



CAT AND DIZZY TRAIL CANYONS - WESTERN SWELL



Rating: Moderate Hike

Length: 5-7 hours (10 miles)

Gear: Standard Hiking Gear

Water: None, bring all you will need.

Season: Spring, Fall, Winter (when no snow on the ground)

Notes: High clearance required to get to the trailhead, though the roughest section (last 1.0 miles or so) could be walked if needed.

Waypoints:

Dike Spring	12S 492430mE 4290096mN N38° 45' 34" W111° 05' 14"
Leave Dizzy	12S 494167mE 4289427mN N38° 45' 13" W111° 04' 02"
Muddy Creek	12S 491712mE 4288475mN N38° 44' 42" W111° 05' 43"
Confluence	12S 492056mE 4289014mN N38° 44' 59" W111° 05' 29"
Cat Canyon	12S 493997mE 4291210mN N38° 46' 11" W111° 04' 09"
Trailhead (2wd)	12S 493366mE 4292884mN N38° 47' 05" W111° 04' 35"

Hype

Nestled on the western edge of the San Rafael Swell, Cat and Dizzy Trail canyons offer a moderate day hike in a very seldom visited area. The hike goes down Cat Canyon to Muddy Creek, then returns up via Dizzy Trail, making a loop hike. Though I generally like most areas of the Swell, these canyons seemed a bit stark for even my tastes. I would, however, recommend the hike in early spring when the wild flowers are in bloom. They were out during my hike and made for a stunning contrast of colors and vibrancy in an otherwise muted landscape.

A short stretch of narrows near Muddy Creek makes the hike, though most of the hike is out in the open desert. Beware, bugs will be problematic in late spring, bring long sleeves and pants. The Muddy Creek or spring water could be filtered, but bringing all the water you need is recommended.

There are springs along the way, and Muddy Creek always flows, but the water can be alkaline and cause stomach upset. I would recommend carrying all you need, and not planning on filtering.

Tags: hike, wildflowers, access: high clearance

Trailhead

The trailhead is reached off of Interstate 70, exit 108. This is about 50 miles west of Green River, UT or 54 miles east of Salina UT.

From the highway, go south, staying on the main road signed Lone Tree Crossing. (road #923)

- 0.45 - Stay right.
- 1.0 - The main road crosses a wash, then begins heading south along the wash.
- 5.3 - T-Junction. **Go left and reset your odometer.** (Onto Road #927)
- 0.6 - The road goes up the wash bed.
- 1.4 - Side road on the right.

Go right and reset your odometer. **Note: The road from here is rough and requires at least high clearance. It can be walked if needed.**

- 1.2 - Go right.
- 1.4 - The Bottom of Cat Canyon and the trailhead.

Route

To Muddy Creek (1.5-2 hours)

From the bottom of Cat Canyon, head downstream. It is open and easy walking. In about 30 minutes (1.6 miles), Dike Spring is on the right. On the return, you will re-enter Cat Canyon at this spot.

Continue down Cat Canyon. About an hour or so from the trailhead (2.2 miles), the canyon becomes entrenched and deepens quickly. Dizzy Trail canyon comes in shortly on the left, but it is worth the short side trip to continue down to Muddy Creek proper. (2.8 miles one way from the trailhead)

Up Dizzy Trail (2.5-3 hours)

From Muddy Creek, go back up Cat Canyon to the divide with Dizzy Trail. Go right up Dizzy Trail. The canyon is deep walled at this point, but soon passes through a spring and tamarisk before opening up into the badlands. Stay in the main wash, following it for 2 miles from Cat Canyon (about an hour) to a very well used social/animal trail leaving on the left.

Follow the social trail as it climbs up, meanders west, then northwest across the badlands. Beautiful country in a very stark way. After 1.3 miles (25 or so minutes), it descends back into Cat Canyon. Go right, up Cat Canyon back to the trailhead.

