



# In Search of Eldorado

Link to the Eldorado Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VczD1olutQ8>



Day 13  
Wednesday,  
January 15th

Mojave National  
Preserve

Weather  
40's to 60's and sunny

## Hello to Family & Friends

I left my campsite off Cedar Canyon Rd and turned south down Black Canyon Rd towards the Hole-in-the-Wall Visitor Center. I already know the VC is closed today, but I am hoping they left some info outside or that I might pass a sign for a trailhead. On the way I passed several mounds of boulders like the one above. If I was a geologist I could tell you how something like that formed. But I'm not, and I don't play one on TV. So look it up if you want.

Eureka! They had a trail map of four trails. No directions to them of course except for the Rings Loop Trail which heads out from the parking lot.

## In Search of Eldorado

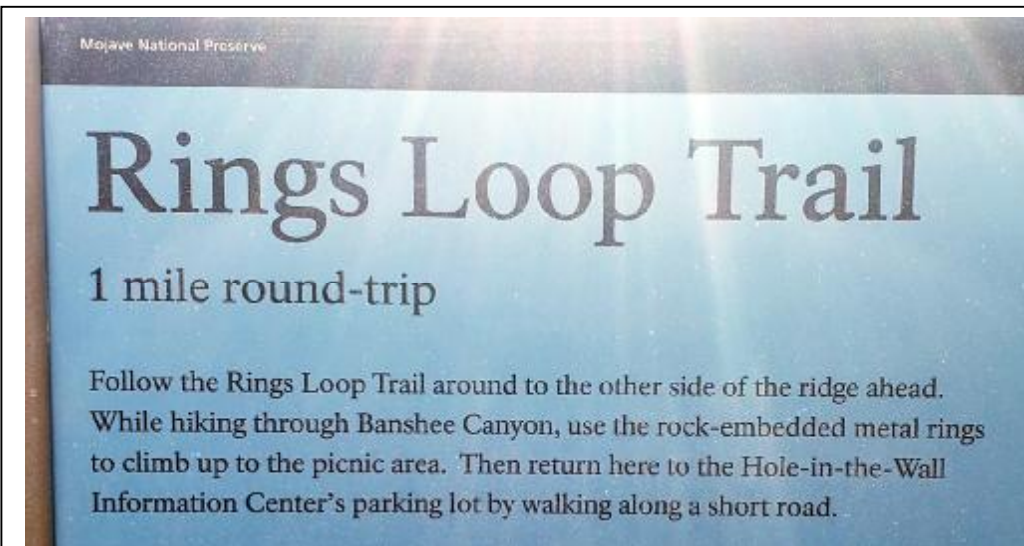
By Edgar Allan Poe

Gaily bedight,  
A gallant knight,  
In sunshine and in shadow,  
Had journeyed long,  
Singing a song,  
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—  
This knight so bold—  
And o'er his heart a shadow—  
Fell as he found  
No spot of ground  
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength  
Failed him at length,  
He met a pilgrim shadow—  
'Shadow,' said he,  
'Where can it be—  
This land of Eldorado?'

'Over the Mountains  
Of the Moon,  
Down the Valley of the Shadow,  
Ride, boldly ride,'  
The shade replied,—  
'If you seek for Eldorado!'



It is one of the trails on my list, so I geared up and headed out.



As I move further south I am seeing more cacti. Death Valley, surprisingly, had few. Only near the buildings and those were most likely planted there.

