

TUCKI MOUNTAIN 6726 FEET CLASS 1

MILEAGE: 250 miles of paved road, 6.4 miles of excellent dirt

DRIVE/ROUTE A: From the junction of State Highway 190 and the Wildrose Road near the Emigrant Ranger Station in Death Valley National Park, drive 9.5 miles S on the paved, signed Wildrose Road (toward Trona) to the signed turnoff "Skidoo Site 9 Miles". Turn left (E) here and drive 7.2 miles of excellent dirt to a sign "Skidoo 1906-17" describing the townsite of Skidoo. Turning around here, backtrack 0.85 miles to a faint road heading N and park.

CLIMB/ROUTE A: Walk N on the faint dirt road about 0.2 miles to the obvious saddle. From here the peak is seen in the distance to the N as an unimpressive, reddish colored ridge. Hike to the next saddle just E of point 5820 and drop down to a good E-W running dirt road near the 4800 foot elevation level. Turn right (E) following the road for about 1.25 miles to where it reaches its highpoint near a sharp turn and starts dropping downhill. Leave the road here (Continuing E on the road will bring you to the old Journigan cabin and mine in about 0.5 miles. See SIDELINES 2 below.) and proceed 0.5 miles N up a large gully to a saddle at 5200 feet elevation. Dropping NW from this saddle to the flats below, you'll pick up a poor road which is followed NW for about 0.75 miles to a sign "Old Martin Crossing" (Look NW from here to spot the Martin cabin at the far end of the flats. See SIDELINES 2 below.). From Old Martin Crossing head across the flats at a 325° bearing toward the base of hill 5730 and ascend a wash to the top. From here the ridge route up Tucki can be seen at a 315° bearing. Drop down off the hill in that direction to the flats below, crossing them and continuing up the other side to gain the ridge. Follow the ridge generally NW up over point 6480+ and on to point 6520+, where you'll drop down about 200 feet to a saddle 0.25 miles S of the peak. Hike N from here to the top.

ROUND TRIP STATS/ROUTE A: 4300 feet elevation gain, 14 miles, 12 hours

DRIVE/ROUTE B: From the intersection of State Highway 190 and the Trona-Wildrose Road, drive 1.4 miles S on the Trona-Wildrose Road to a faint dirt road turnoff on the left. Turning onto the faint dirt road, follow it E and N through Emigrant Wash until it improves somewhat in just a short distance. If road conditions are good, this stretch is capable of being made in a 2WD high-clearance vehicle, however a 4WD high clearance vehicle is recommended. Continue on the road about 1.3 miles (it eventually leaves Emigrant Wash and climbs the right bank of the wash) to where it makes a sharp right turn into a canyon. Continue on a rough road, taking care over sections of bare rock. Approximately 7 miles in there is one bad spot where a severely eroded section of road has been filled in with boulders. Good wheel placement here is a must. The road improves past this point to the trail head where there is a 4WD road leading off to the left. There is a good flat spot suitable for camping here. If you can make it to this point with a 2WD high clearance vehicle, park at this junction. With a 4WD high-clearance vehicle, turn left and follow the steep road 0.75 to the top of the hill. Park.

CLIMB/ROUTE B: From the top of the hill follow the road NW, downhill less than 0.5 miles to signed "Old Martin Crossing" (Look NW from here to spot the Martin cabin at the far end of the flats. See SIDELINES 2 below.). From Old Martin Crossing head across the flats at a 325° bearing toward the base of hill 5730 and ascend a wash to the top. From here the ridge route up Tucki can be seen at a 315° bearing. Drop down off the hill in that direction to the flats below, crossing them and continuing up the

TUCKI MOUNTAIN (CONTINUED)

other side to gain the ridge. Follow the ridge generally NW up over point 6480+ and on to point 6520+, where you'll drop down about 200 feet to a saddle 0.25 miles S of the peak. Hike N from here to the top.

