

## Orderville Canyon • Zion National Park

<b>Rating:</b>	3B III
<b>Best Season:</b>	Summer or Fall
<b>Time:</b>	6 to 10 hours, 12.3 miles (19.6 km)
<b>Longest Rappel:</b>	15 feet (3 m)
<b>Access:</b>	Required car spot or shuttle service to Orderville Trailhead, located on dirt roads on the North Fork Road near Zion Ponderosa Ranch. Ends at Temple of Sinawava in the Main Canyon.
<b>Permit:</b>	Required. Available at Visitor Center.
<b>Seasonality:</b>	<u>Spring</u> —Snowmelt and packed snow may be present in upper sections of trail and canyon. Closed whenever North Fork (Narrows) is over 120 CFS. <u>Summer and Fall</u> —The preferred seasons, with good temperatures and great fall photography. Bring plenty of water if hiking on a hot day. <u>Winter</u> —Hard to access after snowpack has started for the winter.
<b>Equipment:</b>	Helmets, short rope and rappelling gear. Drybags, good wading/hiking shoes. Wetsuits or drysuits in all but the hottest weather.
<b>Drinking Water:</b>	Water available to filter in second half of hike.
<b>Flash Flood Risk:</b>	Moderate
<b>Anchors:</b>	NO JUMPING! Bolted anchors for short obstacles.

Orderville is a wonderfully fun canyon. With two short obstacles where ropes are often used, it is the easiest technical canyon in this book, or the hardest off-trail hike. Due to the clay soils in its headwaters, Orderville can be exceptionally slippery, so the experienced Ordervillian brings a short rope on all trips. Bring a rope to use as a handline, and the skills required for using it safely. Despite its fairly technical ease, Orderville Canyon sees quite a few accidents. Jumping into shallow pools tends to break ankles and lower legs. Rescue is slow and difficult. **Don't jump.**

The start of Orderville includes a fair amount of hiking in the full sun. In summer, an early start is highly recommended. The short spur road down to the floor of Orderville is a high-clearance 4WD road, and should only be attempted by experienced jeeps. Once started down this road, turning a vehicle around is impossible.

The bottom half of Orderville is wet - great fun when it is hot out. A backcountry water-park. Water protection for cameras and anything else you want to keep dry is essential. The footing can be uncertain, and the technical difficulties are few, so ski or trekking poles, or a hiking staff, are useful.

**Getting to the Start:** Orderville starts off the North Fork Road. The road can be impassable when wet, even for 4WD vehicles. From Springdale, take Utah Route 9 through the Park. 2.3 miles past the East Entrance, turn left (N) on the North Fork Road, initially paved, but soon turning to dirt. Follow this 11.4 miles to a field and dirt road on the left, signed for Orderville Canyon ORV Area. Follow the road .1 miles across the field to a corral, and park among some trees. Those with a true 4WD vehicle can continue down the steep, rutted road another 2.2 miles. Shuttles for hire are also available to Orderville trailhead Junction.

**Approach:** Follow the rutted dirt road steeply downward. At the bottom, follow the dirt road beside the creek downcanyon. After about an hour, the burly-vehicle carpark appears, a big flat area where

some can park. A half-hour walk beyond this, the canyon drops dramatically in a dryfall. Follow trails left, then down steep, loose shale to the canyon floor. These Carmel-formation silts are the source of the super-slippery clays that make Orderville so slippery after a good rain.

**The Canyon:** Stroll downcanyon. At first, the canyon is open with large trees, punctuated by short sections of interesting narrows. The narrow sections become longer and more frequent, the terrain providing a wide variety of scenery. Numerous canyons come in from the north and south, including Esplin Gulch. About an hour downcanyon from the mudslide, the hearty canyoneer arrives at the first obstacle. A large boulder blocks the canyon, with a bolt anchor on the right wall. Some may simply slide, but more mature individuals will wish to use a rope to rappel, or as a

handline for downclimbing the chimney below the anchor. Slippery clays can make this treacherous – use caution.