Mojave National Preserve

## Cultural Signs of the Past

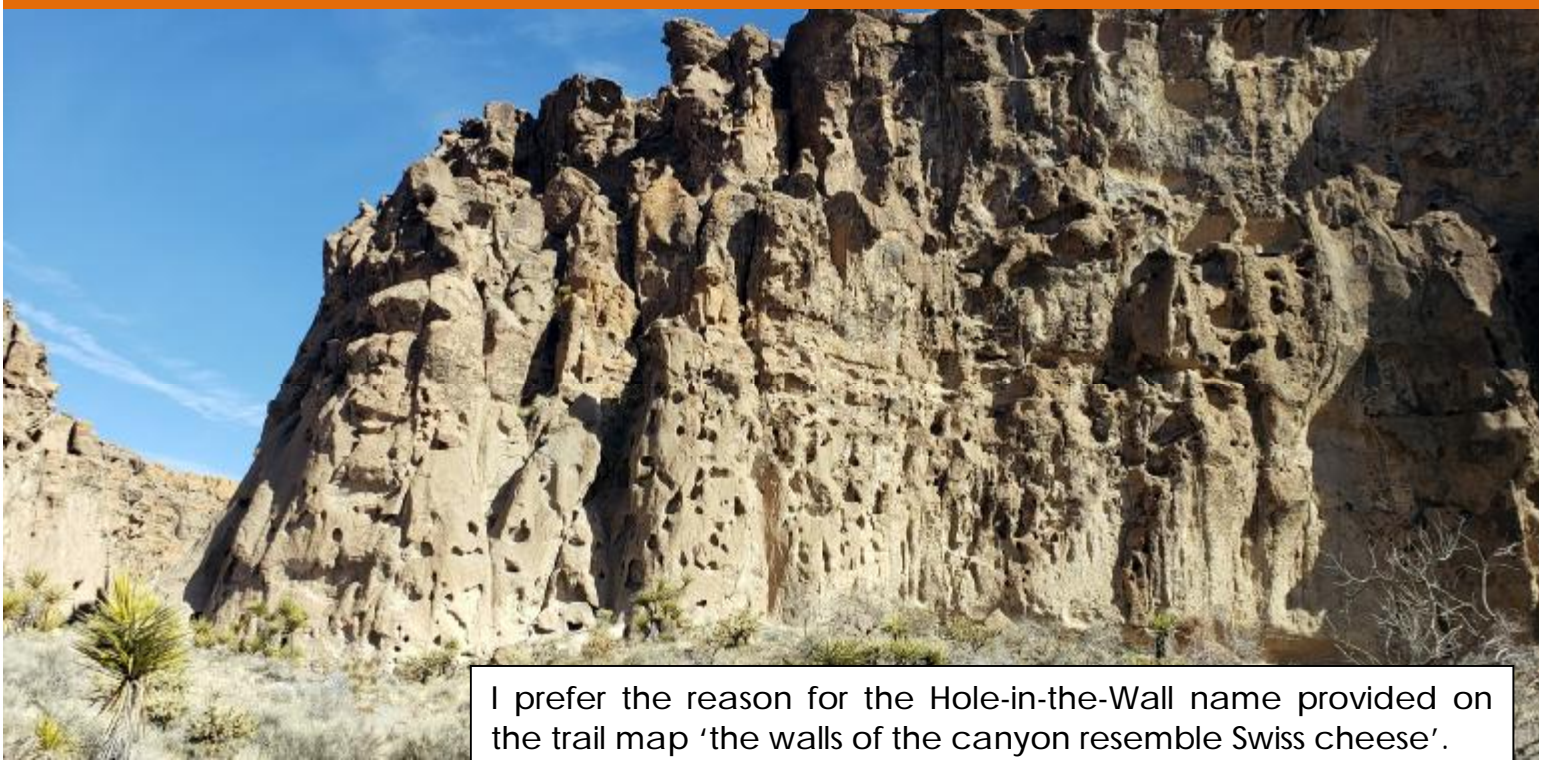
Scattered on some boulders here you will find rock art images that provide windows into rituals, beliefs, and artistic abilities of humans who lived in this Mojave Desert area perhaps thousands of years ago. With a palm-sized stone such as quartz, inhabitants pecked these petroglyphs into the rock varnish on the boulders to expose the lighter colors underneath. The thin coating of varnish, a deposit produced by bacteria living on rock surfaces digesting organic debris, slowly continues to accumulate on the boulders and the images.



