



BIG WASH - GRAND JUNCTION



Rating: Easy Hike

Length: 1-2+ hours (2.3 miles)

Gear: Standard Hiking Gear

Maps: CAMEO, CO

Water: Generally a small flowing stream the whole way.

Season: Any, though summers can be hot.

Waypoints:

Trailhead

12S 735501mE 4340390mN
N39° 10' 51" W108° 16' 25"

Hype

Big Wash is a, well, big wash in the Book Cliffs east of Grand Junction. The wash makes an excellent stroll. It starts pretty and gets prettier the further you hike. There are some small obstacles en route that make for interesting challenges to tackle directly or usually can be circumvented instead.. This area seemed much less traveled than the hikes we did closer to Grand Junction, great for those looking for a little more solitude. The hike is an out and back, so the length can fit whatever time and motivation you have.

Our trip, Thanksgiving 2018, found the small stream in the wash bottom frozen, turning the canyon into a winter wonderland complete with ice-covered waterfalls. Though pretty any time of year, this hike was especially enchanting when covered in ice. The ice also makes a few obstacles a bit more treacherous!

Tags: *hike, family friendly, beginner, access: paved*

Trailhead

Travel east from Grand Junction CO on I-70 about 12 miles to exit 49 (CO-65). Go south on CO-65 about 0.7 to a large parking area and Big Wash on the right.

Route

From the trailhead, follow the social trail up Big Wash. There is an interesting small overhang and drilled core holes on the cliff to the right within sight of the trailhead.

As the hike progresses up the wash, the walls begin to narrow, and small cascades and ledges are encountered. These are all generally easy to find a path around. A more substantial waterfall (3 m / 12 ft) seems to be a frequent turn around point for most. This can be climbed directly by the skilled, or return down canyon a minute and look for a social trail on the right (looking up canyon) that steeply climbs up and around the falls.

Above the falls, the canyon opens a bit but is still quite pretty. We wandered up several more bends, then turned around as the canyon began opening more and more.