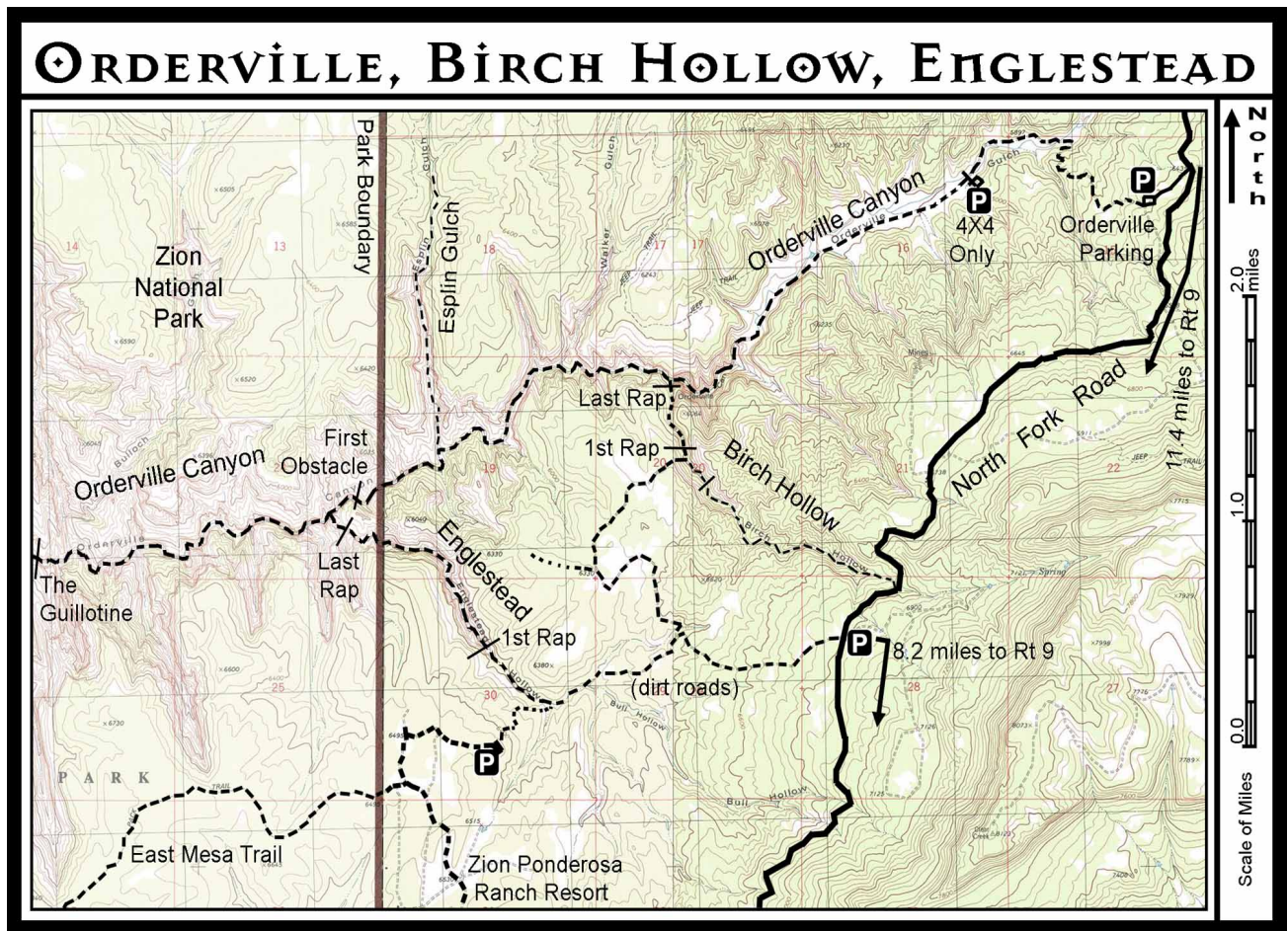
Further downcanyon, the narrows become more continuous. A few small springs provide water and a small flow starts. A log dam often backs up a shallow pool, and another one requires a short downclimb next to a waterfall. Stay in the watercourse in these areas and avoid using trails to the side that contribute to erosion.

The second obstacle is reached about an hour and a quarter past the first obstacle. A large boulder blocks the canyon. Thirty feet above the canyon floor, an even larger block spans the width of the canyon as a chockstone, and has been there long enough to have a lush growth of vegetation on its top. This is The Guillotine. Bolts and slings on the left side overlook a steep v-slot with logs leaning against it. This downclimb is especially slippery because the trees are polished and practically frictionless. Use the rope to

rappel, or as a hand-line to assist and protect the downclimb. If there is water at the bottom, it is likely shallow.

A half-hour past this, another boulder blocks the width of the canyon. A scary-looking V-slot downclimb on the left looks like the obvious path, but following the water down a short fall on the right is easier and safer. This is Corkscrew Falls.