ROUND TRIP STATS/ROUTE B: 2000 feet elevation gain, 7.5 miles, 5-6 hours

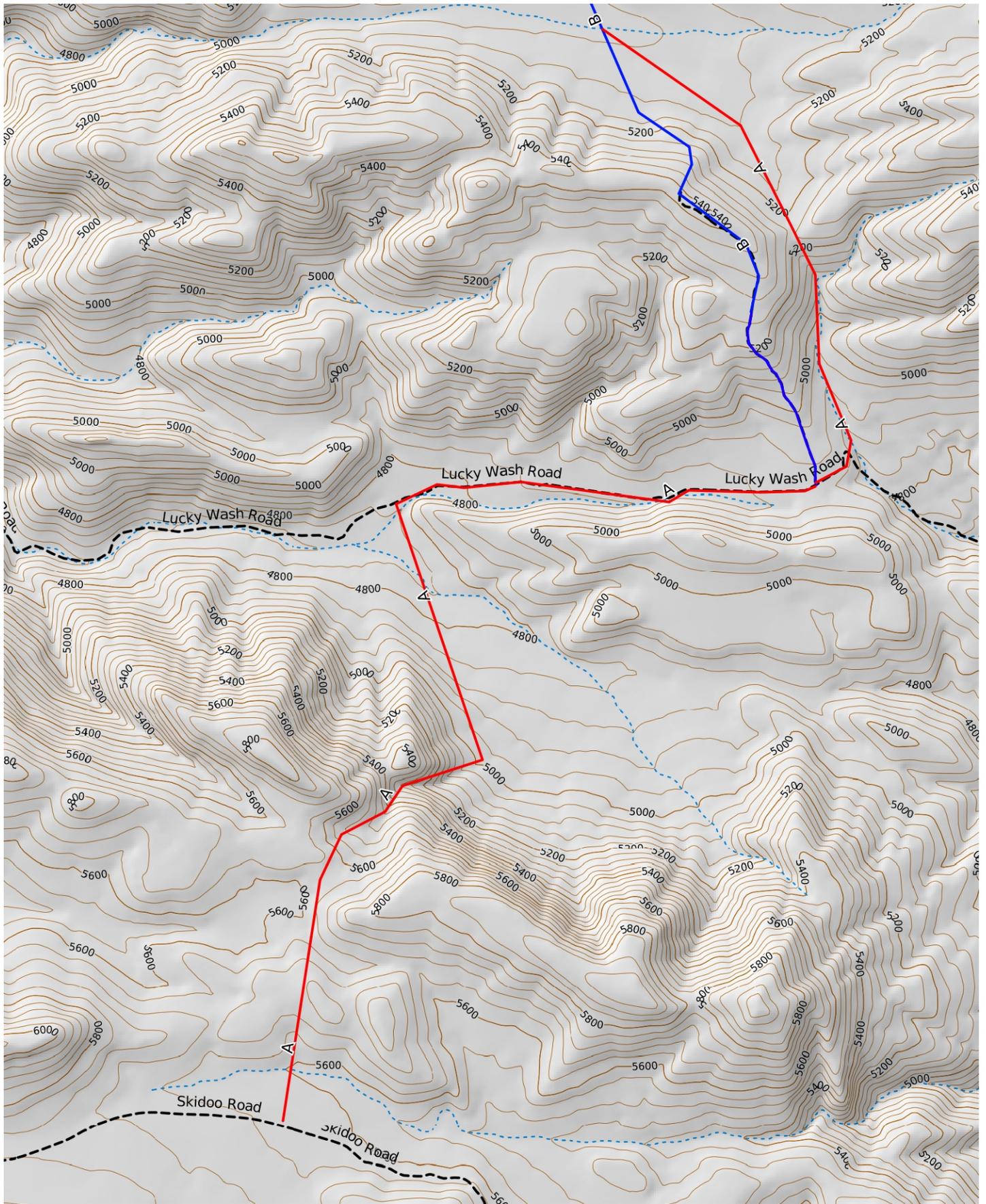
SIDELINES

1. Tucki has also been known by the name Sheep Mountain. Local tradition suggests that tucki was a Shoshone word for sheep.

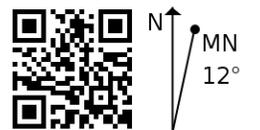
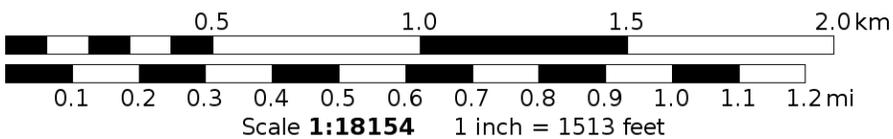
2. The Journigan cabin and mine site was first established in the 1860's by a family of Mormon miners who found some promising ore in the area. It's kept stocked with a small supply of canned food and water (but don't count on the water!) by a handful of people who devote their spare time to maintaining such historic mining sites. The Martin cabin, a cozy one bedroom shack with a good stock of supplies, is also worth a visit.

