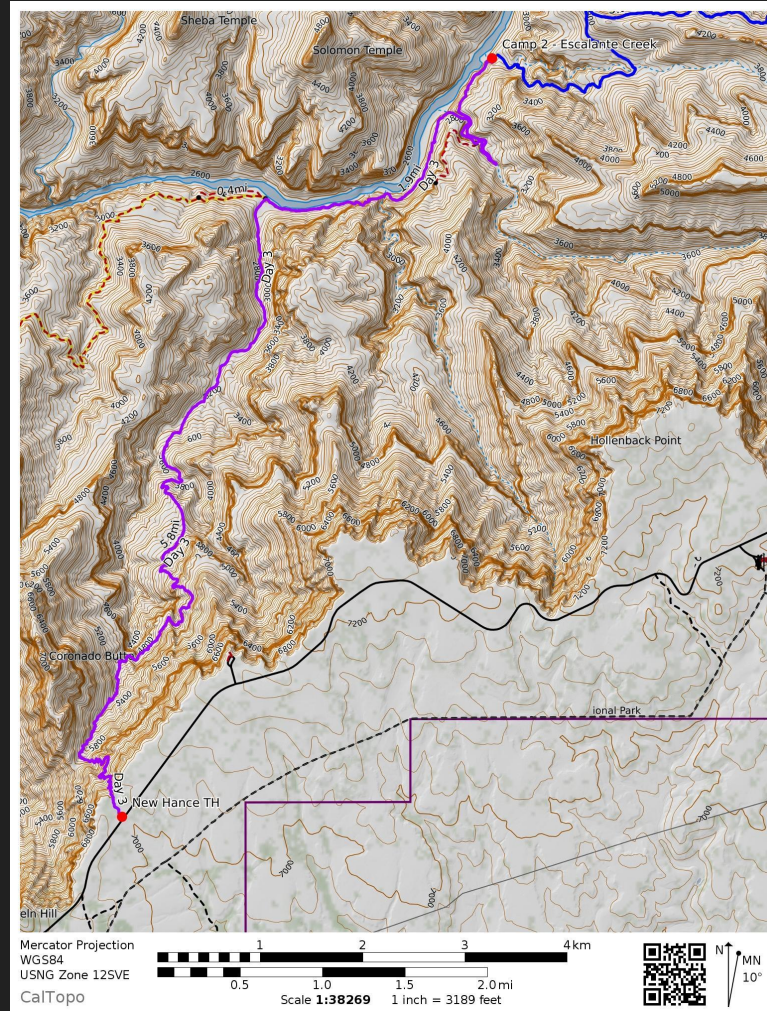






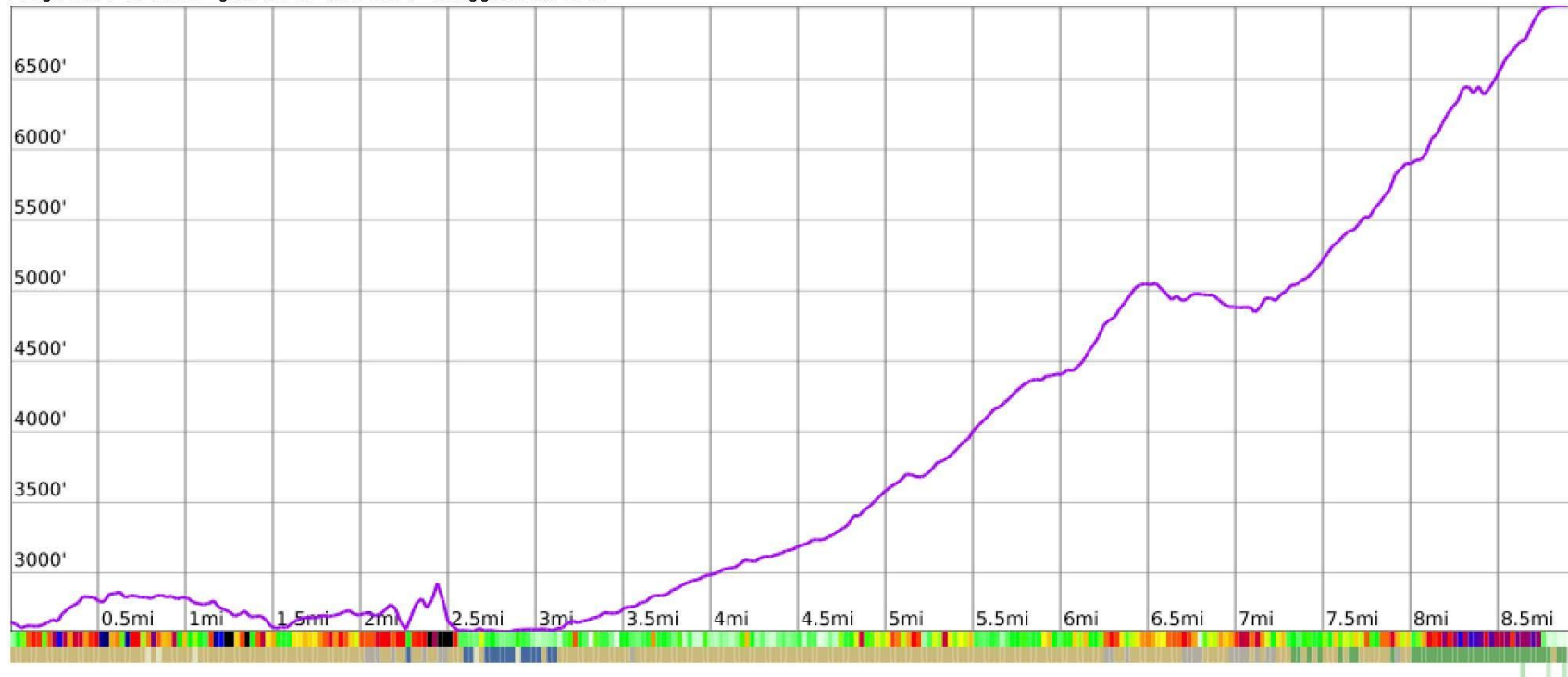


Day 3 - Escalante Creek to South Rim via New Hance Trail



Day 3 Escalante Creek to South Rim via New Hance Trail

range 2579' to 7021' gain 6020' loss 1644' exaggeration 4.2x



Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

According to NPS:

