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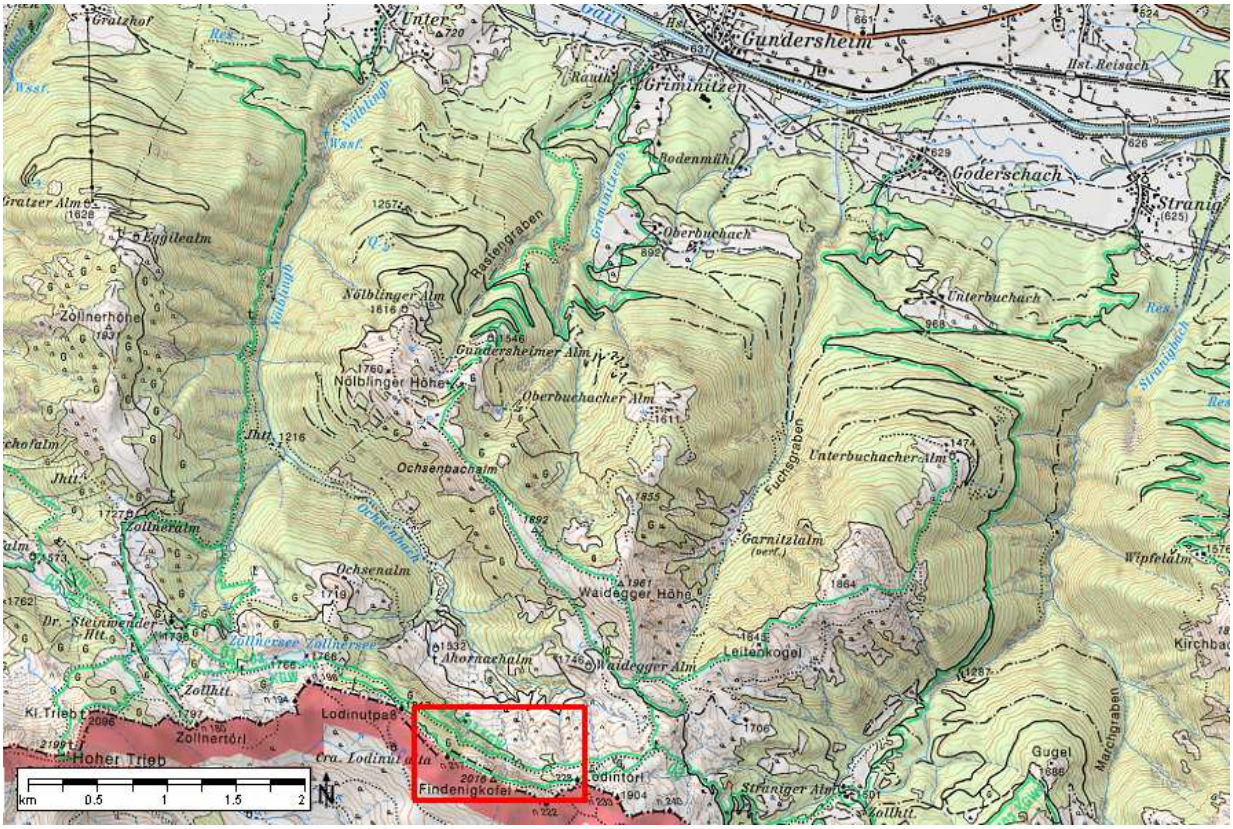
Geotope 56: Findenig-Nordwand – Twice as Much

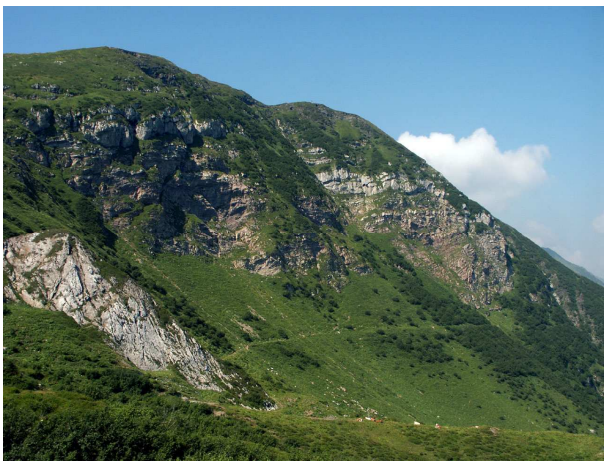


Red square: location of the geotope; green tracks: hiking trails; ©BEV: Federal Office for Calibration and Measurement, 2005.

Access:

During summer access is possible by car from the small village of Goderschach via Stranig Alm to Waidegg Alm. From there the long-distance trail no. 403 is leading to Lake Zollner with passage of the wall just in the middle height.

Description of the Geotope



View of the northeastern wall of Findenig with the long-distance trail no. 403.

The entire wall has a height of some 400 m und ranges from above Ahornach Alm almost to the summit of mountain Findenig at an altitude of 2000 m. Geologically, the wall is composed of two sedimentary packages, each of which consist of black siliceous shales from the Silurian Period (440 to 420 m.y. BP) and greyish and pinkish limestones of Devonian age (420 to 360 m.y. BP). The boundary between the two is located shortly below the trail passing the wall.

The black shales from the Silurian were deposited in a sea-basin without much life, because at that depth neither light nor much oxygen was present. These hostile conditions changed at the beginning of the Devonian when the greyish and pinkish limestones were deposited. From now on the sea was inhabited by different groups of organisms including cephalopods (orthoceratids – the “straight horn”), corals, stromatoporoids, bivalves, dacryoconarids, snails and conodonts. At the beginning of the Carboniferous Period the sea-bottom significantly subsided to provide the space for huge amounts of clay, sand and gravel of the Hochwipfel Formation being supplied to the ocean by rivers from rising mountains on the adjacent continents.

Colour change from greyish to pinkish limestones from the Devonian Period.

At the end the marine sediments were compressed, folded, inclined and uplifted from the sea to form a mountain chain which was part of the Variscan Orogen. As such the forerunners of the Carnic Alps were formed some 320 m.y. ago. However, this was not the end: In the following millions of years the sea returned

and flooded the ruins of the previously formed mountains and sedimentation started again. This sedimentary cycle is locally preserved between Naßfeld and Lake Zollner.