

Rio Laja Trail - Section 1: *Abandoned Hacienda Trail*

Description:

This Section of the trail is considered seasonal because during periods of high water in the Presa Allende, almost half of its distance, from the trailhead parking to beyond the abandoned hacienda, may be underwater. This guide describes the trail during the dry period when hiking is possible, though this Section of the Rio runs nearly year round, boasting an abundance of waterfowl.

The trail follows the upper right bank within the federal zone, however, there is a parallel trail off to the far right (going north or upstream) that is well-used by commuters and may as well be followed. Be advised that this trail often intersects with private land; use the well-established unofficial trail at own risk. Additionally, it is important for bikers to watch for the occasional agricultural drainage ditch, low branch or fallen tree. The first Section of the trail will end at the La Esperanza community, after 2.17 miles/ 3.47 km, where Section 2 will begin.

Access to trailhead parking:

Cross the railroad tracks coming from town on Calzada de la Estación. After crossing the tracks bare left (off from the paved road) to the cobblestone road following the signs to the Otomí development. Bare right at the next fork following the signs to Otomí. Pass the entrance to Otomí on the left and follow the dirt road straight to the Presa (about .5 miles/850 meters). Park anywhere on this peninsular and follow the shoreline around to the right. Depending where you park, the trail begins another .5 miles/850 meters. The Rio Laja enters the flood plain of the Presa Allende, making a 90 degree turn from north to west which marks the starting point of the trail.

Waypoint 1: Trailhead parking, mile 0.0, km 0.0. GPS coordinates: 20.907, -100.792. Walk north slightly downhill to the top of the bank of the Rio Laja flowing north to south and making a distinctive 90 degree turn to the west.

Waypoint 2: Abandoned Hacienda at .9 miles/ 1.5 km.

Ruins of Las Trancas, the Abandoned Hacienda, are slightly visible through the ring of surround trees, NNE of the trail.

Waypoint 3: End of Section 1 and start of Section 2, at 2.17 miles/ 3.47 km. GPS coordinates: 20.931, -100.802. Section 1 ends at a makeshift river crossing often used by vehicular and foot traffic during dryer periods, but inaccessible during high water.