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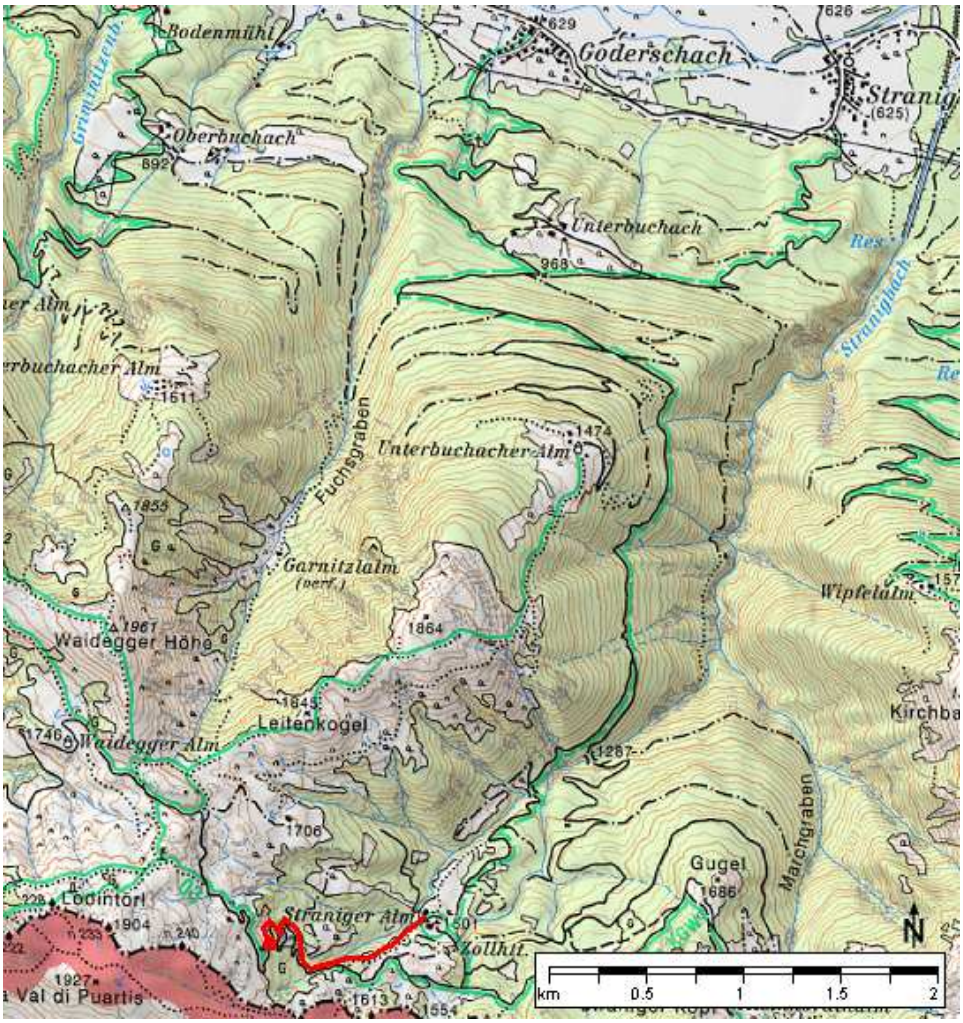
Geotope 34: Stranig Alm Road – Where Old meets Young



Red marking: Hiking route according to advance description; green tracks: hiking trails; ©BEV: Federal Office for Calibration and Measurement, 2005.

Access:

The road starts in the small village of Stranig via Unterbuchach to Stranig Alm und further on half distance to Waidegg Alm. The outcrop is exposed near a road-bent of the east-facing slope.

Description of the Geotope

At an altitude of some 1700 m the road from Stranig to Waidegg Alm crosses older and younger strata. More precisely, the bush-covered slope below the bent of the road is composed of lightgrey limestones of Devonian age (approx.. 420 to 350 m.y. BP), which were dated by microfossils quite accurately. These rocks are strongly faulted, folded and mixed like playing cards.

Atop this old irregular surface younger rocks of Upper Carboniferous age (360 to 290 m.y. BP) were deposited. They signalized the incoming sea from the southeast which was slowly flooding the Carnic Alps or at least their ruins. This was not an easy task and accompanied by formation of reworked angular rock-clasts and fine-grained quartz sand which were cemented to a thin but hard conglomeratic layer. After this “capture of the Variscan mountain chain” the sedimentation changed to normal conditions of a shallow sea, in which clayish, arenaceous, pebbly, calcareous and marly deposits repeatedly alternated.

Contact (red line) between the lightgrey Lower Devonian limestones (below) and pebble-bearing basal sediments of the overlying post-Variscan sequence in the March Creek southwest of Stranig Alm.

For all those who are interested in more:

C**onglomerates** are sedimentary rocks, consisting of rounded and more than 2 mm big cemented components of varying origin; b**reccias** are similar to conglomerates but consist of angular clasts.