# Hole-in-the-Wall

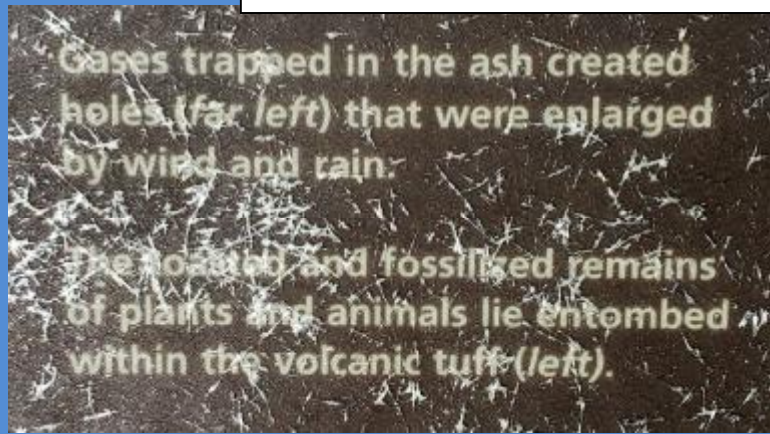
Hole-in-the-Wall is a common place-name in the West, the most famous being the Wyoming hideout of such outlaws as Jesse James. Legends describing the origin of the local name abound. The most credible is that

gunslinger-turned-homesteader Bob Holliman named it after spending some time at its famous Wyoming counterpart. Holliman was fifty when he settled in nearby Round Valley in 1918 and raised cattle on a small homestead operation.



I prefer the reason for the Hole-in-the-Wall name provided on the trail map 'the walls of the canyon resemble Swiss cheese'.

This was pretty wild. I am not sure I have seen anything with this many holes in the rock before. A few heads maybe, but not entire canyon walls. There are more Swiss cheese shots below.



Gases trapped in the ash created holes (far left) that were enlarged by wind and rain.

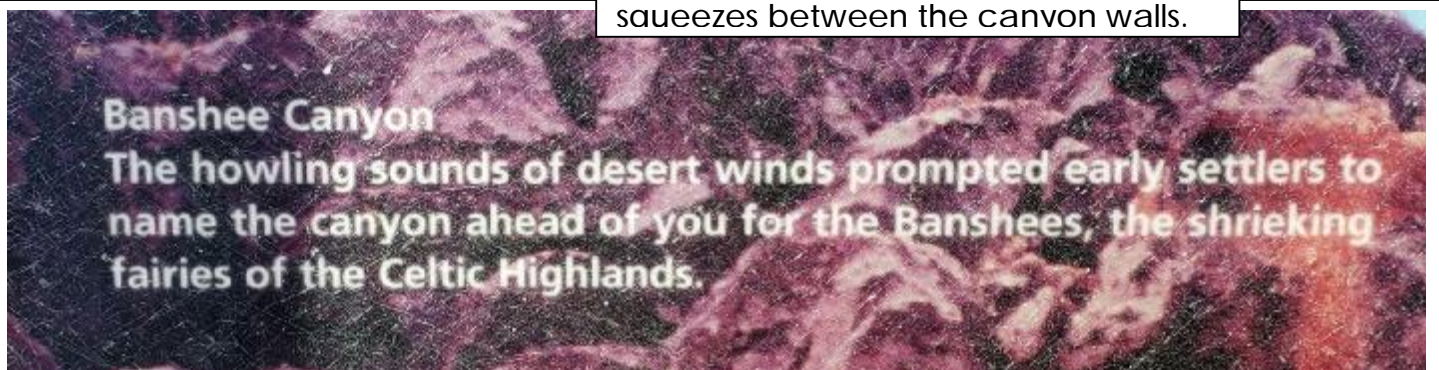
The fossilized and fossilised remains of plants and animals lie entombed within the volcanic tuff (left).



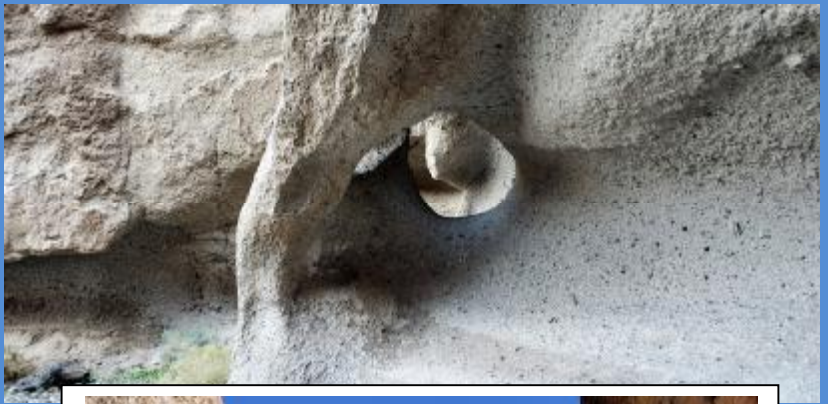
We are now entering Banshee Canyon. I can just imagine the howling a strong wind makes as it squeezes between the canyon walls.