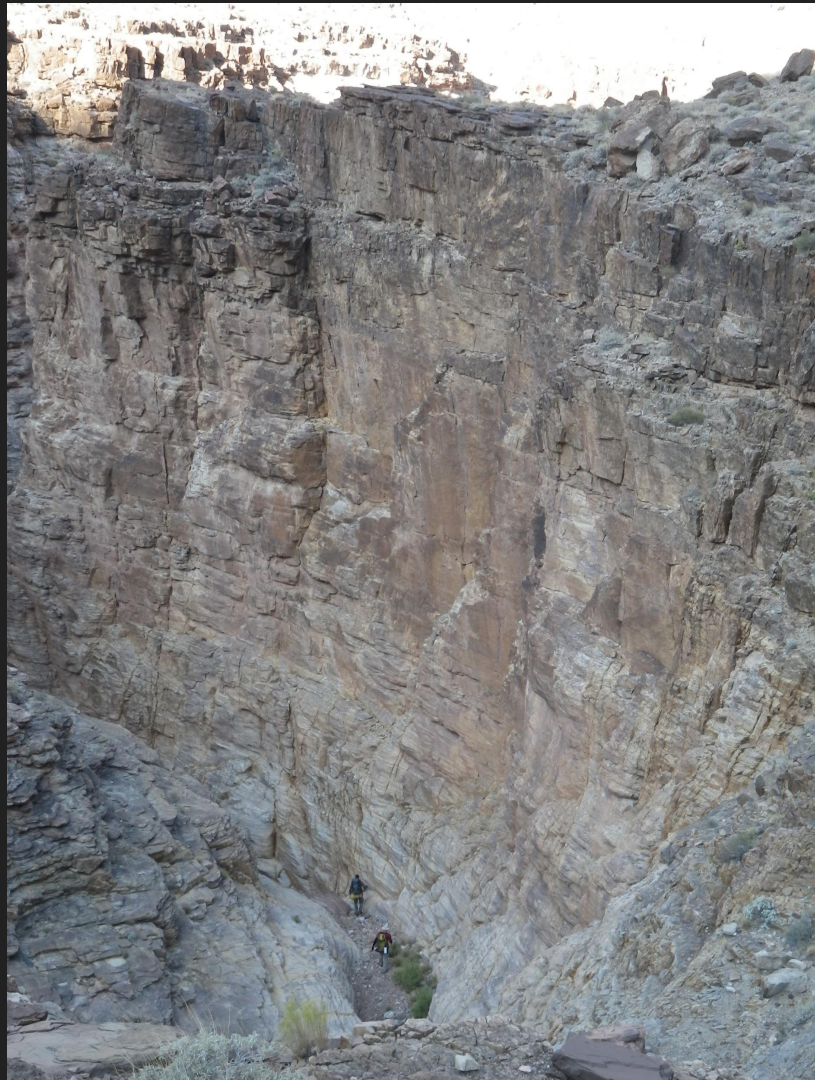
Important Notes

The New Hance Trail lies within a primitive use area and is thus recommended only for highly experienced canyon hikers. It is not maintained and may be the most difficult established trail on the South Rim of the Grand Canyon.

https://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/upload/New_Hance_Trail.pdf



