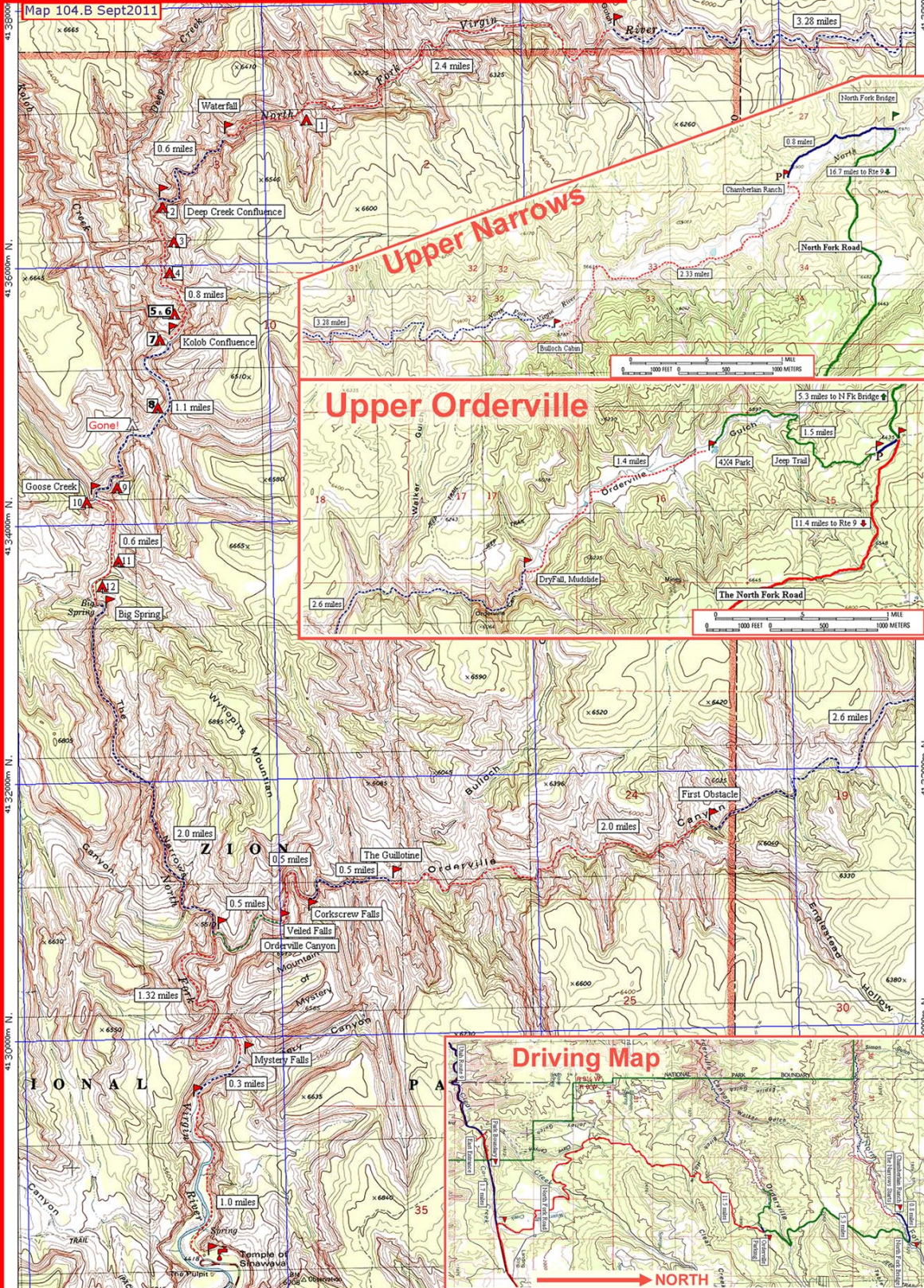
Numerous interesting obstacles make for fun splashing in the water. In another half-hour, Veiled Falls is passed on the left using some shallow moki-steps. This is a popular destination for folks hiking upriver, so don't be surprised to find a crowd. A couple of downclimbs past logs might require a short swim. About an hour past The Guillotine, the final narrows section soars spectacularly skyward. Just beyond, Orderville joins the Narrows. Turn left and hike downstream about an hour to the Veranda at the end of the paved path leading 1 mile to the Temple of Sinawava.



# TOM'S UTAH CANYONEERING GUIDE

WGS84 Zone 12S 332000m E.

Map 104.B Sept2011



**Upper Narrows**

**Upper Orderville**

**Driving Map**

**Zion National Park: The Narrows and Orderville Gulch**

Campsite location and numbering change from year to year. Shuttles: 435-772-0990