### **Banshee Canyon**

The howling sounds of desert winds prompted early settlers to name the canyon ahead of you for the Banshees, the shrieking fairies of the Celtic Highlands.

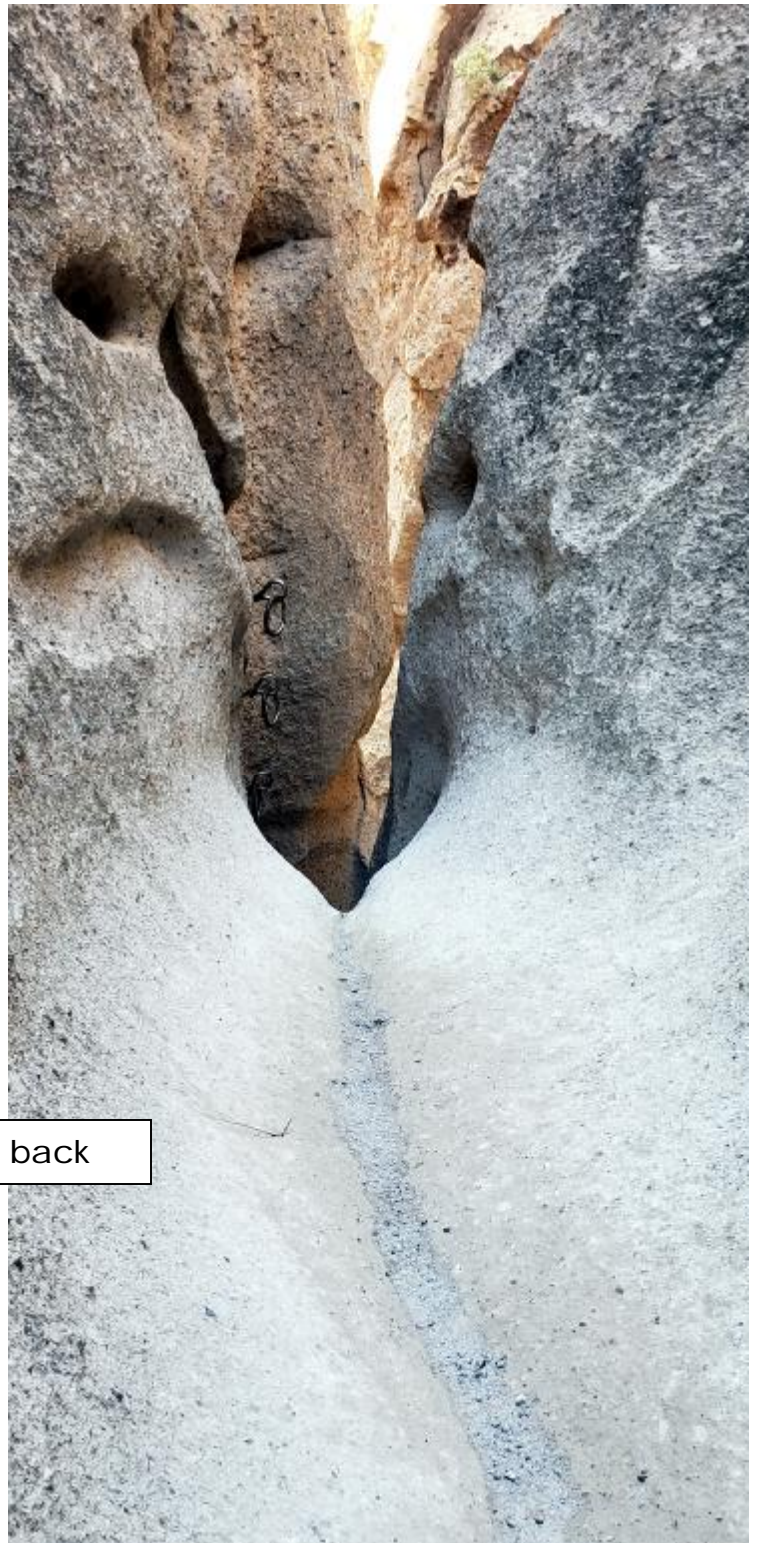


This was a secondary canyon. It ended a short way ahead



This is the trail to follow

This was the first set or rings, for which the trail gets it's name.



