

We left our campsite at the south end of Joshua Tree National Park on the BLM land adjoining the Los Angeles aqueduct and drove east on the I10 to Red Cloud Road. We stopped about half way to the Red Cloud mine in a Cholla forest. We saw a desert tortoise and while we were exploring the surrounding area, three cars stopped to ask directions. They had missed their turnoff 1 mile back and had proceeded up a very rough road to that point. They turned around after we straightened them out, but they were at high risk at getting stuck or getting damage to their vehicles. The road got worse and we finally had to turn around about ½ mile beyond the mine. The mine is up a side canyon with the processing plant on the west side of the canyon. On the way back to I10 we stopped at several mysterious rock houses. The last picture shows our campsite by the aqueduct.

On Tuesday we drove up Cottonwood Road to the visitor center and its nice bathrooms. Then on Old Dale Road, which is a maintained dirt road to the Sunrise mill site. Lots of rock buildings. This is where the ore was transported from the mines and processed. There is a well nearby which provided the water. In wet years, there is a shallow depression, which fills with water. No water this year (2015). Continuing on we turned to the east on the Brooklyn mine road to the Golden Rod mine. Not much left except household appliances which have been there a long time. The shaft is covered with rebar and goes down about 300 feet. The Standard mine is at the southern end of this alcove in the mountains. Here there were 5 old cars dating to just after WW II. Also there were beer or soda cans with aluminum tops with pull tabs on them. About half the cans, as shown in the photo, had the top intact and the bottom opened with a church key. Progress is hard for some people. The road is rough after the turnoff from Old Dale road. The area is remote with few visitors. The Pinto Basin wilderness area is to the east. The other side of those mountains is Eagle Mountain mine.

This was a trip to camp at the south entrance to Joshua Tree National Park with our friends from Las Vegas. The Los Angeles Aqueduct runs on the south side of the park. There are 2 access roads where you can camp and look down on the I-10 Freeway. For two days we toured the area in a jeep. Weather was in the high 70s with clear skies. The last day was overcast. This is our favorite camping spot in the desert east of Indio. There were a few bush flowers, but no flowers on the desert floor.