



TOM'S UTAH CANYONEERING GUIDE

Archive

Farnsworth Canyon, 3 Hidden Arches and Jug Handle Arch Rap Route San Rafael Swell, Eastern Reef

Rating:	Many options, I-III Class 2 to Class 5 EZ ★★
Best Season:	Fall, winter or spring. Exposed to full sun, so not a good high summer option.
Time:	2 to 6 hours.
Access:	Route starts and ends at the mouth of Farnsworth Canyon.
Permit:	Not required.
Equipment:	If rappelling, 2 50m ropes, a drill kit and extra slings.
Map:	USGS 7.5' Temple Mountain, Old Woman Wash.
Cold Protection:	None required.
Drinking Water:	Bring plenty.
Flash Flood Risk:	Moderate.
Skills Required:	Steep hiking up a gully with loose rocks, 3 rd class. On the Rap Route: Long rappels in a wilderness setting and a little downclimbing.

Farnsworth Canyon offers a variety of opportunities for fun. A quick and easy half-hour jaunt gets you an interesting 1/4-mile long slot canyon, and a cute little canyon beyond. Or continue up the now wide, deep-walled canyon, duck around the back, climb a long steep gully to the top of the reef, and hunt out 3 arches tucked into a network of canyons. Return the way you came. This is a short, non-technical family stroll.

If so inclined, follow **THE RAP ROUTE** through Jug Handle Arch, and into the interesting canyon below.

An alternate start - driving up North Temple Wash, around a not-too-bad mining road, and into the head of Farnsworth Canyon - is possible with a 4WD vehicle.

Getting There: From Temple Junction, take a dirt road northeast. At 1 mile, a side road branches left into North Temple Wash, and a "Not maintained beyond this point" sign exists. Continue along the main road, past a few modest difficulties, another 1.2 miles to a former track on the left leading down into Farnsworth Canyon, blocked by a WSA sign. Park Here.

The Business (A Quick Jaunt): Traipse into the wash and up toward a particularly charming set of narrows. They are quite narrow and about 1/4 mile long. Enjoy. This makes a delightful after dinner stroll. Explore the pocket canyon to the right after the narrows, or return to your car.

The Business (3 Hidden Arches): Lets continue up Farnsworth and go hunt for some arches. Continue up Farnsworth, staying right in the main canyon where it divides. This area is shared with ORVs and Motorcycles. Admire the large

sandstone walls. At the head of the canyon, locate a BLM sign-in book, where a side canyon heads off east and north along the back of the reef. This is the popular Motorcycle Trail. Follow the side canyon around one big turn, until you can see a rock slide that allows easy access through the large escarpment to your right. This is where we will ascend.

Espy a mining road contouring the hillside to the base of the slide. The mining road is rough, and offers only a slightly better approach than climbing directly. Work your way to the slide, then ascend the slide to the top of the reef.

Ah, what a grand view. Turn right and follow the rim of the escarpment 1/3 mile to a rugged group of canyons, ridges and pinnacles. There are 3 arches hidden in this area. San Rafael Bridge and Hidden Bridge span two adjacent canyons, about 200 feet below surface level. Both are a little difficult to view. The third is Jug Handle Arch and is in the next canyon west. It can be viewed from above and to the west. Enjoy the arches and the challenge of getting reasonable photos of them. Return the way you came.

Jug Handle Arch Rap Route: Class 5 EZ.

Want a more exciting exit? Let's rap through Jug Handle Arch and down into the interesting canyon below. This is also the fastest way back to Farnsworth Canyon.

Get a view of Jug Handle Arch. Walk out on the ridge between Jug Handle and Hidden Bridge to a point above the Bridge. Work your way down the easy terrain on the opposite side of the ridge, then back to the right, and find a ledge 30' directly above Jug Handle Arch, and a two bolt anchor.

Rappel 30' down to a ledge right at the arch. Re-adjust the rappel, so the knot is past the edge. Rappel through the arch and down the steep wall below, 165 feet to a small stance and a 2-bolt anchor. From here, a second rappel of 50' takes you to the sandy bottom of the canyon. **Don't pull the rope!** Clamber over a pile of rocks, then continue your rappel 30' down to the next level of the canyon. Now pull the rope, and hope it pulls! (A natural arch in the canyon bottom can be threaded as an alternative).

Continue downcanyon. One more short rappel is made off a bush (may require slings). Another section is downclimbed through a nice slot. Work your way downcanyon and pop out into Farnsworth. Voila.

Alternate Approach: Driving to the head of Farnsworth is surprisingly easy. Drive up North Temple Wash - an easy and scenic drive through the reef, often graded sufficiently for a low clearance 4wd vehicle. A difficult spot is found near the head of North Temple Wash.

After driving through the reef, turn right on the first side road (usually a cairn here). This smaller road heads north across the terrain, then into a wash, then out of the wash as it starts to climb. A rough spot is encountered about half way up the ridge. Follow the road to the top of the ridge, then down the other side into Farnsworth Canyon. Park near the head of the canyon. (Driving time: 45 minutes).