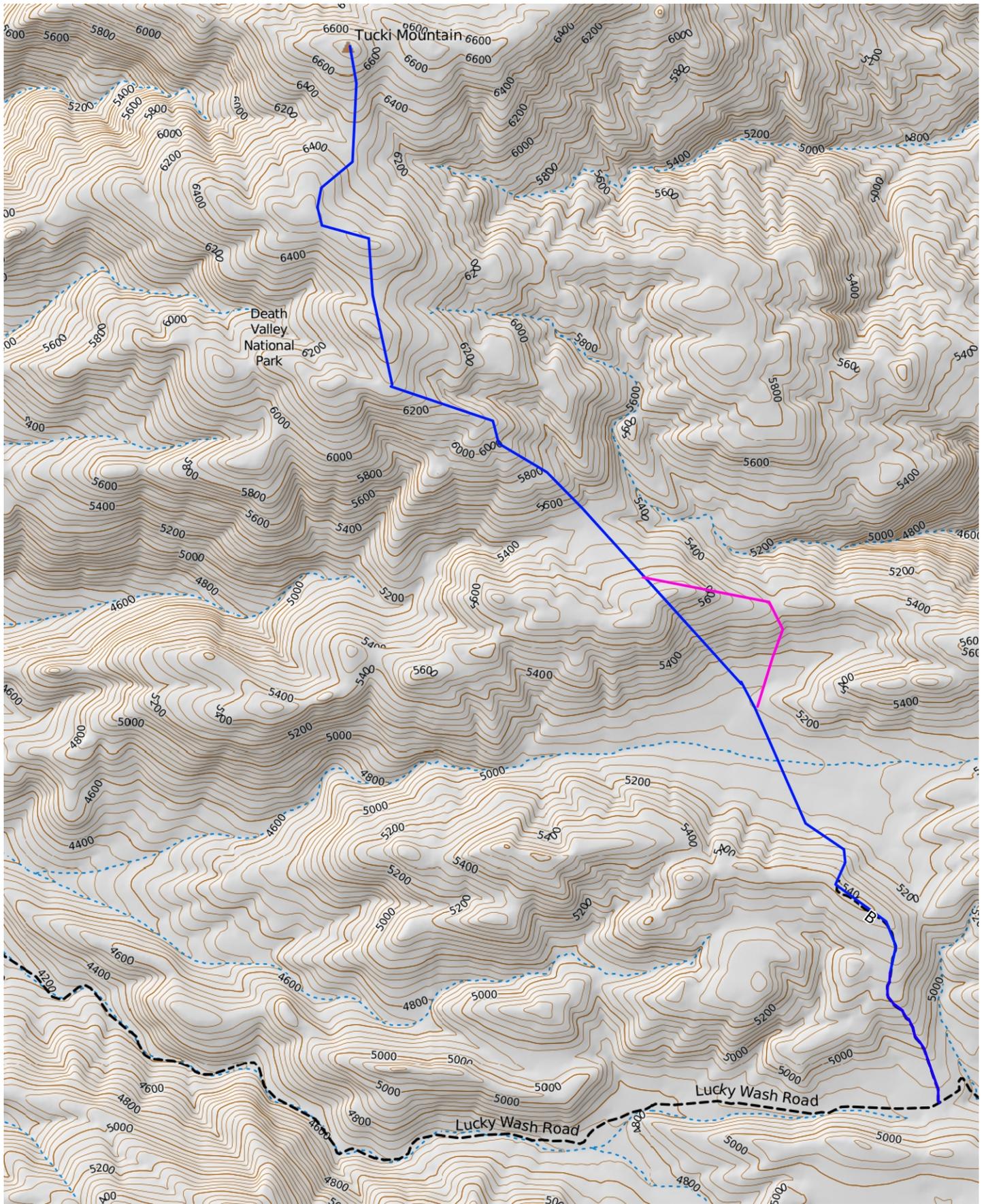
3. This peak is located within the boundary of Death Valley National Park.

4. Gold was discovered at Skidoo in 1906 by two prospectors, John L. Ramsey and John A. Thompson. Within a short time the stampede was on by prospectors throughout the area to stake their claim and strike it rich. Bob Montgomery, the millionaire owner of the Bullfrog Mine District in Rhyolite, Nevada, purchased the original claim for \$100,000. By the time the ore played out in September 1917, the Skidoo mine had produced about \$1.4 million in gold, becoming the second largest gold producer in the Death Valley and Amargosa country, being topped only by the Montgomery Shoshone mine. As was typical in most rough and tumble mining camps of the period, there were occasionally moments of violence. Perhaps the most famous incident to take place in Skidoo was the shooting of Jim Arnold, a general store owner, by Joe "Hootch" Simpson in April 1908 and the subsequent lynching of Simpson by a vigilante force of townsmen a few days later. Hootch was hung and his dead body was strung up on a telephone pole in town for all to see. After a period of time some of the locals decided to cut him down, put him in a pine box and throw it down an abandoned mine shaft. However that was not the last of Hootch Simpson. The town physician, a Dr. MacDonald, was convinced that Hootch committed his murder in a fit of rage brought about by syphilis and retrieved the body to conduct testing on the dead man's brain. Dr. MacDonald cut Hootch's head off and took it back to his office for study. Once satisfied that he had studied it enough, the doctor set it outside on an anthill for a few days and then retrieved it to boil the remaining flesh off the skull, keeping the grisly curio in his possession for a number of years. In justification of the lynching, the editor of the Skidoo News wrote: "The method of disposing of such, in the way that happened here, is just, cheap and salutary in the lesson it conveys. Local gun men are already in a chastened frame of mind. Would-be bad men, as they bowl along the road on their triumphal entry of Skidoo, will note the number, the stoutness, the great convenience of the telephone poles, and reflect thereon. It is a matter of deep regret, but it was the will of the people."



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