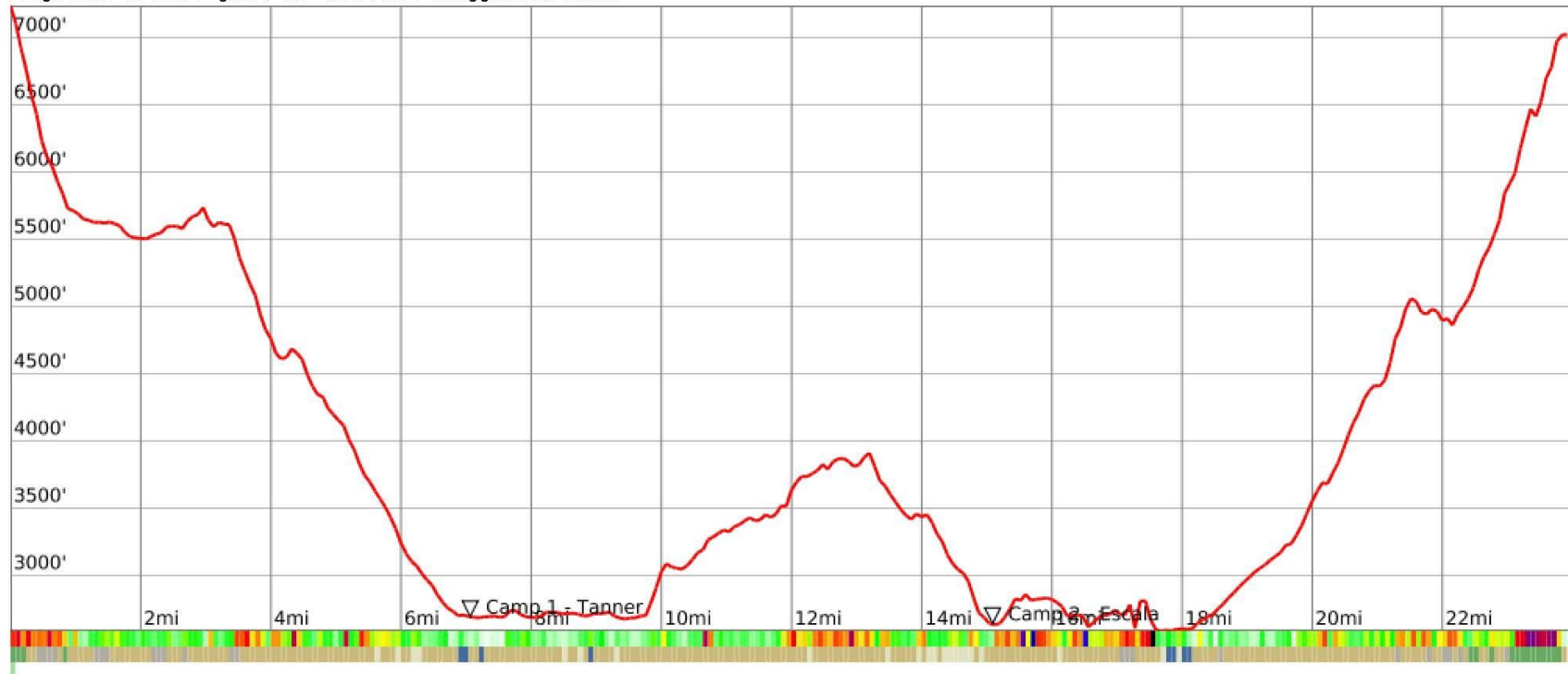






Escalante Route - full route

range 2585' to 7234' gain 7434' loss 7651' exaggeration 10.9x



Slope Angle (top), Land Cover (middle), Tree Cover (bottom)

Grand Canyon Logistics

1. When to go
 - a. Spring or Fall are best
 - i. I've gone in April, October and November
 - b. Summer is hot in the Canyon
 - c. Roads to North Rim close during the winter
2. Maps
 - a. Grand Canyon Trail Map, 5th edition, by Sky Terrain, \$11.95 at Amazon
 - i. Includes lots of details on trails
3. Guide books
 - a. NPS website has good trail descriptions: <https://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/campsite-information.htm>
4. Special gear requirements
 - a. Ratsack - steel mesh bag for food storage
 - i. Corridor Trails have Ammo boxes, so don't need Ratsack
 - b. Microspikes if chance of snow or ice
5. Water on Corridor Trails
 - a. Provided by pipe
 - b. Per NPS website, Corridor water is turned off sometime between October 10 and 30, and can be turned off at other times if their pipeline breaks

6. Permits
 - a. Procedure: <https://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/backcountry-permit.htm>
 - b. Cost: \$10 plus \$8 per person per night
 - c. Apply by mail or fax (not email or online)
 - i. Limited walk up permits
 - d. Time to apply:
 - i. For October trips: between May 20 and Jun 1 by 5 pm MST
 1. All requests between these dates are prioritized randomly
 - e. In 2019, about 60% of October permit requests were successful
7. Travel from Seattle
 - a. Fly to Flagstaff or Phoenix, then drive or bus to Canyon
 - b. Drive from Seattle - about 1,200 miles
 - c. Hotels or campgrounds on the South Rim
8. For Rim to Rim backpack
 - a. Shuttles from South Rim to North Rim take about 4.5 hours, cost about \$90

Is a Grand Canyon backpack a good trip for you?

Pros

1. Fantastic scenery
2. Spectacular geology
3. Good trails (Corridor Trails)
4. Good campgrounds
5. Can backpack outside Pacific Northwest season

Cons

1. Permits can be hard to get
2. A lot of gain/loss from the Rim to to River
3. Crowded on the Corridor Trails
4. Expense of travelling to the Grand Canyon
5. Not a good summer trip
6. Water can be an issue off the Corridor Trails
7. Mules (and manure) on the Bright Angel and South Kaibab trails

Questions?