From above the rings looking back

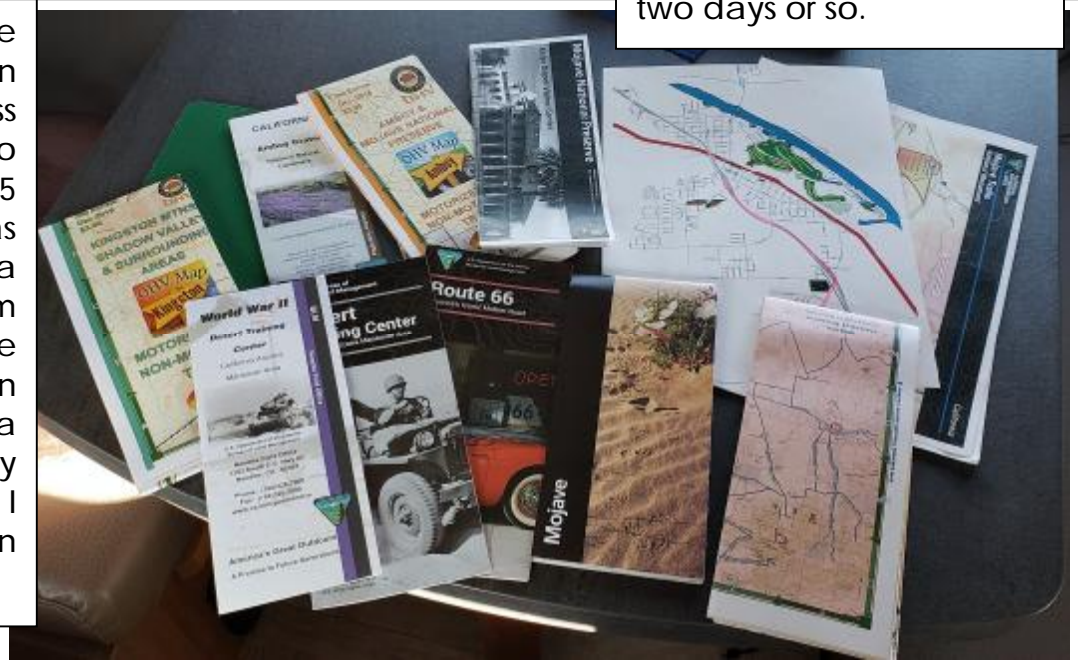
This was a neat little hike and I'm glad I did it. Something unique I haven't done before.

From Hole-in-the-Wall I headed to Needles and the BLM office. Needles is about an hour away.



I asked for it, and I got it. These should supply enough info for the next two days or so.

Believe it or not, there are no grocery stores in Needles. You have to cross the Colorado River into Arizona, then go 10-15 miles towards Las Vegas before you can find a Wally's or ShopRite. I am happy with the food I have for now. I will be in Twentynine Palms in a couple days and they have three grocery stores. I did save a buck a gallon on gas over there though.



Mojave National Preserve is basically bisected by three roads: the one I came in on from the north; the one I headed back north on until I turned on Cedar Canyon; and Lanfair Rd is the most easterly. They all kind of connect I-15 on the north with I-40 on the south. Goffs is at the southern end of Lanfair Rd.

As I left Needles I found myself once again on Route 66, which I followed to Lanfair Rd and the town of Goffs, if a population of 23 can be called a town.

Welcome to the Mojave Desert  
Heritage & Cultural Association

Hours: 9-4 Saturday, Sunday, &  
Monday except holidays.  
& by advance appointment  
Free Admission

Contact us at:  
Phone 760-733-4482  
Email: [info@mdhca.org](mailto:info@mdhca.org)

Visit our website:  
[www.MDHCA.ORG](http://www.MDHCA.ORG)

School & Grounds opening Sat. Oct. 19.

