

Rio Laja Trail- Section 12: *San Luis de la Paz Bridge*

Description:

This trail is quite pleasant and would be good for mountain biking, with exception for a few steep ascents and descents and irrigation ditches. This section of the trail is 2.09 miles/ 3.35 km long.

Access to trailhead parking:

Follow highway 51 roughly 17.7 miles/ 28.32 km from the Ventana golf Course intersection. Turn left at sign for "Rioyos 1 KM" and follow for .6 miles/ 1 km. Park to side of soccer field under big trees, or on other side of road under perul trees.



Waypoint 1: Trailhead parking, mile 0.0/ km 0.0. GPS coordinate: 21.142, -100.881. Walk short distance down 4x4 road toward steel pedestrian bridge and make a right turn to follow an indistinct trail along right bank of river. The trail will meet up with a well-defined trail- continue straight not to the left. At .22 miles/ .36 km, ascend up steps cut into embankment, to meet dirt road leaving soccer field, and take trail to the left. Continue with river to left and field to right. The trail will recede into the fields and carrizo stand will appear on left.

Waypoint 2: At .63 miles/ 1 km, the trail descends into an arroyo. Head left away from field, staying close to river, and ascend bank of arroyo to a clearly defined trail. At .74 miles/ 1.2 km, the river bends from NNE to WNW. The trail ebbs some.

Waypoint 3: At .92 miles/ 1.5 km, a dirt road, for extraction purposes, descends into the river. Cross this road and ascend bluff with diverse and abundant cactuses. Remain on upper left bank of trail passing through cactus field, to the left. Ascend a man-made dirt mound on the riverbank, picking up main trail. Ascend another bank, walking toward large mesquite tree.



Approaching diverse and abundant cactus field

Waypoint 4: Trail splits off toward the highway, at 1.18 miles/ 1.9 km. Take a left at split, bordering agricultural field. Observe a possible pump house is off to far right side of agricultural field. Head toward river and big, mature willow trees at 1.47 miles/ 2.4 km, where the trail splits again. Descend toward riverbank to cross arroyo. Ascend gently sloping trail and take steep right to pick up main

trail. At 1.57 miles/ 2.53 km, another dirt road will cross to other side of Laja, under electrical wire. Take a sloping trail up from riverbed to left. The bridge becomes visible at 1.87 miles/ 3 km, where a suspended, rusted pipeline crosses river and cross well-defined dirt road. At high water, take road to the right, but at low water, easy to traverse on well-used trail in the riverbed. The high trail runs along river. Follow mesquite trees on left and field on right.



Waypoint 5: End of Section 11, start of Section 12, at 2.09 miles/ 3.35 km. GPS coordinate: 21.161, -100.890. The San Luis de la Paz Highway Bridge marks the end of this trail and of the network of trails along the Rio Laja. This section is 32.43 miles/ 51.9 km from the start of Section one on the Rio Laja trail network.

San Luis de Paz Bridge at trail's end