

SECTION 3: *Xoté Trail*

Description:

This Section of the Rio Laja Trail is passable at all times of the year and suitable for hiking and mountain biking. As in Sections 1 and 2, the preferred trail is on the east or left bank and several places where the Rio may be crossed for most of the year. Portions of the trail along the upper bank are very difficult for walking. Many local walkers/bikers use an established trail running parallel, but outside of the Federal Zone, often at the very edge of a cultivated field. There is also one section of the trail that comes so close to the old road to Atotonilco. Use caution if opting to walk along the road for a short distance. Section 3 of the trail ends at the Casa de Aves Bridge, totaling 3.42 miles/ 5.5 km.

Access to trailhead parking:

From Plazuela de La Estación, cross the tracks and remain on the blacktop road to the right (to Cieneguita) for about 3 miles/4.8 kilometers. Turn left at sign pointing to Guanaguato (Guanaguato Bridge). There is a small pull-off on the right before crossing the bridge that is suitable for one car. Alternatively, cross the bridge and take the first left into a large dirt lot.

Waypoint 1: Trailhead parking, mile 0.0. GPS coordinate: 20.948, -100.794. Walk north following upper right bank or on 'unofficial' parallel path to far right. Keep in mind that this unofficial trail is more well-used by local and often intersects with private land. Trail parallels the Cieneguita Road variably 100 feet /30 meters to the east. At about .75 miles/ 1.21 km, the first of several possible crossings of the Rio appears. There are several stands of carrizo that require traversing to the far right from the top of the bank by as much as 30 feet/10 meters, as well as a few barbed wire fences to climb over or through.

Waypoint 2: Off to the right, and across the road, notice the entrance to the water park, Xoté, at mile 1.5/ 2.4 km. In this vicinity it may be easier to walk on the road. Return to the trail as soon as possible, while there is not heavy traffic, caution is advised. A short distance later there is a small arroyo to either walk over or around. The paved road turns to gravel/dirt. At mile 2.07/ 3.3 km, there is an unofficial traffic crossing of the Rio, and bridge ruins at mile 2.16/ 3.5 km.

Waypoint 3: Rio San Damian enters the Rio Laja from the left bank, at mile 2.39/ 3.85 km. If hiking the west side of the Rio Laja, it may be necessary to go up the Rio San Damian a short distance in order to cross.

Waypoint 4: End of Section 3, and start of Section 4, at 3.42 miles/ 5.5 km. GPS coordinate: 20.982, -100.805. The section ends at the Casa de Aves Bridge. This location is 7.19 miles/ 11.57 km from the start of Section 1.