Don't worry, I knew this ahead of time  
also. Goffs is only a few miles out of the  
way, back the direction I was going, so I  
decided to give it a looksee.

A nice looking school and the  
grounds had a lot of interesting  
sights to see behind the fence



Inside the one room school  
(although the one above looks like  
more than one room) are exhibits  
of the cultural history of the Mojave  
Desert. Outside are displays of road  
and mining machinery, vehicles,  
and a windmill. Thanks to my old EZ  
66 GUIDE for that description.

### GOFFS SCHOOLHOUSE 1914

THE FIRST SCHOOL IN GOFFS OPENED ITS DOORS FOR THE FALL TERM IN 1911 SERVING THE NEEDS OF CATTLE RANCHES, MINING DISTRICTS, HOMESTEADERS, THE RAILROAD, AND, MOST OF ALL, THE PEOPLE SUPPORTING EXPANDING TRAVEL ON THE NATIONAL OLD TRAILS ROAD—LATER U.S. HIGHWAY 66. A NEW SCHOOL, FEATURING A DISTINCTIVE MISSION STYLE, WAS DESIGNED BY ARCHITECT A. BEIMER IN 1911 AND CONSTRUCTED BY TOM WARE ON LAND DONATED BY H.P. WARE.

THE NEW SCHOOL HOUSE WAS A SOURCE OF PRIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY. IT SERVED THEIR NEEDS FOR A COMMUNITY CENTER AS WELL AS A SCHOOL UNTIL THE SPRING OF 1937 AFTER U.S. HIGHWAY 66 WAS REALIGNED AND OTHER FACTORS HAD DIMINISHED THE POPULATION. IT REVERTED TO PRIVATE OWNERSHIP IN 1938 AND BECAME A PRIVATE RESIDENCE UNTIL 1945. DURING WORLD WAR II IT WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF A LARGE DESERT TRAINING CENTER ARMY CAMP—THEIR BEING MORE THAN 10,000 SOLDIERS HERE AT SOME TIMES. FROM 1954 TO 1982 THE BUILDING WAS ABANDONED. IN 1982 JIM AND BERTHA WOLD ACQUIRED THE PROPERTY AND STARTED RESTORATION. IN 1990 FURTHER RESTORATION BY THE FRIENDS OF THE MOJAVE ROAD BEGAN.

PLACED BY THE BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER OF THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ORDER OF E. CLAUDIUS VITUS AND THE FRIENDS OF THE MOJAVE ROAD.

OCTOBER 13, 1991







## ARMY CAMP AT GOFFS DESERT TRAINING CENTER CALIFORNIA-ARIZONA MANEUVER AREA

THE U. S. ARMY MAINTAINED A CAMP AT GOFFS 1942-1944. GOFFS WAS AN IMPORTANT RAILHEAD, SUPPLY POINT, HOSPITAL, AND FOR THREE MONTHS IN 1942 HEADQUARTERS OF THE 7TH INFANTRY DIVISION. THAT UNIT WENT ON TO DISTINGUISH ITSELF IN COMBAT IN THE ALEUTIANS AND AT KWAJALEIN, LEYTE, AND OKINAWA. THIS MONUMENT IS DEDICATED TO ALL THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE U.S. ARMY WHO SERVED HERE WITH A SPECIAL SALUTE TO THOSE WHO LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES FOR THEIR COUNTRY.



PLAQUE DEDICATED OCTOBER 12, 2008  
BY THE BILLY HOLCOMB CHAPTER  
OF THE ANCIENT AND HONORABLE  
ORDER OF E CLAMPUS VITUS  
IN COOPERATION WITH THE MOJAVE  
DESERT HERITAGE & CULTURAL  
ASSOCIATION



There will be more about the Desert Training Center in the next couple of days, along with the Patton Museum I am looking forward to it.

My next stop on Route 66 is Fenner. The oasis below has the only fuel and food for miles in either direction. And they know it, because the prices are outrageous. \$6/gal for diesel. A can of fix-a-flat for 16.99 when WalMart has it for 5.29. This was a look but don't touch excursion.





They did have this nice 1929 Mercedes Benz Gazelle. I am pretty sure it's a replica since only 40 originals were ever produced and the Gazelle name was given to the replicas. But it sure was nice to look at.

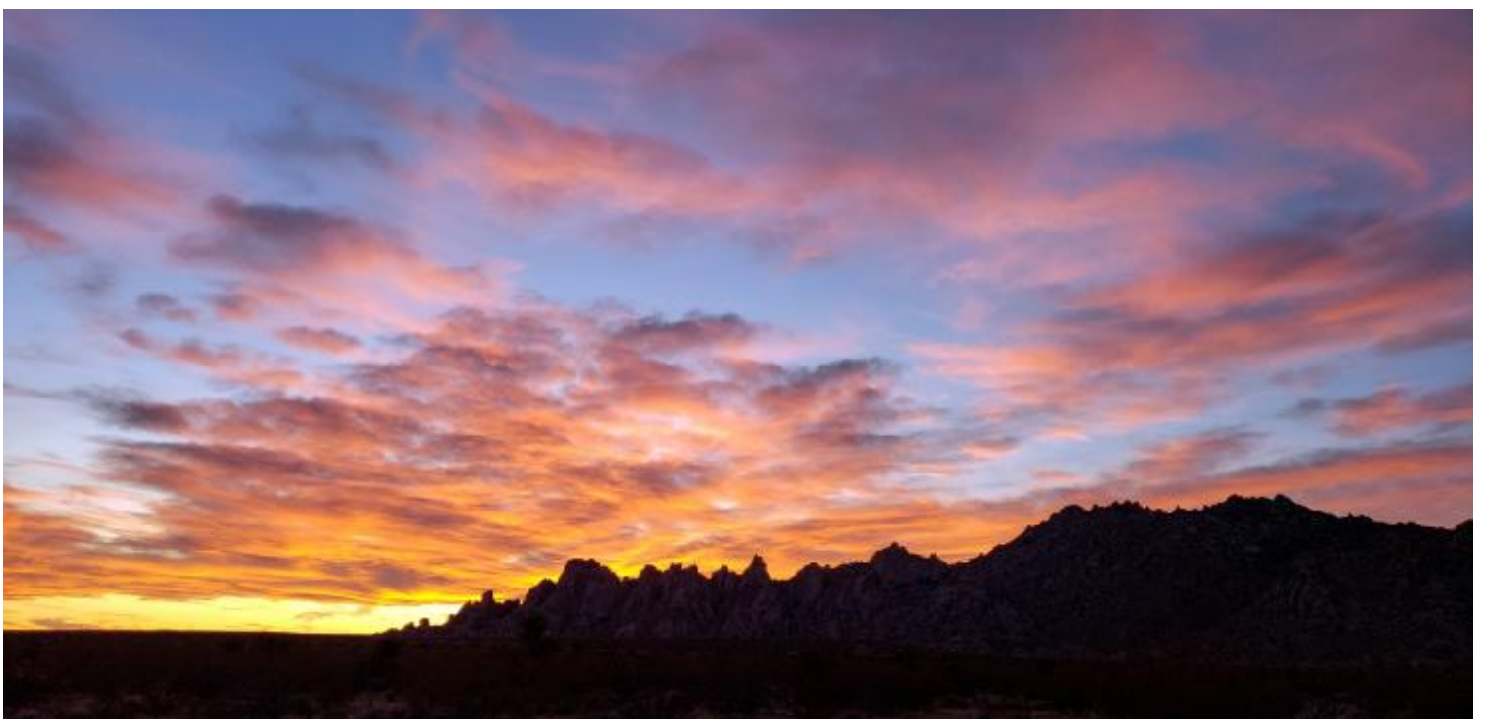
Fenner intersects with I-40 which I took west back to Kelbaker Rd and into the Preserve again. I was hoping to get to the Kelso Dunes before dark but had to turn around and look for a campsite for the night.

The picture below is the Granite Mountains which I am camped across the road from.





The reddish orange color is because of the sunset. You can choose which one below you like the best. It was another beauty.





My personal favorite is below



I spent about an hour, maybe a little more, going through the maps and brochures from the BLM and at least getting tomorrow organized. I should be near or in Joshua Tree National Park tomorrow evening. Unless....I decide to wander a little further northwest to a canyon....well, if I do, you'll see the pictures of it.

No real downers today, only ups. Just the way I like it.

Until next time.....

